

FOLLOWING THE XAVERIAN WAY

Concordia

XBSS Students Take a Faith- Filled Journey to Spiritual Discovery



From March 9-13, 2025, 78 juniors from the 13 Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools (XBSS) gathered at the Holy Family Retreat Center in West Hartford, CT, for the annual XBSS Junior Retreat. Rooted in the Xaverian values of humility, trust, zeal, compassion, and simplicity, this transformative experience offered students the chance to deepen their faith, form meaningful relationships, and reflect on their identity as leaders called to serve others as unique expressions of God's love.

Throughout the week, students engaged in powerful moments of prayer, reflection, and community-building that strengthened their faith and connections with peers from across the XBSS network. The retreat opened with a Mass celebrated by Fr. David Cinquegrani, setting a sacred and unifying tone. Students from Xavier High School (CT) and St. John's Prep (MA) planned the liturgy, which emphasized the retreat's core theme: being created in the image and likeness of God.

A key element of the retreat was the small group sessions, where students reflected on their faith journeys and explored how they are called to live out the Xaverian mission of compassion and service. The Asteroid Activity further challenged students to confront their own biases and recognize the dignity of every person as they stepped into the roles of individuals from diverse backgrounds, such as a widow, an ex-convict, and a gang member. This eye-opening experience helped students reflect on how they perceive others and how they are called to love as God loves—without judgment.

On Service Day, students embodied the Xaverian call to “manifest God's love to the peoples of the world” by serving at 13 different sites across the

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greater Hartford area. From homeless shelters and food pantries to inner-city schools and disability centers, students experienced the joy and humility that comes with standing alongside those in need. Senior leaders from Malden Catholic and Xaverian Brothers High School reminded juniors that service is not about “checking a box” but about meeting others with compassion and love, recognizing the face of Christ in those who are marginalized.

The retreat also provided moments of deep reflection and spiritual renewal. The Sacrament of Reconciliation offered students the chance to let go of burdens and recommit to living as unique expressions of God’s love. The Ragman Skit, performed beforehand, served as a powerful reminder of Christ’s sacrifice and our call to serve others with humility and compassion.

The XBSS Junior Retreat was an invitation for students to live more fully as people of faith and service—ready to answer God’s call in both the ordinary and extraordinary moments of daily life. Students departed with a renewed sense of purpose and a responsibility to return to their school communities as leaders who embody the Xaverian mission.



All XBSS Retreatants gather for a group photo on the final day of the retreat.



Jim Conley, Director of Campus Ministry, engages with a junior retreatant.

Sharing God’s Love: Novices Transform Lives at Notre Dame du Travail

Every Saturday, our dedicated Novices bring God’s love and knowledge to the parish of Notre Dame du Travail through their catechesis classes. Novices Yves and Clinton are inspiring the young people preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation. This year, 15 children will joyfully be Confirmed, with the date to be set by the bishop and the parish priest.

Meanwhile, Novices Ildesbald and Joseph guided children in their final year of preparation for Baptism and First Holy Communion. These children experienced the profound joy of these sacraments during Easter Mass, after three years of dedicated preparation. In total, 55 children were part of this transformative program.

Adding to the vibrant parish life, Novice Benedict shares his talents as a member of the French choir, enriching the community with beautiful music.

Together, our Novices are making a significant impact, nurturing the faith and spirit of the young and the entire parish community.



Above: Ildesbald with his catechism class.

Right: Yves teaching catechism to children preparing for baptism.

Right: Novices Yves, Ildesbald, Benedict, Clinton and Joseph



Student Service Trip to Guatemala Leaves Lasting Impression

Since 2013, students from Xavier High School in Middletown, CT have embarked on transformative international service trips, in partnership with Mission Discovery. These journeys offer students an incredible opportunity to serve others on a global scale, with the aim of becoming “Learners, Servants, and Tellers of Stories.”

This year, twenty Xavier students and four dedicated teachers, including Brother John Sullivan, spent February 15-21, 2025, working together with the local community of Antigua, Guatemala. Their efforts included:

Volunteering at Kairos School: Kairos is a private Christian school in Ciudad Vieja, providing quality education to needy children from kindergarten to 9th grade at no cost to their families. Our volunteers distributed food and tutored the Kairos students, making a tangible difference in their lives.

Constructing Two Homes: While modest by U.S. standards, these “homes” represent a permanent and cherished dwelling for local families. Junior, Lukas Roming reflected, “We met some amazing people who worked alongside us and shared their stories. The experience made me deeply grateful for everything I have at home. It was truly impressive.”

These service trips not only impact the communities they serve but also leave a lasting impression on the students, fostering a spirit of gratitude and global citizenship.



Brother John Sullivan giving a blessing and dedication of one of the houses the group built.

Xaverian Brothers High School Global Encounter Program Another Successful Trip!

This past February, seven XBHS students and two campus ministers teamed up with a youth group from Saint Mary of the Nativity in Scituate, Massachusetts, to spend a week in Peru, growing in their faith, and offering their services through prayer and manual labor through XBHS' Global Encounter Program. This program is a week-long service immersion experience that students participate in during school breaks.

During the visit, the group participated in Mass and Adoration every day, often going out into the community and inviting people they encountered to join them. Throughout the week, the students switched between work groups: a manual labor group and a ministry of presence group to get a well-rounded experience.

The manual labor group was charged with cementing floors in a home that had been recently damaged due to flooding, while the ministry of presence group connected with the people of the towns they were visiting, offering to pray with those who were sick, or unable to join them for Mass.

Brianna Larnard, one of the XBHS campus ministers in attendance, noted, “It was a blessing for me to hear from our students that what they enjoyed most were times spent in the towns praying and visiting with people.”



And, This Year's Winners Are...

Each year, the **Theodore James Ryken Award** is presented to members of the faculty, staff or administration of each of the 13 Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools who exhibit a commitment to the Founder's vision. The recipients of the award are recognized as committed and dedicated individuals who proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They nurture their school community spiritually; 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.

Congratulations to all who sustain the Xaverian mission!



◀ **Sister Jane Holland**

Lowell Catholic



◀ **Domenic Cacciapuoti, Jr.**

Malden Catholic High School



▶ **Brion Townshend**

Mount St. Joseph High School



▶ **Joseph Cabigas**

Our Lady of Good Counsel High School



◀ **Melanie Paresi**

St. John's Prep



◀ **Beth Hayden**

St. John's High School



▶ **Dr. Catherine Bowes**

St. Mary's Ryken High School



▶ **John Olon**

St. Mary's Ryken High School



◀ **Ann Marie Jakubielski**

St. Bernard School



◀ **Ben Cottrell**

St. Xavier High School



▶ **Patrick Mathews**

Xaverian High School



▶ **Lisa Keereweer**

Xavier High School



◀ **Marie Braychak**

Xavier High School



◀ **John Tassinari**

Xaverian Brothers High School



Groundbreaking and blessing of the new residence.



Very Soon, Brothers in Bungoma will be under one roof

A new residence is being built to bring together our dedicated Brothers in active ministry, who are currently spread across various locations. This new home will offer them a space to thrive, fostering a sense of community and belonging.

Brothers in formation will continue their journey at the current residence, ensuring they have the ideal environment to grow in their vocation.

The new residence will feature a beautiful chapel, a well-stocked library, a welcoming dining room, and a modern kitchen, creating a nurturing and supportive atmosphere. As construction nears completion this spring, we ask for your prayers for our Brothers in Bungoma. May this transition to their new home be filled with blessings and joy, as they embark on this exciting new chapter together.

Thanks to your support, room renovations are underway at Xaverian House

Big changes are coming to Xaverian House in Danvers, MA, as we begin the first phase of home improvements. Thanks to the very generous support of friends like you who responded to the *Christmas Appeal*, planning for renovations to the 20 bedrooms have begun with an anticipated completion date of Summer 2025.

Our retired Brothers eagerly await the updates to their living quarters. After all, a fresh coat of paint, new carpeting, furnishings, bed linens and window treatments will certainly add to their daily living experience. Thank you again for your generosity to our retired Brothers!



Our students during one of their visits to the orphanage run by the Missionary Sisters of the Poor.

NEWS FROM HAITI: Sant Zaveryen Students Visit Orphanage

These are very difficult times for the people of Haiti. We recently received a letter from our Sant Zaveryen students with an update on their academic and living situation. By the grace of God, they continue to progress with their education despite the hardships they encounter. They are very grateful to the Xaverian Brothers and their benefactors for their loving support.

One beautiful way they express this gratitude is by “paying it forward” through their own acts of kindness. Every Sunday, after Mass, they visit the orphanage run by the Missionary Sisters of the Poor. There, they volunteer their time and love, ministering to the orphaned children who have been abandoned and neglected.

Please continue to pray for our students and all the people of Haiti. Your support and prayers are a beacon of hope in these trying times.

Figaro, Kerson, Guensley, Stanley and Marcnor



Ensure That Your Wishes Are Met...Learn More About How Our Partnership with FreeWill Can Help

As members of the Xaverian Brothers family, we are called to live lives of faith, compassion, and service. Throughout the years, you have been a vital part of our mission, and we are deeply grateful for your continued connection.

With thoughtful planning, we care not only for those we love but also for the values we cherish. To support you and those you love, we are excited to offer you a free, easy-to-use online will-writing tool through our new partnership with FreeWill. This can also be used with more complicated estates by contacting a local attorney.

In just 20 minutes, from the comfort of your home, you can:

- Protect your loved ones
- Ensure your wishes are carried out
- Gain peace of mind for the future

As faithful stewards of God's gifts, we are entrusted to plan wisely and care for what has been given to us. Whether you are creating a will for the first time or updating an existing one, we hope this resource will be a blessing to you and your family.

To get started with your will scan the QR code or visit: xavb.ro/freewillxb



If you have already included the Xaverian Brothers in your estate plans, please let us know so we can thank you for your generosity and welcome you into the Concordia (planned giving) Society.

To let us know, scan the QR code or visit: xavb.ro/informusfb



XBSS Announces New Leadership At Schools: A PROMISING FUTURE AHEAD

In January, the Mount Saint Joseph High School Board proudly announced **Mr. Brendan T. Donohue** as the new President of the school. With an impressive 13-year tenure as Principal at Xavier, Middletown, Brendan brings a wealth of experience and leadership to the MSJ community.



St. Xavier High School proudly announces the promotion of Assistant Principal **Dr. Daniel McCue** to Principal, starting in the 2025-2026 academic year. Dr. McCue's unwavering dedication to students and faculty aligns perfectly with St. X's strategic vision of continuous improvement, promising a bright future for the school community.



In February, Xavier High School proudly appointed **Mr. Nicholas Cerreta** as their new President. A distinguished 2001 graduate of Xavier, Nick has been a dedicated member of the faculty since 2005. Rising through the ranks, he became Dean of Students in 2007 and was named Associate President for School and Community in 2023. Having served as interim president since the start of the school year, Nick's leadership and commitment to the Xavier community are set to drive the school to new heights.



Saint John's High School is thrilled to announce **Ms. Lauren Hill** as their next Principal, effective July 1, 2025. Lauren, a highly respected former faculty member from 2014 to 2020, taught high school English at various levels. Currently serving as the Assistant Principal for Academics at Xaverian Brothers High School in Westwood, MA, Lauren brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to educational excellence back to Saint John's.



St. Mary's Ryken High School is excited to announce the appointment of **Mr. Thomas R. Campbell** as its new principal, effective July 1, 2025. With over 25 years of experience in Catholic school administration and teaching, Tom is deeply committed to academic excellence, faith formation, and student success. He joins SMR from Our Lady of Good Counsel High School in Olney, MD, where he has served as principal since 2013. Tom's extensive experience and dedication promise to lead St. Mary's Ryken to new heights.



In March, Mount Saint Joseph High School proudly appointed **Mr. Samuel Bianco '01** as their next Principal. Since 2018, Sam has served at the administrative level at MSJ, first as the Director of Students and most recently as Director of Student Life.



All Roads Lead to Rome...General Chapter to Take Place this Summer

This July, the Xaverian Brothers will embark on an important journey as we gather in Rome for the 29th General Chapter. Held every six years, this series of congregational meetings spans two weeks and is a pivotal event for us.

Last fall, delegates were chosen to represent each region of the congregation—Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Kenya/South Sudan, and the United States. These delegates, alongside the current congregational leadership, will convene to chart the future direction of our congregation and elect new leaders who will guide us for the next six years.

As our Brothers prepare for this significant event, we ask for your prayers and support. May their discussions be filled with wisdom and inspiration, leading to a bright and unified future.



Students in Kipushi Learn Practical Skills for the Future



Every afternoon, as the final bell rings at Rijken School in Kipushi, Congo, a wave of excitement sweeps through the young girls in the sewing program. They eagerly head to the workshop, ready to dive into hands-on lessons in fabric cutting and sewing. These passionate students are already crafting beautiful, ready-to-wear items like dresses, skirts, and shirts.



Equally inspiring are the young students in the electrician program, buzzing with enthusiasm.

We're thrilled to highlight that eight of these budding electricians are girls, breaking barriers and lighting up new paths.

However, the journey isn't without its challenges. The cost of materials remains a significant hurdle. Yet, witnessing these determined young girls and boys acquire invaluable skills for their future is truly heartwarming.

This incredible progress is made possible by the unwavering support of our benefactors. Your generosity is a beacon of hope. May you be blessed for your kindness.

Exciting News from Brother Festus at St. Patrick's in South Sudan

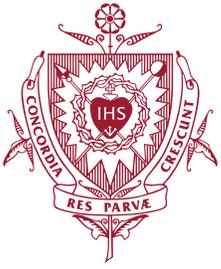
St. Patrick's Secondary School in South Sudan began the 2025 school year with a heartfelt prayer service at their local church. Led by Brother Christopher, the service invited everyone to reflect on the day's readings, emphasizing the free and unconditional call to God's service. Brother Christopher inspired all by quoting Theodore Ryken: "God is for sure not obliged to make an account to anybody even if he chooses to use a sinner." The gathering saw students, teachers, and community members of Nadapal come together in unity. Students were warmly welcomed back and encouraged to stay focused on their studies. The community was delighted to see most students return promptly, a testament to the Brothers' dedication in instilling the importance of punctuality.



Brother Christopher led the first prayer service of the 2025 year.

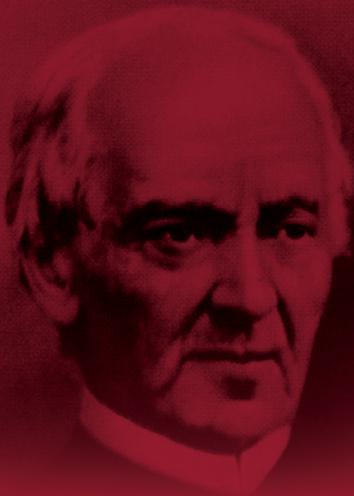
Despite the challenges posed by an extreme heat wave that affected water levels and the school's paw paw trees, the spirit of St. Patrick's remained unbroken. On February 23rd, the South Sudan Ministry of Education ordered schools to close from February 24th through March 10th due to the dangerous heat and dry conditions. This posed a significant challenge, especially for boarding students who live over 150 miles away.

Please keep St. Patrick's in your prayers as they navigate this brief pause and strive to resume the school year with renewed strength and hope.



XAVERIAN BROTHERS

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Theodore James Ryken Society

The Theodore James Ryken Society recognizes friends of the Xaverian Brothers who are intimately involved in the mission of the Xaverian Brothers through their interest, moral support, prayers, and donations of \$1,000 or more annually. To make a gift or to learn more about the Theodore James Ryken Society visit xavb.ro/TJRdonate or scan the QR code.



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