

WORLD CATHOLIC.US *News*

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CELEBRATING
THE JUBILEE YEAR
TO HELP
“MAKE THE WORLD ONE FAMILY”

Bangkok, Thailand: Photo by Joshua Rawson-Harris on
Unsplash



NEWSLETTER OF THE XAVERIAN MISSIONARIES USA



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Provincial House
12 Helene Court
Wayne NJ, 07470
973-942-2975

Our Lady of Fatima Shrine
101 Summer Street
Holliston, MA 01746
508-429-2144

Xavier Knoll
4500 West Xavier Drive
Franklin WI
414-421-0831

missionmedia@xaverianmissionaries.org
worldcatholic.us

Publisher

Fr. Mark Marangone, SX

Communications Board

Fr. Carl Chudy SX
Fr. Rocco Puopolo SX
Fr. Alex Rodriguez SX
Pietro Rossini SX

Editor

Mary Aktay

Printer

AlphaGraphics, Totowa NJ

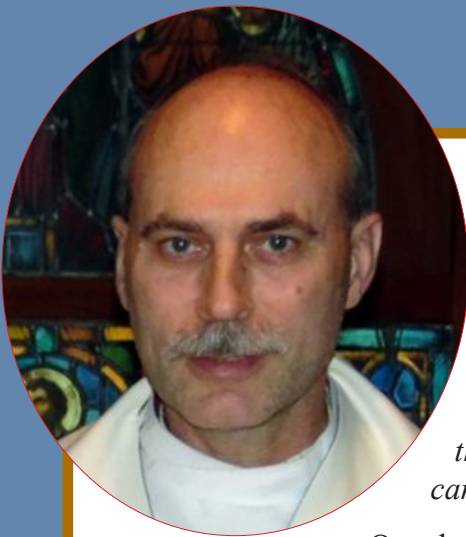
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Please also consider naming the St. Francis Xavier Foreign Mission Society in your Will.

Together we can help St. Guido Conforti's vision to "Make of the World One Family" become a reality.



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Our passion. Your protection.



CARRYING ON HIS MISSION TODAY!

Dear Friends of the Missions:

Ernest Gordon was a British Army officer during World War II. He was captured at the age of twenty-four and sent to work on the Burma-Siam railway line which was being constructed through the dense Thai jungle. Ernest recalls this true story from the prison camp:

One day when the shovels were counted after work, the guard on duty went berserk. He said one shovel was missing. Screaming, he ordered the thief to step up. When no one did, he got his rifle and threatened to fire on the crowd.

At this point, an Australian came forward. He stood silently as the guard beat him. Finally, the guard struck him a thunderous blow with his rifle on the head. The Australian dropped – clearly dead, but the guard kept beating him savagely. Then the work crew carried the shovels and the dead Australian to the guard house. There the shovels were counted again. No shovel was missing after all.

What are my thoughts as I imagine myself to be the Australian, before stepping forward?

“The greatest love you can have for your friends is to give your life for them.” (John 15:13)

St. Paul reminds and assures us that “Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:39)

On Good Friday, from the cross, Jesus preaches his greatest sermon of all: love to the end, the one sermon that transformed humanity.

The night of Easter our Lord reveals “the beauty” of God’s Love, who, passing through the sacrifice of the cross and death, is transfigured in the Risen Jesus, ever living and ever present in and among those who put his Word into practice, ready to put on His apron... ready to love and serve others just as He did, not only on Holy Thursday.

Throughout the pandemic, as we have become aware, we need more and more of that oil called ‘patience, understanding, thinking of others, and compassion,’ especially with those we rub elbows with, that is, we spend more time with than before.

In each present moment we are invited to renew our “Yes,” individually and together, to the One who called us to follow in his footsteps and to carry on his mission today: reaching out to the ends of the earth so **“to make of humanity one family.”** And by doing so He’ll be risen, present, and alive anew in each of us and in our midst.

That is resurrection and new life!

~Fr. Mark Marangone SX and the Xaverian Missionaries

The Xaverian mission among the poor in Bangkok: a privilege.



**FR. ALEX
BRAI, SX**

Ten years ago, when I was in Salerno, Italy, working with the youth in the university ministry and in missionary and vocation animation, I could not imagine that the day would come when I would be in Thailand, living in the largest slum of the capital city, Bangkok. For the last five years I have been living here at Khlong Toei, which is called “a city in the city,” where thousands of people have moved in from other provinces with the hope of finding a better life.

I would like to cite some remarks that we get about our presence here in order to share with you our reasons for being here and also the very meaningful experience that the Lord is giving us: *“Stop always talking about the poor. Stop posting these pictures showing you with the children of the slums, or with the sick, or with the homeless. The mission is more than that.”* These are comments that we receive from time to time from our acquaintances, or people who follow us in our mission or by other missionaries.

First of all, I want to say that we, who are living among the poor, are very well aware that the Mission of the Church is much more than what we are doing and that the missionary charism extends to many other fields. We are also aware that the Xaverian spirit compels us to involve ourselves in many sectors of the society and of the Church that need our contribution. And then, since many people appreciate our commitment and support and accompany us through their prayer, I would like to share with you how our community - made up of Xaverians and lay people, in the largest slum of Bangkok - was born.

When we arrived in Thailand we asked ourselves: Besides working in the villages of the North, could we, as missionaries, give also a contribution towards meeting the needs of Bangkok, the great metropolis? By referring to the reflections

of the last General Chapters and through a knowledge of the reality in which we were living, after many meetings among us and with other missionaries and pastoral agents of the Bangkok diocese, we were finally convinced that our presence in Bangkok could be quite significant.

Our Constitutions, which present our charism have been our guide: “Faithful to Christ’s own option, we direct our efforts among non-Christians, in a particular way, to the privileged ones of the Kingdom: the poor, the weak, the marginalized, and victims of oppression and injustice.” (C. 9). In Bangkok the Catholics are less than 0.3% of the population. The local priests and the missionaries are all working in the parishes and in the Catholic schools. The places that are most in need of missionaries are the slums. That is why we started our presence among the poorest, trying, as far as possible, to be close to them and to assume a simple, essential and conscientious lifestyle.

Since the beginning the Lord has placed on our way some young lay Thai people, who were ready to share this new mission with us, Consecrated and lay people work together for the proclamation of the Good News among the poorest. Prayer and sharing are the center of our mission, which is then realized in concrete activities, where the priority is daily visits to the people.

During these past years we have realized how true and meaningful the words of Jesus are when he says that every time we help a poor, needy person, it is Jesus himself we are helping. We have understood what the Holy Father was talking about in June 2016: *“Aiming at the essential. What does it mean? It means looking at Jesus, looking at Jesus in the hungry, in the inmate, in the sick, in the naked, in the jobless who has a family to support. Looking at Jesus in these brothers and sisters of ours; looking at Jesus in the lonely, in the saddened, in the one who makes mistakes and needs*

advice, in the one who needs somebody ready to walk with him in silence, to make him feel he is not alone.”

We cannot but thank God for giving us the possibility to meet Christ, every day, in our brothers and sisters with whom we share our life. They, who are the privileged of the Gospel, the priority of the Church mission, have become our privileged friends and our priority. In other words, they are our VIPs.

If we often talk about them, if you often see us with them, it is because they are to us what the parishioners are to a parish priest, or the students to a teacher. They are now our brothers and sisters that we have the privilege to serve. ***They are our family!***



Pietro Rossini SX interviewed Fr. Alex Brai on his “Mission Outlook” podcast, available on Spotify and Apple Podcasts. <https://anchor.fm/pietro-rossini/episodes/Building-Together-a-Better-World---Thailand-ef1229/a-a2gmoa8>

IN ADDITION TO FR. ALEX’S MINISTRY IN THAILAND, FR. THIERRY KENGNE KAMGA SX HAS INITIATED A PROGRAM TO “MICRO-FUND” ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVES OF AFRICAN REFUGEES THERE. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP, PLEASE GO TO [HTTPS://WWW.XAVERIANMISSIONARIES.ORG/SUPPORT/](https://www.xaverianmissionaries.org/support/)



Project Focus:
Xaverian Missionaries in Thailand

LIVELIHOOD PROJECT FOR AFRICAN REFUGEES IN THAILAND

African refugees in Thailand live in extremely difficult circumstances as refugees cannot have work permits.

The Xaverian Missionaries are working with select African families in Thailand through livelihood cooperatives selling art, food, and other services. Help us help them!

Contact
missionmedia@xaverianmissionaries.org
973.942.2975

I COULDN'T BELIEVE WHAT WAS HAPPENING...



I started my pastoral work as parish vicar at St. Francis Xavier parish in the Diocese of Novaliches, Quezon City, Philippines in January 2019, and since then, I have been involved in different ministries. After some months, the General Direction visited the parish and shared their wish to transform our parish to a ‘missionary parish,’ a church that goes to the unchurched and reaches the poor. Some months later, the pastoral council reexamined the parish’s vision and mission, clearly stating the missionary purpose.

Vision

We envision St. Francis Xavier Parish as a Christ-centered community of disciples journeying with the people to become one family of God where communion, faith, and love abide.

Mission

Sharing the Word of God, nourished by the Holy Eucharist, and guided by the Holy Spirit, we are called to be missionaries in order to reach out to the poor, marginalized, and inactive Christians.

I was inspired by the parish priest, Fr. Simone Piccolo, together with the pastoral team. They have always been concerned to reach the unchurched parishioners, and in a particular way, to the sick and poorest of the poor. However, when the pandemic broke out, many pastoral difficulties came into play. For the first time, the parish doors were closed; most of the activities were canceled, remaining only those that could be done by streaming through the internet. Parishioners didn’t receive the holy communion, kid’s catechism stopped, youth’s programs were canceled, and we weren’t more able to visit the sick.

I couldn’t believe what was happening. I thought that the pandemic would last only a few months, but it has become a prolonged nightmare. We didn’t have a choice but to adapt ourselves to the new normal. Adaptation to this new situation has been complex. Myself, I have a hard time preaching in front of a cellphone in an empty church celebrating live streaming Eucharists. Even though I still long to go back as before, the pandemic forced the parish to develop new evangelization methods. We felt the need to adapt our missionary work to the new situation and explore different ways of keeping in contact with our Parishioners. Of course, physical contact can never be replaced by a virtual connection, but it is a helpful tool to continue our mission.

Little by little, the different church groups restructured the way of doing ministry and became more creative in finding

ways to reach the group members. The catechetical ministry developed a new way of teaching by bringing to the kids modules at their homes. The parish youth ministry organized some online events through their Facebook page and became the main support to help the parish to develop the live streaming Eucharist. Indeed, a great effort has been made to prepare more young people on social communication ministry to help the parish stream the daily Eucharist and other pastoral programs.

A pleasant experience of the year 2020 is the continuation of Bible sharing through video conferences. Despite the lock down, small BEC (Basic Ecclesial Communities) leaders continued their Bible sharing by using “Google Meet.” After some months, the group grew. Indeed, many of the members learned how to use the new communication platforms to keep in contact. Each one in

their own home shared their experiences of the lock down in the light of the Gospel. At the same time, the group became a support to each other during these difficult times.

I also realized during that time the power of the grassroots of the church. BEC leaders were the first to answer the parish’s charity projects; by their strong organization and unity, they could distribute goods faster to the poorest of the poor.

As a young missionary and priest, I couldn’t express better my experience as Fr. Frank McNulty said it: “*Priesthood is a lot better than I thought it was going to be... and a lot tougher.*” Truly, pastoral work is fulfilling but challenging; however, it became more challenging during this time of crisis. The pandemic brought a lot of pastoral difficulties, mainly, how to keep contact with the parishioners. It is still difficult; however, our effort continues by reaching the parishioners through other means of communication.

.....
“Priesthood is a lot better than I thought it was going to be... and a lot tougher.”

~ Fr. Francisco Xavier Beltrán SX



It Is About LOVE

What makes me blessed and joyful to be a Xaverian? It is love: love for the mission of God to spread the Gospel to people, especially those who have not known Christ yet. This love came to me because of Christ, and the Holy Spirit who inspired our founder, St. Guido Maria Conforti. It is clear, and inspiring that he proposed to us to be men of the Word, men who abide in the Gospel in the life and the love of Christ. Moreover, every time I read his *Testament Letter*, I feel his living spirit who gently speaks to me firmly and decisively.

I can see him, feel his warming heart, and his love. He comes to me through the last words of his *Testament Letter* when he embraces the present and future members of our religious family as if he were present with them.

Aside from his warm heart, he warns me that there are challenges to face as Xaverians, yet he reminds me that the apostolic life, combined with the profession of the religious vows, is in itself the most perfect life possible according to the Gospel. This sentence touches my heart and makes me aware of the challenges and difficulties that I may have to face. Challenges are not meant to bring me to despair, but to grow more in faith and in the perfection that the Gospel has taught me. Furthermore, the words of the Founder, inspired from the Gospel, capture the essence of the Xaverian charism.



As it comes to the way of perfection, Conforti asks me to live it fully. Conforti wants us to be perfect. It was frightening in the beginning, but now I understand that this is for the good and the fulfillment of Jesus' mission in this world.

He asks me to take responsibility as Jesus' follower; to love poverty in order to rely on God's Providence only; to love chastity that my life may become like the Angels, pleasing to God; and to love obedience as my own free will directed to God's will. In the beginning, it wasn't easy. But now, because of his love that has been accompanying me in my formation, I recognize that these things are necessary and fundamental for my life as a Xaverian and I do believe that there is no better life than to follow what Conforti said in his *Testament Letter*.

When St. Guido Conforti talks about community life, sometimes I feel ashamed because I am not always able to meet his expectations in our

time. To make the world a single family is still an ideal in which I must commit myself more. I used to blame others because of my shortcomings. Instead of becoming humble, I somehow behaved like a boss. Instead of becoming a brother, at times I acted as a stranger who does not care for others. Realizing my fragility, I want to ask the grace to God to overcome my limitations. In this hope, I want to see and to love others as my brothers and sisters through the intercession of St. Guido Maria Conforti.

I believe that the *Testament Letter* is a priceless treasure that pushes me forward in the way of perfection as a Xaverian Missionary. Perfection is not about being the best or the boss, but - like Jesus - becoming brothers and servants who can bring God in our daily relationship with others, and in our service to others. I hope I can become what God wants me to be, to love and to be love.

~ Gregorius Purba Nagara SX

Consecrated Dimension of Our Life

Some days before my final profession of the religious vows, my two brothers and I went on a retreat to deepen our sense of consecration to God. That particular moment allowed me to recount the blessings I have received from God, revisit the circumstances that can draw me away from God, and re-center my life around Christ through the religious consecration in order to love, give, and serve more in my daily mission. In celebrating the World Day of Consecrated Life, I would like to share my experience to stress the importance of the religious vows, their role for human maturity, and their impacts on missionary consecration.

Importance of Religious Consecration

One of the frequent questions I encounter in my apostolate with Christians and non-Christians here in the Philippines is related to the importance of religious consecration. For me, the joy and vitality of living the religious vows emerge from the life of prayer which enables me to discover God's presence in the simple daily events and in community life as the place for growing in my vows of Chastity, Poverty

Obedience, and Mission. Since the vows are interconnected, I feel that I am living the vow of chastity when I am able to love not only those who welcome positively my mission but those who reject it as well; poverty when I share spiritual, material, and intellectual resources with the people around me; and obedience when I serve with enthusiasm. In this perspective, I see my religious consecration as the grace of self-giving to God in order to cooperate with His mission and make visible God's unconditional love to all people, especially to those who do not know Christ yet.

Role of Vows in Human Maturity

The religious vows are indispensable tools in shaping my human maturity. Since human growth is a lifelong process, the life of vows helps me remain aware of my strengths and limitations while simultaneously accepting my brothers and sisters' uniqueness in my community and ministry. Living the vows makes me concerned about my human maturity as well as the maturity of others. For instance, as part of the celebration of the conversion of the apostle St. Paul, my community has organized

a 'fraternal correction' to help one another grow in maturity and sanctity. This attitude of giving and receiving mutual correction on a specific behavior shows how religious life helps my human growth and maturity. Thus, the vows are also my spotlights whenever I face circumstances tempting me to be self-centered or remain in my comfort zone.

Impact of Vows in Missionary Consecration

As I consecrate my life to God not just for myself but also for others, I express my consecration through the ministry with the people who share with me their joys and struggles related to various dimensions of their life. From such moments, I learn that people come to share their stories because they see in the consecrated a person who listens compassionately to them. May God's grace assist all of us who have consecrated their lives to God to be genuine witness of Christ by loving, serving, and proclaiming the Gospel values to all, especially to those who do not know Christ yet.

~Cassien Nshimirimana SX

Cassien Nshimirimana SX, originally from Burundi, is currently in the International Theologate of Manila, Philippines. Cassien made his perpetual profession on November 5, 2020 together with two other brothers: Lucivaldo De Sousa Costa (Brazil) and Erasto Torres Carpio (Mexico). In the summer of 2019 he took part in the program organized by the Silsilah Dialogue Movement in the city of Zamboanga (Mindanao - Philippines) whose theme was "Christianity and Islam at the Crossroads."



World Mission News

“Making of the World One Family...”



10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PRESENCE OF THE XAVERIAN MISSIONARIES AT THE SERVICE OF THE POOR AND THE LAST, “BY WITNESSING THE GOSPEL OF JESUS”

Bangkok (Agenzia Fides) - “It all started in 2007 when, during the General Chapter, it was decided to open a new missionary presence in Asia. In times of crisis, marked by the decline in vocations, the aging of the staff and the difficult situation in certain missions, it was a sign of hope for the whole Institute, called to set out again and to reposition itself in a new world and ecclesial context.

Hence the choice of Thailand, where the first two Xaverians arrived in January 2012”. This is what Father Alex Brai, a Xaverian missionary, reports in an interview with Agenzia Fides, speaking of how the spiritual children of Saint Guido Maria Conforti took their first steps in the Asian country. “Like every beginning,” says Father Alex, “ours too was full of hope and trust, but at the same time it was fraught with difficulties.”

“We dedicated the first two years exclusively to the study of the language, attending courses in schools specifically for foreigners and constantly exercising to pronounce

sounds completely absent in our alphabet.” “Another reality with which we had to confront,” he continues, “was Buddhism: in Thailand, it is a cultural phenomenon, before being a religion. Here, in every house, in every public space, on the streets, as well as in the numerous temples, explicit references to Buddhism abound.” The missionary observes: “This is a fascinating aspect for us, but also a challenge to be able to enter such a different world, with unusual visions and mentalities, without letting ourselves be led by cultural and religious prejudices.”

It is especially among the most needy and non-Christians that the Xaverian missionaries choose to bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus in Thailand. “Faithful to the charism of our institute,” explains Father Brai, “we are committed to collaborating in the work of Evangelization among the villages of the north, on the border with Myanmar. At the beginning of our presence, the number of Catholic families was around 70. Besides managing the life of this small Christian

community, we made contact with the surrounding villages where there was no Christian presence. Through our help in schools, visits to the sick and a number of activities aimed at children, especially in the poorest villages, we are getting to know the reality and making ourselves known.”

In Bangkok, the religious work is in the slums: “Here too, the charity of Christ urges us,” Father Alex reports, “to bring us closer to the poor, the last and the excluded. Every day, we visit the sick, the elderly, children in difficulty, without relatives or someone who takes care of them.”

“Ten years after our arrival in Thailand,” concludes the religious, “the problems to be solved are still many and the challenges to be faced are many: in our small way, with the help of God, we are sure that our presence, sharing in the simplicity and our fraternal proximity are the basis for building a better future.”

USA NEWS

PROVINCIAL HOUSE, WAYNE NJ

The Common Ground "conversation among humanists, atheists, agnostics and religious believers" continues to take place monthly via Meetup over the Zoom video conference platform. These conversations and dialogues are opportunities for mutual respect and cooperation around the values and ethics we all share. It is a way to build bridges of understanding in order to encourage a sense of solidarity despite our differences. You are invited to join!

<https://www.meetup.com/Conversations-Among-Atheists-Humanists-Religious-Believers/>

FATIMA SHRINE, HOLLISTON MA

Dear Friends of Our Lady of Fatima Shrine, It was so good seeing many of you during Easter. There were almost 200 who joined us for our first outdoor Mass. Weather permitting we will have many more Sunday Masses outdoors. Many who have joined us are long standing friends here at the Shrine, but we have noticed many new recent attendees. We invite you all, old and new, to consider keeping up to date with many of the opportunities that are part of our mission ministry. Here we coordinate the "Metro West Interfaith Dialogue Project." "There is a local chapter of "Pax Christi Massachusetts." We also host retreats and other Marian events throughout the year. Whether it is special events held here at the Shrine or news items from our Xaverian Ministry in Africa, Asia and Latin America, you will find them announced through our monthly E-newsletter called, "Xaverian Factor."

We encourage you to go online and sign up for the free monthly newsletter.

For those who use Facebook, there is also a

page for Our Lady of Fatima Shrine where we also announce events and programs. <https://www.facebook.com/OurLadyofFatimaShrineHolliston>

We also thank you for your continued financial support that allows us to provide this wonderful place of peace for many to enjoy. May the blessings of the Easter Season continue to touch each one of you.

Sincerely yours,

Fr. Rocco Puopolo SX, Director

XAVIER KNOLL, FRANKLIN WI

Dear Mission Friends,

Well, who would have thought we would be where we are over a year into the COVID-19 pandemic? Last fall all the residents of the Knoll were infected with the virus. Most recovered except for Fr. Aniello who succumbed to the virus and died on November 18, 2020. We pray for him as he looks down from heaven. With current restrictions and many unknowns, we have cancelled this year's festival. Pamela and I, as chairs, along with Fr. Alex, were hopeful we could have the event this year but decided we could not. The festival is one of two major annual fundraisers for the Xaverian Missionaries. Those monies raised are used to fund the Xaverian missions around the world. They have no parish to support these efforts, only the very generous people that you are.

Frank & Pam Janiszewski, & Fr. Alex

The drawing will be done on July 25, 2021, after 10:00 am Mass at the Xaverian Grounds. Go to <https://www.xaverianmissionaries.org/xavier-knoll-franklin-wi/> for more information.



A "pre-COVID-19" Meetup at the Provincial House led by Fr. Michael Davitti SX, Director of the Provincial Interfaith Dialogue Commission



Outdoor Easter morning Mass at Fatima Shrine

XAVIERIAN MISSIONARIES



2021 Pro-Mission Raffle

"In the evening of life, we will be judged on love alone."

St. John of the Cross



Mission Raffle 2021

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Wayne, NJ 07470

Xaverian House Supported:

☐ Xaverian Knoll, Franklin, WI; ☐ Fatima Shrine, Holliston, MA; ☐ Provincial House, Wayne, NJ





Lucivaldo De Sousa Costa SX (Brazil) and Erasto Torres Carpio SX (Mexico) and Cassien Nshimirimana SX (Burundi) at their perpetual profession.

Consecrate Your Life to God. Dedicate Your Life to Others.

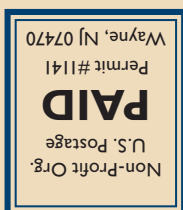
Become a Xaverian Missionary

Priest, Sister or Brother.

Contact: frrocco@xaverianmissionaries.org, fralex@xaverianmissionaries.org

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Italy • Japan • Mexico • Morocco • Mozambique • Philippines • Sierra Leone • Spain • Taiwan • Thailand • UK • USA



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