



**XAVERIAN**  
**MISSIONARIES**



CELEBRATING 75 YEARS  
OF THE XAVERIAN  
MISSIONARIES IN THE USA

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Photo: Fr. Alex Rodriguez, SX



**NEWSLETTER OF THE XAVERIAN MISSIONARIES USA**



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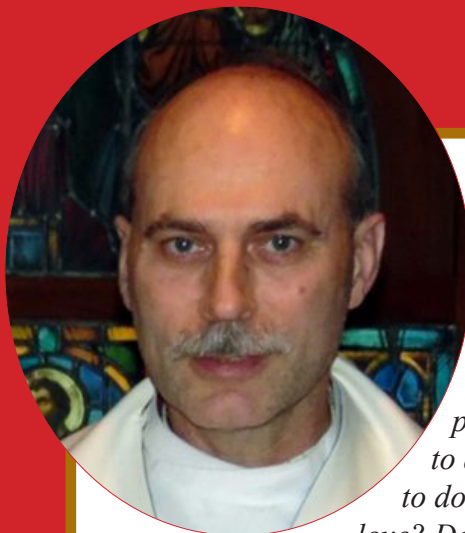
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## 'ROOTED AND GROUNDED' IN LOVE

### *Dear Friends of the Missions:*

*In the swirl of things to do, a desire is there: to do the good God wants, to not do the good God does not want. I want to be in the place God wants me to be. But the question arises: Do I really need to do this or that? Or, more precisely, how do I know which good thing to do? The right place to be? There is a criterion to help: Is it really love? Does it build communion with God and with others? Is what I am doing and where I am right now 'rooted and grounded' in love (Eph 3:17)?*

*St. Augustine tells us as much: "Once for all, then, a brief precept is given to you: Love, and do what you want. If you are silent, be silent with love; if you cry out, cry out with love; if you chastise, chastise with love; if you spare, spare with love. The root of love must be within; nothing but good can come forth from this root."*

*To love and to serve out of love as Jesus did.*

*When the great Japanese Christian, Kagawa, first heard about the life of Jesus, he cried out, "Oh God, make me like your Christ!"*

*To be more like Christ he left a comfortable home and went to live in the slums of Tokyo. There he shared himself and his possessions with whoever needed help.*

*They say that once he gave away all his clothing. He was left standing in only a tattered kimono. On another occasion, even though deathly sick, he continued to preach to people in a rain, repeating over and over: "God is love! God is love! Where love is, there is God."*

*William Barclay gives us an insight into the heart and mind of Kagawa when he quotes the great man as saying: "God dwells among the lowliest of men and women... God is there with beggars. God is among the sick., God stands with the unemployed. Therefore let those who would meet God visit the prison cell before going to the temple. Before going to church let them visit the hospital. Before reading their Bible let them help the beggar..."*

*Mission Sunday speaks of reaching out to the needy and those brothers and sisters who don't know the Lord Jesus...*

*All Saints Day reminds us of reaching out... so to journey together on the path to holiness...*

*Christmas has been showing us for over two thousand years how God reached out to us... and how we can reach out to others "to make of the world one family," God's dream.*

*May the New Year be full of blessings, peace, and harmony to overcome so much division, hatred and selfishness we witness in our world... beginning in our homes and communities.*

*With deep gratitude, let us keep each other in prayer;*

*~Fr. Mark Marangone SX and the Xaverian Missionaries*

## My experience as a Xaverian Brother and future nurse



**BROTHER GANGGUS  
VENANSIUS SX**

A Xaverian missionary is called and sent to go wherever Christ wants. Therefore, a person who responds to this call enjoys his vocation. I never thought that my congregation would send me to the Philippines to take a degree in nursing program. I was told about this news when I was busy preparing for a comprehensive examination as one of the requirements to get a degree in Philosophy. I am not disappointed nor sad; however, being a Xaverian brother granted the chance of studying in the Philippines is a special opportunity to look at the wider world perspective. In addition, living in an international community is not only satisfying but also beneficial for teaching me lessons that I will carry throughout my life. When I arrived in the Philippines, I didn't expect to be busy. Day and night there are constant challenges compounded by the busy traffic. The heat and humidity are unbearable, but I think it is not far from the atmosphere in Jakarta. Many friends have told me about the situation of this country. I did not expect that the country where I will continue my studies is better than my home country. I just hope that I would be able to adapt to and learn many things like culture, lifestyle, and people.

As a Xaverian brother who is studying as a student nurse, I believed that many of us may have numerous questions regarding missionary nursing which may include the charism and spirituality of the Xaverians. What is the connection between being a Xaverian brother and a nurse? What are the significance of missionary nursing, the specific effects of spreading the gospel, and the effect on healthcare in the community as well as the effect on the nurse's physical and spiritual life?

All of us know that nursing is a vast health field with many challenging factors that include not only to protect patients, promote health and well-being, prevent illness and injury, and alleviate pain and suffering, but it is also a particular field that allows to expand one's present knowledge and enables continuous growth. As a Xaverian brother, I believed that

what I chose (studying nursing) is to prepare myself for my future ministry. Wherever my congregation will send me I will always have a job because there will be always sick people. In this way, I can carry out the wish of our founder St. Guido Maria Conforti. He reminded us to look at Jesus, our example. Jesus understood our suffering when he died for us. It was not only the physical pain of the crucifixion that he suffered; he also suffered the emotional pain of denial by his friends, the social pain of being mocked and ridiculed, and the spiritual pain of rejection by God his Father. Jesus treated not only the physical diseases of people but also addressed their social, emotional, and spiritual concerns. Jesus touched the outcast and lepers for whom touch had been prohibited (Cf. Matthew 8:3). On this, Jesus is teaching me that I have to care, not only for physical bodies, emotions, and social concerns but also spiritual lives. I am glad that I am pursuing nursing as a means to bring health and the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who have not known him yet. As a Xaverian Missionary brother and future nurse. I am called to prepare myself spiritually, do daily personal meditation on the Word of God. My prayer and the time I spend listening to God will strengthen my relationship with God and allow me to advance towards my next steps. Being grounded in God's Word and having a community of believers is essential for effective ministry that will help me when encountering the spiritual opposition that inevitably occurs when I seek to announce Jesus Christ.

Studying at Our Lady of Fatima University allows me to experience the situation of the Philippines. It has a strong sense of identity combined with a varied and multi-cultural history with its vision of "improving Man as Man." The university instills in each student an atmosphere of academic excellence together with the social role and responsibilities essential of holistic healthcare practitioners and medical professionals. In this university, I can also prepare myself emotionally by understanding my own culture and looking at how that differs from other cultures. Learning



to adapt to different ways of doing things and seeing how other people view the world is a part of missionary work. I believe that God has placed each one of us in our own cultures. I also believe that God reveals Himself in each culture. By learning and understanding another culture I think it's better to present the Good News of Jesus in culturally appropriate ways. It also helps me to provide better nursing care and health education if I understand the customs, values, and beliefs of other cultures.

**T**he diversity of religions within the world population challenges me to provide health care systems and to deliver culturally competent medical care. I learned from my studies that cultural competence is the ability of health providers and organizations to deliver health care services that meet the cultural, social, and religious needs of patients and their families. Strategies to move health professionals and systems towards these goals include providing cultural competence, training, and developing policies and procedures that decrease barriers to providing culturally competent patient care. This activity highlights the importance of cultural competence in clinical medicine and its consequences. For us Xaverians, especially me who am taking nursing, mission is towards everybody especially the non-Christians, and the fact that healthcare is more than just a way to reach the poor and suffering for Christ.

I hope that what I am studying will help me to be a fully human who can understand the situation of others especially the non-Christians and so come to their help. Finally, I would like to thank the patients, families, and relatives with whom I journeyed along this journey. Thank you for entrusting yourself to my care and for teaching me much about what it means to be a nurse, and what it means to be myself.



*Photos from top: Medical education at Our Lady of Fatima University, Philippines; Interreligious Dialogue in the Philippines; medical care for the poor in the Philippines*

# XVI PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

**T**he Xaverian Missionaries USA celebrated the XVI Provincial Chapter in Duxbury, Massachusetts. It was an opportunity for our missionaries throughout the United States to come together, look back on the last five years of our work together and to peer into the future for the next four years with hope and enthusiasm despite the ravages of COVID-19.

As we gathered, we remembered all our men worldwide who succumbed to the pandemic, in particular Fr. Aniello Salicone who died of COVID-19. We also looked at all that had been accomplished in the last five years both in and out of lockdown. We are grateful for the care and support we provide for each other as the Delta variant continues, friends and benefactors who so lovingly were with us through it all, and how the Lord of hosts holds us all in infinite hands.

Looking forward, we formulated some plans for the 75th anniversary of the United States Province of the Xaverian Missionaries which began at Our Lady of Fatima Shrine, Holliston, Massachusetts in 1946. Celebrations are anticipated in all our communities.

Other decisions regarding the next four years considered our changing communities and the need to streamline our work by strengthening our commitment to interfaith and interreligious-secular dialogue, and inspiring younger generations to the mission of a global Catholic Church. Practically that will mean that our Provincial House in Wayne, New Jersey, will eventually be closed, and our work there transferred to our other communities.

The new leadership of the Province was named to help guide us into the future. (See bottom picture on opposite page.) They include Fr. Mark Marangone as Provincial Superior (first on the right), Fr. Alex Rodriguez as Vice Provincial (first on the left), Fr. Carl Chudy as 1st Councilor (center), Fr. Rocco Puopolo as 2nd Councilor (second on the right), and Fr. Dominic Caldognetto as 3rd Councilor (second on the left).

We ask for your continued support and prayers as we look forward to another 75 years of ministry and service in the United States.

*~Fr. Carl Chudy, SX*







# The Evolving *Mission ad Gentes* in the Northern Hemisphere: An Experience in the United States

FR. CARL CHUDYSX



The evolving religious landscape of the world, and in particular, the United States, is extremely varied and changing. People are on the move (in and out of the institutional church and other religious traditions); social and religious realities which were once clear are today increasingly complex (Catholic communities in multireligious and multisecular realities, national populism)...It was said that even some Christian cities and countries had become “mission territories.” (*Redemptoris Missio*, 32)

The mission of the church changes often. Why? Because the world is constantly changing around us. The *mission ad gentes*, as St. Pope John Paul II indicates, is continuously grappling with these changes and seeking ways to share our faith in Christ that answers the deepest needs of humanity in any given time.

Today in the US COVID-19 reveals our response as disciples of Christ in our attempt to come together in faith with others, but also unveils our divisions, and inequalities that expresses themselves in institutional racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia, our national woundedness. In this sense the *mission ad gentes* becomes an icon for cultural and religious bridge building and reconciliation.

For me, that “encounter and dialogue” may be mapped out in revealing ways through

three encyclicals of Pope Francis: *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Laudato Si*, and *Fratelli Tutti*. They help me understand the proclamation of Christ beyond all borders and boundaries for the 21st century.

When I returned from missioning in the Philippines in 2007, I already had a commitment to interfaith dialogue. After my service in leadership for eight years in this province, I sought to deepen my resolve by completing two academic degrees in two areas: Christian-Muslim relations and beyond, and religious-secular dialogue. In recent years this has evolved into projects in my mission work.

## Grassroots Interfaith Literacy and Solidarity

We started the Metrowest Interfaith Dialogue Project ([hollistoninterfaith.org](http://hollistoninterfaith.org)) in 2017 by calling together religious leaders and other interested parties from the religious communities. We emphasize the dialogues of life, common good, and religious experience as we gather our congregants and others. Issues of interfaith dialogue among lay people that are practical and their solidarity in communities that are multifaith and multisecular are explored in gatherings throughout the year.

The Multifaith Collaborative ([openspiritcenter.org/multifaith-collaborative](http://openspiritcenter.org/multifaith-collaborative)) is a project that was started and currently directed by Rev. Dr. Debbie Clark, pastor of the United Church of Christ. Together with multifaith friends in the Framingham area of Massachusetts, we provide another opportunity for interfaith activities. I assist and collaborate in this project.

I also collaborate and assist in the interfaith outreach of the Islamic Center of Boston ([icbwayland.org](http://icbwayland.org)).

## The Bleeding Borders Between the Religious and Secular

*Redemptoris Missio* also speaks of the *mission ad gentes* in cultural sectors, or the contemporary “Areopagus.” Our work is recovering the challenge of *Gaudium et Spes* that the church must be in dialogue with all the world, including

secular culture, and the culture of unbelief. Within the Multifaith Collaborative we began a new project called Active Bystander's Training ([trainingactivebystanders.org](http://trainingactivebystanders.org)). This is an interfaith and intersecular program of religious leaders and secular professionals who became certified trainers through Quabbin Mediation ([quabbinmediation.org](http://quabbinmediation.org)). It seeks to neutralize events of religious and cultural violence in both the public sphere and on social media.

At the encouragement of the General Direction, the US and UK Provinces created a collaboration in religious-secular dialogue. In 2013 we initiated the first conference at Conforti Institute in Coatbridge with religious leaders and associations of secular humanism. The US Province continued this by creating another conference in 2015 with Rutgers University and the American Humanist Association. We continued in Coatbridge with a vigil summit of religious and secular leaders for COP 21 in Paris and the UN Summit of Global Climate Change. In the US we continue with blog writing (Secular Spectrum Blog) and a group of religious and secular friends that meet monthly via Zoom.

Finally, my recent studies have led me to research into Catholic disaffiliation and the “mass exodus” of younger (and not so young) generations away from the church, finding this another opportunity to bring religiosity and secularity in conversation. I found stories of departure just as important as stories of conversion. I initially assisted in a national study by St. Mary's Press published in 2017 called: *Going, Going, Gone: The Dynamics of Disaffiliation in Young Catholics* ([catholicresearch.smp.org](http://catholicresearch.smp.org)). Recently, I completed my own research project on Catholic disaffiliation from the perspective of Catholic families for my thesis. The title is: *Postsecular Catholicism: Toward a Renewed Understanding and Pastoral Praxis in Catholic Families with Disaffiliated Children in the Archdiocese of Boston* (<https://bit.ly/3x94gRJ>).



# God In Everything

*The penultimate 'resonance' before the official closing of the Jubilee Year in the Mother House of Parma on Sunday October 3rd, 2021, comes to us from the Province of Sierra Leone.*



*Fr. Carlo Di Sopra SX, currently engaged in missionary ministry in the parish of St. Peter and Paul in Fadugu (Diocese of Makeni), Fr. Carlo was born in 1954. After several years of service in formation and mission awareness ministry in Spain, he arrived in Sierra Leone in 1993, where he served in various positions among which was the service of religious superior.*

Today is a period and a society in which the Church, Christianity, and religion in general, seem to be reaching the end. Our epoch has been defined as a truly "cultural night," a night foreshadowed by the terrible proclamation that God is dead. Completely bucking this general trend, Conforti's Testament Letter proposes "to see God, seek God, love God in all things."

At a time when ideologies and nationalisms were on the rise, Conforti proposed a universal project that, once again, bucked the trends: he viewed the possibility of a world forming one single-family embracing all humanity.

Commitment, dedication, and work towards the realization of this sublime objective is, according to the Founder, "the fulfilment of Christ's wish." And, as a consequence, it is also what makes of us authentic prophets when, together with him, we chose to undertake the "serious and solemn commitment" contained in the Constitutions.

Obviously, the Letter abounds with many

other contents and overflows with the father's affection for his family which is willing to answer so great a call. I have always loved the idea taken from St. Anselm "of offering both the fruit and the plant" which expresses the relation between apostolate and religious life. In the Letter religious life is proposed and explained extensively and in detail. However, it has always struck me that, apart from stressing their observance, at the source of each vow is placed a verb: "let us, love." Let us love poverty, let us treasure the sacrifice of our will through the vow of obedience.

Although the language being used bears the mark of their time, these paragraphs are very beautiful because they describe how everything is aimed at setting ourselves aside in order to let the life of Christ shine through us, The Founder's advice brings spirituality down into everyday life.

The oxymoron an "affluent poverty" (povertà opulenta) is very expressive and easy to remember, like the quote from Paul's letter to Timothy: "As long as we have food and clothing, let us be content with that," or the advice

to be prudent, humble and industrious. Splinter groups must not take form and no one should plot to get his own way. No-one should claim privileges and exemptions even after having held important positions. Here, we really must thank the Lord for the many luminous examples of superiors who have followed this advice to the letter.

Very beautiful are those passages where one perceives the Founder's anxiety about the spread of the Gospel and, at the same time, about preserving the unity of mind and intense love for the Family. To realize all of this, Christ's love must rule mutual relationships.

The idea of one single human family is what attracts and inspires me; it opens my horizons and spurs me on with creativity and commitment.

Similarly, I find appealing the other exhortation, "to see God, seek God, love God in all things" just when the death of God is being proclaimed.

*~ Fr. Carlo Di Sopra SX*

# World Mission News

*“Making of the World One Family...”*



## FLOODING AFFECTS THOUSANDS (INCLUDING XAVERIANS) IN THAILAND

**T**he Xaverian community in Umphang, a new established mission of Thai Diocese Nakhonsawan bordering Myanmar, has recently suffered from a never-seen flood in the small town of Umphang, Tak Province, a district located on the top of a steep mountain. More than 2000 families were affected by the Tropical Storm Dianmu with heavy rains on September 22 and 23 2021

Our Xaverian residence, a rented house, was flooded and almost completely under water. A catechist and I, luckily, were in the villages to distribute the survival kits for the families affected by COVID 19. Fr. Alessio, the person in charge of our boarding house/dormitory for the children, was aware of possible floods and managed to save a car, a motorcycle and a few other things as the water was coming unexpectedly fast. He could reach the other isle of the Mae Klong Mai river where, we have rented another house for a dormitory. When I returned, the two main bridges of the town were

not accessible. The community had to wait until the following day to be able to return, to see the disaster caused by the storm and clean up the house. Almost nothing was left. We tried to save what we could still use. We lost more than 4000 books in Xavier House, our small library. A car, computers and all electronic devices were “gone,” under water! It will take weeks to clear everything and to be back to some normality.

The community and the children are safe. Thank God, no human casualty has been reported in this calamity. While we are moving to a safer place, the community is looking forward to helping others, mainly the migrants and the poor most affected by this tragedy.

Crop agriculture, mostly corn, is behind this devastating flood as many deforestations have been happening around the district for decades. The

massive use of pesticide in crop farming has destroyed the soil that should keep the rainwater. The electricity is already accessible, but the community and the dormitory will not have drinking water for days to come. Internet connection is back, good enough for texting.

We thank you for being with us and we ask you to keep us in your prayers.

*~Fr. Reynaldo Tardelly SX*





# USA NEWS

## PROVINCIAL HOUSE, WAYNE NJ

The COSUMA, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, is a gathering of Xaverian leadership from the twenty-one countries where we are present.

It traditionally occurs two years before the General Chapter and is, in many ways, preparation for that international meeting that determines our direction for the following six years. It is being held from September 26 to October 10 at the Xaverian house at Tavernerio, Italy.

On Sunday October 3 all the members of COSUMA gathered at Parma for the Eucharistic Celebration for the closing of the Jubilee year.

Fr. Mark Marangone SX, new re-elected Provincial Superior of the United States Region, represents us in this gathering. It is also a way of thinking on how our religious family worldwide discerns together internationally the will of God for us at this moment and the path God wishes us to take into the future.

This year's meeting focused on our mission beyond the boundaries of the church, Christianity, and indeed religion itself, to the wider view of the Kin-dom of God that encompasses all of humanity, and indeed, all of the cosmos. The catch phrase for this mission comes from the tradition of Vatican II called "Mission ad gentes."

## FATIMA SHRINE, HOLLISTON MA

**We need info on the Shrines Christmas Season Events and Lights schedule!!!!**

Masks and social distancing are no longer required in the Shrine for VACCINATED

PEOPLE according to the State of Massachusetts. The State does advise that NON-VACCINATED PEOPLE CONTINUE TO WEAR MASKS.

Registration is NO LONGER REQUIRED for Mass.

~Fr. Rocco Puopolo SX



## SAVING SPACE FOR MORE FROM FR. ROCCO



## XAVIER KNOLL, FRANKLIN WI

Thank you all for your awesome support of the Missions at Franklin's 2021 Rum-mage Sale in September and the Mission Banquet in October. We were so happy to be together in person.

~ Fr. Alex Rodriguez SX



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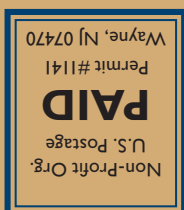
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