

XAVERIAN BROTHERS SPONSORED SCHOOLS



INSPIRING LIVES OF LEARNING, FAITH & SERVICE



Xaverian Brothers

Sponsored Schools

Dear Friends,

In Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools, prayer is a vital element of our formation. As we pray together, we come more in touch with our core values and beliefs and the spirit of Theodore James Ryken, our Founder. The prayers in this book were prepared by the staff of the Sponsorship Office using the Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers and the Foundational Documents of Xaverian education as resources. It is our hope that these prayers honor our tradition while helping us to remember that we are a part of something greater than ourselves. May they bring each of us closer to God and inspire our faith life to further growth as we call to mind the motto of the Xaverian Brothers, “Concordia Res Parvae Crescunt”, In harmony, small things grow”

Alice Hession, Sister Pat Ells, CND, Brother Richard Mazza, CFX

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Xaverian Mission

Leader: Blessed be the God of compassion and of all encouragement.
Be with us now as we pray.

All: Loving God, we meet today to further our understanding of your call to serve as persons of vision for our schools. Strengthen our faith, hope, and love through interaction with each other. Help us to find promise and fulfillment in the challenge of being stewards of these communities of faith. Amen.



Reader: The Lord answered me and said: “Write down the vision clearly upon the tablets, so that one can read it readily. For the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment, and will not disappoint. If it delays, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not be late.” (Hebrews 2:2-3)

Reader: You have been told what is good and what the Lord requires of you. Act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with Your God. (Micah 6:8)

Reader: The spirit of God is upon me; therefore he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good tidings to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, recovery of sight to the blind and release to prisoners, to announce a year of favor from our God. (Luke 4:18-19)

Reader: Christ’s peace must reign in your hearts, since as members of the one body you have been called to that peace. Dedicate yourselves to thankfulness. Let the word of Christ, rich as it is, dwell in you. (Col 3:15-16.)

All: The Gospel of Jesus Christ forms the core belief that impels the educational ministry of the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools. Within their distinct cultural contexts, Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools strive to respond to the call of evangelization by focusing on three important dimensions:

1. Proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ for the purpose of understanding His message about life as found in the Gospels and the teachings of the Church.



2. Creating a community of faith in which all members of the school can encounter Christ and experience and celebrate the meaning of Christian living.
3. Preparing students to understand life in light of the Gospel imperatives that call all believers to discipleship, using their talents and competencies to build the Kingdom of God with justice and love of neighbor.

- from Mission Statement of the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools

Leader: Good and gracious God, we make this proclamation of our mission with hope and confidence that you will give us the strength and wisdom to enliven it.

All: Give us, we pray, a renewed sense of hope and promise so that we might recognize your dwelling within and among us. We face the future knowing that you will continue to nourish and sustain us. Bless us, in Jesus' name. Amen.



Xaverian Educational Charism

Leader: We recall that, as always, we are surrounded by God's love and care for us. Let us take a moment to recognize God's presence with us today...

Reading: The vision of a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School has its origin in the charism of the Brothers of Saint Francis Xavier. This charism, the founding impulse of the Congregation, is a gift received by the Founder, handed on and further enriched and enlivened by the giftedness of those who collaborate in Xaverian Sponsored education. Together, the Xaverian Brothers and those who collaborate with them in their educational ministry serve as stewards for the Xaverian charism.

Leader: A Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School is intended to be a center of growth and learning marked by certain essential characteristics:

- Enduring Personal Relationships

All: May our decisions foster an environment where relationships can grow and thrive.

- A sense of Christian Stewardship

All: Help us recognize our responsibility to care for all the gifts and contributions of each member of this school community.

- Centrality of Religious Instruction, Spiritual Formation, Worship and Prayer

All: May we grow too as people of faith and love in the image of God.

- Character and Moral Value Development

All: May our leadership always model personal and corporate responsibility.

- A Demanding Educational Program

All: Help us provide adequate programs that each student may develop his gifts of mind, heart and body.

- A Spirit of Harmony

All: May we also have one mind and heart in working for the coming of the Kingdom of God.

- A Passion for Justice and Peace

All: May justice guide all our decisions and may our service promote a Gospel witness.

Reflection: As we reflect on our mission as a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School, which of these characteristics do we see most evident? Which characteristic challenges our school to further growth?

Let us pray: O God, may our deliberations and decisions help each member of this school community to draw closer to you and further the growth of your Kingdom. Guide our paths toward you. We give you thanks for all the blessings of this school year. We pray in Jesus name. Amen.



Religious Formation



Leader: Lord, God, you who called yourself “the way, the truth and the life.” Instill within each of our hearts a faith that shows in a myriad of ways who we are and what we believe.

All: In the name of our God who shares divinity with us,
In the name of our God who shares humanity with us,
In the name of our God who guides us and supports us,
Let us give praise and thanks. Amen.

Reading: ***CENTRALITY OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION, SPIRITUAL FORMATION, WORSHIP AND PRAYER***

The teachings the faith permeate the entire educational program of a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School. Religious instruction and spiritual formation enable students to integrate their personal faith with the teachings of Jesus Christ as found in Scripture and the authentic tradition of the Church. The Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School gives priority to providing the time and space necessary for reflection, prayer, sharing of faith and sacramental celebrations as integral dimensions of the educational program. It is necessary, as well, for the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School community to reflect on how it manifests the Gospel values which characterize the Christian’s love of God and neighbor.

Faculty and staff are also supported in their growth as people of faith. In this way they model to their students and each other the ongoing ways in which God intervenes in life.

CHARACTER AND MORAL VALUE DEVELOPMENT

Emphasis on structure and consistent personal responsibility are hallmarks of the Xaverian educational tradition. Well-defined expectations for learning and a just and caring administration of discipline help to develop the character and moral values students need for a life of discipleship.

- Mission, Vision, Values, Calls, Goals, Criteria of Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools

Reading: Education can play an outstanding role in promoting the inculturation of the Gospel. Nonetheless, Catholic centers of education will be able to engage in authentic evangelization only if at all levels they clearly preserve their Catholic identity.

The influence of these educational centers should extend to all sectors of society without distinction or exclusion. It is essential that every possible effort be made to ensure that Catholic schools, despite financial difficulties, continue to provide “a Catholic education to the poor and the marginalized in society.”

- *“The Church in America” Apostolic Exhortation, Pope John Paul II*

Reading: “Three interdependent and equally important goals guide the Church’s ministry with adolescents:

1. To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.
2. To draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community.
3. To foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.

The Church and the world need the faith, gifts, energy, and fresh ideas of young people. The entire Church, and in a special way ministry with adolescents, must empower young people for their mission in the world.”

From “Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry”, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1997.

All: Loving God, hear our prayer that we may challenge each sponsored school to be an instrument through which young people come to know you and bring about Your kingdom. May we serve as faithful stewards and so build communities which reflect Your love, mercy, fidelity, and justice. Only with faith can we hope that tomorrow’s children will be able to end their prayer as we do now in Christ’s name, world without end.

Amen

Stewardship

CALL TO PRAYER

- Leader** We are a holy people, men and women called by our God to ministry in this moment of history—and the spirit of God is upon us.
- All** We pray for the grace to serve as effective stewards of the mission of Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools.

READING ONE A SENSE OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

A Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School community is called to recognize that all it has comes from God. It is challenged to grow in the conviction of its moral responsibility to care for all of God's gifts, whether it be the care of the human person and human relationships, the earth's environment and its natural resources, or the material resources entrusted to their use.

A Xaverian school community is called to put on the mind of Christ in order to bring about the New Creation. Therefore, all members of the Sponsored School community—governing directors, administrators, support staff, teachers, students and parents—should feel that their giftedness and contributions are welcome and valued as important to the mission and work of the school.

In this way, those involved in Xaverian Sponsorship will understand the role they play as stewards responsible for the life and mission of the school.

- Mission, Vision, Values, Calls, Goals, Criteria of Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools

READING TWO

“As we disciple of Jesus Christ,
you are called to follow in His footsteps
and minister God's healing touch of love,
through word and deed,

to all whom you meet
in your journey of life.

You have responded to the invitation:

Come follow me.

Day by day
you will need to renew your response.
Do not become discouraged
over the difficulties you encounter
in your life of gospel service.
Knowing that difficulties would be your share,
Your Founder judged:

*that nothing special is achieved
without much labor, effort and zeal.*

Remember,
Jesus, your brother,
has walked this path before you.
In you, as Risen Lord,
He wants to walk this path again,
And His Spirit, the Spirit of God,
now guides you.”

-From the Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers

PRAYER

Good and gracious God, we are thankful for your call to serve in the Catholic educational mission. Help us to articulate once again your vision so that it pervades the hearts and lives of each of us and all associated with our school community. Give us the strength to carry out the vision for the mission of the Church. Amen.



Enduring Personal Relationships

Leader Creator God, we remember your faithfulness and love; we give you thanks for the signs of your presence among us. Grant us the grace to remain faithful as you are faithful.

All May our inner vision be transformed so that we can see more clearly that the one who has called us will strengthen us, the one whose power now at work in us can do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine.

Leader May we be open to the Spirit that we may discern with hope and joy and confidence what we are called to be and to become in order to build the reign of God.

All May we be the ones who in faithfulness and solidarity bring the loving compassion and mercy of our God to a needy world. Amen.

READING ENDURING PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The Xaverian charism is, at its core, relational. Therefore, a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School strives to create an atmosphere in which relationships can grow and thrive. In such an atmosphere, all can experience respect and care for their dignity as children of God. Those who work in a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School are called to understand and live their role as ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ which they proclaim by their attitudes, actions and manner of relating to others, especially their students.

- Mission, Vision, Values, Calls, Goals, Criteria of Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools

READING

Your life with your brothers and sisters,
centered on the word and worship of God,
is a sharing
in the memory of Christ.

You are called
to be of one heart and one mind with them
so that you can participate
in the building up of the reign of God.

This was the vision
Theodore James Ryken had in view
when he founded the congregation:

A band of Brothers
who mutually help,
encourage,
and edify one another,
and who work together.

- Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers

CLOSING PRAYER

Loving and gracious God, we come before you with unlimited confidence in your love and mercy. Take from us those impediments to building a community of persons whose relationships endure and who are committed to bringing about your reign. Give us this day and all our days the grace to be faithful to our call. Amen.



A Spirit of Harmony

Leader: In the name of God, our Creator
All: who invites us to a life of wholeness

Leader: In the name of God, the risk-taker
All: who invites us to deepen our unfinished self

Leader: In the name of God, the Spirit
All: who calls us to conversion, be with us. Amen.



Reading: A SPIRIT OF HARMONY

Harmony, rooted in Jesus Christ's example of humility, has nurtured the growth of the Xaverian charism throughout its history.

Christian humility creates harmony by affirming both the giftedness and limitations of all members of a Xaverian school community thus freeing them to learn from each other and to seek the truth together. Christian humility offsets the effects of unhealthy attitudes that can impede human relationships and paralyze the functioning of the school community. Moreover, Christian humility can create the harmony needed to allow members of the school community to agree to ideas and programs which best serve their students. Harmony, being of one heart and one mind, promotes the growth of the community.

- Mission, Vision, Values, Calls, Goals, Criteria of Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools

Reading:

Keep ever before you
the motto of the congregation:

“Concordia res parvæ crescunt”
“In harmony small things grow.”

For it is only in harmony
that you will grow,
that your community will grow,
that the love of God will grow in your world,
and that the kingdom of God will grow to completeness.

- Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers

Reading: Ephesians 4: 14-19

For this reason I kneel before the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,
that he may grant you in accord with the riches of his glory
to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner self,
and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith;
that you, rooted and grounded in love,
may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones
what is the breadth and length and height and depth,
and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge,
so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Leader: Loving God, remember your church throughout the world,

All --that your people may dwell in peace.

Leader: Remember all of us gathered here today,

All: --that we may receive your gifts.

Leader: Remember our school communities,

All: --that we may live in harmony. Amen.



Christian Community

Leader Creator God, we remember your faithfulness and love; we give you thanks for the signs of your presence among us. Grant us the grace to remain faithful as you are faithful.

All May our inner vision be transformed so that we can see more clearly that the one who has called us will strengthen us, the one whose power now at work in us can do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine.

Leader May we be open to the Spirit that we may discern with hope and joy and confidence what we are called to be and to become in order to build the reign of God.

All May we be the ones who in faithfulness and solidarity bring the loving compassion and mercy of our God to a needy world. Amen.

READING ONE: THE CALL TO AFFIRM AND CELEBRATE LIFE MORE ABUNDANTLY IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.

The Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School will seek to form Christian community by deepening the understanding of Jesus Christ's teachings about life and by affirming and celebrating significant moments in the life of the school community. As a Christian community, the Xaverian Sponsored School will welcome and affirm the giftedness and dignity of each person, respect diversity and create a caring atmosphere in which human relationships can grow and thrive.

- Mission, Vision, Values, Calls, Goals, Criteria of Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools

READING TWO

“Your life with your brothers and sisters,
centered on the word and worship of God,
is a sharing
in the memory of Christ.

You are called
to be of one heart and one mind with them
so that you can participate
in the building up of the reign of God.

This was the vision
Theodore James Ryken had in view
when he founded the congregation:

*A band of Brothers
who mutually help,
encourage,
and edify one another,
and who work together.”*

- Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers

CLOSING PRAYER

Loving and gracious God, we come before you with unlimited confidence in your love and mercy. Take from us those anxieties that separate us from you. Take from us those impediments to building a community of persons committed to bringing about your reign. Give us this day and all our days the grace to be faithful to our call. Amen.



Educational Program

Leader: Gracious God, send your Spirit to be with us as we gather together today to reflect on, celebrate and deepen our call as Collaborators in Xaverian education.

All: May we continue to work for the common good of all the people in our school community. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our brother. Amen

Reading: **A DEMANDING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

An academically demanding educational program is a hallmark of the Xaverian charism. As a center of growth and learning, a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School creates an atmosphere in which all are committed to academic integrity and excellence. Such an atmosphere instills in students the desire to learn for the sake of learning and increases their personal confidence as they experience success.

The Xaverian charism recognizes the dignity and giftedness of each student as well as the differences that exist among students. In order to provide all students the opportunity to grow in their differing talents, a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School provides a variety of programs geared to the development of the whole person.

A Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School attempts to create programs that encourage active lifelong learning. Such programs allow for student and teacher interactions which develop skills necessary to retrieve, evaluate, synthesize and critique information.

- Mission, Vision, Values, Calls, Goals, Criteria of Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools

Reader: "Global competition makes education more important than ever before. The challenges to our economy and way of life are coming from many more directions and at an ever-faster rate. To meet them, America must have students and graduates in increasing numbers who are not only highly literate, numerate and conversant in the humanities and sciences, but who are creative, motivated and confident...who are able and willing to think independently...and who possess integrity."

"If we are to achieve the promise of education for all young people... we must focus reform efforts on the predominant human capital component in the system—talented teachers—people who are the heart and soul of education, the inspiration for the young people they teach. If we are to make education the answer for every young person in our nation, then we need to find ways to elevate the teaching profession by providing not only powerful opportunities for recognition, but opportunities for professional growth as well."

- Lowell Milken

Reader: Another important element of transformational education is promoting hope. Paulo Friere in his *Pedagogy of Hope*, declares that it is the responsibility of all those involved in education “to unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be. After all, without hope there is little we can do ... Hope is an ontological need.”
- Jim Hug, SJ “Center of Concern”

Reading: “The entire Church ... must ensure that young people are well equipped for their special mission in the world. All our efforts to promote an active Christian discipleship and growth in Catholic identity must lead toward mission. This is our special responsibility to the young generation. We pray with the whole Church that we can meet the challenge of Vatican II in the document titled, *The Church in the Modern World*, ‘... the future of humanity lies in the hands of those who are strong enough to provide coming generations with reasons for living and hoping.’”

-*Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*
National Conference of Catholic Bishops

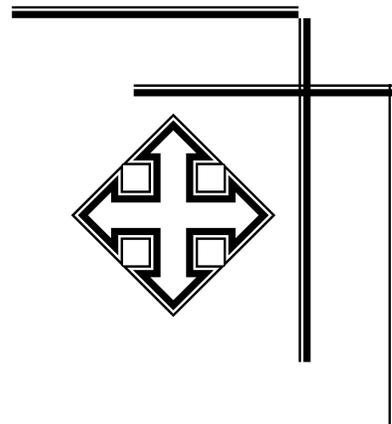
Sharing: Describe one specific way that we, are ensuring “that young people are well equipped for their special mission in the world”?

Leader: Let us pray.

All: To him who is able to accomplish
far more than we ask or imagine,
by the power at work within us,
to him be glory in the church and in the Spirit
to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.



Justice and Peace



All: God of justice,
You call us to be
bread for the hungry,
presence for the lonely,
challenge for the complacent,
and hope for a broken world.
Fill us with your strength and compassion
that we may create with you a world of justice and peace.
This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Reading: The Lord answered me and said: Write down the vision clearly upon the tablets, so that one can read it readily. For the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment, and will not disappoint. If it delays, wait for it, it will surely come... (Hebrews 2:2-3)

Reading: You have been told what is good and what the Lord requires of you. Act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)

Reading: The spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, recovery of sight to the blind and release to prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the Lord. (Luke 4:18-19)

Reading: A Passion for Justice and Peace

A Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School is called to become a center of Christian concern for Gospel justice and peace. Those responsible for the governance of a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School are to assure that the policies and procedures dealing with the treatment of administrators, support staff, teachers, students and their parents reflect Gospel care and justice. Likewise, they should assure that financial provisions are made to enroll the poor and the marginalized, thus enabling real cultural and economic diversity to exist.

- Mission, Vision, Values, Calls, Goals, Criteria of Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools

All: **Prayer for Educators of Justice and Peace**

Good and Gracious God, Teacher of all peoples, Bless and guide those of us who seek to educate others about your good news of justice and peace.

Guide us in our work, as we reach out to shape hearts and minds.

Walk with us as we deal with complex issues, help us to find the right words and actions to communicate your love for all members of the global family.

Support us as we promote critical reflections on local, national and international issues. Renew our commitment, so we can spark courage and empower others to confront injustice.

Allow our vision of a better world to transform spirits. Help us to nurture the skills that will bring this vision to reality.

Remind us how blessed we are to have this call to proclaim justice and peace and to be able to respond even in small ways.

Give us patience and perseverance in our work. Grace us with fellowship and community. Help us to remember that you are our rest and refreshment.

All:

God of Justice,
You open our eyes
to the needs of our sisters and brothers.
Help us to see the Christ
in every person and in all of creation
We ask this in Jesus' name
who proclaims the dignity of humanity
in every time and place. Amen.



Faithful to the Vision

Leader: Come to our aid, God of Wisdom.

All: O God, you give us the example of those who have gone before us who leave a legacy to enliven and inspire our work. Give us their humility, trust, zeal, compassion, and simplicity so that we may articulate, once again, their vision as we live out our mission today.

Reader: “Humility allows all members of the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School to accept and affirm their giftedness as well as to acknowledge the giftedness of others. Likewise, humility enables one to accept personal limitations in oneself and others. Humility inspires a sense of connectedness, not only within the community, but beyond. Humility is not a passive attitude, but an attitude leading to action – and that action is service.”

Reader: “Trust is the meeting place of mind and heart, faith and courage. Trust in God forged the Xaverian charism as the Brothers learned to respond in faith and courage to the enormous difficulties encountered in establishing their first schools. It is the spirit of the Lord who encourages, enlightens and inspires all believers especially those engaged in the demanding mission of evangelization and the ministry of educating and forming young people.”

Reader: “The word ‘zeal’ is traditionally used among Xaverian Brothers to mean the single-minded devotion to, the ardent enthusiasm for, and the intense drive to fulfill the Church’s ministry of education. The Founder’s zeal for the Church’s work of evangelization formed the spirit and charism that the Xaverian Brothers have transmitted to their Sponsored Schools.”

Reader: “Compassion, as exemplified in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, calls for the openness necessary to let oneself be touched by another’s life and the courage to reach out in loving service to others. Compassion is the eyes, the ears and hands of Christian charity. It is the heart seeking action. Compassion leads one to a lifestyle rooted in mercy and forgiveness.”

Reader: “Simplicity is another aspect of the Xaverian charism and is rooted in humility, trust of God, zeal for the Church’s ministry of education and compassion. Simplicity frees the heart, mind and the soul for the work of evangelization. A Sponsored School community applies the value of simplicity in all decisions related to the life and mission of the school so that inclusivity of all persons and outreach to the poor and marginalized is upheld.”

Closing Prayer:

Loving God

We pray that we who gather this day
to serve in our role as keepers of the vision
may be good stewards.

May we be people who freely respond to your call
to live our commitments
and to instill in our students these values.

We ask these things, God,
our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.
Amen.

“Inspiring Lives of Learning, Faith & Service”

Humility

Reader: Blessed is the God of wisdom, whose presence is here and now and forever.

All: Loving God, we meet to enrich our understanding of your call to serve.
Strengthen our faith, hope and love, our sharing of thoughts and prayers for the future. We give thanks for the gift of the wisdom of one another.

Reading: Eph 3:14-19

Brothers, and sisters, I kneel before the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,
that he may grant you in accord with the riches of his glory
to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner self,
and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith;
that you, rooted and grounded in love,
may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones
what is the breadth and length and height and depth,
and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge,
so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Reading: “Humility allows all members of the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School community to accept and affirm their giftedness as well as acknowledge the giftedness of others. Likewise, humility enables one to accept personal limitations in oneself and others. Humility inspires a sense of connectedness, not only within the community, but beyond. Humility is not a passive attitude, but an attitude leading to action -- and that action is service.

Humility promotes harmonious relationships allowing members of the school community to affirm each other, to learn from each other and to work together. Humility is a powerful source of unity and is needed if the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School is to promote truly inclusive and collaborative relationships.”

- Mission, Vision, Values, Calls, Goals, Criteria of Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools

Reflection: What images of the value of humility are affirmed for you in this reading?
What are the examples that demonstrate how your school lives this value?

Reading: “Affirm your brothers and sisters in their gifts,
for by doing so you enable them
to realize the gifts that God has given them
for his service.

In turn,
allow them to affirm you
and call you forth for even greater service
of the Lord.”

Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers

All: We pray in faith, O God, that we respond to your call to serve others with
a humble heart. That we might be ever reminded to continually affirm each other and
those who serve in our schools as we live out our gifts in service to our students and each
other. Amen.



Compassion and Simplicity

Leader We give thanks for the ways we have come to know of God's kindness, mercy and compassion...

All And for those men and women whose lives are a reflection of Gospel simplicity and love of neighbor.

Reader: Recognized in the Xaverian charism are certain values that distinguish the spirituality of the Xaverian Brothers and are rooted deeply in the Brothers' history and traditions. Among these values are compassion and simplicity.

Reader: **COMPASSION**

Compassion, as exemplified in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, calls for the openness necessary to let oneself be touched by another's life and the courage to reach out in loving service to others. Compassion is the eyes, the ears and hands of Christian charity. It is the heart seeking action. Compassion impels those in a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School to look at life with the eyes of Christ, to suffer with those who suffer, to accompany them and to seek appropriate action to eliminate the sources of suffering. Compassion leads one to a lifestyle rooted in mercy and forgiveness.

Reader: **SIMPLICITY**

Simplicity is another aspect of the Xaverian charism and is rooted in humility, trust of God, zeal for the Church's ministry of education and compassion. Simplicity frees the heart, the mind and the soul for the work of evangelization and education.

The Xaverian Sponsored School community makes simplicity a way of thinking, feeling and acting in order to offset the modern tendencies of materialism and consumerism, which can minimize the spiritual values of God's kingdom. A Sponsored School community applies the value of simplicity in all decisions related to the life and mission of the school so that inclusivity of all persons and outreach to the poor and marginalized is upheld.

Programs and activities of the Xaverian Sponsored School educate and form students in Gospel simplicity and responsibility for their neighbor.

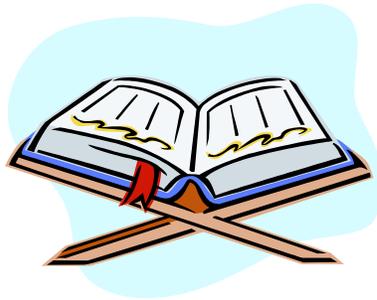
Reading:

“In a complex world, one of the biggest challenges is in keeping one’s perspective, because it is only through harmonious relationships that things become simple. When I look around at our school, I constantly marvel at the complexity of it all. Yet there is a simplicity at work -- a simple justice which aspires to have each person doing that which he or she does best. And, at the heart, there is the beautiful simplicity of a competent, caring teacher connecting with a respectful, open student.

Mr. Stephen Gregory, St. John’s High School, Shrewsbury, MA

Closing Prayer

All: O God of Wisdom, pour out your spirit upon us. As we ponder the many tasks and responsibilities that face us, may we be people of vision rooted in the spiritual values and beliefs of Xaverian Sponsorship. We ask you this through Christ our Lord, your Son and our Brother. Amen.



Trust

LEADER: We take time to remember that we are always in the presence of God, who loves us and knows our hearts, our innermost dreams and desires.

ALL: Loving God, we are full of gratitude for all the gifts and talents you have given us to be leaders.

LEADER: We take time to remember that we are always in the presence of God. Amen.



READING ONE

Trust is the meeting place of mind and heart, faith and courage. Trust in God forged the Xaverian charism as the Brothers learned to respond in faith and courage to the enormous difficulties encountered in establishing their first schools. This trust is characteristic of the Xaverian charism: *Omnia cum Deo, nihil sine Eo.* (All with God, nothing without God.)

It is the Spirit of the Lord who encourages, enlightens and inspires all believers especially those engaged in the demanding mission of evangelization and the ministry of educating and forming young people. A Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School is urged to provide the contemplative time and space needed for members of the school community to fix their gaze on the transcendent in order to grow in faith in spite of life's difficulties.

- Mission, Vision, Values, Calls, Goals, Criteria of Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools

READING TWO: Ephesians 1:15-23

Ever since I heard about your faith, I have not stopped giving thanks for you and remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking God to give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know God better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may see what it is God is calling you to. And may you see the glorious inheritance that is planned for you and understand the great power you have received. The power is the same power that God used to raise Jesus from the dead and to place him above all created things. With Christ, we can now experience the fullness of God who fills up everything in every way.

READING THREE:

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.

- *Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers*

READING FOUR:

Above all, trust in the slow work of the Spirit. We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end without delay. We should like to skip the intermediate stages. We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new. And yet it is the law of all progress that it is made by passing through some stages of instability – and that it may take a very long time. And so it is with you, your ideas mature gradually – let them grow, let them shape themselves, without undue haste. Don't try to force them on, as though you could be today what time, grace and circumstances will make of you tomorrow. Who can say what this new spirit gradually forming within you will be? Give yourself the benefit of believing that the Spirit is leading you, and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself in suspense and incomplete.

- *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ*

PRAYER

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in us the fire of your Love. Send forth Your Spirit and we shall be created and you will renew the face of the earth. O God, who instructs the hearts of the faithful through the Light of the Holy Spirit, grant that through that same Spirit, we may be always truly wise and ever rejoice in your consolation through Christ, our Lord. Amen

Zeal

Leader: Loving God, we thank you for this day and the opportunity to serve you in the mission of Catholic education.

All: We ask your blessing on each of us as we enter into the mystery of your ongoing shaping of our life. May the Spirit of Christ give us wisdom to discern our role. Be with us as we work together for the future of Xaverian education.



Life and Letters of Theodore Ryken

Brother Aubert Downey, CFX

This is the story of the persistent, plodding Theodore James Ryken, who in 1839 brought into being the Congregation of the Brothers of Saint Francis Xavier. In founding this Brotherhood Mr. Ryken undertook what practical and experienced men assured him was a preposterous task. Admittedly the facts were against him: he was forty; his formal education, meager; his financial means, negligible; his well-placed friends, non-existent. To all appearances he was one more visionary.

To the amazement of everybody, except perhaps himself, he succeeded not only in founding this Brotherhood but also in keeping it alive from day to day for twenty years until he was removed from office From the natural point of view this is a story of persistent plodding; from the supernatural point of view, it is the story of one man's faith in the providence of God.



Theodore James Ryken
Founder of the Xaverian Brothers

Reading:

Beyond this Theodore James Ryken
chose Saint Francis Xavier
as the patron of the congregation so that
*“the name of this insatiable laborer for souls
will indicate with one word
what is intended for the congregation.”*

- *Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers*

Reading: ZEAL

The word “zeal” is traditionally used among the Xaverian Brothers to mean the single-minded devotion to, the ardent enthusiasm for and the intense drive to fulfill the Church’s ministry of education. The Founder’s zeal for the Church’s work of evangelization formed the spirit and charism that the Xaverian Brothers have transmitted to their Sponsored Schools. Furthermore, the renowned zeal for evangelization of St. Francis Xavier led Theodore James Ryken to select this saint as the patron of the Congregation.

Single-minded devotion to the mission of the Xaverian Sponsorship unifies and strengthens the Xaverian educational ministry. Ardent enthusiasm for the Christian formation of young people increases a person’s desire for personal growth and learning. Intense passion for the more abundant life proclaimed by Jesus Christ inspires and forms the Christian community.

- Mission, Vision, Values, Calls, Goals, Criteria of Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools



All: O God of wisdom, pour out your spirit upon us. As we ponder the many tasks and responsibilities that face us may we be people of vision rooted in the spiritual values and beliefs of Xaverian Sponsorship. Guide us and this school community as we face the many challenges that lie ahead. We ask you this through Christ our Brother. Amen.

Praying with Our Fundamental Principles

CALL TO PRAYER

We have been freely chosen to respond to the call of God to live a life of love in faith and trust as disciples of God's Son, Jesus Christ, in a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School
So now let us pray together with the Fundamental Principles which guide and animate our mission.

READING ONE

“You were created by the God of love
In God's image and 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”

ALL Gracious God, inspire us to live our lives uniquely so that we may always reflect the giftedness you have bestowed on us. May we also be generous in loving you and all whom we meet on this blessed journey of life. Open us daily to the freedom which you offer so that we may envision our world as the house of God enabling us to see and to embrace all humanity as our brothers and sisters.

READING TWO

“Day by day you will need to renew your response.
Do not become discouraged over the difficulties you encounter in your life of gospel service.
Knowing that difficulties would be your share, your Founder judged:
that nothing special is achieved without much labor, effort and zeal.”

ALL Loving God, help us to face discouragement and to meet difficulties with hearts that are faithful and reliant on your grace-filled presence. Like Francis Xavier and Theodore Ryken, may we be zealous in promoting peace and justice for the poorest and most marginalized of our brother and sisters.

READING THREE

“If you allow yourself to be formed by God
through the common, ordinary, unspectacular flow of everyday life,
you will gradually experience a liberation and a freedom never before imagine. “

ALL Teach us, loving God, the way of simplicity so that we may see you and hear you more clearly in the everydayness of our lives. In this way, it is you



who will form our hearts and instruct our minds to embrace life’s deeper beauty where your holy and respectful presence guides and fashions us into your disciples.

LEADER Loving and gracious God, we ask you to bless our gathering. May your Holy Spirit stir our hearts and minds so that we may be able to see your mission more clearly and respond to your call more generously. We ask this in Jesus’ name. AMEN

READING FOUR

Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools are rooted in the rich tradition of Roman Catholic education. Our mission is to foster the moral and spiritual development of young people. We prepare students not only for success in college and in life – but also for meaningful lives in the service of God. Each day in a Xaverian school provides time and space for reflection, prayer and the sharing of faith. Students, faculty and staff are supported as they integrate their personal faith with the teachings of Jesus Christ.

That same spirit of joyful and dynamic spirituality is alive in each Xaverian school today, fueled by the enthusiasm with which each school embraces the core spiritual values, the charism, of the Brothers – humility, trust, zeal, compassion and simplicity. With a deep commitment to our faith, we accept our personal limitations and understand that all we have comes from God. We strive to think, feel and act in ways that will help us meet the challenges of our times.

PETITIONS RESPONSE: Lord, hear our prayer

For each of us as we gather and meet. May God’s Good and Holy Spirit guide and direct all our deliberations. Let us pray to the Lord.

For our school community, our administration, faculty, staff, students and parents, we ask God to protect them and to inspire them with a love for learning, a reliance on faith and a heart for service to all their brothers and sisters. Let us pray to the Lord.

For peace, that God will give courage and insight to all world leaders so that new avenues may be found to nurture peace and justice in every land. Let us pray to the Lord.

For the Church and particularly for Pope Francis, that through his leadership a stronger , more vibrant Christian community may prosper in order to bring more peace, justice and compassion to our very needy world. Let us pray to the Lord.

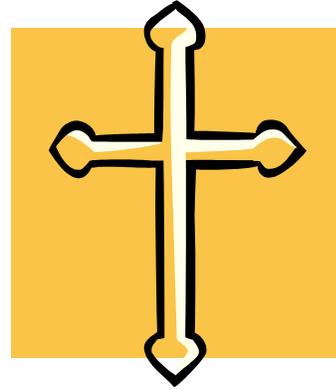
ALL – Our Father.....

CLOSING PRAYER

ALL Loving God, we commend to you our prayers, petitions and concerns both spoken and unspoken. During our time together make us ever more aware of your presence within and among us. We ask all of this in the name of Jesus, our Brother, who live and reigns forever. AMEN.

Bread that is Broken

Leader: Gracious God, provider of all our needs, you have called us into your ministry. Help us to follow the example of your Son, Jesus, who in the breaking of the bread, restores us for work we carry on in God's name. Amen.



Reading: Matthew 14:14-19

When he disembarked and saw the vast throng, his heart was moved with pity, and he cured the sick. As evening drew on, his disciples came to him with the suggestion: "This is a deserted place and it is already late. Dismiss the crowds so that they may go to the villages and buy some food for themselves." Jesus said to them: "There is no need for them to disperse. Give them something to eat yourselves." "We have nothing here," they replied, "but five loaves and a couple of fish." "Bring them here," he said. Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and two fish, looked up to heaven, blessed and broke them and gave the loaves to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the people."

Reflection:

Like the bread taken by Jesus, we are chosen by God, selected for a unique role to play in God's story. And as we recognize that we have been chosen, so we also recognize the chosen-ness of all people.

Like the bread blessed by Jesus, we, too, are blessed by God. We are to claim our blessing and to bless others as we live each day.

Like the bread broken by Jesus, we are also given. Each of our lives is a gift to those close to us; family, friends, colleagues. God has given us – each one of us – as a sacred gift to the world.

Like the bread broken by Jesus, we are also called, challenged to lead a life of service to our mission. God calls us to remember those we serve in our schools, especially those students and parents whom we will never know.

Reading: “It is through your life of gospel witness
lived in community with others
that God desires to manifest
care and compassionate love
to those who are separated and estranged,
not only from their neighbors,
but also from their own uniqueness;
to those who suffer
from want, neglect, and injustice:
the poor, the weak, and the oppressed
of this world.

They too are called
to experience,
express,
and share
the love of God with the world
through their own giftedness.

In this life of following Christ,
allow yourself, therefore, to be given away,
together with your sisters and brothers,
as nourishment for others,
as bread that is broken.”

- *Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers*



Closing Prayer:

All: God, who calls us, blesses us, and sends us into the world as gifts, we thank you. Help us always to remember the teaching of your son, Jesus. Help us, also, to remember the example of our founder, Theodore James Ryken, who continues to challenge us to remember that our role is to be of service. May we be aware of the need to support each other in this work. We offer this prayer in gratitude. Amen.

Call to Service

Leader: Loving God, as we look to add our stories to your story, help us to make them stories worth telling by filling us with your word of hope and life. We ask this in Jesus' name.

All Amen.

Reading 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit;
there are different forms of service but the same Lord;
there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone.
To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.
To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom; to another the expression of knowledge according to the same Spirit;
to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit;
to another mighty deeds; to another prophecy; to another discernment of spirits; to another varieties of tongues; to another interpretation of tongues.
But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes.

Reading 2 Corinthians 9: 6-15

Consider this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
Moreover, God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work.
As it is written: "He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

The one who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness.
You are being enriched in every way for all generosity, which through us produces thanksgiving to God, for the administration of this public service is not only supplying the needs of the holy ones but is also overflowing in many acts of thanksgiving to God.

Reading : Theodore Ryken looked upon his original vocation
as being a conversion
through which he

“fell in love with the service of God”

Yet, he too,
came to the understanding
that a continual conversion is needed.

Be patient, therefore, with yourself and with God.

If you allow yourself to be formed by God
through the common,
ordinary,
unspectacular
flow of everyday life,
you will gradually experience
a liberation and a freedom
never before imagined.

- *Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers*

All Teach us, good Lord,
to serve you as you deserve,
to give and not to count the cost,
to fight and not to heed the wounds,
to toil and not to seek for rest,
to labour and not to ask for any reward,
save that of knowing that we do your will. Amen.

- *St. Ignatius Loyola*



Community and Affirmation

Leader We gather today conscious that the Spirit of Wisdom moves in each of us. May we be wise in our sharing, ready to listen, and open to learning.

All We pray that we may use our gifts for the good our school community and for the common good. Amen.

Reader “You are called
to be of one heart and one mind with your brothers and sisters
so that you can participate
in the building up of the reign of God.

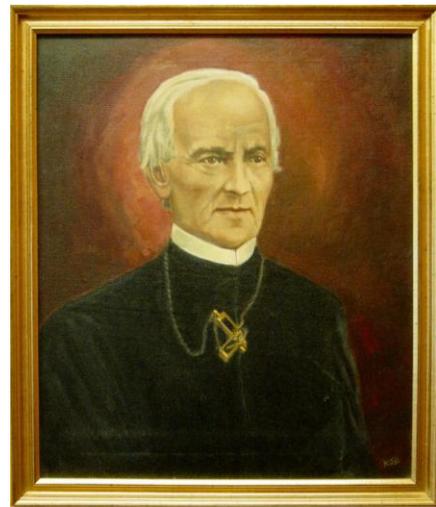
This was the vision
Theodore James Ryken had in view
when he founded the congregation:

A band of Brothers
who mutually help,
encourage,
and edify one another,
and who work together.

You are called then by your Founder
to enter into a true mutual sharing
with your brothers and sisters.
This sharing will demand of you
an opening and a giving of yourself to them
at many levels,
and a ready acceptance of each of them
in all their sinful and graced humanity.

Cultivate a sincere friendship
and a warm affection for your sisters and brothers,
for it is in the manifestation
of honest concern and love for each other
that you and they will show
you are daughters and sons of Ryken
and disciples of Jesus.

Listen to your brothers and sisters,
be compassionate with them in their difficulties,
bear with them in their weaknesses,



encourage and support them.
Affirm your brothers and sisters in their gifts,
for by doing so you enable them
to realize the gifts that God has given them for service.

In turn,
allow them to affirm you
and call you forth
to even greater service of God.”

- *Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers*

Reflection/Discussion How are we challenged to “mutually help, encourage, and edify” each other and the staff of our school this year?

Prayer of Intercession

We pray that we, like Brother Ryken, may be faithful in living out God’s call in our lives. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

We remember the needs of our school community, may God hear and answer these needs. Let us pray to the Lord.

We pray that God’s Spirit will guide us so that we might make prudent decisions. Let us pray to the Lord.

We pray that we can continue to “manifest honest concern and love for each other.” Let us pray to the Lord.

We pray in thanksgiving for all those in our school community who give of themselves so that our students might learn and grow. Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Loving God, nothing is beyond our reach if we reach out together.
 Help us to build our dreams with faith --
 Faith in ourselves
 Faith in our community
 And faith in you, our God. Amen.

God's Service

Leader Blessed is the God of wisdom,
whose presence is here and now and forever.

All Loving God, we meet to enrich our understanding of your call to serve.
Strengthen our faith, hope and love,
our sharing of thoughts and prayers for the future.
We give thanks for the gift of the wisdom of one another. Amen.

Reader “Theodore Ryken looked upon his original vocation
as being a conversion
through which he

*fell in love
with the service of God.*

Yet, he too,
came to the understanding
that a continual conversion is needed.

Be patient, therefore, with yourself and with God.

If you allow yourself
to be formed by God
through the common,
ordinary,
unspectacular
flow of everyday life,
you will gradually experience
a liberation and a freedom
never before imagined.”



Reader

Psalm 8

O God, our God,
Your greatness is seen in all the world!
Your praise reaches up to the heavens;
It is sung by children and babies...
When I look at the sky, which you have made,
At the moon and the stars, which you set in their places;
Who are we that you should be mindful of us?
Mere ones, that you should care for us?

You made us inferior only to yourself;
You crowned us with glory and honor.
You appointed us over all creation;
Sheep and cattle, and wild animals, too;
The birds and the fish
And the creatures in the seas.

O God, our God,
How glorious is your name over all the earth!

Leader

We ask for the eyes of God ...

All

That we may see the signs of the spirit all around us.

Leader

We ask for the Ears of God ...

All

That we may hear the calling of our mission in all that we do.

Leader

We ask for the Heart of God ...

All

That we may have compassion for all those who suffer.

Leader

We ask for the Mind of God...

All

That we may center all that we do in the knowledge of God's love.

Leader

We ask for the Strength of God ...

All

That we may be steadfast in our commitment to fulfill our mission.
Amen.

Personal Gifts

Leader God of our longing, you are ever faithful and ever patient, waiting always for us to welcome you into our lives. May we learn to see you in all we do.

All Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Reading: “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 Parent God,
who knows you,
understands you,
and loves you.

It is this communion with the living God
which is at the heart of your life
as a child of God,
disciple of Jesus,
witness of God's spirit,
quicken member of God's Body,
and brother or sister to the world.

Gradually,
you will realize
that the cost of your discipleship
is your very life,
freely consecrated to God
and offered to the world
as a sign of God's love and care.

*The gift you have received
give as a gift.”*

-

- *Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers*

Reading

Luke 11: 9-13.

“So I say to you, ask and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For whoever asks, receives; whoever seeks, finds; whoever knocks, is admitted. What parent among you will give their child a snake if she asks for an egg? If you, with all your sins, know how to give your children good things, how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?”

Leader

Loving God, today we thank you for the many gifts we have received for your service. We ask you to help us use these gifts wisely so that we might help in building up the Kingdom of God.

All

For these, and all God’s gifts, we give thanks. Amen.



Created by the God of Love

Leader Come to our aid, God of Wisdom.

All Open our eyes that we may see clearly your works,
our hearts that we may understand your vision for us,
and our ears that we may hear your call to ministry.

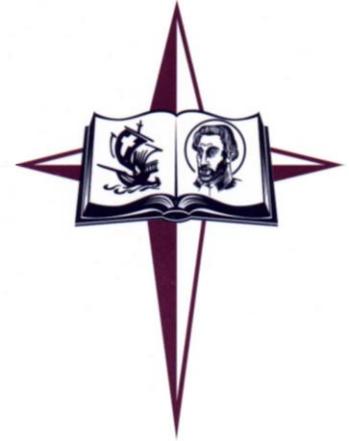
Reading “You have freely chosen
to respond to the call of God
to live a life of love in faith and trust,
as a disciple of God's Son, Jesus Christ,
in a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School.

In calling you
God too was completely free.
Your Founder,
Theodore James Ryken,
was most conscious of this,
since he wrote about his own vocation:

*God is not obliged
to give an account to anybody,
even if God wants to use a sinner.*

You were created by the God of love
in God's image and 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.”

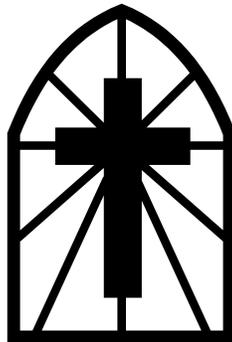
- *Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers*



Reading: Together with everything that has ever existed in this universe, we exist in God. God is never absent. God is everywhere, involved in the unfolding of matter and life wherever this happens. We acknowledge this awesome mystery embodied in every human person aware that each give God a unique and personal expression.”

(from Praying a New Story by Michael Morwood)

All: God who is Father, you created us in your image and called us good.
God who is Son, you revealed the depth of divine love and invited us to eternal life.
God who is Spirit, you guide us today and fill us with your truth.
Let us pray that we recognize God in each person. Amen.



Contemplation and Action – Mary and Martha

...the members will have the privilege of following both the lives of Martha and Mary. Through prayer and meditation they follow Mary in the contemplative life, while by catechizing children and older people, they follow Martha in the active life.

-from the Plan by Theodore James Ryken(ca.1837-38)

Leader O God, send us your Spirit
All kindle in us the fire of your love.
Leader Lover of us all,
All make our hearts like yours



Reader Luke 10:38-42

In the course of their journey Jesus came to a village,
and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house.

She had a sister called Mary,

who sat down at the Lord's feet and listened to him speaking.

Now Martha, who was distracted with all the serving, came to him and

said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister is leaving me to do the serving all by myself?

Please tell her to help me." But the Lord answered, "Martha, Martha" he said,"you worry and fret about so many things, and yet few are needed, indeed only one.

It is Mary who has chosen the better part, and it is not to be taken from her."

Reflection

Martha complained to our Lord about her sister Mary because she did not help her serve, for she thought she was performing a big and very useful service and her sister was just sitting there, idle. But our Lord passed sentence and pronounced judgment on them both. He did not criticize Martha because of the service she performed, for that service was good and useful. But he criticizes her because she was so occupied and because she was depressed and sad about a number of outer things. And he praised Mary for her inner practice and said that only one thing was needful and that she had chosen the best part that would never be taken away from her. The one thing needful for all is divine love. The best part is the inner life that clings to God in love. That is what Mary chose. But Martha chose an honest outward active life, and that is the other part that faithful servants are still choosing for love of our Lord.

(Ruusbroec, Sparkling Stone, p.132-134)

Intercessions

Jesus, our brother, your love for us teaches us that even the ordinary actions of everyday life can be full of God, breathe of God, shine with God, and be fragrant of God. In that spirit, we pray that our ordinary actions may please God and be full of love.

As we rise:

May our hearts be filled with thanksgiving.

As we go about the business of our loves:

May we see you in each person we encounter.

As we come before you in prayer:

May we be open and responsive to your Spirit.

As we strive to seek peace in moments of conflict:

May we search for the guiding presence of your truth.

As we come together to form community:

May we refuse no kindness or mercy to one another.

As we take time to plan for the future of our young people:

May we share the wisdom stilled in us by You.

As we come to each day's end:

May we lie down to rest, trusting in your faithfulness.

All Faithful God, you have revealed yourself to us in Jesus. Through the power of your Spirit, you come to us and abide with us. We stand in awe of your boundless love. May we daily come to know Jesus more fully, love Him more deeply, and follow him more closely. This we ask of you, Holy Trinity, Undivided Unity. Amen,



Hospitality

Leader Indwelling Spirit of God, You are here, You are now. Together we shape this moment. Our power to love...to grow... to listen... to accept... to be... shape all we do. Bless us as we begin this meeting.

Reading Mark 10:13-16
People were bringing little children to him, for him to touch them. The disciples scolded them, but when Jesus saw this he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs. In truth I tell you, anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." Then he embraced them, laid his hands on them and gave them his blessing.

Response Psalm 95
O come, let us bow down and give thanks,
let us be humble before the Blessed One!

For the Beloved is Supreme, and we,
blessed to be invited to friendship
as companions along the Way!

O that today we would harken to the
Beloved's voice!
Harden not your hearts, as in the days of old.
that you be not separated from Love.

Be not like those who hear the Spirit's Voice
and heed it not,
thinking to be above the Teacher.

For life is but a breath in the Eternal Dance,
a gift to be revered with trust,
an opportunity to grow in spirit and truth.



Readings The Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School will seek to form Christian community by deepening the understanding of Jesus Christ's teachings about life and by affirming and celebrating significant moments in the life of the school community. As a Christian community, the Xaverian sponsored School will welcome and affirm the giftedness and dignity of each person, respect diversity and create a caring atmosphere in which human relationships can grow and thrive.

As a center of growth and learning for young people, the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School creates an atmosphere that makes young people feel welcome and secure, while respecting diversity and helping to develop the individual student's gifts and talents.

-Mission, Vision, Values, Calls, Goals, Criteria - Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools

Leader

Let us thank God for the ways we have been gifted with love.

Response: We thank you God.

For the gift of Jesus, who became one with us to show us how to love...

Response: We thank you God.

For all the people who have tried to be faithful to Jesus' vision over the centuries and who have passed it on to us...

Response: We thank you God.

For those who have loved us and so shown us your face...

Response: We thank you God.

For the persons who come our way needing our attentive presence...

Response: We thank you God.

For your presence with us when we have struggles over decisions of how best to love...

Response: We thank you God.

For the inspiration of Theodore James Ryken to be formed by God through the common, ordinary, unspectacular flow of everyday life...

Response: We thank you God.

All

Creator God, you have known us and loved us since before we were conceived, and you will know and love us forever. On the journey of our own life as part of the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools Network, may we "stand ready to answer when asked if we are available for God to become more present in our lives and through us to the world." We ask this in the name of Jesus our Brother. Amen.

Prayer for Children

Leader We come to this place to remember and celebrate our past, to assess our present, and to prepare our children's future. We seek your help, O God, to see your vision for the children of our world, and your guidance as we endeavor to respond to this challenge in our schools. We pledge to commit ourselves to work for your kingdom on earth by service to the least of these -- Your children.



Reading “When God wants an important thing done in this world or a wrong righted, He goes about it in a very singular way. He doesn't release thunderbolts or stir up earthquakes. God simply has a tiny baby born, perhaps of a very humble home, perhaps of a very humble mother. ... And then – God waits. The great events of this world are not battles and elections and earthquakes and thunderbolts. The great events are babies, for each child comes with the message that God is not discouraged with humanity, but is still expecting goodwill to become incarnate in each human life.”

Presbyterian Outlook -- Edmond McDonald

Reading “In every child who is born under no matter what circumstances and of no matter what parents, the potential of the human race is born again, and in him, too, once more, and in each of us, the terrific responsibility toward human life: toward the utmost idea of goodness, of the horror of terrorism, and of God.”

Let us Now Praise Famous Men -- James Agee

Reading “The entire Church ... must ensure that young people are well equipped for their special mission in the world. All our efforts to promote an active Christian discipleship and growth in Catholic identity must lead toward mission. This is our special responsibility to the young generation. We pray with the whole Church that we can meet the challenge of Vatican II in the document, *The Church in the Modern World*, ‘... the future of humanity lies in the hands of those who are strong enough to provide coming generations with reasons for living and hoping.’”

*“Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry”
National Conference of Catholic Bishops*

All O God, whose realm must be entered as a child, we live in a world that looks for results and the easy rhetoric of those who proclaim that they have the answer. In our rush for these results and answers, we forget to listen to the children, the young people. Mold our hearts and spirits that we might work together, while listening for your word in the voices of the children around us.

Refresh and sustain us with the vision of your world to come, in which all children will rest secure in your love. We ask these things on behalf of the children of today and of generations yet to come who will live to praise your name, world without end. Amen.



“Inspiring Lives of Learning, Faith & Service”

What we bring

Leader God of all good gifts, the abundance of your love overflowed in Jesus and in your Church. Help us to reach out to those who need us, and to know that what we give is not ours but yours.

All May the name of God be praised, for your generosity knows no bounds. Amen

Reading: Acts 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes. They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Reading: “Our network is one of our greatest strengths. It allows us to sustain the Xaverian educational tradition while preparing our students for careers and lives in the twenty-first century...Affiliation with other Xaverian schools allows us to connect with peers whose experiences and backgrounds are different than our own. Through network wide retreats, students gain perspective on their own experiences. Teachers and administrators meet regularly to strengthen a valuable professional network, to share best practices, and to grow as people and as educators. By joining together, we understand that we are part of something greater than ourselves and reinforce for our students the value of lifelong learning.”



From XBSS Brochure “Inspiring Lives of Learning, Faith & Service”

Reading: We have been given eyes to see, ears to listen, and minds to interpret what we are beneath the words spoken...

We have been given tongues to speak for the innocent... to praise, encourage and support, to proclaim, in season and out of season, the News that renews.

We have been given heads to judge, ourselves not others, situations not motives, solutions not excuses, justice not expediency; to discern the essential from the desirable, the good from the less good, the less good from the bad.

We have been given hearts to comfort, to open doors, to discover the best in others, to understand, and to allow all to develop in harmony.

(Author unknown)

All: We have been given all we have. And we are grateful.

Leader: O God, you give us the example of those who have gone before us who leave a legacy to enliven and inspire our work. Give us their humility, trust, zeal, compassion and simplicity so that we may articulate, once again, their vision in order to live out our mission today

All: For now and for what is to come, we pray in thanksgiving. Amen.



"Inspiring Lives of Learning, Faith & Service"

Who we are



Leader: We were created by the God of love in God's image and according to God's likeness, to be a unique expression of that love. It is through us 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.

All: Loving God, inspire us with your love and compassionate presence so that we may be persons who generously share our unique gifts and talents in order to promote and support life-giving ways of living, learning and serving others.

Leader: Today we gather, meeting together to consider where we stand and who we are.

All: **Open our hearts to your inspiration and kindness so that we may influence others through the Spirit of your love.**

Leader: Gracious God, be with us in this space and time as we shape the changes in our understanding of your wisdom.

All: **Open our minds to your understanding and caring so that we may influence others through the Spirit of your wisdom.**

Leader: We work in prayer and dialogue in going back to see where we have been, we steady our perspective for the journey forward today.

All: **Open our eyes to your mercy and compassion so that we may influence others through the Spirit of your forgiveness.**

Reading: "In addition to our Catholic faith, we also share a uniquely Xaverian perspective and approach to education. Theodore James Ryken, founder of the Congregation of the Brothers of St. Francis Xavier, described his personal commitment to his ministry as "falling in love with the service of God."

That same spirit of joyful and dynamic spirituality is alive in each Xaverian school today, fueled by the enthusiasm with which each school embraces the core spiritual values, the charism, of the Brothers – humility, trust, zeal, compassion and simplicity. With a deep

commitment to our faith, we accept our personal limitations and understand that all we have comes from God. We seek lives rooted in mercy and forgiveness. We strive to think, feel, and act in ways that will help us meet the challenges of our times

- From XBSS Brochure "Inspiring Lives of Learning, Faith & Service"

Leader: Gracious God, giver of all good things, we stand confident of your support in our lives and we ask for gifts to help us on the way.

For the gift of humility, to see ourselves as you see us with loving and honest eyes.

All: **Give us your vision.**

Leader: For the gift of trust, to believe wholeheartedly in your Gospel message of peace, hope and love.

All: **Give us your conviction.**

Leader: For the gift of zeal, to be willing to work and to serve others generously and willingly.

All: **Give us your fidelity.**

Leader: For the gift of compassion, to treat all whom we meet and care for as our brothers and sisters.

All: **Give us your charity.**

Leader: For the gift of simplicity, to let go of those things that clutter our vision of you.

All: **Give us your spirit of freedom**

Leader: Creator God, we pray now and always for a deepening of these gifts in our lives so that we may serve our school communities as ministers of your healing touch of love through word and deed. Bless us with your love and support us with your wisdom. We pray this prayer through Christ Jesus our Brother. Amen.

All: May our Loving God bless and keep us.
May Jesus Christ, our Friend and Brother, graciously inspire us.
May the Holy Spirit, the Giver of Life, grant us peace. Amen.

"Inspiring Lives of Learning, Faith & Service"

What we share

Leader: Created in the image and likeness of God, we share a dignity and a call that comes directly from God our Creator.

All: We ask you, Lord, to bless us as we gather in this place. May your Holy Spirit, whose presence moved our founder Theodore James Ryken to respond to your call, stir within our hearts and minds so that we may be able to see your mission more clearly and share the blessings that come with embracing your call.

Leader: Called to be good stewards and serve those entrusted to our care...

All: We pause, Lord, and ask you to enrich our understanding of your call to serve, encourage and support one another. Strengthen our faith, our sharing of thoughts and prayers for all associated with our Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools. In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen

Reading I:

"We always thank God for you because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. God called you to this through the Gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, stand firm and hold on to the teachings that we passed on to you."
Thessalonians 2: 13 - 15

All: *May we be of one mind and heart in working to promote the Kingdom of God.*

Reading II:

"Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools are rooted in the rich tradition of Roman Catholic education. Our mission is to foster the moral and spiritual development of young people. We prepare students not only for success in college and in life – but also for meaningful lives in the service of God. Each day in a Xaverian school provides time and space for reflection, prayer, and the sharing of faith. Students, faculty, and staff are supported as they integrate their personal faith with the teachings of Jesus Christ. "

From XBSS Brochure "Inspiring Lives of Learning, Faith & Service"

All: **May our decisions be mission-driven and enhance the life of our school community.**



Reading III:

“We can keep on because we know that, in the end, our mission, Ryken’s vision, the Xaverian charism in education is not just the work of the Brothers; it is a work that we all share and carry on. Most importantly, we all know and believe that it is not just OUR shared work, it is God’s work.”

Excerpt from an address given by Bro. Arthur Caliman at NCEA Convention, April 2004

All: **May our efforts foster an environment where God’s work can continue to grow and thrive.**

Leader: Together, let us ask for God’s continued blessings on this school community

All: God our provider, you have called us each by name and invite us to experience, express and share the gift of your love through service to our Xaverian schools. May this sharing strengthen our resolve to “stand ready” and trust in your loving presence with us. May we be faithful as Jesus was faithful, merciful as Christ has been merciful to us, and love as you love. We make this prayer in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



“Inspiring Lives of Learning, Faith & Service”

What we value

Leader: Let us praise God, the Almighty One.

All: We thank you for your many blessings

Leader: Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

All: As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Reading: “At the heart of a Xaverian education is our commitment to the full development of each person. We begin with an understanding that each student arrives with a unique set of talents and preferences... The Xaverian focus on building enduring relationships allows us to foster outstanding achievement in students with a wide range of abilities. Teachers who take the time to know each student can guide them to make the most of their talents, and support them in persevering through and learning from challenges.”

From XBSS Brochure “Inspiring Lives of Learning, Faith & Service”

Reading: Education comes from two Greek words – that for child and that for learning. From its roots, education can mean to lead a young person away from ignorance and disorder. This idea is founded upon the principles of Catholicism and really means of education a most important work for those who try to accomplish it; this idea makes education truly the art of the arts. With the eyes of faith, consider the greatness of your mission and the wonderful amount of good you can accomplish.

*From Christian Education, by Basil Anthony Moreau
founder of the Congregation of the Holy Cross*

Reading: There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom; to another the expression of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit; to another mighty deeds; to another prophecy; to another discernment of spirits; to another varieties of tongues; to another interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes.

1 Corinthians 12: 4-11

Reading: **A Prayer of the Saints**

We give thanks for
All the saints,
Signs of hope for us
In a time when hope is
Often difficult to discern.

We give thanks for
The communion of saints,
Our communities of faith
That support us
When we lag behind.
When we let go
Of our neighbors' hand.

We give thanks for
Our own call to sainthood,
That challenge of baptism,
That creative, disruptive grace,
That instinctive turning toward the human family.

We are images of each other,
We are a ruckus chorus
Announcing the kingdom of God:
Hear it and know
It calls us home.

by Jane Deren, Education for Justice

All: God who is Father, you created us in your image and called us good. God who is Son, you revealed the depth of divine love and invite us to eternal life. God who is Spirit, guide us and fill us with your truth. All praise to you, eternal Triune God, Forever and ever. Amen.

