

WORLD CATHOLIC.US *News*

WORLD CATHOLIC.US · [HTTPS://XAVERIANMISSIONARIES.ORG/MISSIONBLOG/](https://xaverianmissionaries.org/missionblog/)

VOL. 68 NO. 2 - MAY 2020

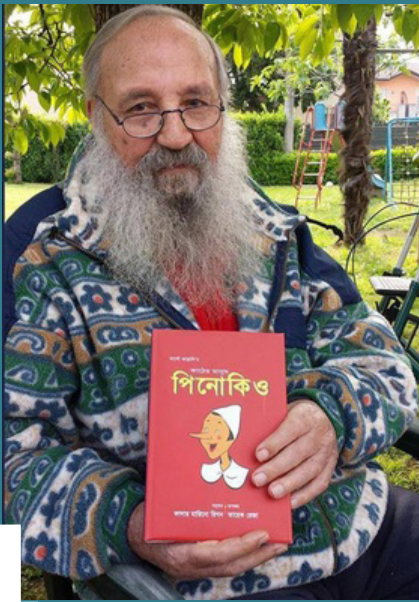
**NEW DECADE,
NEW LOOK, NEW DESIGN
TO CELEBRATE
THE JUBILEE YEAR
AND HELP
“MAKE THE WORLD ONE FAMILY”**



PHOTO OF BANGLADESHI FISHERMAN
BY RAHAD HASAN ON UNSPLASH



NEWSLETTER OF THE XAVERIAN MISSIONARIES USA



4



6



8

IN ADDITION TO BEING
THE WEBSITE OF
THE UNITED STATES
XAVERIAN MISSIONARIES,
"WORLDCATHOLIC.US"
INDICATES THAT THE
CATHOLIC FAMILY OF THE
WORLD INCLUDES US!

SUMMARY

- 3 Toward a New Humanity
- 4 The Father: An Untold Story
- 6 In a Time of Exile
- 7 Because Spring Didn't Know
- 8 Centennial Year Reflection:
Saint Guido Maria Conforti and
the 1918 flu pandemic
- 9 Prayer is Our Homage to God
- 10 World News
- 11 USA News

WORLDCATHOLIC.US News Magazine



Official publication of the United States
Province of the Xaverian Missionaries

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

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

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

missionmedia@xaverianmissionaries.org
worldcatholic.us

Publisher

Fr. Mark Marangone, SX

Communications Board

Fr. Carl Chudy SX
Fr. Tony Lalli SX
Fr. Rocco Puopolo SX
Fr. Alex Rodriguez SX
Fr. Aniello Salicone SX

Editor

Mary Aktay

Printer

AlphaGraphics, Totowa NJ

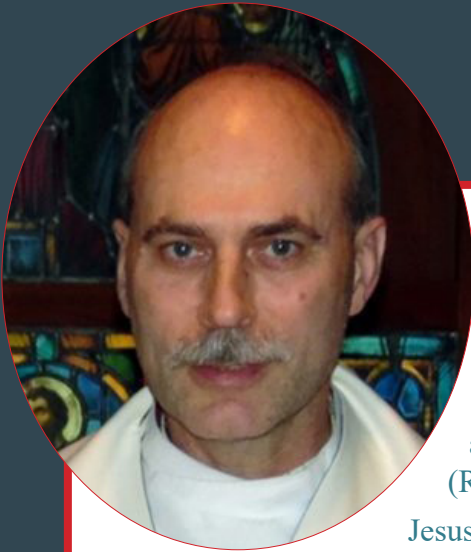
Please consider donating to the Xaverian Missionaries through our Communities listed above or online at <https://www.xaverianmissionaries.org/support/>.

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

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



**PRAESIDIUM
ACCREDITED**
Our passion. Your protection.



TOWARD A NEW HUMANITY

With Saint Paul we cry out: “Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or persecution, or famine, or the sword?... I am convinced that neither death nor... anything else will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:35-39).

Jesus preaches his greatest sermon on the cross: the sermon of love to the end. Jesus, while nailed to a cross, filled with an amazing calmness and an inexplicable love, way before anyone asked for it, intercedes with the Father for the forgiveness of his torturers... and all of humanity with them. “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” (Luke 23:34)

He preferred to die for the guilty, for us sinners, which required of him even more strength, courage, and love.

Right up to his final hours on earth, Jesus preaches forgiveness by his life.

And even following his Resurrection, his first act is to commission his disciples, you and me today, to go to the whole world, to reach out to all of humanity, to be his witnesses and... to forgive: “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained” (John 20:22-23).

The Lord Jesus, friend of sinners, calls you and me and all of us from sin to fidelity, to discipleship, to ministry, to mission... to be instruments of peace, compassion, and love, to forgive one another as God does, “with a caress”, using Pope Francis’ expression.

Where are we called to forgive others with the same “caress” today, tomorrow, and every day?

These weeks of “lock down” offer us a time to pause, look at ourselves, at how we relate to our Creator, to our sisters and brothers, and to creation. Maybe, as a human family we need to rethink our priorities...

Easter and resurrection bring new hope and invite us to choose new life, justice, harmony, unity, respect, compassion, and, definitely a much better sharing of the world resources. There is plenty for everyone.

With humility and good will to serve one another, we can start anew and together find a common path toward making the world a better place for everyone and “of humanity one family.”

Our hearts go out to all our sisters and brothers who have lost loved ones due to the pandemic...

Count on our prayers and remembrance at our daily Mass.

Among tears... With deep gratitude we wish to you and your loved ones a grace-filled Easter Season and a bright future.

~Fr. Mark Marangone SX and the Xaverian Missionaries

The Father: An Untold Story



**Father Marino
Rigon
Bangladesh**

“FATHER MARINO RIGON did an immense job for the people of Bangladesh. We wanted to

do something concrete to honor his memory by making a film about his life. This initiative will be useful to present and disseminate the contribution of the great missionary to a worldwide audience”: stated Hamento Sadik, the young Bangladeshi director, committed to shooting a film on Italian Xaverian missionary Marino Rigon (1925-2017), who missioned in Bangladesh for 60 years.

The film titled “The Father: An Untold Story” will be an Italian-Bangladeshi joint production. More than 200 artists, from Italy, New Zealand, Brazil, and England have attended the auditions for the film. The filming will begin in Venice and Vicenza (where the missionary was born), in Italy, and then in Khulna, Mongla, and Jessore, in Bangladesh. Sadik works side by side with Italian director Rocco Cosentino, the executive producer for the Italian portion of the film. “We have already had an official meeting with Father Rigon’s family. They are giving all kinds of support. We are very grateful to them,” says Sadik.

Fr. Rigon is loved in Bangladesh for his outstanding contribution to education, socio-economic development, culture and literature, but also to the struggle for the independence of Bangladesh. Hamento Sadik recalls that already in 1957, three years after his arrival in Bangladesh, he founded St. Paul’s High School in Shelabunia, a place that Sadik visited and where scenes of the film will be shot. The film will also enhance the missionary’s help for the

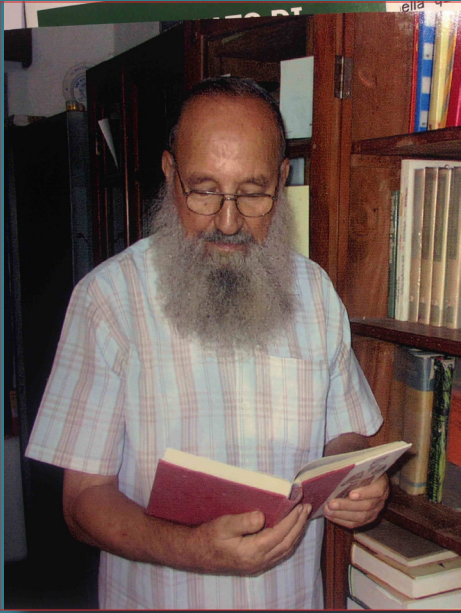
professional training and empowerment of women, and his humanitarian contribution during the 1971 war of independence: transforming his mission into a “field hospital” he treated the wounded fighters, who fought on both sides. Rigon is considered a true “hero” in Bangladesh.

Catholics in Bangladesh are very happy with the initiative of the film on Father Rigon. “We are very happy that a film is being produced, among other things with a Muslim Bangladeshi director. His figure helps and gives an excellent image of Christians in Bangladesh”, said Milon Gomes, a Catholic from Dhaka.

Fr. Rigon was born in Villaverla, Vicenza, Italy in 1925. He moved to Bangladesh in 1953. He lived in Bangladesh as a missionary for sixty years to preach the Gospel and established good relationships with people of other faiths. The missionary was passionate about Bangladeshi literature: he learned the Bengali language and began to translate local literary works into Italian, such as those of the well-known poet Rabindranath Tagore, whom he introduced in Italy. He also translated a number of other literary works, including 350 songs by the mystic poet Lalon Fakir and Jasim Uddin, into Italian. Many of his books were later re-translated to French, Spanish and Portuguese. In 2009, he was conferred honorary citizenship of Bangladesh by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina “for his tireless and exemplary contributions to society”.

At the age of 92, Father Rigon died of old age complications in Vicenza, Italy, on October 19, 2017. As per his dying wish, his body was brought back to Bangladesh and buried in Shelabunia.

[Story from Zenit News Service.](#)



FR. CARL CHUDY SX



ANNE AND JEFFREY ROWTHORN

The prayer of the Prophet Daniel is marked by deep awareness of sin and failure around the time of the Babylonian Exile around 6th century BCE.

The Israelites had lost everything they valued, their city and their king. They had broken the Covenant so often and so thoroughly that God sent them into Exile amid strange people, different faiths and religious customs.

Though terribly painful, it also brought renewal and a fresh start, a fresh hope. The contact with other faiths enabled them to understand that their Lord was not simply the God of Israel but was God of the whole world.

They learned that they must respond as the servant of God. Ezekiel expresses this beautifully: 'I shall give you a new heart, and put a new spirit in you. I shall remove the heart of stone from your bodies and give you a heart of flesh (36:26).'

The Christian Exile Toward Golgotha in a Time of the Coronavirus

The Christian journey reenacted through the way of the cross of Jesus is also our journey from exile to reconciliation and forgiveness and a new, fresh hope in the times we live. The effects of this pandemic has brought fear and uncertainty across the globe and even though it is devastating for many, like the exiles of our Jewish friends, and our alienation from Christ and God's people, there are lessons to be learned.

Coronavirus also awakens us to the deeper call as Christians through the purification of the "way", by calling out our best instincts – love, neighborliness, compassion and a sense of caring for every member of God's beloved community on Earth.



Out of the Depths We Cry Out to You in the Face of the Coronavirus

Creator God of the universe, God of a thousand names and faces, divine source of health and wholeness, whose compassion embraces the entire community of Earth: behold your fearful people all over the world as we confront the coronavirus. Out of the depths we cry to you, O God. Holy God, hear our voices as we pray for all who may be affected by the virus:

For all health caregivers who have close contact with patients and for the patients themselves; out of the depths, O God — We cry out to you. Protect them.

For all who travel for their daily work; For all who pump gas and serve customers; out of the depths, O God — We cry out to you. Protect them.

For daycare center staff who cuddle and comfort children and for all children; For teachers and professors, coaches and cafeteria workers and students everywhere; out of the depths, O God — We cry out to you. Protect them.

For the homeless, for the poor, the lonely, the vulnerable, migrants, and the isolated elderly who have no protectors; out of the depths, O God — We cry out to you. Protect them.

For all who have tested positive, all who are waiting for test results, and all who are quarantined; out of the depths — We cry out to you. Protect them.

For all who have already died of the coronavirus, now free from pain and suffering. God of hope, carry them all the way home, and comfort their families and friends; out of the depths — We cry out to you. Protect them.

Loving God, hasten the day when the virus will have run its course; quicken scientists to develop medications and vaccines; call out the best instincts of your people — love, neighborliness, compassion, and a sense of caring for every member of your beloved community on Earth. We pray out of the depths to you, O God of hope, whom we call Jesus, Allah, YHWH, Divine Mystery, Wakan Tanka, Great Spirit. **Amen.**

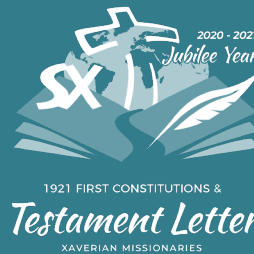
Anne and Jeffrey Rowthorn, resident scholars at the Collegeville Institute, wrote this litany to bring all of our prayer and concern together, no matter what faith we follow.

BECAUSE SPRING DIDN'T KNOW!



*It was March 11, 2020,
the streets were empty, the stores closed,
people were no longer going out.
But spring did not know.
And the flowers kept blooming, and the sun shining,
and the swallows returned, and the sky was colored pink and blue.
It always got dark later and in the morning the lights
came in quickly through the windows.
It was March 11, 2020,
and the young people were studying online.
And in the afternoon the inescapable appointment to play cards.
After a while they closed everything. Also the offices.
The army was beginning to monitor exits and borders.
Because there was no more room for everyone in the hospitals. And people got sick.
But spring didn't know it and the buds kept coming out.
It was March 11, 2020, and everyone was in mandatory quarantine:
Grandparents, families and also young people.
Then the fear became real.
And every day seemed the same.
So spring did not know it and the roses bloomed again.
Some people learned a new language. Some started studying
and took the last exam that was missing for their thesis.
We understood that we were truly living separated from life.
We stopped making deals with ignorance.
There were those who became doctors to help whoever might need it tomorrow.
It was the year in which the importance of greeting and affection was understood.
The year the world seemed to stand still. And the economy collapse.
But spring did not know it and the flowers gave way to the fruits. And then came liberation day.
...The emergency was over. And that the virus had passed.
And then we went outside. With tears in the eyes.
Without masks or gloves. Hugging our neighbor. As if he were our brother.
And it was then that summer came.
Because spring did not know. And I was still there.
Despite everything
Despite the virus
Despite fear
Despite death
Spring did not know and taught everyone
The force of life.*

~Irene Vella, Italian Journalist



Saint Guido Maria Conforti and the 1918 flu pandemic

FR. LUIGINO MARCHIORON SX. NOVICE MASTER, PHILIPPINE THEOLOGATE

Saint Guido Maria Conforti, the Founder of the Xaverian Missionaries, a close and caring brother, father and bishop of the Diocese of Parma, Italy, knew and faced as a believer, alongside a horrible world war (1915-1918), the devastating and dramatic reality of the “Spagnola” or “Spanish flu” (the 1918 flu pandemic), also called the “lung plague.”

In the territory of Parma - increasingly involved in the dramatic reality of the First World War (1915-1918) - the hygienic conditions of the population were worsening: diseases had been on the rise for some time, including typhoid, tuberculosis and pellagra. In the last months of the year 1918, the serious threat of the “Spagnola” (“the lung plague”) appeared on the horizon. The virus that first emerged from a military training camp in the United States, and then spread in Europe, starting from the northern coast of Spain. The first news of a contagion in the territory of Parma appeared in the local newspaper *La Gazzetta di Parma* (August 23, 1918).

In May 1915 the Xaverian Missionary Institute was made available to the military authority by Conforti himself to relieve the pain of the sick and injured. In June 1915 the Xaverian community had to withdraw to the top floor of the building at the back of their quarters to make room for a convalescent home. The ground and first floors were occupied by the military. In 1916 there was room for 150 sick people. Despite the remonstrations of Conforti and the constant request to liberate some places, the seminarians and the fathers had to leave the Seminary. They found hospitality with the Stigmatine Missionaries in August 1918.

In “Holy” Week Jesus “enters” the city of Jerusalem—and now in “enters” our families, our communities, and

our cities—to reaffirm the dignity of every person; to reveal to every person attention, listening, teaching, pardon, encouragement, healing, that is to put Himself in the service of others. In this dramatic, distressing and epochal time of our history we are called “to enter” with all our fragility. In this moment of pain and tears, of great trial, of passion and death in which a treacherous, insidious, unknown, surprising and lethal enemy called Covid 19 Virus is wounding and striking the whole of humanity and has hit to the heart also of our Xaverian missionary family, we feel the weakness of our human condition. We are accompanied by Jesus our Lord who “enters” the core of our families and faces in us and with us the mystery of Holy Saturday. The darkest moment of our life is at the same time the most luminous sign, because the Holy Saturday, although it seems to remain between the death and the Resurrection, is “entered” by One, the Only One, who embraced his “Passion” for us, for every person. From here, Jesus, the Beloved Son of God, opens the light of a new hope: the light of the Resurrection, the fullness of life.

During this period, as Xaverian Missionaries, we are also called to prepare ourselves for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the father’s final testament with humility, gratitude, fidelity and hope, returning to what is essential. We want to celebrate the grace of this century of the father’s testament with confidence in the friendship of the Lord and in His Resurrection, with fraternity, resourcefulness, creativity for the many gestures of kindness, zeal, impulse, the total gift of self, the beauty, the spirit of sharing in the life of our “companions of vocation” of different nationalities who today continue to “enter” with humility and fragility,

and sow in the hearts of peoples and cultures the same spirit of the Gospel.

A centennial anniversary celebrated with our parents and benefactors, true instruments of the Providence of God in our life; with the laity and diocesan priests who for love of God and our brothers and sisters, work together with us, embracing the charism of Saint Guido Maria Conforti as a gift and a responsibility. It is lived and experienced as an opportunity for discernment, conversion, renewal and willingness to improve - in living and witnessing - the call we have received to serve our non-Christian brothers and sisters, and generate a new commitment to welcome and walk in a new way the path of proclamation of the “Gospel of Christ.” There is no other reason than the friendship and benevolence of the Risen Lord who is with us to decide to leave our “nets” and “boats”, to “go forth”, to “leave” and to “remain” with our brothers non-Christians (Matt. 4:20, 28:19-20).

At the same time, among the peoples and cultures in which we live, other voices that are very familiar to us, participate too in this Centennial Anniversary. They are the voices of a wounded humanity, the one of the refugees and migrants, the one of new forms of slavery and abuse: from the destruction of ecosystems and the greedy, bossy and indiscriminate exploitation of habitats that causes climate change, vast exodus of entire families, and new pandemics, to the criminal use of resources for the weapons of war that suffocate and destroy life, education, health, families, institutions and future. These voices are in us and with us. They are part of our identity in the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Testament Letter of Saint Guido Maria Conforti.



Prayer is our Homage to God

ST. GUIDO CONFORTI INSISTED A GREAT DEAL ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER. HE SPOKE CONSTANTLY ABOUT THE MOTIVATIONS FOR PRAYER AND THE FUNDAMENTAL REASONS THAT EXPLAIN THE BEAUTY OF A LIFE OF PRAYER.

“God has no need of our prayer, but we do. We need to pray to placate the divine justice, glorify the divine Majesty, obtain the blessings of divine Providence, fight, win and gain merits, so that we might not perish, but save ourselves. This is a pressing and constant need, but at the same time it is very good and salvific because prayer can do everything to our advantage and the advantage of everyone. What is prayer? As I said to you before, prayer is the elevation of the spirit to God, to the God who is the source of life; it is the mysterious bond of the wonderful exchange between humanity and our Creator. It raises our soul high above this vale of tears and takes it into the heart of God. Humanity speaks and God listens, we ask and God grants our requests, we order and God, in a certain sense, obeys because prayer exerts a gentle violence on the heart of God, who has already said to those who pray: “Ask and you shall receive.” This explains why Augustine cleverly called prayer “the strength of humanity and the weakness of God. “If I were to give you concrete examples of the efficacy of prayer, I would never finish speaking.

*Prayer is the
elevation of
the spirit to God.*

Countless times, prayer has proven to be stronger than the laws of nature, even stronger than hell itself. Remember the pages of sacred and profane history and you shall see how, from age to age, the most terrible scourges receded before this mysterious power, which we could say is the supreme law of all the laws of the universe. Pestilence and war, hunger and thirst, rain and drought, all kinds of storms, illness and death: you shall see that they all bowed down before those who prayed.”

(1913, JANUARY 6, PARMA, HOMILY ON THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY; FCT 21, 42)

World Mission News

“Making of the World One Family...”



Photo: Char Kukrimukri, Bangladesh by Adrien Taylor on Unsplash

CATHOLIC BISHOPS ACROSS ASIA HAVE ADVISED THE FAITHFUL TO ATTEND CHURCH SERVICE THROUGH LIVE STREAMING OR MASSES AIRED LIVE ON CABLE, LOCAL TELEVISION NETWORKS, RADIO STATIONS, ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA. THEY ALSO URGED PEOPLE TO INVEST MORE TIME IN PRAYER, RECITE THE ROSARY, DEVOTE TIME IN PERSONAL PRAYER READING THE BIBLE AND DO OTHER SPIRITUAL PRACTICES.

Manila (Agenzia Fides) - The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has affected more nations than the World Wars. The outbreak has impacted every aspect of life—family, social, business, governance, education, economy, religion, to name a few.

During the emergency, governments around the world have limited the movement of citizens to contain the infection by adopting “social distancing” measures. Consequently, in-person meetings, conferences, gathering, works and religious services have been canceled. In this unique time in the world, the Church authorizes around Asia, like in the Philippines, India, Japan, Indonesia, Myanmar, Malaysia, Vietnam, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and in many parts of the world to “stay home”.

Undoubtedly, church authorities in these countries have navigated their people to stay at home as a protective and preventive measure during the crisis that uncovers new challenges for one and all.

People are directed to turn to technology to keep their faith in a time of crisis in this unprecedented moment as it is a great responsibility of all to help each other.

At a very practical level, the church officials stressed to focus on social distancing as an important tactic for slowing the spread of illness for all. So, the “virus checks,” for instance, have taken on a whole new meaning in light of this moment in terms of social interaction and religious practice. People are directed to turn to technology to keep their faith in a time of crisis in this unprecedented moment as it is a great responsibility of all to help each other.

These turbulent times have paved a way for ‘digital or virtual church’ across the nations as extreme or enhanced community or self-quarantine are in place in many countries and all public Masses and other church services and programs are canceled. The Asian Churches have advised the faithful to attend church service through live “streaming” or Masses aired live on cable, local television networks, radio stations, online and social media.

Amid the coronavirus disease outbreak, Catholics in Asia and elsewhere look life and challenges in the light of faith and feel its essence as a universal character in a state of “Digital Church.”

USA NEWS

The current health emergency prevents us from participating in the Holy Eucharist. Pope Francis called the Eucharist the “Prayer par excellence...the highest, the most sublime and, at the same time, the most concrete.” In fact, it is the encounter with God through God’s Word and the Body and Blood of Jesus. Being deprived of this sacred banquet is undoubtedly painful for many. However, there is not much that we can do due to the circumstances, and before we can participate in the Holy Eucharist again, we must endure the current situation.

However, there are ways that could help us alleviate this situation:

a) Participation in online television or radio broadcasts of the Eucharistic celebration. When we participate in the Eucharist in this way, we must remember that we are not watching an entertainment program, but are looking for an encounter with the Lord. Silence, a well-arranged place and a committed heart must accompany us in this action without distractions. We must remember that we are not seeing or hearing the celebration of the Eucharist as mere consumers. It is not a video or a song, it is actually an invitation to deepen our belonging to God, even though we cannot physically consume the Body and Blood of Jesus.

b) Make the presence of Jesus in our midst come true through our family prayer. This practice requires us to return to the experience of the first Christian communities: “They dedicated themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to community life, to the breaking of bread and to prayers” - Acts 2:24. We cannot participate in the Eucharist, but we can sit down, gather our thoughts, silence ourselves and pray intentionally. We remember the Baptismal Rite: “Now you are anointed with the chrism of salvation, so

that, united to God’s people, you can remain forever as a member of Christ the Priest, Prophet and King.” We participate in the priesthood of Jesus, and we are all called to spread the love of God.

This pandemic unfortunately deprives us of the opportunity to participate in the Eucharist. However, it gives us the opportunity to grow in our faith, in our unity with God. I really invite you to deepen your faith through your prayer life. We may not be able to do as many things as we like, but don’t waste your time. Use this time to grow in aspects of your life that may have been neglected during this time of emergency; “At an acceptable time I listened to you, and on the day of salvation I helped you.” Behold, now is a very acceptable moment; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6: 2).

Our prayers are for all of you!

~Fr. Alex Rodriguez SX

On May 10th, St. Mary’s Parish in Holliston MA will celebrate their 150th Anniversary with a Mass with Cardinal Sean O’Malley, OFMcap. Xaverians are gifting the parish with a Mexican Carving of the Madonna and Child. The inscription on a plaque reads, “The Xaverian Community at the Missionary Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima congratulates the parish family at St. Mary’s in Holliston on their 150th Anniversary. Seventy three years ago you welcomed our first confreres to Holliston as they established our community here in 1947. We became part of this family of faith, sharing with you our world church while you keep us grounded in the local church. Mary, the first missionary, continues to inspire us and helps us direct all peoples to her Son.”

~Fr. Rocco Puopolo SX



**WE INVITE YOU TO “VIRTUALLY”
JOIN THE XAVERIAN MISSIONARIES
BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE, worldcatholic.us;
VIEWING THE VIDEO REFLECTIONS OF FR. ROCCO PUOPOLO SX AND
FR. CARL CHUDY SX AT https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsBrSHM-RaT2CW_vsgU_6s1A FOLLOW US
ON FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/worldcatholic>;
TWITTER <https://twitter.com/worldcatholic>; AND SIGN
UP FOR OUR E-NEWSLETTERS <https://www.xaverianmissionaries.org/stay-informed/e-newsletters/>.**



**WE ARE ALL IN THIS
TOGETHER AND WE
ARE HERE FOR YOU!**



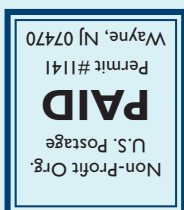
SPREAD KINDNESS!

**Bring Compassion to the World!
Become a Xaverian Missionary
Priest, Sister or Brother.**

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

Xaverian Missionaries Serve In:

Bangladesh • Brazil • Burundi • Cameroon • Chad • Colombia • Democratic Republic of Congo • France
Indonesia • Italy • Japan • Mexico • Mozambique • Philippines • Sierra Leone • Spain • Taiwan • Thailand • UK • USA



Return Service Requested

