



# The Alexians

*The Love of Christ Compels Us*

*Immaculate Conception  
Province of the Congregation  
of Alexian Brothers*

### **Mission Statement**

*Strengthened by community, prayer, commitment to the poor and the legacy of our founders, and in partnership with others, we Alexian Brothers witness the Healing Christ by a holistic approach to promoting health and caring for the sick, dying, aged and unwanted of all socioeconomic levels.*

### **Values**

*Compassion  
Dignity of the Person  
Care of the Poor  
Holism  
Partnership*

## New treatment center extends Brothers' commitment to marginalized

**A** former Alexian Brothers residence in suburban Chicago has been transformed into a residential treatment center for people with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), anxiety and addictions, a purpose that reflects the Alexian Brothers' long-standing tradition of caring for the mentally ill and other marginalized groups.

AMITA Health's Foglia Family Foundation Residential Treatment Center opened its doors April 24 in Elk Grove Village, Illinois, following an April 21 blessing and dedication ceremony. The center is the only one of its kind in Illinois and one of only four such facilities in the nation.

Most Reverend George J. Rassas, an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Chicago, blessed and dedicated the facility during the ceremony attended by AMITA Health leaders and associates, Alexian Brothers, local dignitaries, and friends and supporters of the Alexian Brothers and AMITA Health.

"Let us ask for God's blessing on all those who will take up residence here and upon those



Most Reverend George J. Rassas, an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Chicago, (left), blesses the Foglia Family Foundation Residential Treatment Center with assistance from Father Bill Veith, (right), a chaplain at AMITA Health Alexian Brothers Medical Center Elk Grove Village.

who will devote themselves to healing and care," the bishop said. "Let us ask the divine blessing on this building, which for years has served as the residence of the Alexian Brothers. The same love of Jesus that moved them to serve our community for over 150 years compels our commitment to the dignity of all people. . . . May this residen-

*(continued on page 2)*

## New treatment center extends Brothers' commitment to marginalized

*(continued from page 1)*

tial treatment center be a healing place of consolation, mercy and empowerment.”

The 48-bed center fills “a very crucial gap” in behavioral health services regionally while enabling AMITA Health to complete its continuum of care for patients with OCD, anxiety and addictions, said Clay Ciha, president and chief

executive officer of AMITA Health Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital Hoffman Estates.

Speaking at the blessing and dedication ceremony, Ciha thanked the Alexian Brothers and Vince and Pat Foglia of North

Barrington, Illinois, for helping to make the center a reality. The Brothers sold their 40-year-old residence to AMITA Health, allowing the facility to be repurposed, and the Foglias' foundation donated \$5 million for the renovation project. “Somebody had to let go, and somebody had to take hold,” Ciha said. “We’ll never be able to thank them fully for what they’re doing – the Brothers and the Foglias.”

Ciha expects the center to treat about 500 people a year, with residents staying at the facility for three to six weeks, depending on the nature and complexity of their disorders. Specializing in treating multisymptomatic patients, such as those with anxiety and substance-abuse issues, the center will address what Ciha called an “overwhelming epidemic of addiction.” He added: “Under one roof, we’re going to treat anxiety, alcohol abuse, OCD, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and opioid abuse.”

The Alexian Brothers decided to sell their

longtime residence because it had become financially impractical to continue to own it. Only three Brothers lived in the 25-bedroom facility by 2016, their numbers depleted by the deaths of older Brothers and a long-term decline in religious vocations. It was an easy decision to turn the residence over to AMITA Health because the new center will extend the Brothers' 800-year-old commitment to serving the marginalized, said Brother Dan McCormick, C.F.A., provincial of the Immaculate Conception Province of the Alexian Brothers. The Brothers broke ground in May for a smaller residence nearby.

Citing the growing need for services addressing the needs of people struggling with OCD, anxiety and addictions, Brother Dan told attendees at the blessing and dedication ceremony: “This is real. . . . This is about your neighbors, your sons, your daughters. And if you don’t think that’s possible, you need to think again.”

Backing the project was “a natural” for the Foglias, longtime supporters of the Alexian Brothers Foundation, said Vince Foglia, who noted the widespread impact of mental illnesses and addictions and the Alexian Brothers' longstanding leadership in behavioral health services. “There’s been no better place, for many years now, to come than Alexian Brothers in this whole Chicagoland area – especially when you had teenagers and youth that needed help,” he said. “Now it’s getting better. . . . We’re very proud to have our name on the building. . . . This is an awesome place and a great place.”

Mark A. Frey, president and chief executive officer of AMITA Health, credited the Alexian Brothers for the “outsized presence” that AMITA Health and its legacy Alexian Brothers Health System have in behavioral health and substance-abuse services.

“It has largely been something that we have inherited from the Alexian Brothers themselves – a charisma and a legacy of caring for

*(continued on page 7)*



Alexian Brothers, AMITA Health leaders, AMITA Health supporters, and local dignitaries cut the ribbon during the blessing and dedication of the Foglia Family Foundation Residential Treatment Center.

# Provincial's Letter

## Dear Alexian Friends:

For 800 years, the Alexian Brothers have followed a healing tradition of stepping up to care for those on the margins of society.

When the Black Death ravaged Europe during the Middle Ages, the Brothers cared for the sick and buried the dead.

When young women, most of whom were schizophrenic, were burned at the stake as witches during the German Inquisition, the Brothers cared for them and comforted them as they walked to the stake.

When the Nazis began rounding up the mentally ill in 1931 and 1932, the Brothers stood in the way, and many died because of their resistance.

When many religious institutions avoided the issue of HIV/AIDS during the 1980s, the Brothers began taking people with AIDS into the Brothers' residences and caring for them until they died. Led by the late Brother Felix Bettendorf, C.F.A., the Brothers later raised money and in 1989 founded Bonaventure House, a residence on Chicago's North Side where people with HIV/AIDS could receive compassionate care and could die with dignity. Asked why the Brothers were stepping up to care for people with HIV/AIDS, Brother Felix said, "Because they need help."

His words echo today as the Brothers embark on a new phase of our healing mission in the United States. After gradually exiting our longtime hospital ministry in recent years, we have looked for ways to reinvent ourselves as religious brothers in the 21st century – and for new opportunities to help those on society's margins.

That kind of opportunity arose when we decided last year to sell our 25-bedroom residence on the campus of AMITA Health Alexian

Brothers Medical Center Elk Grove Village, Illinois. Only three of us still lived there, and it had become impractical to continue to own the 40-year-old building. We were pleased to find a willing buyer in AMITA Health, which had been searching for a location for a residential treatment center for people with obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety and addictions.

No one is more marginalized than the mentally ill and addicted, and AMITA Health's plan offered an ideal opportunity for us to perpetuate our centuries-old tradition of addressing the needs of the mentally ill and other marginalized groups. After a monthslong renovation project, the new Foglia Family Foundation Residential Treatment Center opened April 24 in our former residence, and the Brothers could not have been more pleased. (See article on page 1.)

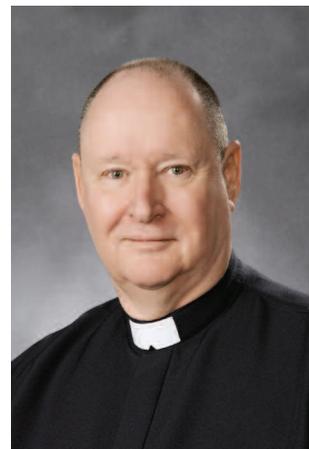
The center is the only one of its kind in Illinois and one of only four such facilities in the nation. In addition to filling a gap in behavioral health services regionally, the center creates new ministry opportunities for the remaining Brothers in Elk Grove Village, who can provide pastoral care to the center's residents.

The opening of the center offers a compelling example of Alexander Graham Bell's observation, "When one door closes, another opens." We thank God for this new door that has opened, allowing our legacy of caring for the mentally ill to endure. We also pray for His guidance as we continue to look for new opportunities to serve those in need.

May God Bless You and Yours,



Brother Daniel McCormick, C.F.A.  
Provincial  
Immaculate Conception Province of the Alexian Brothers



## Did you know?

*Editor's Note: "Did you know?" provides brief glimpses into the rich, 800-year history of the Congregation of Alexian Brothers.*

Of the many religious groups devoted to the care of the physically and mentally ill during the Middle Ages and Renaissance, only the Congregation of Alexian Brothers has survived into the 21st century. We are 800 years old!

Having no single founder, the Alexian Brothers originated on the fringes of medieval society as part of the reform movement of the "mendicants" – Franciscans, Dominicans and Beghards, all of whom found their inspiration in the ideal of the "pauperes Christi," or poor of Christ.

The Brothers began as a ministry of spontaneous assistance to the Black Death plague victims of the Rhineland (1348-1351) through the Brothers' organization as "Seelbruders," or soul brothers, officially commissioned to care for the dying and to bury the dead. The Brothers evolved into "Passage Brothers," caring for not only the physically ill, but also the incurably insane.

## Alexian Brother takes reins as comptroller for province

**B**rother Steve Fogt, C.F.A., has been named comptroller of Alexian Brothers Community & Ministries, the nonprofit organization of the Immaculate Conception Province of the Congregation of Alexian Brothers.

It is the first time that an Alexian Brother has served in the role. In the past, the accounting/finance department of Alexian Brothers Health System and, more recently, the accounting/finance department of AMITA Health handled bookkeeping and other financial matters for the Brothers.

“With Alexian Brothers Health System becoming part of Ascension and later teaming with Adventist Midwest Health to form AMITA Health, the Brothers as a business entity are now separate from the health system,” said Brother Dan McCormick, C.F.A., Provincial of the Immaculate Conception Province. “So it makes sense for us now to manage our financial affairs.”

Brother Steve is ideally suited for this responsibility, Brother Dan said. Brother Steve earned an associate’s degree in accounting from Joliet Community College in Joliet, Illinois, and a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Lewis University in Romeoville, Illinois. This past December, he earned a master’s degree in business administration, with a concentration in finance, from Lewis University. Before joining the Brothers in 2013, he worked as a benefits specialist at Waste Management, Inc. He earlier worked in the accounts receivable department at Tellabs.

“I enjoy how numbers flow, as well as the logic behind accounting,” said Brother Steve, who professed his First Vows as an Alexian Brother in 2015. “It’s pretty straightforward.”

In his new role, Brother Steve will be responsible for all Alexian Brothers accounting functions, including disbursing funds to the

“The Brothers have made a commitment to utilize our funds in a socially conscious manner.”

three Alexian Brothers communities in the U.S. and to the Alexian Brothers missions in Hungary and the Philippines, tracking expenses, processing reimbursements, and managing accounts payable and accounts receivable.

Brother Steve also will develop budget reports for the Provincial Council and will consult with financial advisers about the Brothers’ investments. “The Brothers have made a commitment to utilize our funds in a socially conscious manner,” Brother Steve said.

Adeline Dzierozynski, a senior accountant at AMITA Health who has handled the Brothers’ accounting for years, has been training Brother Steve since he assumed his new duties in January. “As time moves forward, I’ll do more and more on my own,” he said.

Brother Steve expects to spend two or three days a week on his comptroller duties, and two or three days a week on ministry activities. He volunteers at the Greater Chicago Food Depository, and he provides personal budgeting advice to participants in the Transitional Living Program of the Alexian Brothers Center for Mental Health in Arlington Heights, Illinois.

“It’s a privilege for me that Brother Dan and the Brothers have confidence that I’ll be able to use my skills to help with our accounting and still have the flexibility to still do ministry work, which is really my passion,” Brother Steve said.

Added Brother Dan: “He will be that wonderful combination of a very practical accountant and a Brother who has a heart big enough to include the most marginalized. It’s a remarkable gift for him to bring to the Brothers.”



Brother Steve Fogt, C.F.A., says it’s a privilege to serve as Alexian Brothers comptroller while still having the flexibility to pursue ministry activities.

# Five Alexian Brothers celebrate milestones at mission in Philippines

**F**ive Alexian Brothers recently celebrated milestones at the Alexian Brothers mission in the Philippines.

Novice Brothers Ignatius Gonzales, C.F.A., and Mark Buenaobra, C.F.A., professed their First Vows as Alexian Brothers; postulants Dionisio De La Banda, Jr., and Rommel Cabangon entered the Alexian Brothers Novitiate; and Brother Paul Oserin, C.F.A., renewed his Temporary Vows for one year.

Brother Ignatius and Brother Mark professed their First Vows during a Eucharistic Celebration in the Chapel of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at the Alexian Brothers Novitiate House in the Bajada section of Davao City. Reverend Father Ronel M. Fulo, Jr., of the Blessed Sacrament Fathers, presided during the March 19 celebration. Brother Ignatius said that during the homily, Father Ronel reminded him and Brother Mark “that our spiritual thirst can be satisfied only through a deeper faith encounter with Jesus Christ. From Jesus’ heart flows an abundant stream of grace and mercy, and we are being called to meet the Lord deeply in our hearts.”

After the homily, Father Ronel blessed the scapulars to be worn by Brother Ignatius and Brother Mark. Brother Raphael Fallado, C.F.A., Director of the Alexian Brothers Bajada Community, presented Brother Mark’s scapular to him, and Brother Dominic Andes, C.F.A., Director of Temporary Professed, presented Brother Ignatius’ scapular to him.

Brother Mark and Brother Ignatius then knelt in front of the altar and professed their First Vows, each holding a lighted candle. Brother Raphael accepted their vows on behalf of the Congregation of Alexian Brothers.

Family members of the two Brothers traveled from other provinces in the Philippines to witness the celebration. Also in attendance were religious sisters and brothers from different congregations.

On March 18, postulants Dionisio and

Rommel entered the novitiate, and Brother Paul renewed his Temporary Vows, during a Eucharistic Celebration in the Chapel of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Reverend Father Allan Rodriguez, D.C.D., presided during the Mass, and the two postulants were initiated into the novitiate before the Liturgy of the Word. Brother Dominic, who also serves as Director of Postulancy, presented the two postulants to Brother Raphael, who also serves as Director of Novices. Brother Raphael then accepted the two men into the novitiate.

Novice Brother Dionisio retained his baptismal name and chose Saint Augustine of Hippo as his patron saint. Novice Brother Rommel chose Francisco as his religious name after selecting Saint Francis of Assisi as his patron saint.

Brother Paul renewed his Temporary Vows after the homily at the same celebration. Brother Dominic accepted Brother Paul’s renewal of vows, and Brother Raphael served as a witness. It was an especially memorable day for Brother Paul, because his mother and younger sister attended the celebration.

“The occasions were a reminiscing and reflective activity for all the Filipino professed Brothers, who in the silence of their hearts remembered the day of their commitment to God and to serve the Church,” said Brother John of God Oblina, C.F.A., Director of the Alexian Brothers Community in the Matina section of Davao City.



Brother Ignatius Gonzales, C.F.A., (left), and Brother Mark Buenaobra, C.F.A., (right), join Reverend Father Ronel M. Fulo, Jr., for a photo after he presided during a Eucharistic Celebration at which the Brothers professed their First Vows.



(Left to right) Reverend Father Allan Rodriguez, D.C.D., Novice Brother Dionisio De La Banda, Jr., Novice Brother Francisco Cabangon, C.F.A., and Brother Paul Oserin, C.F.A., pose for the camera after a Eucharistic Celebration during which Novice Brothers Dionisio and Francisco entered the Alexian Brothers Novitiate and Brother Paul renewed his Temporary Vows.

## Brother Romie Duriman, C.F.A., takes sabbatical in United States

Brother Romie Duriman, C.F.A., has joined the Alexian Brothers Community in Arlington Heights, Illinois, for a sabbatical following the death of his mother.

Brother Romie, Director of Vocations at the Alexian Brothers mission in the Philippines, is becoming involved in ministry activities and is working with Brother Patrick McCabe, C.F.A., and Zeke Mapa in the Alexian Brothers’ U.S. vocations office.

“He is learning from them and sharing with them some of the vocations strategies that the Brothers use in the Philippines,” said Brother Dan McCormick, C.F.A., provincial of the Immaculate Conception Province of the Congregation of Alexian Brothers.

## Prayerful silence, joyful visits highlight sabbatical for former superior general

*Editor's note: In this column, Brother Edward Walsh, C.F.A., who served for 18 years as superior general of the Congregation of Alexian Brothers before leaving the position in 2016, reflects on his recently completed six-month sabbatical with the Alexian Brothers Community in Knock, Ireland.*

**T**he Alexian Brothers residence in Knock, Ireland, is known as a house of hospitality and healing.

The three Brothers who live there have a large parcel of land where they grow vegetables and raise chickens and goats. The property

includes two hermitages for private retreats and three small houses for people who wish to have a private day or retreat days. There also is a small chapel where laypeople on retreat can participate in prayer and adoration. The chapel was a good spot for me because it provided a place for silence and prayer each day.

Not far from the Brothers' property is the 100-acre shrine of Our Lady of Knock, Queen of Ireland, which offers many things to do for the thousands of people who visit the site daily. There is a large adoration

chapel, a basilica and a parish church where the Blessed Mother is believed to have appeared in 1879. The church has become a devotional place for visitors, and the shrine draws local people and visitors from many nations. The shrine offers a daily lecture program, which features many thought-provoking presentations on a variety of religious topics. These lectures

gave me much to reflect upon during the many days I walked around the shrine.

Shortly after I arrived in Knock, I traveled to Medjugorje in southern Bosnia and Herzegovina near the border with Croatia. It is a small, poor town, but thousands of people visit every day because of reports that the Blessed Mother appeared to six children there in 1981 and still appears to the six individuals, who are now adults. One thing that struck me was the Thursday night service outside the town's church. About 10,000 people attended the service, and there was a chair for each person. There was total silence, and no one moved or spoke. It was a special time for me.

I also visited the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Fatima, Portugal, where three shepherd children reported apparitions of the Blessed Mother in 1917. Although this year is the 100th anniversary of the reported apparitions, Fatima was relatively quiet – a good place to observe silence and to hear God speaking.

My sabbatical also offered opportunities for me to visit fellow Alexian Brothers in Dublin, Ireland, and Manchester, England. Visiting the Brothers reminded me of a lesson I learned as I traveled to all of our Alexian Brothers houses while I was superior general: One's way is not always the only and best way.

I also caught up with Irish relatives I don't get to see often enough. Knock is in County Mayo, where my mother's parents were born, and I visited many cousins and shared many Irish stories and laughs with them. I also traveled a few hours to Galway, where my father was born. I visited cousins there and saw the school he attended and the place where he worked.

All of these visits brought me joy, peace and relaxation. It was a time when I could become closer to God. My sabbatical also gave me time for prayer and silence, which I truly enjoy. For where in life can one find truly good friends if not in Jesus and his mother, Mary?



Brother Edward Walsh, C.F.A., says his sabbatical in Ireland was a time of peace and relaxation that brought him closer to God.

## Brother Leó Vendrey, C.F.A., joins fellow religious at Hungary conference

**B**rother Leó Vendrey, C.F.A., recently represented the Alexian Brothers' Hungarian mission at an annual meeting of people from religious orders and institutions across Hungary.

The Unitas Conference, which started after the end of communist rule in Hungary in 1989, features a program that includes lectures, common prayer, adoration and faith sharing.

This year's conference occurred in February in Esztergom, one of Hungary's oldest towns. Esztergom is the seat of Cardinal Péter Erd, primate of the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary and archbishop of Esztergom-Budapest. The town also is the location of the Church's Esztergom Basilica, the largest church in Hungary.

"Brother Leó came back with a lot of nice memories and useful information," said Brother Alexis Siska, C.F.A., director of the Alexian Brothers Community in Győrújbarát, Hungary.

Brother Leó assists Brother Alexis with

administrative matters at the mission, and both men provide pastoral care at the St. Elizabeth of Hungary Home for the Elderly at the mission.

### In other Hungarian mission news:

Responding to an invitation from Pope Francis, the Alexian Brothers in Hungary organized an event to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church. The event included a Mass celebrated by Father Gyula Gyökér and an adoration in St. Bernadette Chapel at St. Alexius Monastery, the Brothers' residence at the Hungarian mission. The Flowers of Jesus Charismatic Community joined the Brothers for the celebration. "Musicians played religious songs on the violin, organ and guitar," Brother Alexis said. "It was great to spend a prayerful evening with this lively community."



Brother Leó Vendrey, C.F.A., listens to a presentation at an annual meeting of representatives from religious orders and institutions across Hungary.

## New treatment center extends Brothers' commitment to marginalized

*(continued from page 2)*

individuals who really need help as much if not more than anyone else in our health system," Frey said at the blessing and dedication ceremony. "It is this charism and this legacy of reaching out to those who are in most need and most reflect the values and the mission of our organization that have always been front and center for everything we do. That is largely why not only do we have the system we have in place, but why we've actually chosen to expand it in a very, very significant way."

The center's services will include individual therapy, group therapy and psychiatric care/medication management. The center will offer the best in evidence-based care, with options

such as expressive therapy, mindfulness and exposure response prevention therapy. Residents struggling with addiction also will have access to 12-step addiction recovery groups.

The center includes four beds for veterans, their spouses and their children up to age 26, and donations to the Alexian Brothers Foundation will cover their care. Veterans suffering from PTSD will have access to virtual-reality treatments that simulate battle situations. The center also will provide other virtual-reality treatments for residents struggling with phobias and addictions.



(Left to right) Brother Steve Fogt, C.F.A., Brother Dan McCormick, C.F.A., and Brother Patrick McCabe, C.F.A., display an architect's rendering of the new Alexian Brothers residence in Elk Grove Village, Illinois, during a ground-breaking ceremony for the residence May 9.

# In This Issue

Volume 43, Number 1  
Spring 2017



## Cover

Treatment center for mentally ill, addicted opens



## Page 4

Alexian Brother takes reins as comptroller



## Page 5

Five Brothers mark milestones in Philippines



## Page 6

Former superior general reflects on sabbatical



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*The Love of Christ Compels Us*

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## New Alexian Brothers Associate makes promises in St. Louis



Brother Warren Longo, C.F.A., accepts Kathy Creely's promises as an Alexian Brothers Associate during a March 18 ceremony in the chapel at the Alexian Brothers residence in St. Louis. Alexian Brothers Associates are laypeople who assist the Alexian Brothers with their ministries and join them for retreats and other activities. "The Brothers' ministry has always appealed to me, mostly because they embrace everyone, no matter who they are or what they have or don't have," said Creely, who has worked with the Alexian Brothers on and off since 1987. "They mirror Christ." The Associate program, she added, provides an opportunity to receive spiritual satisfaction and to give something back to Christ by supporting the Alexian Brothers' mission.