



BASILIAN FATHERS MISSIONS

Newsletter of the Apostolate in Mexico and Colombia

Fall - Winter 2026

St. Francis Xavier Cabrini: A Bold Missionary Without Borders

Frances Xavier Cabrini, known to the world as “Mother Cabrini,” was born in Lombardy, Italy in 1850. From her earliest years she dreamed of serving as a missionary in China, but God’s plan led her westward instead — across the ocean to the Americas. Her journey became a parable of courage, compassion, and faith in action.

When Pope Leo XIII told her, “Sister, not to the East, but to the West,” she obeyed without hesitation. Arriving in New York in 1889, she found thousands of Italian immigrants struggling in poverty and isolation. With characteristic energy and trust in Divine Providence, she began building schools, hospitals, and orphanages — not only in New York, but across the United States, South America, and Europe. Her mission was simple yet profound: to make Christ’s love visible through health care and education.

Mother Cabrini’s leadership was marked by a rare blend of gentleness and determination. She faced prejudice, bureaucratic resistance, and frail health, yet she never allowed obstacles to dim her zeal. “The world is too small for what I intend to do,” she once said. Her Sisters of the Sacred Heart became a network of service, reaching those most forgotten.

Mother Cabrini died in 1917, in Chicago, in a hospital which she had founded. In 1946, she became the first U.S. citizen to be canonized as a saint, recognized not only for her sanctity, but also for her tireless advocacy of migrants and the poor. Today, her legacy continues wherever people cross borders seeking hope and dignity. Missionaries who follow her example discover that love knows no frontier and that faith, when lived boldly, transforms both giver and receiver.

Mother Cabrini reminds us that missionary work begins not only in distant lands, but in the willingness to see Christ in every stranger. Her life calls each of us to serve with generosity, tenderness and trust — confident that God’s providence still opens new paths for love and service. Your contributions to the Basilian Fathers Missions help us open these paths in our ministry in Mexico and Colombia.



**My dear friends,
go often,
and place yourself
at the feet of
Jesus.
He is our comfort,
our way,
and our life.**

St. Francis Xavier Cabrini

The Basilian Fathers (CSB): 1797-1822

The formation of the religious community known today as the Basilian Fathers was a long process that took place in France in the 25 turbulent years after the French Revolution. It was downright dangerous to promote Catholic education in the aftermath of the French Revolution, but that is what happened. The Archbishop of Vienne contacted Father Joseph Lapierre and asked him to organize a school in the remote French village of Saint-Symphorien. He was also to care for the parish there. Both were dangerous assignments since the French soldiers made sporadic visits to inspect the village for compliance to the Revolutionary laws.

Nevertheless, a little band of 8 priests and priests-to-be formed around Joseph Lapierre and Joseph Marie Actorie with the apostolate of teaching and preaching. When the school moved from Saint-Symphorien to the town of Annonay in 1801, there was a total of 132 students. The little band of priest-teachers founded two more schools in Annonay in 1805 and 1813. Things were looking up.

After much discussion and debate, the 10 founders petitioned the local bishop to form an association of priests in the Diocese of Viviers whose ministry would be teaching and preaching. On November 21, 1822, the Congregation of St. Basil was born.

**"Let us not love with words or speech,
but with actions and in truth."**

The first letter of St. John 3:18



"This is the bread that comes down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever." John 6:58



The Basilian parish in Medellín, Colombia has a dynamic program of prayer and scripture study. "The Word of God is living and active." Letter to the Hebrews, 4:12



The Basilians in Mexico and Colombia pray for our donors in Canada and the USA. They feel connected with you, and they are grateful for your support.



These Basilian scholastics (seminarians) met together this past summer for a time of prayer and sharing. They are preparing for ordination and service to the People of God.



The Basilians came to the small parish of San Lorenzo, Diácono y Mártir, in Tehuacán, Mexico in 1978. The parish community has grown and flourished. A larger church was constructed to accomodate the growing number of faithful parishioners.



The Basilians of the parish of San Basilio in Medellín provide several vocational workshops for young men and women that teach skills for future employment. Above we see two young men being trained to work in arts and crafts.

The parish also a long-time sponsor of a "Comedor" or dining room that serves healthy food and drink to the needy, both the elderly and the very young, who otherwise would go without much needed nourishment.





Growing the Mission

Greetings! My name is Walter Roberto Martínez Royaceli. I am a Mexican Basilian scholastic (seminarian). I am deeply grateful for everything you do for me and for all of us Basilians and for the people of God entrusted to our care in Mexico and Colombia.

I first wrote to you in 2023 when I was still early in my Basilian journey. In May of this year (2026) I completed my theological studies at the Pontifical University of Mexico. This past year at the university and in pastoral ministry has been especially meaningful for me. On the one hand, the books, the professors, my classmates, and my friends have allowed me to deepen my knowledge of God. This is knowledge that never grows old, but rather is always new and alive.

But this knowledge is nothing if it is not shared; here lies the other aspect of my experience of faith: my pastoral ministry. From August 2025 to August 2026, I was entrusted with leading the catechesis program for the Chapel of Guadalupe and the Parish of Saint Peter of Verona, both in Mexico City. I prepared the topics and various activities with each group of catechists. Meeting with children, adolescents, young adults, and parents during each catechesis session kindled my love and hope for a better world. Celebrating the sacraments with each of them deepened my relationship with God and made me long even more for all he promises us.

I believe in God, who unites my own family, who inspires enthusiasm of the children in catechism, who gives energy to the young people, who sustains the elderly and infirm, who strengthens the commitment of parents, who endows the teachers with wisdom, who inspires the ministry of the Basilians, and who blesses the generosity of all of you who support our work in Mexico and Colombia. Without the support of my family, the Congregation of the Basilian Fathers, and without you, our faithful donors, my good intentions and my desire to serve would not be possible.

St. Augustine said in his *Confessions*, written at the end of the 4th century: "Give me what you ask of me, and ask of me whatever you will, Lord." I ask God for His blessing upon you and your families, your work, and each of your needs. I pray that that Our Lady of Guadalupe will be with you and guide and protect you.



Words from Pope Leo

For us, it is not always easy to understand and accept God's ways, especially when they are very far from our own. Then the temptation arises to think that the Lord is the one who is wrong, or worse still, that he is not listening to us or is not concerned about us.



Courtesy of Vatican Media

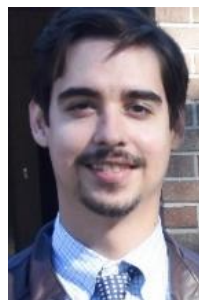
Faced with this uncertainty, please remember two important things. The first is never to cease our dialogue with the Lord. We must confidently tell him about our difficulty in understanding what he is asking of us. The second is never to judge God's work, but rather to prayerfully listen to what he is revealing to us in our lives, even when it does not meet our own expectations.

Angelus address on August 30, 2026, at Piazza della Libertà at Castel Gandolfo.

"...LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR..."



How to donate: An envelope is enclosed with this *Newsletter* if you wish to donate by mail. If you would prefer to donate securely online, in your browser please type: www.basilianfathersmissions.org or scan the QR CODE to access the Website. Every donation is important.



Aron Fernandez

**Director of Operations,
Basilian Mission Center**

Dear Friends of the Basilian Missions,

The Catholics and catechumens we serve in Mexico and Colombia have benefited by your charity through the gifts of medicine, clothing, food, education, and faith. On behalf of the Basilian Fathers, I want to thank you for your generous support. It is a pleasure for me to serve you and the Basilian Fathers. Their efforts to reach our brothers and sisters in Mexico and Colombia cannot fail to deliver God's mercy. Those who have never known Christ, or feel forgotten by God, will not be abandoned. Your donations help to bring the Good News of the Gospel to those most in need, and God will surely not forget your charity.



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Welcome! A Message from Father Terence Kersch CSB

I am blest to follow Father Maurice Restivo CSB, as the Procurator of Missions. Father Maurice was recently elected as our Vicar General, and I assure him of my prayers in his demanding new role. I have served in both Mexico and Colombia and have preached for the Missions during my previous Basilian appointments. I am delighted to follow Maurice Restivo and his predecessors.

As a native of Montreal, Quebec I completed my primary and secondary education in the Catholic School system of that province. I obtained a BA, MA, and PhD in Political Science at the University of British Columbia, an MA in Israel Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and an MDiv at the University of St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto. Some of my previous Basilian appointments include Chaplain of the University of St. Michael's College; Pastor of St. Basil's Church; Director of Scholastics; and President of St. Joseph's College in the University of Alberta. Please pray for me as I start my new role as Procurator of Missions.



Farewell and "Gracias"! A Message from Father Maurice Restivo CSB

Last fall I wrote about the surprises that God has for us. Little could I have imagined how many there might be. I returned from Colombia on June 3, happy to resume my role as Director of our Mission office and weekend preaching. Then, in July I was elected Vicar General of the Basilian Fathers! This is a full-time position, requiring a move to our Curial residence in Toronto. I am still a bit in awe of the confidence that my confrères had in me as they elected me to this position. I ask your prayer for me as I assume this new position and assure you that you continue to be in mine.

One of our first acts as a new General Council was to appoint Fr. Terry Kersch to assume the position of Procurator/Director of the Basilian Fathers Missions. I am sure that he will be diligent in his new role. Together, let us all be open to the surprises God has for us, and make the most of the opportunities that lie ahead.