After sixteen years of dedicated service, Brother Thomas Gerrow is retiring as President of St. John’s College High School. He has held that position longer than any other president in the school’s 156 year history. During these years Brother Thomas has directed a total transformation of the school. When he arrived at St. John’s the total enrollment, including its middle school, was 440 students. Today, without a middle school, enrollment has increased to over 1,000 students. In addition, he has overseen a $25 M renovation of the campus. These renovations have covered all aspects of the school including an entirely new science wing, state of the art technology in all renovated classrooms, a new art room, the building of a second gym, and a renovation of all the athletic fields. Anyone who has not been at St. John’s in recent years would hardly recognize it.

However, the achievement Brother Thomas is most proud of is the founding of our San Miguel School, a middle school for Hispanic boys who live in the area and cannot afford to attend a Catholic school. Opened eight years ago in affiliation with St. John’s, its academic program focuses on the fundamentals needed to go on to high school and college. Its success can be seen in the large number of its graduates who attend Catholic high schools and colleges in the area. As a result of Brother Thomas’ efforts, our San Miguel School recently moved into a totally renovated building that includes the latest technology in classrooms, a library, counseling center, cafeteria and administrative offices. Brother Thomas’ service to St. John’s and San Miguel is a testimony to his dedication and concern for the Lasallian mission. He will be greatly missed at both schools.

Mr. Jeffrey Mancabelli, who will succeed Brother Thomas as the 28th President of St. John’s in July, has been a vital force on the campus for the past ten years. He came to St. John’s as Vice Principal for Academic Affairs and has served as Principal for the past nine years. During these years Mr. Mancabelli has become a true Lasallian and is well prepared to become the first lay president in school history. Last year he attended a program at the Christian Brothers Motherhouse in Rome deepening his understanding of St. La Salle’s spirituality and the Lasallian educational mission. Brother Dennis Malloy, Provincial of the District of Eastern North America, states that he is “fully confident that Mr. Mancabelli’s leadership experience, combined with his extensive Lasallian formation, will not only keep St. John’s on its present course, but will also take the school to even higher degrees of success.”

Brother Michael Andrejko, a teacher at St. John’s from 1996-2000, has been appointed to succeed Mr. Mancabelli as principal. He has served on the school’s Board of Trustees since 2004.

A native of Pittsburgh, Brother Michael’s previous teaching assignments have included La Salle College High School and St. Gabriel’s Hall in suburban Philadelphia. He has also served as the Academic Vice Principal of West Catholic High School in Philadelphia. He is currently the Director of Campus Ministry and member of the administrative team at Central Catholic High School in Pittsburgh.

By Brother Martin Zewe, FSC
St. John’s College High School
In late March, Br. Stephen Olert, Director of the Office for Senior Brothers for the District of Eastern North America, invited nurses from the new District’s retirement homes to meet at La Salle Hall in Ammendale for a sharing and planning session. In attendance were District Health Care Coordinators Sr. Maryanne Burgoyne, RSM, and Mary Gorman, as well as Corinne Racioppa and Mary McCrory from La Salle Manor in Toronto, Joanne Beagan, Rebecca Gwinnell and Carol Light from De La Salle Hall in Lincroft (NJ) and Robin Shrader from La Salle Hall, Ammendale. Also representing the District were Br. John Patzwall, District Manager of Retirement Resources, and Br. Jerome Sullivan, Auxiliary Provincial.

Among the matters discussed during the day long meeting were the guidelines for The Physical and Pastoral Care of the Brothers, monthly news notes on wellness topics, the maintenance of a District database, common health forms and communication among District nurses, driving issues for senior Brothers, and procedures for admission to District retirement homes. Brother Stephen was pleased with the energy and enthusiasm participants brought to this first District Nurses’ Conference and anticipates future meetings on a yearly basis.

In early March the Cardinal Gibbons School community was shocked to learn that their school would be closing at the end of the school year. The Archdiocese of Baltimore announced that twelve Catholic elementary schools would also be closing in June. Cardinal Gibbons, which opened in 1962 under the supervision of the Brothers of Mary (Marianists), is located in West Baltimore on the site of what had formerly been St. Mary’s Industrial School under the Xaverian Brothers. Personnel limitations resulted in the Brothers of Mary leaving in 1990.

In 1997, at the request of Cardinal Keeler, the Christian Brothers welcomed Cardinal Gibbons into its Lasallian network of schools as an Affiliated Member, which enabled their faculty to participate in programs of professional development and other educational activities. Although this collaboration did not involve a formal commitment of Brothers to the school, Cardinal Keeler received permission in 2004 to invite Brother Kevin Strong, FSC to become the school’s first President. Brother Kevin readily accepted the invitation and set about the work that summer with his characteristic enthusiasm.

When asked about his early days at Gibbons, Brother Kevin remarked: “I was warmly welcomed by the faculty and staff, as well as by students, parents and alumni. The school had an all inclusive feeling and I loved everything about the place and the people associated with it. Babe Ruth’s presence (a former St. Mary’s student) was always tangible there, especially on the playing fields. We immediately set about opening up buildings that had been closed and giving a new appearance to the school. The business community and alumni were very generous in helping with the renovations of the facilities.”

Brother Kevin served as president until 2009 when health issues required his resignation. He continued his service to the school as a member of its governing board this past year. The thought that the Archdiocese would make the decision to close the school without warning and without more personal consultation with the Board and the Brothers has “astounded” him and he feels “devastated by the impact it has had on the entire school community.”

During Lent Calvert Hall students packaged sandwiches for distribution to Baltimore’s Franciscan Center to feed the homeless.

Students and faculty of LaSalle High, Philadelphia, gathered for prayer before classes on Fridays during Lent. Students organized the services and shared personal reflections on the Gospel passages selected.
The 64 students of San Miguel Providence (RI) recently raised $565 for the people of Haiti. Shown are eighth grade class officers and teachers. During Lent they focused their efforts on raising $1000 for Rongai Agricultural School, a Lasallian school in Kenya.

Approximately 140 students and faculty members from Lasallian schools and colleges in the United States and Canada assembled at the United Nations in New York City from April 25-27 for the Lasallian Convocation on the Rights of the Child. Participants in this unique teach-in event learned about why and how a world fit for children can be established.

In so doing, Lasallians joined thousands of others in their call for universal ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Since the adoption of the CRC in 1989, the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, who conduct about 1,000 educational ministries throughout the world, has advocated for the human rights and guiding principles enshrined in the treaty, which provides legal and moral standards for the rights of children. The Convention emphasizes the rights of children to survival; to develop to their full potential; to protection from abuse, neglect, discrimination, and exploitation; and to participate in family, cultural and social life. This complements the Brothers’ mission of providing a human and Christian education to the young, especially to those who are poor and marginalized.

The Lasallian Convocation at the UN was part of a global effort to achieve a culture of action on behalf of the rights of children. The three-day event involved activities and presentations that were designed to inform, educate and inspire the way Lasallians think, judge, decide and act as individuals within the community. The Vatican’s Permanent Observer at the UN endorsed the gathering and delivered an address to the assembly.

Some 100 Lasallian educational ministries in the US-Toronto region involve more than 67,000 students, 800 Brothers and 9,000 teaching partners. The Convocation marked the beginning of a concrete effort by this educational community to combine service activities with justice-oriented advocacy reflective of Lasallian education as it moves forward in the 21st century.

By Br. Ernest Miller, FSC
Associate Director for Mission & Ministry
District of Eastern North America

St. Joseph’s Collegiate Institute Entertains Ammendale Brothers

During their spring break in late March the Swing Choir of St. Joseph’s Collegiate Institute of Buffalo, NY put on a very lively and entertaining performance for the retired Brothers of La Salle Hall. The very talented singers, performing under the direction of Mr. James Deiotte, were on a “Goodwill Tour” to the Washington, DC area. They also performed for the Little Sisters of the Poor Home and the Veterans Home. The Ammendale visit was arranged by Br. Peter Killeen, a doctoral student at Catholic University, who himself was a member of the troupe in his high days. At the end of the show, the Brothers enjoyed hosting the students and their chaperons for dinner.

Olympian Apolo Ohno Visits La Salle Academy

Olympic gold medalist, Apolo Ohno, visited La Salle Academy in North Philadelphia on April 14th to discuss the dangers of underage drinking. The Century Council, a group funded by a number of alcohol distilling companies whose goals are fighting drunk driving and underage drinking, provided the program. “Ask, Listen, Learn” was developed to inspire middle school children to embrace a healthy lifestyle and say no to underage drinking. Apolo invited the students to play a quiz game and answer questions about alcoholism while playing a Wii-like motion video game.

Although Apolo shared his speed skating experience with the students, it was evident that he did not come to talk about his accomplishments; he was there to inspire students to live healthy lives and follow their dreams. “You guys give me energy too. You inspire me.” He told the students, “You make me feel good that you’re the future of our country.”

Because of the importance of Apolo’s message and who he was as an eight-time Olympic medalist, La Salle Academy invited 7th and 8th graders from the surrounding schools of Saint Laurentius and Saint Malachy to participate. Students from San Miguel School, Camden, and Hope Partnership were also in attendance.

By Sr. Jeanne McGowan, SSJ
President of La Salle Academy

Apolo Ohno with Ms. O’Neill’s 6th Grade Class

Olympian Apolo Ohno Visits La Salle Academy

The Lasallians convened at the United Nations on behalf of the Rights of Children

Students from Lasallian schools and colleges attended UN convocation on the Rights of the Child.

The 64 students of San Miguel Providence (RI) recently raised $565 for the people of Haiti. Shown are eighth grade class officers and teachers. During Lent they focused their efforts on raising $1000 for Rongai Agricultural School, a Lasallian school in Kenya.
La Salle Hall Expansion Completed, Brothers Express Gratitude to Donors

Last fall the Christian Brothers appealed to donors for their support in helping to fund the expansion of our retirement facilities at La Salle Hall in Ammendale, Maryland. The project involved the addition of eight bedrooms to the twenty-two bedroom facility that was opened in 1994. The new construction also included an exercise center and staff office along with laundry and storage facilities.

We are very happy to report that our donors contributed a total of $98,650 to the appeal, an outstanding response during these difficult economic times. An additional $36,850 was contributed by Brothers’ communities. These amounts, combined with proceeds of $81,500 from last October’s Service Awards Dinner, has resulted in $217,000 in total donor giving for the project. Such a generous outpouring of support from our benefactors will greatly assist us in meeting the $1.3 M cost for the building’s construction and furnishings.

Br. John Patzwall, Manager of Retirement Resources for the District of Eastern North America, worked closely with Whiting-Turner Construction and Architects Group Practice in the designing and building of the new addition. During the ten month construction phase even the heaviest sleepers among the Brothers didn’t need alarm clocks, as hammers and saws broke the early morning quiet promptly at 6:00 AM. The final stages of the work were undeterred by the Great Blizzard of 2010. In fact, our construction workers came to the rescue in plowing driveways and walkways through the thirty inches of snow and higher drifts around the property.

With life back to normal here in Ammendale, the community is enjoying nature’s re-birth and the pleasure of the outdoors. During these holy seasons of Easter and Pentecost we are especially mindful of the great blessing our benefactors continue to be in assisting us in the care of our retired Brothers. We pray daily that God will bless you and your loved ones abundantly.

Thank You!
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Mr. & Mrs. Joseph L. Lang
Mr. Thomas Langan
Mr. David C. Larkin
IMO Deceased Brothers of West Catholic
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Go to www.fscserviceawards.org for Information regarding the annual Service Awards Dinner honoring our Christian Brother Jubilarians

IMO = In Memory Of
IHO = In Honor Of
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The Christian Brothers' Service Awards Dinner

Save the Date

Saturday, November 13, 2010
THE BALLROOM AT THE BEN FRANKLIN HOUSE
Honoring our Brother Jubilarians

75 Years
Br. Patrick Phillips
65 Years
Br. Hugh Albright
Br. Thomas Caldwell
Br. Francisco Martin
Br. Hilary McGovern
Br. Nicholas Sullivan

60 Years
Br. Timothy Dean
Br. Brendan Garwood
Br. Joseph Gerry
Br. Charles Gresh
Br. Philip Whitman

50 Years
Br. James Bednar
Br. Philip DePorter
Br. William Fealy
Br. Eric Henderson
Br. William Johnson
Br. Richard Kestler

40 Years
Br. Lawrence Shine
25 Years
Br. Charles Huber
Br. Anthony Nguyen
Br. Leonard Rhoades

Entertainer Brendan Pelan is accompanied by visitors from Calvert Hall in a rousing version of the Irish Rover. The CHC Alumni Association annually joins the Brothers in Ammendale for Mass, and then treats the community to a delicious meal and evening of entertainment. Joining the singers is Br. Patrick Phillips, a long time teacher at Calvert Hall, who, at 93, is celebrating his 75th anniversary as a Christian Brother this year.

Photos in this issue courtesy of Stephanie Beard, John Chung FSC, Lewis Clark, Phil DeRita, Roy Engelbrecht, Lawrence Goyette FSC, Doug Heidrick, Rebecca Minarik, and John Patzwall FSC