

HERMANO SANTIAGO: A Brother's Legacy. In Nicaragua, amid the political turmoil of the 1970s, Brother James Miller, FSC, a native of Wisconsin, worked in Christian Brothers' schools in the town of Puerto Cabezas. A skilled farmer, welder, carpenter, and handyman, as well as a teacher and administrator, "Hermano Santiago," who was fluent in Spanish, was instrumental in helping the indigenous Miskito Indians to get grade schools and a fire station in their rural area. In 1981 he was assigned to another Central American country with volatile politics. Guatemala. There, in the town of Huehuetenango, he worked at the Colegio de La Salle doing teaching and counseling, and supervised the Casa Indigena for local Indians. In his Christmas letter home that year he wrote, "*I can't end this letter without asking for your prayers for Guatemala and for all of Central America. The level of personal violence here is reaching appalling proportions (murders, tortures, kidnappings, threats, etc.) and the Church is being persecuted because of its option for the poor and oppressed. The Indian population of Guatemala, caught defenseless between the Army and the rebel forces operating in the country, is taking the brunt of this violence. I am personally weary of violence, but I continue to feel a strong commitment to the suffering poor of Central America. God knows why He continued to call me to Guatemala when some friends and relatives encouraged me to pull out for my own comfort and safety. I have been a Christian Brother for nearly twenty years now, and commitment to my vocation grows steadily stronger in my work in Central America. I pray to God for the grace and strength to serve Him faithfully among the poor and oppressed of Guatemala. I place my life in his providence; I place my trust in Him.*" On Saturday, February 13, 1982, at about four o'clock in the afternoon, Brother James was outside the Casa Indigena, up on a ladder, patching a wall. Three men approached, fired several shots, and fled. Brother James died there on the street. His killers escaped and have never been conclusively identified. †

Each February, Brother James Miller's legacy of service at the cost of his own life is remembered and celebrated in many ways. A few examples: □ The 24th Annual Brother James Miller Day is on February 12, at Sacred Heart Parish in Polonia, Wisconsin, sponsored by Sacred Heart Parish and the Diocese of La Crosse. □ At Cretin-Derham High School, where Brother James had been both a student and a teacher, the 5th Annual Brother James Miller Justice Symposium was held January 30 to February 3. □ The 22nd Annual Brother James Miller Day will be observed on February 15 in his hometown of Ellis, Wisconsin, with a lecture and the presentation of an award for work on behalf of peace and justice (see the Portland County Gazette at <http://www.pcgazette.com> for more). □ At Trinity Stores (www.trinitystores.com) there is an icon which the site says was commissioned by the people of his hometown. Brother James is depicted in robe and rabat, with schoolbooks in one hand and a pipe wrench in the other. • For more on the life of Brother James Miller, the best source is *Hermano Santiago: The Life and Times of Brother James Miller, FSC*, by Theodore Drahmman, FSC, (Christian Brothers Archives of the Midwest, 2002).

SAN MIGUEL: Who Was This Lasallian Saint? February 9 is the feast of San Miguel Febres Cordero, FSC, of Ecuador. Most of us are familiar with the "San Miguel Schools," an innovative and thriving network of Lasallian middle schools for poor children in the U.S. But we may not know much about the San Miguel for whom they are named. He was an Ecuadorian who lived from 1854 to 1910 and in 1977 was declared a saint of the Catholic Church. A biographer says, "He was a first-rate human being, a fundamentally good person, cheerful, kindly toward others, willing to be of service and happy in whatever he was called upon to do. Not all the saints have had the same ability to let the sunshine in, to radiate peace, to appear as messengers who bring tidings of great joy. Yet this is a recurrent theme in the reminiscences of all those who lived with

Brother Miguel.” Born Francisco Febres Cordero, he had crippled legs from birth and was never to enjoy good health. Educated by the De La Salle Christian Brothers, he was the first Ecuadorian to become a Brother. Starting as a classroom instructor at the age of 15, he was soon known as a superb teacher. He also developed rapidly into an eminent scholar, publishing, when he was only 20, a Spanish grammar that would become a standard text in the nation’s schools. Many other books and translations followed, as did election to the National Academy of Ecuador and wide fame. Yet the strongest impression he made on those who knew him was of modesty, humility, and a calm joy. Says his biographer, “In order to penetrate to the source of the sanctity of Brother Miguel, it is necessary to go beyond the externals and to seek in his private notes and personal reflections the very center of his entire being. And there the secret is revealed: he was in love with God. Not in some abstract way. To him God was real, a living presence, the personal object of his affection and adoration, available to his every waking thought.” Brother Miguel spent 1907-1908 in France and Belgium, translating books into Spanish, and in 1909 was assigned to a school in Spain. In Spain he contracted pneumonia. He died there on February 9, 1910. † The biography quoted above is *Brother Miguel Febres Cordero, F.S.C.: Teacher, Scholar, Saint*, by Luke Salm, FSC (Christian Brothers Publications, Romeoville, Illinois, 1984).

For more on Brother Miguel and other saints among the Christian Brothers, go to www.lasalle.org, and under “Lasallian Heritage” click on “History.”

For more on the San Miguel Schools visit <http://www.miguelschools.org>.

For more about Lasallian education in Latin America today, see the “Regions” area of the international Web site at <http://www.lasalle2.org/English/Institutions/Regions/inre.php>. The Région Latinoamericana lasallista (RELAL) stretches from Mexico to Chile and includes the island of Mozambique. The Christian Brothers first came to South America in 1863, and their first schools were in Ecuador, where among their first pupils was a nine-year-old named Francisco Febres Cordero, who became Saint Miguel (see above).

SOME DATES OF SIGNIFICANCE

- February 19 is the date on which John Baptist de La Salle was beatified in 1888.
- March 1 is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Lenten season and our forty days of preparation for Easter. Easter Sunday in 2006 will be April 16

NEWS BRIEFS from around the DISTRICT OF SAN FRANCISCO

SAN FRANCISCO Brother David Caretti, FSC, writes thoughtfully on “The Foundations of Service” and why true service must always involve a genuine encounter with another. His essay leads off the February issue of the Sacred Heart Cathedral Prep newsletter *SHCP Connection*. Go to www.shcp.edu, click on “PARENTS,” then on the navigation bar at left click on “SHCP CONNECTION.”

YAKIMA At La Salle High School in Union Gap the Parents Association is putting on the Third Annual Shamrock Cup, a Six-Kilometer Fun Run & Walk, on March 11.

PORTLAND When a pro basketball player doesn’t do his workout, how does a Lasallian high school benefit? To hear the unusual story, visit the De La Salle North Catholic Web site at <http://www.delasallenorth.org> and click on “In the News,” then on the headline “Blazer Donation”

SACRAMENTO Junior Scott McCalla of Christian Brothers High School was recognized by the 4-H organization with the Golden Clover Award for outstanding achievement for his five years of 4-H-related work with numerous service groups and community events.

MONT LA SALLE Christian Brothers Ranch, now in its sixth year, offers at-risk adolescents in the Napa area the benefits of a 4-H style animal husbandry program. Raising, showing, and selling animals, the students gain valuable skills and also earn money that is saved for them to be used for their post-secondary education. All of the students who have graduated from the Ranch program have gone on to college or to professional training financed by the money they earned during their years on the Ranch.

□ *To find out what's up at schools and works throughout our District, visit www.delasalle.org and click on 'Schools and Works' for an alphabetical listing of District works with links to their individual Web sites.* □

NEWS BRIEFS from the U.S./TORONTO REGION

REGIONAL ASSEMBLY DVD A special DVD that was created for use at the first-ever Regional Assembly on Mission, in Salt Lake City in November 2005, is available at the Christian Brothers Conference Web site. "Associated for the Mission: Voices of the Region" consists largely of inspirational conversations with Lasallians throughout the U.S./Toronto Region. Visit www.cbconf.org.

LASALLIAN VOLUNTEERS The Lasallian Volunteers gathered for their mid-year retreat in Goshen, New York, in January. This program that matches post-college volunteers to needs in various Lasallian education works throughout the country is now in its sixteenth year of successful service. The District of San Francisco has been a prime source of Volunteers, with more than eighty Saint Mary's College of California graduates taking part. For the full story on the retreat, and to learn more about the program, go to www.cbconf.org.

□ *For more news of the U.S./Toronto Region, go to the Web site of the Christian Brothers Conference at www.cbconf.org* □

NEWS BRIEFS from the INTERNATIONAL LASALLIAN MISSION

PHILIPPINES *Brother Andrew Gonzalez, FSC: Rest in Peace*

One of the most dynamic figures in Lasallian education in the Philippines has gone home to God. On January 29, Brother Andrew Gonzalez, FSC, died of complications from diabetes. He was 65 years old. One eulogy describes him as an intellectual giant, a visionary, and a "mover and shaker with an open mind, a big heart, refreshing, liberal and liberating." Brother Andrew was president emeritus of De La Salle University-Manila. His presidency commenced in 1979, and he was the force behind the growth of what is now the De La Salle University System, which has eight different educational units that serve students with varied needs and from varied socio-economic levels. One administrator has characterized the DLSU System as "the type of schools that St. La Salle established during his time." For the story of Brother Andrew's life and for reflections on his achievements as a Brother, educator, citizen, and public servant, visit the De La Salle University Web site at <http://www.dlsu.edu.ph/> and see the latest issue of its "2401" newsletter, with the cover article "Farewell, Brother Andrew."

ROME “Associated for the Lasallian Educational Mission”

What is it like to live and work as a Lasallian educator in Chicago, or Valladolid, or Bristol, or Cameroon? Lasallian educational works are many and varied, and they are spread all over the world. But is there a spirit of association that all Lasallians share? Incisive and moving reflections on “Association” by many Brothers and Partners are collected in a new publication titled “Associated for the Lasallian Educational Mission” available on the international Web site. Go to www.lasalle.org and under “Recent Publications” click on “Bulletin 250.”

For complete news of the international Institute, visit www.lasalle.org regularly. You can sign up there for e-mail alerts to the postings of the latest news.

□ *Teachers of languages and cultures: You have a resource in Rome -- The Web site of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools is multi-lingual and multi-cultural, with publications and postings in French, Spanish, and Italian as well as English. It's a gateway to the wider Lasallian world.* □

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