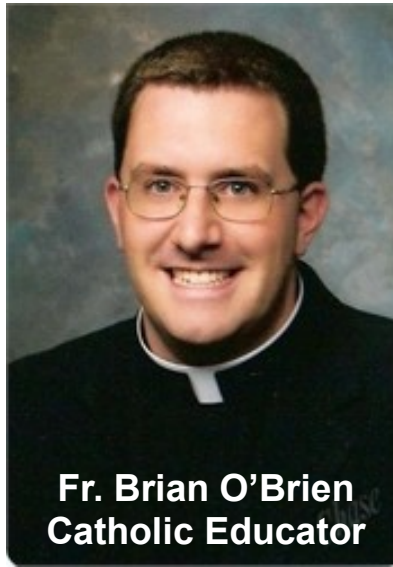


A native of Kingwood, Texas, Brian O'Brien, was encouraged at an early age by a grandmother to consider becoming a priest. His parents and others reinforced this encouragement. However, it was not until high school that he began to seriously think about a religious vocation.



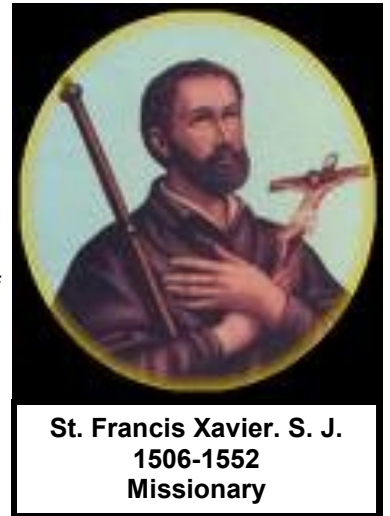
Graduating from Boston College in 1998 with a degree in Theology and Political Science, two years later he earned a Masters in Education through the University of Notre Dame's Alliance for Catholic Education program. This program brought him to serve on the faculty of Bishop Kelley High School in Tulsa, where he taught religion, social studies and coached basketball from 1998 to 2002.

During this time his discernment of the priesthood continued. In 2002, Brian began five years of formation and studies at St. Meinrad School of Theology in Indiana. There he earned a Masters of Arts in Catholic Social Thought and Life and a Masters in Divinity. During this period he also authored the book, "Tough Choices: Bringing Moral Issues Home", in 2003.

Ordained for the Diocese of Tulsa in 2007 at the age of 31, Fr. O'Brien was first assigned as the associate pastor of Christ the King Parish in Tulsa and chaplain to Bishop Kelley High School. Since June 1, 2009, he has served as president of the school. Known for his infectious enthusiasm for the Church and Catholic schools, he experiences great joy in bringing Christ into people's lives through the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. Fr. O'Brien is a good shepherd of the students, families and faculty under his care.

# ***Priest of*** ***the Week***

**Priest of the Week:** Born April 7, 1506, the youngest child of a noble family in the Basque region of Spain, Francis seemed destined to a promising career in either law or royal service. However, while a student at the University of Paris, he met a fellow Basque, Ignatius of Loyola, Ignatius, a former soldier who had undergone a religious conversion to Christ, had a positive influence on Francis. After graduation, Francis and Ignatius, along with five other men, founded the Society of Jesus, as known as the Jesuits, in 1534 for purpose of bringing the message of the Gospel to foreign countries.



Ordained a priest in 1537 at the age of 31 in Italy, Fr. Francis was destined to devote much of the rest of his life as a missionary. Four years later, in 1541, he left Portugal by ship with the ultimate goal of reaching China. Instead, his missionary travels took him first to Mozambique in Africa (1541), Goa in India and Sri Lanka (1542), Malacca near New Guinea (1545), Morotai near the Philippines (1546-47) and Japan (1549-51). At times working with other priest and other times alone, Fr. Francis preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the native peoples of these different places, living among them and adopting their customs. He also attempted to reform the lives of this follow Europeans who were their to establish colonies and trades routes, and who had often fallen away from their faith. He was the first Jesuit missionary to reach India and Japan.

But it was far from easy. He was not gifted in learning the languages of the peoples he encountered. Communication was a constant struggle, as was inadequate funding. Lack of cooperation, if not actual resistance, from European civil authorities added to Fr. Francis' problems. Yet in over a decade of preaching, teaching and giving an authentic witness to Christ he converted tens of thousands to Christianity.

Yet his original hope of reaching China would not be realized. Reaching the island of Sancian, which was in sight of the Chinese mainland, Fr. Francis died there of a fever on December 3, 1552, at the age of 46. Originally buried there, the following year his body was taken to India where it remains to this day. His missionary zeal and energy helped established Christianity far from Europe an set it on course to become a world wide faith. The growth that the church enjoys today in Asia has its roots in his witness. Canonized in 1622 along with Ignatius of Loyola, he is the patron saint of all foreign missionary efforts, as well as St. Francis Hospital in Tulsa. His memorial day is celebrated on December 3. St. Francis Xavier, pray for us!