

Bidding a Fond Farewell to the Brothers of Our Lady of Lourdes

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In January 2015, the departure of **Bro. Baudoin Mensch, FNDL** and **Bro. John Maas, FNDL** from their long tenure in southern Alberta's town of Taber marked the end of an era for a number of Catholic faith communities within Western Canada.

The Brothers of Our Lady of Lourdes came to Canada from their home base in Holland in the 1950s. They served their adopted communities primarily by establishing schools and serving as teachers at a time when qualified teachers were in short supply. Their work also encompassed university and correctional facility chaplaincies, psychiatric nursing, ministry in social services, and university level instruction.

In British Columbia they established schools that they administered and staffed. In Alberta they were active in St. Albert and Edmonton, particularly at Newman Theological College where they studied and taught young candidates for the priesthood. In Calgary, they founded and operated the Don Bosco Home to accommodate and rehabilitate troubled teenage boys.

Bro. John and Bro. Baudoin were particularly active in Taber and Lethbridge. Residing at their St. Francis House in Taber for 50 years. They became engrained members of the community they served with exceptional commitment and dedication.

Parishioners at St. Augustine's are finding it hard to accept that the Brothers' sojourn with them has come to an end. Both Brothers have been called to their Congregational Home in Holland, to live out their richly earned retirement years in communal life with their confreres.

Bro. John and Bro. Baudoin served long and successful terms as teachers at Taber's St. Mary's School where they provided exemplary instruction in Religious Education, and in their major fields of study, namely Social Studies and Mathematics, respectively.

Bro. John served on St. Augustine's Parish Council, in the RCIA program, and in students' sacramental preparation programs. In Taber, he worked with the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Though residing in Taber, he also lent his



*Back L-R: Visitors from Holland: Bros. Jan Klein Overeen, FNDL, Provincial Superior and Theo van den Boer, FNDL, General Superior; followed by past pastors, Frs. Tim Boyle and Mariuz Sztuk SDS
Front L-R: Present pastor, Fr. Vincent Ha and Bros. John Maas, FNDL and Baudoin Mensch, FNDL*

energies to activities in Lethbridge. He was University of Lethbridge chaplain to Catholic students, and also served as chaplain at the Lethbridge Correctional Institute. St. Basil's Parish in Lethbridge also enjoyed his energies for a period of eight years. Following his retirement from St. Mary's, he was a volunteer teacher in Ethiopia for two years.

Bro. Baudoin's tenure at Taber's St. Mary's School encompassed 33 years and included dedicated, long-term coaching of basketball, volleyball, and badminton teams. The school gymnasium—now renamed "Bro. Baudoin Gymnasium"—was routinely opened under his supervision on weekends for various student activities. The frequent use of this provision by students of the parish attested to its popularity and effectiveness for the parish youth ministry.

Following his retirement from St. Mary's, Bro. Baudoin volunteered his services to the Taber Campus of the Lethbridge Community College where he tutored students in Mathematics for about three years. He also spent time as volunteer teacher in third world countries, two years in Kiribati and two years in Indonesia.

Bro. Baudoin and Bro. John leave a wonderful legacy of service and dedication, of unselfish commitment, and of many close friendships – a legacy that will continue to abide with everyone of St. Augustine's Parish and with many others of Taber and Lethbridge. They will never be forgotten. They will live forever in the many hearts they have touched.