The Board of Governors of Alexian Brothers Health System (ABHS) has approved a vision statement for the system that sets its sights squarely on becoming the pre-eminent provider of health-care and housing services in the communities that it serves.

"We want to be known as the system with high-quality institutions that are very caring," he says.

The Alexian Brothers’ commitment to adapting their ministry to changing community needs drove the development of the vision statement, says Brother Lawrence Krueger, C.F.A., Provincial of the Immaculate Conception Province and ABHS Chairperson. The vision statement "challenges us to live out the vision in our ministries, to continually remind ourselves that we exist today, in large part, because of the continued support of the community in which we do ministry. Without knowing who we are and what our communities need, the transformation will be more difficult, perhaps impossible, to make," Brother Lawrence says.

The new ABHS vision statement will sharpen the system’s strategic focus, according to Brother Lawrence Krueger (left) and Brother Thomas Keusenkothen. 

The vision statement, a first for ABHS, is designed to complement the system’s mission statement and emphasis on the Alexian Brothers’ Values of Compassion, Dignity of the Person, Care of the Poor, Partnership and Holism.

"In the past, there have been a number of vision statements within the system, like one for elderly services and others for different institutions," says Brother Thomas Keusenkothen, C.F.A., ABHS President and Chief Executive Officer. "We decided that a systemwide vision statement would provide a stimulus as to where the system should be going and what our main focus should be."

The Provincial Council of the Immaculate Conception (American) Province of the Congregation of Alexian Brothers and the corporate leadership of ABHS began working on the vision statement last February. The final statement was approved July 25 by the Board of Governors and July 26 by the Provincial Council.

The vision statement says: "Inspired by the Alexian Brothers’ rich history and Christian values, the Alexian Brothers Health System will be the premier innovator and provider of health care and housing services that address the needs of its communities."

Brother Thomas expects the vision statement to sharpen the system’s focus on its ultimate objective, which is "to be the best in what we do."

"We want to be known as the system with high-quality institutions that are very caring," he says.

The vision statement "will be a front-end tool in strategic planning and in the continued on page 12"
Behavioral health hospital leaps to third in market-share ranking

President’s letter

Dear Alexian Friends:

Three years ago, Alexian Brothers Health System (ABHS) embarked on a new strategic direction by positioning itself as a regional health-care system to ensure its continued vitality and effectiveness in the new millennium. Instead of having facilities spread from coast to coast, we opted to focus on expanding our acute-care and behavioral health operations in Chicago’s northwest suburb and our elderly services in Milwaukee, Chattanooga/Signal Mountain, St. Louis and Chicago.

This change in direction has worked out extremely well – so well, in fact, that we now are in the midst of expanding our facilities to keep pace with the growing demand for health and housing services in the communities we serve.

St. Alexius Medical Center (SAMC) and Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital (ABBBH), which we acquired in early 1999 as a key part of our new strategic plan, have grown dramatically, straining their capacity.

SAMC has launched a major expansion project to free up patient units now used as offices and to create a new, 100-seat chapel. The medical center also intends to build a parking garage and is developing plans for expanding its emergency room, which is busier than ever. (See page 4.)

ABBBH, which has seen admissions skyrocket since 1999, is developing plans for an addition to accommodate its growing inpatient programs. It also plans to open a new outpatient clinic soon and has expanded its parking lot. (See page 2.)

Alexian Brothers Medical Center (ABMC) has experienced continued growth, necessitating expansion of its parking garage and the addition of more surface parking. ABMC also has expanded its pharmacy department and is renovating its cafeteria as part of its ongoing effort to ensure the best possible environment for patients, their families and ABMC’s employees, medical staff and volunteers. (See page 4.)

The growth of our three hospitals has led us recently to acquire a pair of medical office buildings – one across the street from ABMC and the other near SAMC and ABBBH. These facilities will help us to address the office needs of physicians in our community and will give us the flexibility to add other services at the buildings as our hospitals continue to grow. For example, ABBBH’s new outpatient clinic will be located conveniently in the newly acquired medical office building near the hospital. We also are developing plans for construction of another large medical office building at ABMC.

Our elderly services division also is on the more with the development of the Live @ HomeSM Program, which will offer a continuum of services to allow senior citizens to live in their own homes, avoiding the potentially catastrophic cost of chronic care. ABHS also plans to add assisted-living facilities to the menu of services it offers in Chicago’s northwest suburbs.

All of these initiatives are in keeping with our new vision statement, which challenges ABHS to be “the premier innovator and provider of health care and housing services that address the needs of its communities.” (See page 1.) Change has been good for ABHS, because it has helped us to better address the needs of the communities we serve. We intend to continue to embrace change – and growth – as we strive to achieve our vision in the years ahead.

May God Bless You and Your Family,

Brother Thomas Kreuskenkohr, C.F.A.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Alexian Brothers Health System
ABHS expands facilities to address needs of Chicago’s northwest suburbs

With the first of St. Alexius Medical Center’s expansion projects nearing completion, the hospital has launched a second project, which includes the addition of three levels to create office space that will free up former patient units now used as offices.

The project at the Hoffman Estates, Ill., hospital is one of several recent expansion initiatives undertaken by Alexian Brothers Health System. Others include:

- The relocation and expansion of the mammography department, the addition of new parking and the renovation and expansion of the cafeteria at Alexian Brothers Medical Center (ABMC) in Elk Grove Village, Ill.
- The relocation and expansion of Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital’s outpatient clinic. The Hoffman Estates hospital also has expanded its parking lot and is planning to expand its inpatient program to accommodate rising patient volumes. (See related article on page 2.)
- The Alexian Brothers’ recent acquisition of two medical office buildings—one near St. Alexius Medical Center and the other close to ABMC.

These initiatives reflect the growing demand for ABHS services in Chicago’s northwest suburbs, a key area targeted by the Alexian Brothers for expansion. ABMC has relocated and expanded its facilities along with the Hoffman Estates hospital, which has created a new design that will provide a “light and airy” look for the cafeteria, says the project’s lead architect, Mary Ann Magnifico and Brother Valentino Bianco discuss the renovation and expansion of the ABMC mammography suite.

The first expansion project at St. Alexius Medical Center includes a new main entrance, lobby and adjacent office space totaling 3,600 square feet, as well as a new 100-seat cafeteria seating 3,600 square feet on the first floor. The main entrance, lobby and offices should be done this fall, and the chapel should be finished by the end of 2001, says Linda Gump, Vice President for Administration at the hospital.

The second project involves adding three levels to the hospital’s three-story west wing, which is located between its two six-story towers. Plans call for moving various departments from their current tower locations into the three-level addition and the new offices adjacent to the lobby. The tower space then will be converted back into patient units to accommodate the hospital’s growing patient volumes.

Licensed for 346 beds, the hospital currently operates 197 beds. Its plans to have a total of 280 beds available, and the second expansion project is completed next year, Gump says. The hospital also hopes to complete construction of a new parking garage by the time the additional patient units are opened.

ABMC has relocated and expanded its mammography department to increase its capacity and to make it more “user-friendly,” says MaryAnn Magnifico, ABMC Vice President of Facilities and Construction. The department’s move from The Cancer Institute at Alexian Brothers in ABMC’s North Pavilion building to the ground floor of ABMC’s Brock Medical Office Building is designed to make mammography “more of a routine exam,” she says. The department’s new location features the latest in mammography technology, more mammography rooms, an area for women who have donated patient gowns and are awaiting mammograms, and a separate waiting area for relatives or friends who accompany patients. Other enhancements include a registration area that offers more privacy for patients and a consultation room for doctors and patients.

ABMC also has launched a major expansion of the four-story parking garage on the northwest corner of its campus. The expansion will add 305 parking spaces to the garage and a nearby parking lot, boosting combined capacity to 1,293 vehicles.

Magnifico expects the project to be completed next year. ABMC also is in the process of adding a six-story parking lot near the Niehoff Pavilion across the street from the hospital. The new lot is scheduled for completion this fall.

ABMC is renovating its cafeteria to provide additional seating and enhanced service for the growing numbers of doctors, nurses, employees and visitors who dine there. Brother Valentino Bianco, C.F.A., has created a new design that will provide a “light and airy” look for the cafeteria, Magnifico says.

Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital plans to relocate its outpatient clinic this fall, creating additional combined parking capacity to 1,293 vehicles.

The project at the Hoffman Estates, Ill., hospital is one of several recent expansion initiatives undertaken by Alexian Brothers Health System.
Home ownership program creates ‘dream come true’ for AVM employee and family

MARRIED FOR 25 YEARS, JAWANA and James Henry had resigned themselves to apartment living long ago. “We knew because of our financial status we would never be able to even consider buying a home,” says Jawana Henry, Activity Specialist at Alexian Village of Milwaukee (AVM).

Today, they are celebrating “a dream come true” as the soon-to-be owners of a newly renovated, three-bedroom condominium at North Meadow Homes, a condominium project located less than a mile from AVM.

The couple’s good fortune resulted from a partnership between AVM and the City of Milwaukee that focused on cleaning up the crime-ridden project and creating home ownership opportunities there for Village employees and others.

The cleanup of the 576-unit condominium project has included new landscaping, additional lighting, roadway and parking lot improvements, and the renovation of individual units, which is occurring in phases.

Even more important, the city and AVM have developed and implemented a plan to ensure that all units will become owner-occupied. In the past, rental tenants occupied most of the units, and many behaved poorly, contributing to an environment in which “no sense of pride” existed among tenants about the condominium project, says Gary Mohn, AVM Chief Executive Officer.

The plan includes a program to help prospective owners to qualify for home mortgages to purchase a renovated condominium at a below-market cost of $30,000 for a three-bedroom unit or $44,000 for a four-bedroom unit. Under the program, people with no credit history or a poor credit history can become eligible for a mortgage by successfully completing special classes, which help them resolve credit difficulties and understand financial concepts related to home ownership. People who successfully complete the sessions also are eligible for state-funded, down-payment grants of up to $2,500.

The program has been made available first to employees of AVM and a YMCA across the street from North Meadow Homes. Jawana Henry, 47, is the first AVM employee to take advantage of the program. She and her 45-year-old husband, who have been living in a two-bedroom apartment with their 19-year-old son, successfully completed the special classes, resolved their credit difficulties and by late summer were in the midst of getting their mortgage approved. She expects their monthly mortgage payment to total about $400, considerably less than the $510 in monthly rent they’ve been paying.

“I’m so excited I could scream,” she says. “This is an opportunity we could not foresee.”

Other AVM employees have expressed interest in the program, and Jawana Henry is so grateful for the support she has received that she has volunteered to serve as a special consultant to help fellow employees become homeowners.

While demonstrating how the Alexian Brothers put their Values of Partnership and Holism into action, the initiative “reflects their value of caring for the needy, including people who need some kind of sponsorship and resources for education and support,” Jawana Henry says. The initiative also fosters family unity by giving AVM employees and their children the opportunity to live happily together in their own home, she says.

“It’s truly a blessing from God,” she says. “I have to give God the credit.”

Jawana Henry, shown with her husband, James, in their new condominium at North Meadow Homes, says the chance to own a home is “truly a blessing from God.”

Value in Action

Staff’s generosity preserves dignity of needy behavioral health patients

THE MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN ARRIVED at Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital in a disoriented state, wearing soiled, undersized clothing.

“Her attire was not respectful of her dignity as a human being or appropriate to wear around other patients,” says Stan Kedzior, Director of Mission Integration at the Hofman Estates, Ill., hospital.

Thanks to the generosity of the hospital’s staff, the woman quickly received new clothes in the right size, including a sweat suit and underwear. When she was discharged, she received a new pair of shoes.

The woman, who had been treated at the hospital many times, later expressed her gratitude in a note to the hospital’s chaplain, Dorothy Symonds. “Thank you so much for the beautiful shoes,” the woman wrote, “I’m going to miss you. But now I have my journey to complete, and I will continue to praise God.”

Reflecting on the woman’s case, Kedzior says: “It was very basic stuff, but we had to accommodate her needs for being discharged. The key point was: ‘How can this person’s dignity stay intact once she has walked out the door?’ If we didn’t give her some basic stuff to make that possible, she was so delicate mentally already that it could have contributed to things coming apart. She hasn’t returned to this point, so maybe it helped.”

The money used to purchase clothing and footwear for the woman was generated by the hospital’s “casual-day fund-raiser,” a quarterly event in which staff members wear casual clothes on a designated day and contribute at least $2 apiece to help the hospital buy clothing for needy patients.

Sponsored by the hospital’s Alexian Spirit Committee, the fund-raiser augments staff members’ donations to the hospital’s clothing pantry, enabling the hospital to buy specific types and sizes of clothing that might not be available in the pantry. The hospital estimates the casual-day fund-raisers allow the hospital to provide clothing for 10 to 15 patients each month.

Other patients receive clothing from the burgeoning pantry, and still others benefit from the spontaneous generosity of staff members, who often buy clothing on their own or contribute money for a clothing purchase after learning of a patient’s specific needs.

This compassionate spirit makes the hospital “a human place and captures the spirit of the Alexian Brothers,” Kedzior says.

Adds Julie Geils, the hospital’s Information Systems Manager and Chairperson of the Alexian Spirit Committee: “When we plan an event, we first think, ‘OK, how are we fulfilling our duty as Alexian Brothers Health System employees?’ With the casual-day fund-raiser, we felt we were doing that. We don’t plan an event just to have an event; we first look at what we’re supposed to be doing here.”

The generosity of employees keeps the ABBHH clothing pantry well stocked and allows the hospital to buy specific types and sizes of clothing for patients, according to Stan Kedzior and Julie Geils.
Brother Philip Kennedy receives CHA Lifetime Achievement Award

Brother Philip Kennedy, C.F.A., who worked for more than 50 years as a tireless champion of quality of care, employee fairness and social justice, has been honored with the 2001 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA).

The award honors a person who has spent most of his or her career in Catholic health care, is an acknowledged leader of the health ministry, and has made significant contributions to the health-care profession and beyond.

Brother Philip, who retired as Chief Executive Officer of Alexian Brothers Medical Center (ABMC) in Elk Grove Village, Ill., after suffering a stroke in 1997, expressed gratitude to the CHA and its President and Chief Executive Officer, Rev. Michael Place, S.T.D., for the award. "It was nothing that I had ever anticipated," Brother Philip says.

He also thanked the corporate staff of Alexian Brothers Health System for recognizing him. "None of this would have been possible without the support of my administration and Board, and Brother Lawrence Krueger, C.F.A., Provincial of the Immaculate Conception (American) Province of the Congregation of Alexian Brothers, and Mary Doherty, Vice President for Patient Care Services at ABMC, for accepting the award on his behalf at the CHA’s annual Catholic Health Assembly in Atlanta last June.

"There have been a lot of people who have offered their warmest good wishes to me, and I appreciate their doing that," says Brother Philip, 72, who lives at the Alexian Brothers residence in Elk Grove Village.

"I thought," he adds, "that what the place was put here to do is help others, and that’s why we’re here."
Dispelling myths: New Alexian book offers insights into dying

The Quality of Life Committee of Alexian Brothers of Missouri has published a book to help and comfort dying people by giving them, their loved ones and health-care professionals a better understanding of what happens when a person dies. “Guido To End-of-Life Issues” discusses all aspects of the dying process, including the needs of the dying person and those close to him or her. The book:
- Identifies physical, emotional, social and spiritual end-of-life issues;
- Describes the dying process;
- Identifies available resources and support systems; and
- Provides help with the grieving process.

“Even though death and dying are uncomfortable subjects for most of us, we need to plan for our death so that the care and decisions will be on our terms and reflect our needs and values,” the committee says in the forward of the book. “Now that medical technology offers us so many ways of prolonging life, the process of dying and making end-of-life decisions has become even more difficult. Further, the notion that Catholic dying is made more complex by a person’s expectations about how they will die and what meaning there is in their death. These difficulties can best be met when the dying person and their caregivers are well informed.”

The book includes questions about advance directives, as well as examples of a living will and a durable power of attorney document. The book also deals directly with the difficult issue of withdrawing life support from a loved one. It includes suggestions for dealing with this issue, including a 10-point checklist of questions from The Incarnate Word Foundation, St. Louis, to develop the “Guido To End-of-Life Issues.” Plans call for distributing the book through Alexian Brothers Health System facilities and programs, other hospitals and health-care facilities, the State of Missouri Department of Social Services, churches, hospice programs, bereavement support groups and a variety of other channels.

“We also intend to do community outreach programs, including seminars on end-of-life issues for older adults,” says Mike Roth, a member of the Quality of Life Committee and Chief Executive Officer of Alexian Brothers Sheborbrooke Village and Alexian Brothers Landaowne Village, which are long-term-care facilities operated by Alexian Brothers Health System (ABHS) in St. Louis. “Guido To End-of-Life Issues” reflects the Alexian Brothers age-old commitment to caring for the communities that they serve, says Patrick Gaughan, Corporate Director of Mission Integration for ABHS. “This book is a tool not just for inside the system, but also for strengthening communities through a knowledge base on very critical, sensitive issues that each of us must face,” Gaughan says.

The book, he adds, should help dispel myths about Catholic health care, includ- ing the notion that Catholic health-care institutions promote and condone suffer- ing. “Catholic health care believes one of the primary purposes of medicine in care for the dying is the relief of pain and suffering,” Gaughan says. “We don’t believe a person should suffer at the end of life. We believe in the dignity of the person and providing comfort.”

For more information about the book, or to purchase it, contact Alexian Brothers Community Services at 1-877-4-ALEXIAN.

Alexian Brothers unveil new health center in Philippines

The Alexian Brothers of Missouri have unveiled their presence in the Philippines with the opening of a new health-care facility designed to support their long-standing mobile clinic program for the indigent of the Province of Davao. The Alexian Brothers Health & Wellness Center opened Aug. 16 in the Matina section of the City of Davao. The center, which features 16 doctor’s offices, an X-ray department, laboratory, pharmacy and chapel, is located on a 2.5-acre site that also includes a new education building, canteen and Alexian Brothers residence.

Plans call for doctors and dentists to operate their private practices from shared offices at the center, treating the indigent as well as patients who can pay for their care. By late summer, six doctors and two dentists had joined the center’s staff. The facility can accommodate as many as 45 medical professionals. The Immaculate Conception Province of the Congregation of Alexian Brothers has operated a mobile clinic in the Province of Davao for more than seven years. Staffed by doctors, dentists, medical

The center’s medical staff will include family physicians as well as specialists in cardiology, otology, psychiatry, obstetrics and pallinology, Brother Maurice says.

Mike Roth says the “Guido To End-of-Life Issues,” which is designed to help people plan for death on their terms, is a “landmark” in the archdiocese. About 600 people, including Brother Lawrence, attended a June 5 dedication and blessing ceremony for the new facility. Archbishop Fernando Capalla, who blessed the facility, called it “a landmark” in the archdiocese. In addition to Brother Maurice, three Alexian Brothers and an Alexian Brothers postulant are stationed in Matina. They include Brother John of God Oblina, C.F.A., M.D., Administrator of the Alexian Brothers Health & Wellness Center; Brother Dominic Andes, C.F.A., a pharmacy aide; Brother Francis Berra, C.F.A., who oversees education programs; and Postulant Conrado Cabrera.
Robert Wright has been named Vice President of Managed Care Contracting for Alexian Brothers of Illinois. He previously served as National Director, Planned Gifts, for the Alzheimer's Association, Chicago.

Mark Mengel, M.D., has been appointed Medical Director of Alexian Brothers Community Services, St. Louis. He also serves as Chair and Professor of the Community and Family Medicine Program at St. Louis University.

Dawn Nahf has been named Executive Director of Alexian Brothers The Harbor, Waukegan, Ill., and Dale Wrigley has been promoted to Executive Director of Alexian Brothers Salus Place, St. Louis. Ms. Nahf and Mr. Wrigley previously served as Development Associates at the facilities.

ABHS vision

continued from page 1
strategic decision-making process,” says Patrick Gaughan, ABHS Corporate Director of Mission Integration. The vision statement also will play a key role in the system’s mission integration planning process, he says.

The development of the vision statement reflects the Alexian Brothers’ desire to define and to articulate their priorities for ABHS as their congregations age and they rely increasingly on lay partners to perpetuate their ministry, Gaughan says. “The best way to pass on the charism and core values of the Alexian Brothers is to instill their wishes, their philosophy, their vision into those who partner with them,” he says.

“The mission statement is our purpose – why we exist. The values tell us how to achieve what we want to achieve. The vision statement identifies where we want to go and what we want to become.”