

# *The Stations of St. Peter Julian Eymard*

by Michael A. Perez, SSS and John Christman, SSS

John Thomas J. Lane, SSS, Pastor of Saint Charles, and the Blessed Sacrament Community at St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Albuquerque, NM wanted to create a tribute to the memory and honor of Fr. Normand Falardeau, SSS, who was a member of the SSS Albuquerque Community for 25 years. He died June 2, 2004. In tribute to him, who was a teacher and faithful disciple of the founder of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, Saint Peter Julian Eymard, SSS, eight stations around the life of St. Peter Julian were envisioned. The feast of Saint Peter Julian Eymard is celebrated August 2.

The eight images are done by a local and nationally known artist, Ruben Gallegos, in the New Mexican “santos/retablos” style based on ideas of John Thomas Lane, SSS and drawings of John Christman, SSS. Each icon, or Station of Eymard, is one of a kind, made out of wood, carved and painted artistically in the New Mexican style, and approximately two feet by two feet in size. The White House has honored Ruben, for his other works and again this year, will be sharing his talent with another project. The blessing and dedication was August 23, 2005, Very Reverend Norman Pelletier, SSS, provincial superior, presiding.



**The First Station - The Gift of Self.** This station depicts the Crucifixion of Christ who out of love emptied himself completely for the salvation of humanity. Father Eymard in response to this great love offered himself completely to the person of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist which expressed itself in service to his neighbors.



**The Second Station - Called to be a Priest.** This station depicts the young Peter Julian Eymard in the parish church of LaMure d'Isère, France. While still a child he climbed the altar and leaning his head forward he pressed his ear to the tabernacle. In response to his sister's question, "*What are you doing?*" Peter Julian replied, "*I am close to Jesus, and listening to him.*"

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### **The Third Station - Tomorrow Will be Too Late.**

Having been accepted into the Society of Mary (Marist Fathers) Peter Julian took leave of his beloved sisters. Concerned about his fragile health they pleaded with him to rest a day longer to which he answered with urgency, *"God calls me today, tomorrow will be too late."*



### **The Fourth Station - Inspiration to Found the Religious Order Dedicated to the Eucharist.**

The Corpus Christi procession on May 25<sup>th</sup> 1845 is the setting for this painting. During this Eucharistic procession Father Eymard is consumed with a great love for Jesus Christ in the Eucharist and asks for the grace to, *"preach nothing but Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ Eucharistic."*



### **The Fifth Station - First Communion in Paris.**

One of the first works of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament was the preparation of the children of Paris for their first Holy Communion. During the time of the industrial revolution many poor children were forced to work in order to help support their families often leaving their spiritual needs unmet. This painting celebrates the twelve years that Father Eymard dedicated to this important ministry.



### **The Sixth Station - Priests for Others.**

Throughout his life Father Eymard was the friend of Father John-Marie Vianney, the Curé of Ars. These two future saints attended the same major seminary in the diocese of Grenoble and served the people of France selflessly. During a weekly catechetical instruction to his parishioners Fr. Vianney predicted the founding of a religious order dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament and that its members would do great work for the Church.

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**The Seventh Station - Apostle of the Eucharist.** On December 9<sup>th</sup> 1962 at the close of the first session of the Second Vatican Council Pope John XXIII declared Father Eymard a saint. Due to his great zeal for the proclamation of the Eucharist, Pope John XXIII was moved to bestow upon him the name, "*Apostle of the Eucharist.*" His feast is celebrated by the universal Church on August 2<sup>nd</sup>.



**The Eighth Station - For Thy Eucharistic Kingdom Come.** The final station depicts a Eucharistic feast in which some of the great shepherds of the Church in North and South America gather around Christ at the Heavenly Banquet. Joining Peter Julian Eymard at the Lord's Supper are Kateri Teckawitha, Dorothy Day, Katherine Drexel, Juan Diego, and Oscar Romero. These luminaries exemplified the Eucharistic mission of the Church in their own time and in doing so made present the vast and unequalled love of God for the people of this world.



## *Focus on Vocations*

Most of us like mysteries, especially those we solve using clues, facts and reasons. One of the greatest mysteries of our lives is, "Who will I become?"

Our Christian teaching tells us that we receive a personal call from God to love and serve His people. But how? What are the clues? What do other people and events tell us about whether or not our options include a vowed life as a brother or sister or ordination to the diaconate or priesthood?

Take a look at the "facts" outside you, the needs beyond the people and world you know. How can you help house those in need, to bring peace and justice where there is prejudice and violence?

Where do you enter this scenario? What do you sense in your heart and head? Are you a leader or a follower? Do you work well with people? How are you with God?

With these clues and facts about today's world and yourself, how do you answer the question of who you will become? How do you decide how you will work out a life response to God? (*Serra Club*)