

EYMARDIAN FAMILY

SSS INTERNATIONAL



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News from India

I join our religious of Kristu Jyoti Province – India and express my joy for the fruitful events of IP4, Fr. Superior General's visit and Final Commitment followed by Ordination to Diaconate.

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Richness of IP4: I am grateful to the Provinces of Saints Peter & Paul, and Saint Peter Julian Eymard for the participation of religious from them. It has offered lots of richness being an international Program. We were blessed with four overseas SSS for the sessions this time. Bro. Amirtharaj sss and Bro. Emilio sss shared their learnings of coming together as SSS family with our four brothers. We were affirmed with the continuous support from our General Curia.

Encouraging Visit of Fr. Superior General: “I like animation” are the words of our Rev. Fr. Eugenio Barbosa Martins sss Superior General. In the midst of his chapters' schedule, he made time and visited our religious in three different places. Fr. Philip Benzy sss, General Treasurer / Consultor accompanied him. His visit in Goa, Chennai and Mumbai was encouraging to continue our mission. He emphasized on united celebration and witnessing as Eymardian family. He initiated us to prepare for the XXXVI General Chapter, next November 2023.



Here I am delighted to share the visit and the interaction of Fr. Agostinho Maholele sss, General **Consultor** to all our formation houses.



Moments of Blessings: Every newness are special moments and they are showers of blessings. Four of our brothers made their final commitment, it was followed by the Diaconate. These brothers bring forth blessings and hope to our province. I thank their family people and all those who accompanied them to sustain their Eucharistic call.

Soon after our Fifth Provincial Chapter, I found these events are an opportunity to practice and live the theme of synodality. The greater participation and complete involvement brought richness to all the moments. With gratitude!



Father Peter Jayakanthan Dorairaj, sss
Superior of Kristu Jyoti Province - India

Report from the European Conference

European Conference met in Paris from 15-16 November 2022 at which time we were able to greet the new provincials.

The agenda began with an account of the three chapters which took place over the past year. We considered how they were prepared and how the religious, communities and laity were involved.

Then the most important decisions were shared. Most of which were about the future of the communities and the provinces.

How can a process of revitalisation be initiated? The criteria which could be used by a community could include mission, presence of vocations, cost of maintaining buildings, possibility of reusing empty spaces and church attendance.

In line with this, a European Commission on Vocations was set up. This commission will look at vocation on three levels: a) vocation to Eucharistic life, b) as an associate and c) becoming a member of a religious community. Three religious have been tasked to create some proposals within a year to help all communities. For example, with prayers, materials and activities.

Several religious from outside Europe are already working in some of our communities. Sometimes they form their own community, but their connection with the province in which they work is not well established in any format... For example: what do they do with the material and meetings of ongoing formation, the participation in retreats, what is the connection with the associates of the province and what is arranged when vocations do come.

Around all these questions and some other aspects of their preparation, a European document will be sent to the General Council.

To achieve a more collaborative connection between provinces, the minutes of Council meetings will be shared, excluding any matters which are confidential. When retreats are organised, other Provincials can be notified, and an invitation thereafter be sent to their members.

The provincial council of St Peter and Paul Province (United Kingdom & Ireland) will take over the presidency of the European Conference for the next four years.



Father Peter Dowling, sss

*Superior of Saints Peter and Paul Province
United Kingdom-Ireland*

Celebration of the Twenty-sixth and last Provincial Chapter in Canada

Time of fulfilment for the Saint John the Baptist Province of Canada

Convened by the Provincial Superior last June, the last Provincial Chapter for SSS religious on Canadian soil was held in the house of the Novitiate of Loretteville in Quebec, from 21 to 23 November 2022. Apart from three confreres prevented by their state of health, all the religious took part in this traditional institutional pillar of our charismatic Eymardian family. Also present among the capitulars was Father Jack Harold Nkodia sss, a member of the Cardinal Émile Biayenda Region, a delegate to the Provincial Chapter.

In the presence and under the guidance of Father Agostinho Maholele, a member of the General Curia, this Provincial Chapter, lived in a serene atmosphere of fraternity, was a time of discernment and important

decisions. In broad outline of questions dealt with during this large gathering, three major issues well and truly absorbed and focused our attention, namely, a reflection related to vulnerability, the exercise of planning for the future of our SSS brothers on Canadian soil, and the future of the Cardinal Émile Biayenda Region.

In presenting the present state of the St John the Baptist Province, Father Ghislain Cossette, the Provincial Superior, invited us to meditate and reflect on vulnerability: “Our vulnerability, he stated, has led us to say ‘yes’. ‘Yes’, to the discomfort of the present, ‘yes’, to the uncertainty of the future. ‘Yes’, to the mystery of life. At the heart of our vulnerabilities, he continued, we have the possibility of reliving the gesture of Christ at the Last Supper: to submit ourselves with trust to the Father, to open ourselves to others and to become creative in the way of breaking the bread of our daily life, to bring life to the world.”



Apropos the exercise of planning for the future of our SSS confreres in Canada, taking into account the present number of religious, the lack of recruiting new members, the actual average age of religious, a recommendation was voted on regarding the suppression the Province of St John the Baptist at the next General Chapter (November 2023). An in-depth study was presented to us by two legal advisers, the purpose of this being to better ensure the administration of the material business of the Canadian entity and the security of its members until the end of the existence of this entity as well as the transfer of its property. Moreover, a particular and unprecedented feature in the celebration of the Provincial Chapter was that no elections were held. Indeed, with the authorization of the Holy See, the present Provincial Council's mandate has been extended until the next General Chapter in 2023.

From the outset, the twenty-sixth Provincial Chapter expressed itself favourable to the Cardinal Émile Biayenda Region becoming erected as a Province at the next General Chapter. It was voted that the Province of Saint John the Baptist of Canada would continue assisting the said Region to be capable of correctly establishing administrative management and human resources.

Father Jack Harold Nkodia, sss

1st anniversary of the parish of the Blessed Sacrament of Kilobelobe

Today, 7 November 2022, the Blessed Sacrament Congregation in its mission of being established in Katanga has just completed a year to the day of its existence in the diocese of Sakania-Kipushi. Beginning with a Mass of thanksgiving celebrated by Mgr Gaston Mofya Kibilo, in the absence of the Bishop, Mgr Gaston Ruvezi who was prevented from being present, the day passed in a beautiful atmosphere.

The strong message of this celebration addressed to everyone was: *struggle to go all the way, despite the difficulties we may encounter; move forward, despite the pitfalls for the life of a Christian is a struggle.*

The parish of the Blessed Sacrament at Kilobelobe, in the diocese of Sakania-Kipushi, was canonically erected on 7 November 2021. It is located in the southeast of the archdiocese of Lubumbashi. Entrusted to the Religious of the Blessed Sacrament, its parish priest is Father Jérôme Ngantete, the assistant parish priest is Father Louis Bunga, and the Intern Brother Fiston Gérard Mangala.



1. Pastoral map

The new parish of the Blessed Sacrament at Kilobelobe is entirely rural. It comprises 3 large pastoral areas. First, there is the area where the parish church, parish administrative structures and some social works are situated. This is Kilobelobe. It is at the northern border of Lubumbashi. It consists of several villages set up in 5 large CEVs (Basic Living Ecclesial Communities). The parish church is situated 12 km from the city centre of Lubumbashi. Not having a presbytery, the team of priests in charge of the parish does not live there, but resides provisionally in the neighbouring parish, at the episcopal residence, a distance of 7 km away. Then, there is the vast area or sub-parish of Saint Agatha of Mutambalile, which encompasses 7 communities-chapels and 2 schools. It is centrally located. Finally, there is the most distant zone or the Holy Cross sub-parish of Sokotela with its 9 communities-chapels, more than 70 km from the centre of the parish. This is in the southern zone of the parish.

2. Principle activities

a) Ordinary parish ministry

These essentially consist in liturgical celebrations, the administration of the sacraments, visits to communities, providing moral and spiritual comfort for the weak through listening and presence, raising people's awareness about being responsible for their integral development, the care that children and adolescents be encouraged and kept school, etc.

b) School ministry

School administration, spiritual and moral animation of the teaching staff and students.

c) Some existing social works and those to be created

Schools, health centre, recovery centre for wayward young girls, literacy centre for adults, playgrounds, associations and cooperatives of rural market gardeners, etc.



3. Visit of the Vicar General and Provincial Vicar

Before the Provincial Chapter, Father Agostinho Maholele, in his capacity as General Consultor and in charge of Africa accompanied by the Provincial Vicar, Father Patrick Adidolo, on Saturday 29 May 2022 visited the community of Kilobelobe served by the religious of the Blessed Sacrament of Blessed Isidore Bakanja Province.

On Sunday 30 May 2022, the solemnity of the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, a warm welcome was given them at the Parish led by Father Jérôme Ngantete the parish priest, Father Louis Bunga the assistant parish priest, the lay coordination team as well as by all the faithful of the parish. A march was organized in their honour from the entrance of the parish compound to the church, where a solemn Mass was celebrated by Father Jérôme and the homily was delivered by Father Patrick Adidolo. After the Mass, we convivially shared a fraternal meal followed by a popular traditional dance.

On Wednesday 31 May, after the meeting with Monsignor Gaston Ruvezi, the bishop of the diocese of Sakania-Kipushi, the Fathers were received by all the superiors of the communities, priests, men and women religious of the deanery of the Kafubu valley.

Ending their visit on 1 June, they departed for Kinshasa on 2 June 2022.

Father Jérôme Ngantete, sss

Parish Priest

Ordinations in Viet Nam

After many years living and studying in the Congregation, eleven religious of the Province of Vietnamese Martyrs, now committed themselves wholeheartedly to the service of our Eucharistic Lord through His people by responding to God's call *“to live the Paschal Mystery, to internalise it in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament and to share with others the life springs from it.”* (RL 102)

On 03 November 2022, the Blessed Sacrament Congregation in Vietnam welcomed Joseph Tran Van Toan, Bishop of Long Xuyen Diocese to Khiet Tam Church, where six religious have been ordained by him to the diaconate and five others to the priesthood.

Deacon candidates:

1. Brother Joseph Nguyen Thanh Kham, SSS
2. Brother Thomas Aquino Pham Van Khoe, SSS
3. Brother Peter Le Tien Quynh, SSS
4. Brother Joseph Nguyen Van Son, SSS
5. Brother Joseph Tran Ba Thien, SSS
6. Brother Anthony Nguyen Ba Vinh, SSS



Priest candidates:

1. Brother Vincente Nguyen Van Dung, SSS
2. Brother Joseph Nguyen Duc Huy, SSS
3. Brother Joseph Ngo Van Khang, SSS
4. Brother Peter Nguyen Van Nguyen, SSS
5. Brother Joseph Nguyen Thanh Tung, SSS



In his homily Bishop Joseph Tran Van Toan said: *“In the Eucharist, Jesus expressed an unconditional love, a humble love, a self-destructive and self-giving love for humanity. Therefore, each person is also called to give his or her life to the other to continue his mission of salvation.”*

At the end of the Mass, in spirit of thanksgiving to God, father Joseph Pham Dinh Ai, Provincial Superior, on behalf of all the SSS religious, thanked the concelebrants, religious, the benefactors, their relatives and the entire community.

We thank the Lord to give our Congregation these young religious who are following in the footsteps of Father Eymard to light the Eucharistic fire everywhere. May the Lord through the intercessions of our Mother, Mary Queen of the Cenacle, and of Saint Peter Julian Eymard, our Founder, grant them strength and love so that they will always be enthusiastic and courageous to live their charism and carry out our Eucharistic mission.

Father Joseph Tran Minh Hieu, SSS

Madrid: New members of the Aggregation

Madrid, Blessed Sacrament Community of Sainz de Baranda. On Sunday 6 November 2022 a celebration long desired by me and my fellow brothers and sisters took place. I had even begun to think it was far too long delayed. The occasion being celebrated was about *belonging in an official way to the Eymardian Family, as an Aggregate*.

It was not a long journey toward this, but it has been intense. Throughout a whole year, together with other brothers and sisters, we followed the course of formation given by Fr Allen Peña and Fr José Antonio Rivera. This was a formation needed on different topics that I thought I already knew, but through this opportunity I was given the chance to deepen and continue in the journey of Faith. Also, I deeply felt that need and opportunity to share my Faith with people around me and with the whole community.

From my personal experience I can say it was difficult to express the feeling of being a member of a family, a family in faith. It is very important to belong to a community, particularly if it is a community of faith. A family welcomes, protects, helps. It provides everything we need, and we greatly need to have this *family in the Faith*. This is because the Faith not only looks to Jesus, but also seeing from Jesus' point of view, as Saint Paul tells us in his letter to the Hebrews chapter 12, "fixing our eyes on Jesus". Likewise, the Gospel of John chapter 1 speaks about the transmission of faith through witnessing.

Our celebration, presided by Fr José Antonio Rivera and concelebrated by Fr Allen Peña, although simple was lived with lots of emotion, at least by me. It took place at 1 pm on Sunday afternoon. After the homily Fr Allen gave us the cross and the certificate of being enrolled as members of the Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament.

From that time, and filled with enthusiasm, strengthened in knowing we belong to the Eymardian family, we must *bear witness to our Faith*, to Jesus, with the Eucharist at the centre of our life and our commitment, which must impregnate everything in our life, our activities, our reality. We are guided by the *Life Project* of the Aggregation.



Doña Mercedes Cabrejas Manchado

Aggregate, Blessed Sacrament Community of Sainz de Baranda

History of the SSS Community of Cali Colombia

The Archbishop continued to say: “Tomorrow, early in the morning, my Pastoral Vicar Fr Pedro Rubiano Saenz, will take you to the different neighbourhoods, so you can choose”. Incidentally, this same Vicar, years later, became the Primate Archbishop of Colombia, in the city of Bogotá. Today, as I write this chronicle, he is retired because of his old age, and in very bad health.

So, early the next morning, they set off in the Pastoral Vicar’s car for a neighbourhood called El Rodeo.

The Vicar had not taken into consideration the rain that had fallen the night before, nor the clayey terrain of that neighbourhood. What happened was that the car got stuck, and some local people were called to help them out of the situation. After that the Blessed Sacrament religious said to the Vicar: “God is speaking to us, he wants us to remain here.” And there Father remained.

The Blessed Sacrament religious was experiencing all this while the Superior General, Fr Harry Verhoeven, arrived to Popayán. He was curious about the stories about the religious of Popayán and wanted to go to Cali personally to see what was going on. Because of bad luck we almost lost our Superior General.

Indeed, Fr José Martín Eguiguren, parish priest of the Parish of Santo Domingo in Popayán and Fr General had not chosen the best day for their visit.

The road connecting Popayán and Cali was a small dual carriageway. It was not surprising what happened next. A car going towards Popayán, at full speed, attempting to overtake a truck in the middle of the storm and with no visibility due to the fog, collided front on with Fr José Martín’s car, which was heading towards Cali. This irresponsible act made Fr José Martín swerve and ended up off the road. Fr General was thrown out the car into a field, whereas, Fr José Martín, a man of 120 kilos, had his leg trapped in the car. Using all his strength he managed to free himself and started to look for Fr General, very anxious and unaware whether he would find him dead or alive.

Thank God Fr General was alive. He was wounded, but alive. He was left with a scar on his forehead for the rest of his life, a souvenir of the event. That same day they managed to arrive in Cali, to the convent of the Sisters of Mother Laura, who did everything possible to look after them while curing their wounds.



To be continued ...

Father Lucinio Martin Herrero, sss

Colombia-Peru, NOTIBIP 86 - November 2022

Must Read Book: *A Eucharistic Spirituality*

by Fr Paul Bernier SSS and Jim Brown

In 1992, Father Norman Pelletier SSS wrote *Tomorrow Will Be Too Late: A Life of Saint Peter Julian Eymard (1811-1868)*. Over the next ten years, this book was (and continues to be) such a source of information and insights into the founder of the Congregation, especially for parishioners of Blessed Sacrament parishes throughout the United States (*the Province of Saint Ann*), members of Life in the Eucharist Teams, and those of us lay people connected to the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament.

In 2010 the congregational leadership in Rome reinstituted a program for lay associates called the Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament. This provided an opportunity for Father William Fickel SSS, then Director of the Center for Eucharistic Evangelizing (CEE), and those of us connected to the Center to develop an initial formation program for prospective associates. We also began working on ongoing formation programs for committed associates, carrying forward a long tradition to Father Eymard himself of providing retreats and ongoing formation opportunities for lay people associated with the Congregation.

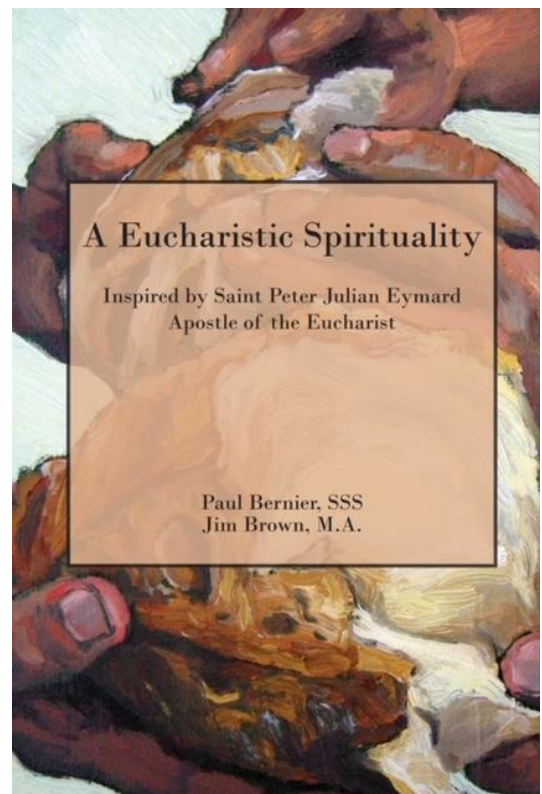
Fast forward to an evening in 2017 when Father Paul Bernier SSS, and I led an evening of reflection for a group of lay associates at Saint Paschal Baylon Church in Highland Heights, Ohio. At the end of the evening, one of the associates chatted me up about providing more “lay-friendly” resources on the founder of the Congregation and his eucharistic spirituality.

The next day, Father Paul and I discussed writing a book relevant to a lay spirituality. We then wrote short chapters that addressed some key elements of Saint Eymard’s eucharistic spirituality, its growth and legacy in the religious orders he founded, and its development in the Church he loved.

When Father Paul and I finished a draft for a 12-chapter book, the provincial administration asked us to send the book out to several lay associates and religious for feedback. One such “critic”, the Vicar Provincial at the time, Father John Keenan SSS, opined: “This is a book we don’t have. It gives us a great companion piece to Father Norman’s book, *Tomorrow Will Be Too Late* for our growing community of lay associates across the province – a book on eucharistic spirituality”.

Another “critic”, lay Associate Mary Muehle from Saint Paschal Baylon, suggested we add questions at the end of each chapter. She then helped us write the questions at the end of each chapter. We believed the questions would be helpful for group discussions as well as one’s own personal reflection.

As Father Paul writes in the Introduction, “this book does not propose a blueprint for those trying to develop a eucharistic spirituality. Rather, it treats various salient aspects of the spirituality of our saint of the Eucharist from which people can draw not only inspiration but suggestions for their own relationship with God”. We might add that there is no intended sequential order to the chapter topics. Readers may find some topics of more personal interest than others.



Our hope, therefore, is that our readers will find inspiration to live the way Father Eymard was convinced Jesus wanted us to live. So, whether the reader is an associate, someone interested in becoming an associate, or a person who wants to know more about a eucharistic spirituality inspired by Saint Peter Julian Eymard, we hope that you, the reader, will gain both a deeper insight into the spirituality of this “Apostle of the Eucharist”, as well as a guide for your own spiritual journey as well.

To obtain your own copy of this fascinating new book on Eucharistic Spirituality inspired by Saint Peter Julian Eymard, Apostle of the Eucharist, call or email Mr. Scott Gongos, Director of Mission Advancement at (440) 449-2700 or sgongos@blessedsacrament.com. We are asking for a donation of \$20 + postage and handling.

This book would be a great Christmas gift for family and friends. Order yours now!

SSS Grapevine

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Anniversaries of Ordination in January 2023

05.01.1963	Fr. Alain VOISARD	Marly, Switzerland	Ordination 60
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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!