

EYMARDIAN FAMILY

SSS INTERNATIONAL



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60th anniversary of the Canonisation of Saint Peter-Julian Eymard

The 60th anniversary of the canonization of Father Eymard is one of the special events celebrated in the Church last year, which happens to be also the 60th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council. Pope Saint John XXIII canonized him during the Mass of 9 December 1962, at the end of the first session of this Council. Various kinds of events have marked the course of the preparation of this celebration.



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1. A pilgrim walk

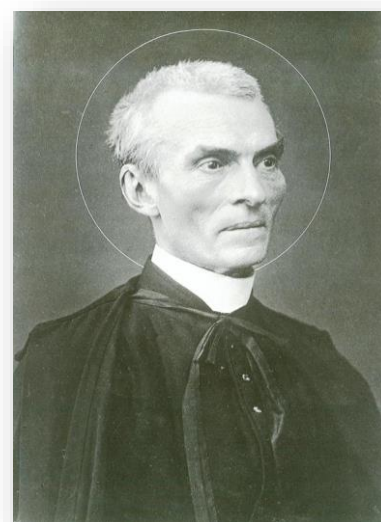
From 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, 15 October, 28 people gathered at the 'Pont du Prêtre', in the Commune of Valbonnais, about twenty kilometers from La Mure, to begin a pilgrim walk. Father Eymard attached great importance to the land, which recalls history, renews a person's bond of with God, their parents and the generations to come. The earth is also the place of various sufferings. It constitutes a challenge in the quest for ways of being effectively committed to the service of the poor.

2. Relevance of Saint Peter-Julian Eymard's charism

The Eucharist was the focus of his thoughts, his words, all his undertakings. It is the expression of God's love. Eymard knew how to express it in adoration and commitment to various works of eucharistic apostolate. A charism greatly relevant for the world today. How would this saint's eucharistic message apply to the present challenges of our societies: fraternity, peace...?

The Eymard Centre of Spirituality of La Mure, in collaboration with parishes and diocesan radio stations, has endeavoured to contribute features. On 3 and 10 December, at the parish of Saint Peter-Julian Eymard at La Mure, the Centre of Spirituality hosted two half-days of teaching, reflection and sharing, on the following themes respectively: 'The Second Vatican Council and St Peter-Julian Eymard's eucharistic charism'; and 'Tasks for synodality, suggested by St Peter-Julian Eymard approach'.

The same Centre of Spirituality presented six catechises and four interviews on diocesan radio stations: 'Espérance' (Hope) from the diocese of St Etienne, 'Maria' from Toulon and 'Radio Chrétienne Française' from Grenoble. The latter hosted two interviews on 17 November and 13 December, respectively with two of our religious: Fr. Olivier Nondo, Provincial Superior of Isidore Bakanja, of the Democratic Republic of Congo, with the Centre of Spirituality; and Fr. Eugenio Barbosa Martins, Superior General of the Congregation of Religious of the Blessed Sacrament.



Father Eymard drew attention to the importance of remembering the grace of baptism. This grace, ever active, impels a person toward being in a process of perennial renewal. Strengthened by the grace of the revelation of God's love in creation, Eymard invites people to regard things from the

perspective of God's goodness to humankind... to take the shortest path, that of love that gives everything without self-interest. Eymard, concerned about the lack of people in the church, had the audacity and the courage to bring the light of the Gospel to the poor, to the ragpickers, in the peripheries. He accompanied them by means of catechesis and all other forms of help.

Like his contemporaries in Lyons, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, Antoine Chevrier, Blessed Pauline Jaricot, Saint Peter-Julian Eymard deeply understood the inseparable link between Jesus in the Eucharist, the poor and the proclamation of the Word of God. This saint of the Eucharist pointed out that true happiness consists in setting out to seek the God's love in the Eucharist and in becoming a witness to it by continually surrendering one's self and being committed to caring for the poor.

3. The eucharistic celebration

On Sunday, 11 December 2022, the parishioners of the 44 sub-parishes gathered in the church of La Mure for the eucharistic celebration of the 60th anniversary of St Peter-Julian Eymard's canonisation. Reverend Father Eugenio Barbosa Martins, the Superior General of the Congregation of the Religious of the Blessed Sacrament presided at this Mass. Concelebrating with him were Blessed Sacrament Fathers, Norbert Pagnier and Aimé Porret from the Community of Colombier-Saugnieu, and the priests and deacons of the La Mure parish.



“Our eternity depends on the sanctity of our lives”, the Superior General said in his homily, recalling the importance of celebrating and holding the feast. Festivity helps to situate conflicts and needs into perspective. It fosters meeting, welcoming, joy and sharing. This event of Father Eymard today nourishes our dreams and enriches our witness as disciples of the Lord. While in precarious health, Eymard expressed the fruitfulness of his life in various apostolic activities. His eucharistic passion is a challenge for us in seeking answers to the new demands of the mission. Let us be illumined by the greatness of Saint John the Baptist: during trials, he let Jesus decide. He found his joy in Jesus. So let us live this path of holiness traced out by Eymard with the same joy as that of Saint John the Baptist.

The parish community continued the celebration in the parish hall with fraternal conversation over a drink and a shared meal. We are also called to take up today's challenges following the example of Saint Peter-Julian Eymard's eucharistic passion.

Father Thaddée Mupapa, sss
Superior, La Mure

Celebrating 60 years Canonization of Eymard in Vietnam

The day on December 9th, 2022 was so special for the whole members of the Eymardian family, particularly for the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament in Vietnam. For 60 years ago on December 9th, 1962, the Blessed Peter Julian Eymard was solemnly canonized by pope John XXIII. To celebrate this significant and memorable event, in early morning, many SSS priests and brothers, sisters from the servant of the Blessed sacrament, sisters from the secular institute of Servitium Christi, and great numbers of Associates from various dioceses were present at the courtyard of the provincial house.

At 6am, the procession took place, headed by the holy cross and incense and followed up by the community and the splendidly decorated sedan-chair of saint Peter Julian Eymard's statue. After people in the procession had entered the church, Reverend Father Joseph Pham Dinh Ai, the provincial superior, gave them his own sharing. He said: Today is a ceremonial day for all the Eymardian family's



members who have one common ideal that "is to live the mystery of the Eucharist fully and to make known its meaning, so that Christ's reign may come to the glory of God and be revealed to the world" (RL 1).

After the sharing, the gathering's atmosphere was made more vivid and fascinating by the acting of SSS sisters and brothers about the life of Fr. Eymard. At the end of the performance, the community watched a video about the context on the day of the canonisation, December 9th, 1962 in St. Peter's Basilica, Rome.

Next to the important part of the gathering is the concelebration of the Eucharist. The Mass was presided by Fr Joseph Ai, provincial superior, along with SSS priests. Fr Joseph Tro, vicar of the provincial superior, who gave sharing on the Gospel of John to the community, insisted that "following in the footsteps of fr Eymard, all of us are called to adorers of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist sincerely. Jesus Christ in the Eucharist must be central in our lives and for our activities. The Eucharist is the source for our activities entirely".

At the end of the Mass, the provincial superior expressed his deep gratitude to priests and religious, Khiet Tam parish council, all members of the SSS aggregation (association) for their presence and collaboration, so that the gathering for Fr. Eymard's canonisation anniversary was celebrated solemnly and devotionally. Moreover, he said that "we do not only rejoice to praise our God and so proud for our Founder as a saint, 'an apostles of the Eucharist', rather than we should learn our Founder's example about love and service in Jesus Christ of the Eucharist".

After the Eucharist, everyone shared together in breakfast prepared by sisters of Servitium Christi at the courtyard of the provincial house. Finally, there was the Eucharistic Adoration for sisters and brothers of the SSS Aggregation in the church at 9am.



Thanks be to God for granting us an apostle of the Eucharist as Fr. Eymard. He is a wonderful pattern to which we follow, through using his life totally in serving and proclaiming the mystery of the Eucharist. May we imitate his life in order to become adorers of the Eucharist faithfully and worthily.

Brother Văn Sơn and Father Huy Kiệt, sss

New members of the Aggregation at San Benedetto del Tronto, Italy

On Sunday, 20 November 2022, the Solemnity of Christ the King, in the Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament Fathers, Father Eugenio Astori presided at the ritual of the “Promises” of nine (9) new members of the Guard of Honour, who were officially welcomed into the Eymardian Family as part of the Aggregation. This event, “forgotten” for many years, deeply moved the Aggregates present, who also experienced a “holy” desire for not having entered the Aggregation in an official way, with a celebration of public welcome, as stated in n. 20 of the *Project of Life*.

Accompanied by hymns and holding a burning lamp in their hand, the new Aggregates entered in procession to their pew, where the priest welcomed them and invoked the Holy Spirit with them. After a brief commentary on the Word of God and the reading of a few passages from Father Eymard’s writings, the ritual continued. The candidates were called by name, and after the blessing of the insignia and the questions regarding admission, they pronounced the formula of the Promise.

The Promise

*Empty handed I welcome
a splendid dawn
that arose in my heart.
The candle being held
in the same joy
illuminated other foreheads.*

*What future initiatives will there be,
called forth by Your voice?*

Here I am!

*Unexpected experience
like a miracle.
My freedom has always
feared of being assaulted
becomes revealed by Your gaze.*

*The cross on my breast,
candid and clear
is Your light
and those silent thoughts,*

*distant, without perfume nor hope,
such fast-fading flowers,
will be transformed by Your lightning flashes.*

*What paradise do they see?
What are their disturbing dreams?*

Here I am!

*This sudden promise
who questions, without answer,
follows the candle lights,
in the dark filled with moose.
The flicker is an armature
who in the immaculate snow
ward off our anxieties
makes our gaze peaceful
breaks the hard crust of the earth.*

*What could they ever dream
those wretched wandering souls?*

... to be Apostles Almost children.

After receiving the emblems and Project of Life, the new candidates went to the altar of the Blessed Virgin, where they consecrated themselves to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament through Mary and Saint Peter-Julian Eymard, and signed the Register of the Aggregation.

All those present were quite moved. Among the new Aggregates there was also a poetess, Rossella Frollà, who has often expressed in verse her joy and sentiments.

Father Eugenio Astori, sss



Province of Our Lady of Africa - Ordination to the Priesthood in the Cathedral of St Anne of Thiès



“What shall I render to the Lord for all his bounty to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord” (Ps 116:12-13)

On Saturday, 3 December 2022, Christophe Mendy, Victor Youga Faye, Louis Demba Ndione and Francisco Mendy with three other young diocesan deacons were ordained priests by the imposition of the hands of Bishop André Gueye of Thiès. In preparation we had a time of renewal by a one-week retreat led by Father Pierre Raul Ciss, a priest of the diocese of Thiès.

The stage of initial formation has been a long journey amid difficulties, suffering, but also much joy. For this reason with the whole Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament we wish to thank God for the gift of life, religious vocation and particularly for the gift of priestly ministry. Today as well we want to live and share with the entire eymardian family the ideal set out by our *Rule of Life*, number 1: “to live the mystery of the Eucharist fully and to make known its meaning, so that Christ’s reign may come and the glory of God be revealed to the world.” For us truly it is a grace that has been given to us to be both members of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament as religious and ministers of the Eucharist as priests, at the service of God’s people.

We wish by these few words to thank God, the author of all creation. We thank our parents for always supporting, accompanying, and encouraging us through their advice, prayers and backing. Great thanks also to our Province of Our Lady of Africa for the renewed trust. Thanks likewise to the various Provinces that have welcomed us during the time of formation as scholastics, regarding which we mention especially the Province of Christ the Bread of Life in Sri Lanka, the Province of Blessed Isidore Bakania in the DRC, the Province of Saint John XXIII of Colombia, and the Province of Our Lady of Guadeloupe of Brazil.

Also we express much gratitude to all our formators and especially to the director of our P4 session, Father Denis Ndene and Father Camille Gagnon. Once again we commend ourselves to your prayers and we assure you likewise of our humble prayers. May God bless you who have contributed to our formation so that God may bestow still more fruitfulness to you ministry.

Like and with Mary we wish to repeat: “My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour (...) The Almighty works marvels for me; Holy is his name!” (Lk 1:46f. 49) In prayerful communion with all the religious of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, we raise our prayers to the Lord of the harvest so that he may continue to send workers. Indeed, we ask the Father to raise up again numerous eucharistic vocations, particularly in our Province of Our Lady of Africa.

Father Francisco Mendy, sss



Fr Victor Youga Faye



Fr Louis Demba Ndione



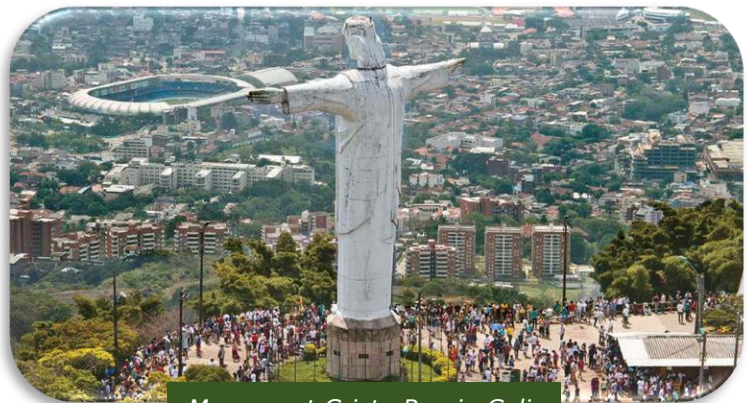
Frs Christophe and Francisco Mendy

History of the SSS Community in Cali Colombia

At the “El Rodeo” neighbourhood, without anyone knowing how, the parish priest of the nearby parish had reclaimed a piece of land, in a symbolic way and as a sign of possession, in the context of a land that had been invaded. He wanted to build there a church and had put in the spot a few bricks that resemble the beginning of a wall, measuring only half a meter. This wall seemed to be saying “Attention! This area has an owner!”

The SSS religious, considering that this could be the place where the project could be developed, dedicated himself to look for a place for the first community to live. In this way the following day, while still living at the Lauritas Sisters Convent, the father returned to the neighbourhood determined to find a small house as close as possible to the mentioned piece of land, on which in the future the church and the residence for the community could be built.

He found a house there for rent and made an agreement with the person living there to exchange it for another house that the father had found in another part of the neighbourhood. In this way the religious would be able to stay there, just in front of the land for the construction of the church.



Monument Cristo Rey in Cali

At this point, we must say something about the background of the neighbourhood. The land had been a ranch belonging to one of the richest families of the region. This ranch overnight was occupied by poor people coming to the city totally destitute. The success of the squatters was not easy: there were 17 attempts to invade. The police on the one hand and planes from a nearby air force base sprayed tear gas over the occupants to make them flee.

With the death of a woman called Celmira Prado, the invasion succeeded. This woman was acclaimed as “a heroine”. However, this is not the place to relate the full story of the vicissitudes in which our parishioners were involved.

Once the SSS religious obtained a house to rent he went to his SSS brethren in the community of Popayán, convinced that after greeting them and relating what he had been doing he would receive sufficient help to furnish the house. The brothers gave him a mattress and some blankets, with which things the religious returned to Cali.

To be continued ...

Father Lucinio Martin Herrero, sss

Colombia-Peru, NOTIBIP 87 - December 2022

Anniversary of Profession in February 2023

27.02.1963

Fr. Joseph FERNANDO

Sydney, Australia

Profession 60