

# An Invitation to Contribute to the Revival of *Emmanuel Magazine*

Since August of last year, I have been serving as editor of *Emmanuel Magazine*, a source of theological reflection on eucharistic prayer published for well over a century by the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament in the Province of Saint Ann.



✚ Owing to a number of factors, including the highly competitive environment in which periodical literature of all kinds must function today, production of a print version of the magazine was discontinued in 2021.

In the years since, members and associates of the Congregation, along with *Emmanuel's* loyal subscribers, have expressed hope that it might be revived in digital form, as has become the case with innumerable publications worldwide previously available only in hardcopy.

✚ My association with *Emmanuel* actually dates back to December 1990, when, under the editorship of the late Rev. Anthony Schueller, SSS (1959-2021), an article of mine entitled "Catholic Sacramentality and the Reform of Sacred Architecture" appeared in the magazine's Advent issue.

It was Fr. Schueller who subsequently invited me in 1995 to write a series of essays addressing the physical environment of Catholic worship in honor of the magazine's hundredth year of publication.

I was only a junior professor of fine arts and theology at Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania (USA), at the time and therefore grateful to "Father Tony", as he was often called, for finding something of value in my writing.

Years later, he was kind enough to provide a cover endorsement for a book I'd authored, and I persisted in sending him material on a regular basis if I thought it might interest his readers.

✚ My periodic submissions to *Emmanuel* on a range of topics continued until I departed university life in 2019, at which time, through one of those inexplicable coincidences of grace, then-editor John Christman engaged me to serve the publication as something of "contributing writer".

I would email John an article every few months, or so, then marvel at how he and his staff succeeded in making it look completely at home on the page. This phase of my relationship with *Emmanuel* came to an end with the November-December issue in 2021, when it was decided that print production of the magazine should come to an end.

✚ Through more recent correspondence with Very Rev. John Thomas Lane, SSS, provincial superior of the Province of St. Ann, I became party to discussions about my serving as editor of *Emmanuel* as an online publication accessible free-of-charge to anyone visiting the province's website (<https://www.blessedsacrament.com>).

Initial installments of the reenvisioned magazine appeared in mid-2025 to universally favorable reviews from readers pleased by the continuity it has maintained with its past even while assuming a means of distribution thoroughly suited to the circumstances of our time.

The Catholic imagination thrives on tradition and innovation alike, of course. A wedding of the two is what I hope to promote in the pages of *Emmanuel* going forward, along with a tone clearly supportive of the ongoing work of reform and renewal within the Church begun a half-century ago by the Second Vatican Council.

My biggest challenge in this very early phase of *Emmanuel*'s rebirthing is “content gathering”, as the phrase is sometimes used in editorial circles these days. The truth is that I spend the better part of my days on the phone or computer searching for writers willing to submit an article or two to post under our flag.

✚ My primary reason for my penning *this* message for wide distribution to the Congregation's membership, in fact, is to announce that *Emmanuel Magazine* is in need of publishable materials.

You could call this a “plea”, though that word carries about it a quality of desperation. I'd rather be seen as casting a net upon the waters with all the confidence in the world, Jesus himself having encouraged his fishermen-followers to do the same as means of drawing others to their mission (John 21:6-7). I hope by way of my message here to snag a handful of authors eager to see our venture succeed by sharing their private reflections on the nature, history and contemporary practice of eucharistic piety with an audience deeply committed to such topics.

I cannot promise instant notoriety to anyone accepting my invitation, though a number of the those to have had their work published in the magazine over the decades did later gain considerable prominence within Catholic circles and beyond. Wealth is something else I cannot guarantee, as *Emmanuel* is not currently in a position to be able to offer even a modest honorarium to those whose work we publish. (I, myself, am acting as editor for little more than a monthly stipend—though I approach the role with utmost seriousness out of deference to Saint Peter Julian Eymard and the international community of priests, deacons and brothers who perpetuate his legacy.)

✚ What I *can* offer those willing to send a little *fervorino*, essay, theological reflection or review of culture my way is my vow to review it with care and gratitude.

I know the growing numbers of *Emmanuel* enthusiasts requesting monthly updates on the magazine's evolution will likewise savor your submissions with prayerful appreciation.

To be in love with the Church and the noblest of its sacraments is to entrust oneself to Mystery, a dimension of which surely involves the network of professional relationships we form in this life.

✚ I look forward to developing precisely a connection of this sort with any member of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament intrigued by the invitation I present here in the name of those longtime devotees, like myself, of *Emmanuel Magazine*.

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