

Bread Broken & Shared

A Newsletter for friends of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament of the Province of Saint Ann

From Our Missions In Sri Lanka:

The Day We Walked For Peace

by Alfred Alexander SSS

Father Alfred Alexander SSS is a Blessed Sacrament priest from Colombo, Sri Lanka. He was formerly the regional superior there and now dedicates himself full time to the ministry of peace while assisting at St. Philip Neri's Chapel in downtown Colombo. Fr. Alex shares with our readers his recent efforts for peace in his war-torn little island nation. Please join us in praying for an end to the civil war in Sri Lanka and for the success of Fr. Alex's and the Blessed Sacrament community's efforts in this endeavor.

The Backdrop: With very short notice, His Excellency the Apostolic Nuncio, Most Reverend Mario Zenario and the Anglican Bishop of Colombo Rt. Rev. Duleep de Chikera accepted our invitation to preside at our dual prayer services, one at the Queen of Peace Church, Malligawatha and then a Eucharistic Celebration at St. Philip Neri's Church. The parishioners and their pastor Rev. Fr. Malcolm Perera, very readily and happily cooperated with the Blessed Sacrament community of Colombo to organize a day dedicated to a prayer service and a walk for peace to be followed by a Eucharistic Celebration at St. Philip Neri's Church. The event drew a large number of devotees including many clergy and religious. The prayer service presided over by Bishop de Chikera along with Rev. Fr. CAG Christopher, SSS, and conducted by the Blessed Sacrament seminarians combined with the Queen of Peace Church choir, was indeed a tribute to the occasion, "to invoke God's blessing upon our beloved land of Sri Lanka." Providentially, the weather was conducive to walking in procession, even though there was an occasional drizzle, as committed devotees walked for

peace with their rosary beads entwined in prayer as the statue of Our Lady of

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Fr. Alexander SSS, leads a peace walk in Colombo, Sri Lanka

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Miracles was taken in procession to St. Philip Neri's Church, led by the cross bearer, Fr. Alfred Alexander, SSS.

We Walked for Peace: When I conceived the idea of a 'walk for peace' and shared it with others, many discouraged me, so I was rightly apprehensive, for we had witnessed, that such gatherings and meetings for peace were often ridiculed, and in fact, disturbed by those whose general consensus was that we needed war in order to achieve peace. In spite of the opposition, some deep instinct within me kept urging me not to be deterred by anything but to go ahead and follow the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Finally, prayer and praxis came together. Immediately following our prayer service we took to the streets carrying in procession the statue of Our Lady of Miracles while reverently praying the Holy Rosary. We carried no banners, we chanted no slogans to indicate our objective – we wanted to maintain a peaceful and prayerful attitude. The power that sustained us on that day was our indomitable faith in Mary's prayer for our country and our equally unshakable faith in the crucified and risen Lord, whose image on the cross I carried, symptomatically spearheaded the procession: *"If God is for us who can be against us!"*



"The day we walked for peace demonstrated our collective conviction that we are of one faith, one body, one bread broken for our world, and for Sri Lanka."

As I reverently led the procession, while many witnessed our faith from a distance along the streets and from the passing vehicles and from apartment windows and shops, the words of St. Paul were ringing in my mind: *"But now in Christ Jesus, you that used to be so far apart from us have been brought close by the blood of Christ. For he is the peace between us, and has made the two into one and broken down the barrier that used to separate them apart, actually destroying (Jesus' death on the cross) in his own person the hostility caused by the rules and decrees of the law."* (Philippians 2:13-15).

The Eucharistic Celebration: Our procession and prayer for peace reached a momentous culmination that crystallized with a concelebrated Eucharist presided by none other than the Holy Father's representative, the apostolic nuncio to Sri Lanka. The celebration further confirmed Saint Paul's thoughts of *"Christ being the peace between the two races and that He had made the two into one"*. In his homily the Apostolic Nuncio commenting on the 1st reading from the prophet Isaiah 2:2-5), and ratified Saint Paul's vision when he said that: *"The prophecy of Isaiah will become a reality by the divine power of God, but not without our cooperation and the good will and determination"*. Further he went on to state that, *"We must recognize that the most powerful and dangerous weapons are those hidden in the hearts of men. Hence, disarmament has to begin in the hearts and minds of men."* What he meant was that humanity must make a U-turn away from the path of violence and war which are hatched in men's hearts to the peace proclaimed by Christ in the Gospel.

My Vision of Peace for the Future:

My vision of peace for the future is based on what I believe and what I had been nurtured with, namely the peaceful coexistence of my own religious community which in itself is made up of different cultures and races but always drawing its strength from the Paschal mystery which we celebrate each day, contemplating and sharing with one another. This is something which I have lived and witnessed during my 48 years as a religious and 38 years as a priest, which happily coincides with our 50th anniversary of Eucharistic presence in the nation of Sri Lanka. The day we walked for peace demonstrated our collective conviction that we are of one faith, one body, one bread broken for our world, and for Sri Lanka. After so many years of violence, war and unrest, it is no wonder that our longing for peace in our dear land becomes the urgent concern for today. Since the heart of the Eucharist is peace with justice and reconciliation, we have, as a religious congregation, opted to live and promote this Eucharistic culture in our own land. It was in this spirit that we walked for peace united with our larger community of faithful that we serve.

Today, I am more convinced than ever that peace in our little island home will remain unattainable if our law-makers and politicians try to make one side vanquished and the other a victor instead of following the wisdom of Plato, *"giving every one his/her due."* I feel deeply that all human attempts at achieving peace through forums and marches, though they may be good in themselves, will fail, *"If Yahweh does not build the house, in vain the masons toil; if Yahweh does not guard the city, in vain the sentries watch."* (Psalm 127:1). ❖

The Latest In Liturgy

by John Thomas Lane SSS

John Thomas Lane, SSS of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament is currently pastor of St. Charles Borromeo parish in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He has previously served as the Director of Liturgy of the Diocese of Salt Lake City, Utah. He holds an MA in liturgical studies from the University of Notre Dame and has written numerous articles on the liturgy in Emmanuel magazine as well as other reviews. He is active in giving workshops on liturgy and has been a speaker at various Liturgical Conferences. Father Lane helps our readers to remain current with what is going on in Liturgy in the American Church today.



Throughout the year, many will ask me, “What’s the latest in liturgy?” Annually, the liturgical leaders of the United States gather to discuss and work with the US Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy on various issues. This year, liturgical leaders networked in Omaha, Nebraska for a week. There are two tracks to the meeting – first a theme that allows for continuing education. Secondly, there are afternoon business sessions that discuss current issues in the liturgical life in the Church. During this time “delegates” discuss and make “position statements,” which are action items for consideration and implementation throughout the country.

The theme for this year’s continuing education convention was “Music and the Art of Celebration.” We all know how important music is and how vital it is to our worship experience. It is important to reflect and work at improving our celebrations. Music has a particular influence and three speakers addressed the topic, Benedictine Anthony Ruff, Doctor Marie Rubis Bauer, and the National Pastoral Musician President J. Michael McMahon. Each took different aspects of music and reflected upon it with the delegates to the convention. Our focus was about the art of singing and how this has been a struggle with congregations around the world. We are always trying to improve the art of participation in the liturgy, especially through music. We have made huge strides over the years in trying to make our liturgies of earth mimic the angels in heaven.

Each year, we hear from the chair of the Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy (BCL), on the latest publications or updates in our liturgical life. Bishop Donald Trautman, from Erie, PA is currently the chair of the committee. He discussed the process for the updating of the Ordo Missae, the third edition of the Roman

Missal. Recently, the bishops of the United States approved part of the “worship book,” with many amendments for cultural reasons. We are waiting for the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (CDW) and Vox Clara to approve these texts. It will be many years for the implementation of new texts; each year we get an update on the long process. An example of a possible new change in the Mass: after the priest says, “The Lord be with you.” Our new response may be: “And with your Spirit.” This is an exact translation from the Latin. Most of the other languages use this literal translation, and have for years. The CDW is demanding the literal translation, one of many to come in a few years. We also heard about the progress of Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest (SCAP). This ritual is done on Sundays when there is no priest available for Mass. About 20% of the parishes in the country currently celebrate this ritual on Sundays. It was first promulgated in

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Latest in Liturgy...Continued from previous page

the 1990s. It has now been revised and a new edition will be ready for 2007.

With time, practice and celebration, we learn what works well, what is proclaimed well, and what needs to be improved. Currently, the BCL is working on revising the Sunday Lectionary and the Advent scriptures. Some times there are passages that are very difficult to follow and were not translated as best as they could be. Revisions help the lector and congregation proclaim and hear the reading much more clearly. This is another project that is ongoing.

As delegates at the meeting, we discussed other projects and proposals which we will work on in collaboration with the US bishops. Last year the bishops wrote a document about lay ecclesial ministers, people who are co-workers in the church. (The actual

document was called Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord). There are now almost 40,000 people who work with and for the church. Guidelines and structures help these lay ecclesial ministers work in the church. Many of these lay ecclesial ministers are liturgists and music ministers. We are providing more training and support to assist lay ecclesial ministers so they may serve the church in the best way. We also asked and will work on formation programs for music ministers so they may serve the liturgy and church in a more helpful way. Many “volunteers” come to church ministry with a request to help. We continue to work on ways to educate, form and assist ministers so that they may feel more confident in their ministry and affirm their role in the church. Furthermore, we asked for and voted

for more support of the clergy, deacons and presbyters (priests), especially assisting them with the role of music in their ministry.

Lastly, each liturgical convention ends with a banquet and national award/honor. This year the delegates honored Notre Dame Professor Dr. Nathan Mitchell. Dr. Mitchell is noted for his incredible gift with words and theology. He did not disappoint, with a wonderful poetic acceptance speech that reminded all of us of our vocation as liturgists and musicians. We are called to continue the work of the church, the “liturgy,” build the Body of Christ and assure God’s people that our worship helps us on our journey to the heavenly banquet in the eternal Jerusalem. For this, we are very blessed and have tremendous hope that God’s people continue to be formed in worship that assists them in helping praise and give glory to God and know that they are a child of God.



Focus on Vocations

O Lord, help me to know your will for me. Let your light shine in the depths of my heart that I may know what you want me to do with my life.

Help me believe that you have a special plan for me. Lord, I know I pass through this life only once; help me decide how you want me to make a difference.

Like our Blessed Mother, give me the wisdom to hear your voice and the courage to answer your call. Above all, give me peace of mind and heart. Amen. (www.usccb.org/vocations)

For more information, please contact the Vocation Office at (440) 442-7243 or by email at sssvocations@blessedsacrament.com.

Bread Broken & Shared

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*Religious Communities in
 Florida, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Texas*

Fulfilled In Your Hearing

Jesus' ministry began in Nazareth after spending some time in the desert in prayer. St. Luke tells us that Jesus "came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah" (Luke 4: 16-17).

Clearly, before Jesus did any other ministry – like healing the sick, expelling demons, or raising the dead – He first proclaimed the good news from the Hebrew Scriptures.

Following in this custom, our seminarians John Christman, SSS and Anthony Marshall, SSS, were officially installed into the ministry of reader by the provincial superior Norman B. Pelletier, SSS. This ministry is part of the *cursus honorem* or path to the sacrament of Holy Orders.



Norman Pelletier SSS, provincial, with Anthony Marshall SSS [L] and John Christman SSS [R] after their installation as Readers

As readers, Anthony and John will be responsible for the proclamation of the Scriptures (*except for the Gospel*) at the celebration of Mass, may also direct the singing, and present the general intercessions when a deacon or cantor is absent. They may also prepare another member of the lay faithful to read the Scriptures on a temporary basis, and help prepare others to receive the sacraments of initiation.

The ministry of reader, as it is known today, came about as a result of the reform of the Second Vatican Council. In 1972, Pope Paul VI revised what were up-to-then called the minor orders of porter, reader, exorcist, acolyte (altar server), and the major orders of sub-deacon, deacon and priest. One preparing for priestly ministry would have to receive first tonsure, and then all of the above listed ministries or offices before his ordination to priesthood.

Paul VI wrote in *Ministeria Quaedam*, the document which reformed the minor orders, that "Certain ministries were established by the Church even in the most ancient times for the purpose of suitably giving worship to God and for offering service to the people of God according to their needs."

However, following the desire of the bishops at Vatican II, "Among the particular offices to be preserved and adapted to contemporary needs," wrote Paul VI, "are those that are in a special way more closely connected with the ministries of the word and of the altar and that in the Latin Church are called the offices of reader and acolyte."

Pope Paul VI also redefined the ministry of reader, noting that "the reader is appointed for a function proper to him, that of reading the word of God in the liturgical assembly." Like Jesus who first acquired a deep love for the Father through study and knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures, Anthony and John will now be asked by the Church in their ministry as readers to "make every effort and employ suitable means to acquire that increasingly warm and living love and knowledge of Scripture that will make (them) more perfect disciple(s) of the Lord," wrote Paul VI in 1972.

The Institution of Readers took place during the celebration of Mass at St. Paschal Baylon Church in Cleveland, Ohio. Thomas Smithson, SSS, the

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director of students, introduced John and Anthony to the assembly. Father Provincial then preached his homily, instructing the readers-to-be to meditate daily on Sacred Scriptures as well as to be faithful to the responsibilities they will assume in their new office of reader. Afterwards, he invited the assembly to pray for Anthony and John, he blessed them and, handing them each a Bible, he instituted them as readers.

After Jesus read the passage in Nazareth from the Prophet Isaiah, Luke tells us that *“rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, ‘Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.’”* (Luke 4: 21). Please keep John and Anthony in your prayers as they undertake the ministry of reader for the Church, and continue in their formative process for the priesthood. Pray, too, that other young people will respond generously to the call of the Lord Jesus to serve as priests, brothers, and sisters following the footsteps of Saint Peter Julian Eymard. ✕

the many problems plaguing our material society. Your great devotion to the Eucharist has helped us to realize that this sacrament is what gives sustenance and true meaning to our entire lives. Your homilies made us think in practical terms and even forced us to entertain more lofty thoughts. You never failed to awaken our senses when from the altar you reveled in the beauty of the day or in the majestic sounds of the choir. You always said “yes” and were willing to do more than your fair share to bring church projects to completion. Regardless of your personal needs or time constraints, your empathy and passion committed you to those in your fold who came to you for counsel and comfort. Our young adults valued your advice and we all have been inspired by your quiet, stunning example and it has encouraged us to become a better people.

We, your friends at Saint Paschal’s, will never fully understand the thought, energy, time, prayer, or love expended by you on our behalf. However, we do recognize that you have changed our lives immeasurably in ways yet to be realized. We truly appreciate your hard work and endeavors and will always be thankful for the pleasure of your company. As you prepare to leave for your new assignment we find ourselves envious because we have experienced first hand the joy and rewards that are in store for your new faith community. We wish you God’s speed and blessings as you ready your heart for its new adventure. Remember that your presence will always echo in the pulsating heart of our parish.

Gratefully,
The People of Saint Paschal Baylon Parish - Cleveland, Ohio ✕

A Man Who Casts God's Shadow *Thomas Smithson, SSS*

by *Cynthia Minadio*

This tribute was offered during a farewell Mass at St. Paschal Baylon Parish for Thomas Smithson, SSS who was being transferred to Chicago to become the director of students for the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament. Cynthia Minadio who wrote this reflection after knowing Father Smithson just briefly, has given us permission to share it with our readers.

Is the man who is so high, so tall, that he seems to fill our community’s universe at all aware of the void in our hearts and spiritual lives that will be left after his departure? Does he know how easy he has been for us to relate to him and to risk our secrets so freely because we felt an instant rapport with such a kindred and caring spirit? We wonder if it was because he came late to his vocation after an enviable stint in corporate America that the Holy Spirit in His infinite wisdom hand picked this man of God to help shepherd the flock at Saint Paschal’s.



Thomas J. Smithson SSS

Father Tom, the gritty memories of the world embedded under your fingernails seem to have given you a unique understanding and keenly perceptive feel for

Ministry at Lenox Hospital -New York City

by *Innasi (Ignatius) Saverimuttu SSS*

Father Innasi Saverimuttu SSS is a Blessed Sacrament Father on loan to the US province for hospital ministry at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City. He resides with the SSS community at St. Jean Baptiste Parish and participates fully in the life of that community. We have asked Father Ignatius to share a little bit about himself and the ministry that he has undertaken.

I am Ignatius Saverimuttu, a Blessed Sacrament Priest of the Province of Christ the Bread of Life, Sri Lanka. You might perhaps be wondering what on earth I am doing in New York. Let me share why I am here and the great experiences gained through my hospital ministry.

It was during the summer of 2005 that I first visited the United States for the purpose of preaching for our missions as a part of the Missionary Cooperative Program. I had the privilege of meeting a good number of our SSS confreres of the Province of St. Ann and was also blessed with the opportunity of meeting people from various parishes of the three dioceses in which I preached. People were very cordial, friendly and welcoming. Over all, this brought me an experience of great joy and happiness with which I returned to Sri Lanka in September, 2005. On my return home to Sri Lanka, I never dreamed that I would get the opportunity to return to the United States again.

It was Fr. Louiston Fernando who was sent by the Province of Christ the Bread of Life, Sri Lanka to be engaged in the ministry of Catholic Chaplain at Lenox Hill Hospital for the period of two years. However, due to his ill-health, he had to be replaced after a period of several months. It was at this point that I was



Innasi Saverimuttu SSS at Lenox Hill Hospital

Who We Are

“Following in the footsteps of St. Peter Julian Eymard, our mission is to respond to the hungers of the human family with the riches of God’s love manifested in the Eucharist.”
Rule of Life 3

Conscious of our call to bear prophetic witness to the Eucharist, we commit ourselves to the renewal of Church and society through this sacrament, especially by:

- ◆ gathering communities characterized by hospitality, reconciliation, and service;
- ◆ celebrating the Eucharist as the source and summit of the life of the Church;
- ◆ associating others with our prayer;
- ◆ giving personal witness to the presence of Christ in the Eucharist;
- ◆ sharing our Eucharistic mission with others in full collaboration.



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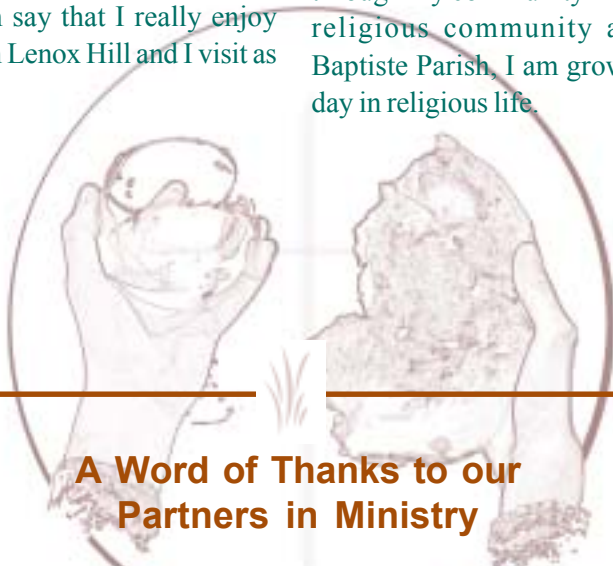
asked by one of the local councilors whether I would be able to undertake the ministry. My first reaction was to consent to the request if no one else was available for this mission. Although this was an invitation from Fr. Nilindra, the provincial, I thought God was calling me for this new mission in order that I may experience personal growth and to reach out to many who are in need of God's grace and consolation.

I arrived in New York in mid-2006 and just after a few days later I started my ministry in Lenox Hill Hospital. Since I come from a village background and do love a simple and quite life, the New York City and the Lenox Hill Hospital scene are a very big challenge for me. But I thought God who called me will accompany me to adjust according to large city life and its demands.

To date, I can say that I really enjoy my ministry in Lenox Hill and I visit as

many patients as I can. During my visit to Roman Catholic patients, I also make it a point to visit patients of other faith persuasions who might share the room with the Catholics. During my simple conversation with them, sharing a few words of consolation, there have been times when I was asked to pray over them. It has also happened that in some cases of some patients who initially wished to remain anonymous with regard to their religious identity, told me that they were Catholics indeed.

So, although my experience so far has been brief, it has been an experience of joy and loving service. I have learned to cherish moments of satisfaction in the service I have rendered with love in my heart. Through this ministry to the sick and through my community life at the SSS religious community at St. Jean Baptiste Parish, I am growing day by day in religious life. ❖



A Word of Thanks to our Partners in Ministry

Many of you discovered the envelope inserted in the middle of *Bread Broken & Shared* and sent a generous donation to the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament. We are most grateful to you for making it possible for our priests and brothers to continue their ministry. Your gift, whether large or small, helps you to actually share in the ministry of the Congregation in the USA. You are remembered daily in the prayer intentions of the priests and brothers of the Congregation.

*Saint Eymard...
His Life*

**Anniversary of Birth:
February 4**

Once again we honor Saint Peter Julian Eymard, our saintly Founder on the 196th anniversary of his birthday and baptism. Peter Julian, throughout his life, celebrated the anniversary of his baptism rather than that of his birth.



**Anniversary of Baptism:
February 5**

Ernest's Ecumenical Corner

by Ernest R. Falardeau SSS

Blessed Sacrament Father Ernest Falardeau SSS has been totally dedicated to the cause of ecumenism - dialogue and cooperation among all Churches - for many years. He recently was acknowledged and received a special award for his work at Temple Shaaray Tefila in New York City. In this issue of our newsletter, Ernest shares with us an introduction to the Churches of the Reformation. In future issues he will continue to introduce us to other ecumenical issues.

The Churches of the Reformation

If sorting out the churches of the East is difficult, understanding the churches of the West is not much easier. Perhaps a useful distinction can be made between the Churches of the Reformation and other Western churches. Catholics tend to think of Protestants generically, i.e. they tend to think that all Protestants believe the same thing and arise out of the same history. We will not be able to clarify everything in a single article, but we can begin the process. With time we will be able to see the different Protestant churches in their distinctness, their theology and their dialogue with the Church of Rome. In doing so, we will see more clearly that we are brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Generic Protestants?

The name "Protestant" originated with the Second Diet of Speyer (1529), when several princes and cities drew up a *protestation*, objecting to the reversal of a previous decision to allow each prince (or city) to decide between Catholicism and Lutheranism. In support of their stand they affirmed: "In matters which concern the honor of God and the salvation of our souls, every individual must stand alone before God and give his account." The sense of "to protest" is not only negative; it also means "to witness." This positive note can better be seen by reviewing the origins of Protestantism than by surveying its present heterogeneity." (Corpus Dictionary of Western Churches. Cleveland, 1970, pg. 633).

Distinguishing the churches of the Reformation follows the Second Vatican Council's decree on ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, and is helpful as a benchmark for identifying churches of the West which arose in the sixteenth century. These churches tend to use the term denomination, attributing to all the baptized membership in the body of Christ which is the church. The Second Vatican Council went a long way toward a similar recognition.

Common Ground

The World Council of Churches, established in 1947, has been a focal point for ecumenical dialogue. A Working Group with delegates from the WCC and from the Vatican has been able to break new theological ground for Christian unity. The Catholic Church is not a member of the world body, but it does work closely with it. Delegates from the Catholic Church are members of the Faith and



Ernest Falardeau SSS proclaims the Word of God

Order Commission and delegates from the Vatican attend the WCC international congresses every seven years.

In 1982 the World Council of Churches received the Faith and Order document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (Geneva: WCC, 1982) which is a landmark theological and ecumenical guideline. Asking the churches to respond to the document "at the highest level of authority", the WCC began the difficult process toward unity in major areas of disagreement since the Reformation among the Christian churches. The goal of the ecumenical movement, as projected in BEM, is a mutual recognition of churches, ministry and sacraments by all Christian churches. In proposing this reconciliation, the WCC was aware of the difficulties which the churches must surmount in achieving the goal of one Eucharist with all it implies.

Catholic scholars (Tavard, Lortz, Küng, Rahner, Adam, Bouyer and others)

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Ernest's Corner..Continued from previous page

grant that the concepts that were at the heart of Luther's concern were part of sound Catholic doctrine. Many Catholics are in virtual agreement with the assertion of J. Pelikan that the Reformation was a "tragic necessity" caused by "loyalty of the Reformers to the best and highest in Roman Catholic Christianity" in the face of theological confusion and indifferent leaders.

Continuing Issues

While there is much common ground

shared by Catholics and Protestants, there are issues that continue to be intractable. What is the Church, who belongs to it, what is the validity of sacraments outside the Catholic Church? Apostolic faith and apostolic succession need much refinement before a common ground is clearly visible.

Substantial progress has been made in the area of faith and dogmatic teaching since Vatican II. Now the churches are torn by moral issues that cut across

church lines and threaten Christian churches from within. How can unity be achieved in a situation that continues to be so fluid?

Patience is undoubtedly required, but also a new level of reformation from within the church itself. Cardinal Walter Kasper is quoted as saying the answer to the current dilemma lies in drawing closer to Jesus Christ. By drawing closer to Christ we will draw closer to each other. ❖

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

“He has done everything well, he makes the deaf hear and the mute speak” (Mark 7:37)



This year's theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has its origins in the experience of Christian communities in the South African region of Umlazi, near Durban. Each year, a first draft of the materials for the week of prayer is prepared in a particular local setting, then adapted for international usage before being distributed worldwide to be adapted for local use. This year's materials reflect the concerns and experience of a people who have undergone great suffering.

Umlazi was originally established under the apartheid regime as a 'township' for the majority black population. A legacy of racism, unemployment and poverty continues to raise formidable challenges for its people, where there is still a shortage of schools, medical clinics and adequate housing. This context of poverty and unemployment gives rise to a high crime rate and problems of abuse within families and communities. But the biggest current challenge faced by people in the informal settlements and townships is that of HIV/AIDS. It is estimated that 50% of the residents of Umlazi are infected with the virus.

Today, faced with the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other dehumanizing forces, it is acknowledged that they also are too strong for a divided church. In Umlazi, there is one courthouse, one hospital, one post office, one clinic, one set of shops - and one cemetery reflecting one overwhelming challenge facing the people. In this same township, the people, almost all of whom are Christian, adhere to scriptures which profess that there is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all. Yet there are many churches, which are not in full communion with each other, and which remain a sign of a divided Christianity. In Umlazi, there is an impatience and frustration with inherited divisions generated many centuries ago in other lands.

Let us join in the struggle to be ONE Christian Church!

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (actually an octave, eight days) has been celebrated continuously since 1894. The theme and focus biblical texts are prepared by an international Joint Committee of the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity. The dates of the Week of Prayer are normally from January 18 to 25 around the world. These dates are chosen because they represent the feasts of two saints significant to our understanding of Christian unity. January 18 is the feast of the confession (or chair) of St. Peter. January 25 is the feast of the conversion of St. Paul. Peter and Paul are understood as representing two competing experiences of Christianity which are reconciled in the gathering at Jerusalem (Acts 15).

Community News:

In Loving Memory

January

- 04 1990 Rev. James Feeley
- 06 1975 Rev. Raymond Tartre
- 08 1988 Rev. Clarence Loch
- 08 2003 Rev. William Dahms
- 10 1917 Bro. Télèspore Roy
- 10 2000 Bro. Fernand Duquette
- 11 1991 Rev. Joseph Ouellette
- 13 1961 Rev. Hervé Huot
- 13 1990 Rev. Gerald Dorais
- 16 1991 Rev. Hector Lemieux
- 18 1970 Bro. Marie-Louis Girard
- 23 1955 Rev. Alphonse Pelletier

February

- 01 1954 Bro. Ely Gingras
- 01 1987 Bro. Paschal Frazer
- 04 2005 Bro. Michael Galligan
- 07 1933 Bro. Pacific Roy
- 12 1969 Bro. Alphonse Caron
- 17 1991 Rev. William LaVerdiere
- 18 1985 Bro. Philip DuFour
- 21 1914 Rev. Louis Pilon
- 23 1925 Rev. Josaphat Beaudry
- 24 1984 Bro. Paschal Dwyer
- 27 1942 Rev. Leo Shaienks
- 27 1984 Rev. Robert Baldoni
- 27 1999 Rev. William O'Halloran



Trip to Italy

The Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament is organizing a trip to Italy in September/October 2007. The group will be led by Fr. Norman B. Pelletier, SSS, provincial superior, and other SSS religious. As of this printing, the total price is not yet available and arrangements are being finalized. The trip will be 14 days and include such places as Rome, Florence, Assisi, Venice, Pisa, Naples, Pompeii, Sorrento and the Amalfi Coast. For more information on this trip, or to receive a brochure once the details of the trip are finalized, write to Italian Adventure 2007, Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, 5384 Wilson Mills Road, Cleveland, OH 44143, or send an email to Italy2007@blessedsacrament.com. Spaces are limited for this Italian Adventure and reservations for the Italy trip will be taken on a first-come-first-serve basis.

Visitors from Bethlehem and Jerusalem

The Cleveland SSS community was happy to welcome Carmen & Michael Zoughbi from Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Michael and Carmen, parents of six children, spent several days with the priests and brothers and shared with them what it is like being a Christian and living in the Holy Land today. In addition to their visit, they brought with them olive wood figures carved in Bethlehem by local artisans which they offered for purchase after the weekend Masses at St. Paschal Baylon Parish.

Amplified Provincial Council Meeting

At the end of November 2007, about 20 SSS religious met in our Cleveland headquarters to discuss the future directions of the Congregation in the USA. All local superiors of communities, pastors of our SSS parishes, directors of our national ministries met with the provincial council and the planning commission of the province to discern where the Lord is leading us in this our 150th year since the founding of the Congregation by Saint Peter Julian Eymard. The second session of this gathering will take place in February 2007. Please pray for the success of this meeting.

Rest in Peace – Edmund Hardy SSS

Many of you knew Brother Ed because he seemed to know just about everyone. He died peacefully on November 27, 2006 just a month short of his 85th birthday. Since we are going to press these days, we will have a tribute to him and his ministry in our next issue of *Bread Broken & Shared*. May his soul and all the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace!

Welcome Father Nathan Arokiasamy SSS

We are pleased to welcome Father Nathan Arokiasamy, one of our young religious priests from the province of India. Nathan will live in Chicago as he pursues further theological studies. More information about Father Nathan in our next issue.

Pray for our Senior Religious

We ask you to remember our senior religious in your prayers. Some of them are resident at Regina Health Center in Richfield, Ohio and others are in Bethany Center which is attached to the local Cleveland religious community. Many are ailing because of advanced age or chronic illness. They are asked to remember you, our friends and benefactors, in their daily prayers and suffering.

Writings of Saint Peter Julian Eymard on the Internet

from a Press Release by the Generalate in Rome

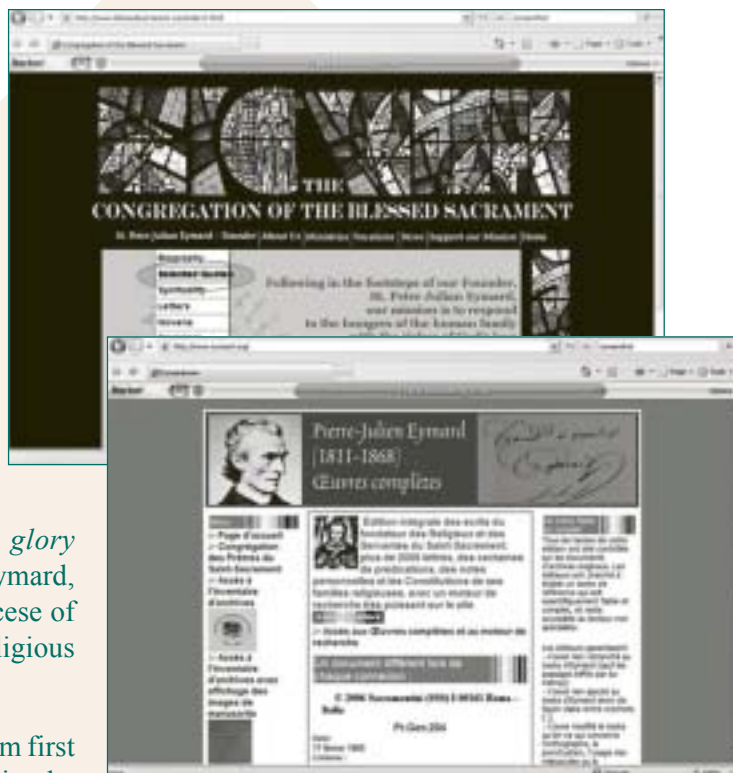
At 3:30 p.m. on December 5th 2006, at the Centro Convegni Matteo Ricci of the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, there was a presentation of the integral, official internet edition of the Writings of St Peter-Julian Eymard, apostle of the Eucharist and Founder of two religious congregations.

On December 9th 1962, at the end of the first session of the Second Vatican Council, before a vast gathering of Council Fathers and the faithful, Pope John XXIII proclaimed Peter Julian Eymard a saint: *“Beside a Vincent de Paul, a St John Eudes, and a Curé of Ars, Peter Julian Eymard takes his place today in the phalanx of these resplendent stars that are the glory and boast of the country of their birth.”* Peter Julian Eymard, who was born and died at La Mure d’Isère, in the diocese of Grenoble, 1811-1869, was a priest and founder of religious Congregations dedicated to the Eucharist.

At the end of an arduous path of searching, which led him first as a member of the secular clergy and then as a Marist, he founded at Paris on May 13th 1856 – 150 years ago – the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament and later the Congregation of the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament. He was rightly called *“an apostle of the Eucharist”*.

Today, the ensemble of his writings and sermons has been made accessible to the public at large on the internet site www.eynard.org. The realisation of this project (that became possible only a few years ago) took four years of intense work, which involved through their specific tasks and constant dialogue the collaboration between the *Commission of the Study on the Founder and his Work* (CEFO), comprising members from the male and female Congregations of the Blessed Sacrament, and the team called *Informatique & Bible* (and later *S.A. Mnémotique*) from the Benedictine monastery of Maredsous in Belgium. The complete work of Father Eymard is now available in a feasible manner. It consists of more than 44 million characters amounting to more than 10 thousand A4 size pages. Moreover, the CEFO has enriched the internet edition with notes and introductions that provide a context for the writings of the Saint and that situate them within the living tradition of the Congregations of the Blessed Sacrament.

The integral, official internet edition of Father Eymard’s writings has been made on the basis of 43 thousand numerical photos of the manuscripts (about 75 thousand pages) kept in the archives of the Religious and Servants of the Blessed Sacrament (AGRSS – AGSSS). Starting from these images all the unedited texts have been transcribed and all those already published have been checked. On the site www.knowhowsphere.net (likewise available on the internet site www.eynard.org), it is possible to consult freely the great collection of the



saint’s correspondence, his personal notes, juridical texts and rules pertaining to the Congregations he founded, and also the immense output of his sermons. The numerical photos of the original documents will be available on line only on request by those doing research.

“For the first time” – in the words of Father André Guitton, one of the experts to whom we are indebted for the realisation of this work – *“we have now his integral writings that have been verified according to scientific criteria. We know that his thought did not stop developing in the course of his life. The edition provides a field of considerable study in getting to know his life and the expression of his charism of founder. Far from being the last word about Eymard, it is rather the beginning of a renewed approach to his message.”* ✕

Share in Our Mission Eucharistic Evangelization Today

If you are a reader of *Bread Broken & Shared*, you are well aware that the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament is celebrating the 150th anniversary of its founding in Paris, France in 1856 by Saint Peter Julian Eymard. Our saintly Founder once said:

“Tomorrow will be too late!”
(Saint Peter Julian Eymard)

These words demonstrate the urgency that Saint Peter Julian Eymard, Founder of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, felt about what God had asked him to do – spread love and devotion to Jesus present in the Eucharist. The Apostle of the Eucharist was chosen by God for a special EUCHARISTIC MISSION. In the mid-19th century, St. Peter Julian proclaimed the love of God in the Eucharist to his contemporaries in France. Today, the members of his religious congregation, the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament continue to proclaim the message of God’s love around the world. So, we encourage YOU to begin TODAY to join us in our Eucharistic Mission of Eucharistic Evangelization.

The Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament has valued its relationship with the people, religious and priests of the Catholic Church in America for more than 100 years, and we want to invite you to share our joy as we celebrate the 150th Anniversary year of our founding by St. Peter Julian Eymard.

We want you to share in our EUCHARISTIC MISSION

How can you help, you may be asking yourself! Well, this is what you can do:

- (1) pray for more vocations to the priesthood and religious life
- (2) become a Eucharistic evangelizer – like St. Peter Julian Eymard and the priests and brothers of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, proclaim your love of Jesus in the Eucharist to family, friends and associates.
- (3) spend quiet time in prayer in the presence of the Eucharist to nourish yourself on Jesus, the Bread of Life.



Actually, we hope that you will take on these three commitments TODAY, because “tomorrow will be too late!”

It has been **150 years** since St. Peter Julian Eymard founded the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament in Paris, France in 1856. We continue to realize the goal of our mission: that all people will come to know and adore our Lord Jesus Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament. We still have a lot of work to do, with your help.

Our priests and brothers minister in many Dioceses and Archdiocese of the United States and around the world. Our needs are great – we are looking to you for help.

We've been around for 150 years!
More than 100 of them in the United States!

We are on a mission from God!

Yes, our mission was given to us by God. Actually, it was given to St. Peter Julian Eymard and has been handed on to the members of his religious Congregation. And we are asking you to join us in this special mission from God.

How can you do this? Very simply..... If you would like to associate yourself with the good works of the Priests and Brothers of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, you can make a special gift TODAY, because “tomorrow will be too late!” **Send your gift to: 150th Anniversary Fund, Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, 5384 Wilson Mills Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44143**

Saint Ann's Shrine:

Cleveland, Ohio



A day in the life of Saint Ann's Shrine....

Each weekday Saint Ann's Shrine has the celebration of Eucharist and recitation of the Rosary for all who want to attend. The regular attendees and time-to-time visitors stop to visit with us on their way to or from Mass; sometimes they purchase religious items or ask for prayers. These men and women have become dear, special friends to all of the Shrine's staff. Some of them have even become volunteers in our office!

One Saturday, a few weeks ago, 55 Italian men and women from Toronto, Canada visited Saint Ann's Shrine. What a delight they were! They even read the readings and sang hymns in Italian! We had a tour and Mass for them after which they enjoyed some light refreshments and did some shopping for our religious items. Earlier in the day, they had taken a tour of downtown Cleveland and another local shrine.

We have had visitors from as far away as Hawaii and are always happy to welcome anyone. So if **you** would like to visit Saint Ann's Shrine, give us a call at 440-449-2700 to arrange a visit and we'll do whatever we can to help you with your plans and help you to get to know Saint Ann, the grandmother of Jesus, a little better.

Do you know about Saint Ann's Blessed Oil?

Many of those who write to us share stories of the miraculous powers of Saint Ann's blessed oil. It is an oil that has been blessed and then touched to the relic of Saint Ann. Many, many Saint Ann devotees have written to us over the years to tell of the "miracles" they believe have occurred because of this oil or praying a Novena to Saint Ann. Some of these testimonials are included in this issue of the newsletter. If you are interested in obtaining Saint Ann's blessed oil, Saint Ann Novena prayers or other religious items, please contact Saint Ann's Shrine at 440 - 449-2700 or use the enclosed envelope to write to us.

What is a sacramental?


Anointing with Saint Ann's blessed oil is called a "sacramental". A sacramental is meant to prepare for or prolong the sanctifying effects of the sacraments. It is a blessing or prayer of the church in which members join.

A sacramental extends the sign language of the acts of Jesus. As such, it prepares us for a more fruitful participation in these actions of Jesus. Jesus blessed the sick. He laid hands on them. He healed many sick persons. This sacramental of anointing of the sick is an extension of Jesus' blessing and healing.


Many use Saint Ann's blessed oil to anoint the sick, however this anointing does not replace the Sacrament of the Sick. ☩

In Saint Ann's Shrine Mailbag


Testimonials to the intercessory power of Good Saint Ann

 I was blessed with the relic of Saint Ann in 1945. I had rheumatic fever and my uncle drove me to St. Anne's Church in Detroit, Michigan. The priest brought the relic out to the car because of my ill health. I was also given a Saint Ann Novena booklet that I said every Tuesday many, many times in my life. Now, no doctor in examining me, can even tell that I ever had rheumatic fever.


A.L. from Garden City, MI

 Please send me a couple of bottles of St. Ann's blessed oil. It has been helping me a great deal. I have been to the doctor and things don't look too good for me. Whenever I have problems, I pray in front of St. Ann's statue in St. Michael's Church and she always helps me.


Mrs. S. P., Cranford, NJ

 Saint Ann intercedes for me with all my problems. In thanksgiving, I am sending this gift. God bless you.

D. B. Cleveland, OH

 Please publish my heartfelt thanks to Saint Ann for answering my prayers. I had an operation and it proved not to be cancer. Please continue to pray for me.


M.R.D. Claremont, NH


 In appreciation to Good Saint Ann. I had a request granted which I prayed for to Saint

Continued on next page...


Saint Ann's Mailbag...Continued from previous page


Ann. I never stop praying to her. I would like to make this public. Thank you. *Mrs A. F. Syracuse, NY*

 Rest assured that I have received a miracle many years ago from our dear Saint Ann. I am asking for heaven to honor her again with a return to God in joy from the one who had the miracle performed on my son. Please send me some Saint Ann's oil. Thank you. *M. W. Newfield, NJ*

 I asked for a Mass to be said for my son who was undergoing surgery on his eye. He was born legally blind with no sight in his right eye. His left eye had cataract which grew slowly through the years. No Doctor would perform surgery until his sight was completely gone so there would be nothing to lose if it wasn't successful. I used Saint Ann's oil on his eyelids every day and all throughout his recovery period of 8 weeks. I'm happy to say that the surgery was successful and he has 20-50 vision in his left eye. It is truly a miracle and a whole new world has opened up for him. He is now 41 years old, has a Masters in Music and has been a high school Band Director for many years. *M. A. M. Omaha, NE*

 Please use the enclosed gift to continue the work of Saint Ann and in thanksgiving for a favor received. She is so powerful, it is impossible to describe. I am an old woman who never believed in her before, but now she always helps me. Please pray for my deceased husband. *Mrs. A. L. Danielson, CT*

 In 1999 my son was diagnosed with a rare kidney disease. He was a few days away from going on dialysis. I received Saint Ann's oil and prayer card and went to Mass on her Feast Day. The doctor who treated my son, took him off his medication, puzzled and amazed at his complete recovery. He continues to go every 2 months for his check up but I know that Saint Ann will continue to keep him healthy. *J. J. Anaheim, CA*

 A short story to let you know of my experience with Saint Ann's oil: An acquaintance of mine was near death and in much pain. He was only 29 years old and fighting terribly against approaching death. I gave my bottle of Saint Ann's oil to a mutual friend who was going to visit him in the hospital. The young man was not totally coherent and in much distress, but when given the bottle of oil, he became calm. And after being anointed with it, he became much relaxed. I feel sure that Saint Ann helped him to accept his death and secure the graces he needed for a happy death. He died very peacefully and beautifully the next day. At the moment of his death, he sat up in bed and told his mother who was at his side, "Look, mom, the white gates are opening." Then he lay back, breathed deeply and passed away. Please forgive me for rambling on, but I thought you'd like to hear the story. P.S. I need some more oil to replace the ones I have given away. *Mr F. C. Port Arthur, TX* ☒

Blessed Sacrament Mass Association

Did you ever wonder what gift you might give to a friend or relative that was hard to buy for? Why not consider our Mass Association. Your loved one will share in Masses for a whole year.

For a donation of your choice, you will receive a beautiful card that you can send to your friend or relative and they will be remembered in a weekly Mass celebrated here in Cleveland at the Shrine of Saint Ann.

All you have to do is request Mass Association cards in advance. When you decide to use one of the cards, simply fill out the name of the person you want to enroll in the Association, and send it back to us. It's so simple – you just send your donation when you use a card. When you need more cards, just let us know and we'll be happy to send them to you.

For more information about the Blessed Sacrament Mass Association, write to:

Saint Ann's Shrine
5384 Wilson Mills Road
Cleveland, OH 44143

Telephone: 440-449-2700

Email:

orders@st-ann-shrine.org

Website:

www.st-ann-shrine.org

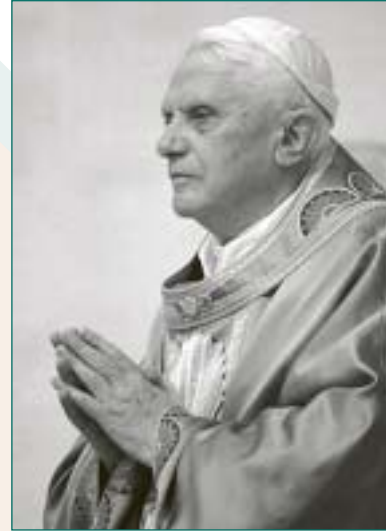


Help Us Find Readers!

You can help us by sending us names and addresses of relatives or friends who might like to read the GOOD NEWS of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament. We are happy to send *Bread Broken & Shared* to anyone who is interested.

Quote from Benedict XVI on Vocations

“Remembering the counsel of Jesus: ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest’. (Matthew 9:37), we acknowledge the great need to pray for vocations to the priesthood and to the consecrated life. It is not surprising that, where people pray fervently, vocations blossom. The holiness of the Church depends essentially on union with Christ and on being open to the mystery of grace that operates in the heart of the Christians. Therefore, I should like to invite all the faithful to nurture an intimate relationship with Christ, the Teacher and Pastor of his people, imitating Mary who kept the divine mysteries in her heart and meditated them diligently (cf. Luke 2:19). Together with her, who occupies a central position in the mystery of the Church, we pray for more vocations.”



*Pope Benedict XVI
Message for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, 2006*

God's Blessings for a Joyous New Year

If you have a question, concern or idea about your newsletter, let us know...

Please change the label and send it back to us, or contact the Provincial Office.

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Bread Broken & Shared

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BLESSED SACRAMENT**

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