



# SSS Grapevine

An Internal Publication of the Province of Saint Ann,  
Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament for the  
Eymardian Family

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## **Philippine Province Member Father Mark del Rosario SSS Installed as Pastor of Saint Joseph Downtown, San Antonio**

*by Father John Thomas Lane SSS, Provincial Superior*

On Saturday, July 29, the vigil of the 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Filipino-American Father Mark del Rosario SSS became the new pastor of the historic Riverwalk church of Saint Joseph Downtown in the Archdiocese of San Antonio. *(You might have read his biography in Bread, Broken & Shared – summer edition 2023, also available on our website.)*

The Provincial Superior of the Philippine Province, Very Reverend Roel della Cruz SSS, and the provincial secretary, Fr Bryan Adona SSS flew from Manila and their SSS headquarters there to represent Fr Mark's home province and the new collaboration between the Provinces of Saint Ann (*USA*) and Our Lady of the Assumption (*Philippines*). Since Fr Mark came from his prior assignment as pastor in Pueblo, Colorado, Fr Joseph Matitu SSS, a community member, drove down and joined the celebration. Fellow dear friend, SSS Fr Anthony Pangan SSS, came from the Diocese of Honolulu to represent Fr Mark's former parish and work in that diocese. Just as important, Fr Joseph Thai Minh Tran SSS kicked off the celebrations as local SSS house leader. For six years, he has been a steady presence in the community as a parochial vicar with the former pastors Fr Mario Marzocchi SSS (*who retired after his 12 years of service*), Fr Anthony Schueller SSS (*who died unexpectedly*), and Fr Norman Pelletier SSS (*who retired for health reasons*). We are grateful for Fr Joseph's leadership and service to Saint Joseph.



Father Mark Del Rosario SSS, new pastor of Saint Joseph Downtown Church, presenting the Book of the Gospels



San Antonio Associates pictures with Father Mark Del Rosario SSS

The installation began Friday, July 28, when several Associates from the Archdiocese of San Antonio, who have newly received their approbation or recognition in the Archdiocese, gathered. Billy Stewart led the excellent potluck dinner and gathering. We enjoyed the remarkable hospitality of our associates and native foods to welcome Fr Mark and the other religious who joined in the celebration. Billy gave a warm welcome to Fr Mark. This was also an opportunity to provide unique gifts to Fr Mark



Fr John Thomas Lane, Fr Anthony Pangan, Fr Thai, Bishop Gary, Fr Bryan Adona, Fr Roel dela Cruz, Fr Joseph Matitu, Deacon Vincent

and me from the recent procession of the Blessed Sacrament through the downtown streets of San Antonio on the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, June 11, 2023.

A little history. Our San Antonio Associates had a dream: to have a special annual procession in the streets of downtown to make known the importance of the Risen Lord



in the Blessed Sacrament. We all know that this was an important day for our founder, and he was inspired to found our religious congregations based on a procession of the Blessed Sacrament in Lyons, France. In Eymard's day, it was called "Corpus Christi" and was held on Thursdays. With an updated liturgical calendar in 1969, we now, as we know, call this day a **solemnity** of the church, combining the Body ***and Blood of Christ*** in the Eucharist on this day – a Sunday – the Lord's Day – with a new longer name and the hope of a special procession with the Eucharist exposed in a monstrance for a procession!



Father John Thomas Lane SSS, provincial, presenting Father Mark to the Bishop and the community

Our associates took this historical, theological, and liturgical history of our institute seriously and inspired Archbishop Gustavo and the archdiocesan offices to promote this event in the life of the Church of San Antonio. Planning was for over a year; it was interesting to hear the different pieces that made the procession successful. Due to technical difficulties, we could not see a highlight video (though we may remember pictures from a recent *Grapevine* in June). Instead,



SSS Religious gathered in front of Saint Joseph Church in downtown San Antonio

members shared their stories of hard work, faith, and conversions of many people they touched that day during the procession set up through completion at the cathedral in downtown San Antonio. Our associates catechized, worshiped, and shared this gift of the Eucharistic mystery with so many tourists and locals, even giving them flower petals to throw in honor of the Blessed Sacrament and this extraordinary, one-of-a-kind procession. Archbishop and our associates are planning for next year's celebration, and we brainstormed how to improve it. Y'all come!

Saturday night (the vigil of the Lord's Day), Bishop Gary Janak, the new auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, installed Fr Mark because Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller was in Mexico attending to his father, who is ill. Bishop Gary is formerly the rector of the cathedral and priest of the Diocese of Victoria, Texas. He was very personable and enjoyable. Members of the parish provided a delicious potluck dinner and a sizeable congratulatory cake and cupcakes to begin the pastorate of Fr Mark.



*Fathers Thai, Lane and Mark*

Lastly, the Blessed Sacrament religious present went to a special luncheon to wish Fr Mark well in his ministry and pray for the growth of our presence in the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Our parish is in an extraordinary location on the Riverwalk, where tourists and locals visit regularly for the sacraments and prayer in the presence of the Blessed

Sacrament. With our SSS presence since 1982, we hope for it to grow for many years in the first joint pastorate of both provinces of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament. It is a historic first to have a joint mission between provinces – one repeated now also in Holiday, Florida, where we will install another new pastor at the end of September. Details to come!

Thank you, San Antonio Associates and parish members, for your awesome Texan hospitality; your warmth is greater than the heat wave of Texas! We are so blessed by your living the Eucharistic life and being true “apostles of the Eucharist.”



*St Joseph Church taken from the San Antonio Riverwalk*



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