



SSS Grapevine

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Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament

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SSS Celebrations Across the Country for the Most Holy Body & Blood of Christ

Each year, the Church's solemnity for the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ awakens and shares our Eucharistic charism and the gift of processions with the Blessed Sacrament. We continue the tradition of our holy founder, Saint Peter Julian Eymard, to share the Eucharistic mystery – the Body and Blood of Christ – with the world, especially when we can have processions of the Blessed Sacrament. In some of our parishes, we also have a special guest preacher! Here are some of the highlights shared from our places that let us know:

- **Corpus Christi Parish, Houston, Texas**



Houston SSS Community with
Father Norman Pelletier

This year, the new pastor, Father Paul Gnanasekar (*Father Sekar*), revived 40 Hours at the parish with a special time of prayer and guest preacher Father Norman Pelletier SSS. Father Norman came from where he lives in the Bethany Wing of the Provincialate in Highland Heights to lead folks in reflecting on the importance of the Eucharist in their life through the special weekend of prayers, exposition, and preaching at the weekend Mass. Sunday afternoon, there was a procession of the Blessed Sacrament around the campus in Houston, bringing Christ to the streets and back for solemn benediction.

• Downtown Procession – San Antonio, Texas

By Billy Stewart, Provincial Associate Council San Antonio Leader

The streets of San Antonio were once again graced with his Adorable Presence during our Archdiocesan Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ! The Procession emanated from San Fernando Cathedral after the 5 pm Mass on June 1st in the center of our city led by Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller. Additionally, we were honored that our Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament Priest, Father Mark Del Rosario, could concelebrate the Mass with the Archbishop and other priests within our Archdiocese.

The streets were opened for Our King by a police escort, Knights of Columbus flag bearers, and an honor guard completed by the Knights and Dames of The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem.

Archbishop held Christ up victoriously in the monstrance surrounded by Acolytes, Deacons, Priests, Seminarians, and many religious and ministries in attendance, along with the associates and others from across the Archdiocese. The faithful lined the streets in anticipation of the arrival of our risen and glorious Jesus Christ in The Most Holy Eucharist. In collaboration with the Archdiocese of San Antonio, our faithful Associates of the Blessed Sacrament were instrumental in organizing, promoting, and implementing this beautiful procession (*now our second year!*)



Gathering at San Fernando Cathedral

The day was filled with music, praise, and prayer, with one main choir in procession and four additional choirs along the route. We are honored that our associates led two of the choirs! There were also four stops with altars along the way, where the Bread of Life discourse was proclaimed to Adorers and tourists alike in English and Spanish. Two of the four Gospel readers were Associates of our local Aggregation.

Over 65 associates were involved as volunteers to give direction, hand rose petals and waters, and evangelize the real presence through their words and witness. They are



identified by the red t-shirts bearing a gold monstrance on the front and "Follow Me" on the back.

We were also excited to have our CEE director, Mona Grigsby-Suarez, in attendance as she joined the celebration. The entire event was live-streamed via video with the aid of a drone and aired on CTSA to be viewed by those unable to attend!

One of the most breathtaking sights was upon the arrival of the Blessed Sacrament outside of Saint Mary's Catholic Church. On a warm sunny day, the crowd cheered at the sight of a shower of red and white flower petals over Christ and Adorers, signifying the blood and water flowing from Christ's side in reparation for our sins. There were loving shouts of "Viva Christi Rey," "We love you,

Blessed Sacrament Procession through downtown San Antonio

Jesus," and "God is good." After the procession, we returned to San Fernando Cathedral to repose Our Lord within the tabernacle. The significance and beauty of this Cathedral is that it is considered the oldest active cathedral in the United States. It has been crucial in San Antonio's spiritual and cultural history since its founding in 1731.

As we hold this year's Eucharistic Procession in our hearts and minds, we look forward to next year's feast of the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ as we rejoice in the fact



that God is with us and eternally present in The Most Blessed Sacrament until the end of time!!



- **Saint Paschal Baylon, Highland Heights, Ohio**



Associate Evamarie Cross, coordinator of Youth Life in the Eucharist (LITE) retreat, offered a reflection at the weekend Mass about the Body and Blood of Christ and one of her talks from LITE. The parish had a procession with the Blessed Sacrament inside the church during 3 of the 4 Masses, and at 10:30, an outdoor procession around the Church property.

Evamarie Cross during the reflection at the weekend Masses

From the 10:30 procession, the Blessed Sacrament was exposition in the church's chapel, with Associates of the Blessed Sacrament leading each hour with several present to pray each hour.

At 4:30 PM during Evening Prayer, Brian Morton, one of the youth leading the LITE retreat in Liverpool (*see other article below*), gave his retreat talk on the Eucharist as Word of God. He shared his journey and the importance of God's Word nourishing his heart.



Blessed Sacrament Procession at Saint Paschal Baylon Church

Following Evening Prayer, the Associates led a potluck dinner in the Blessed Sacrament Community Fireside Lounge and Dining Room to cap off a great day living the Eucharist.



SSS Eymardian Family in Highland Heights, Ohio

• Saint Vincent de Paul, Holiday, Florida



Pastor Father Dominic Long SSS, the Associates, and parish leaders each year transform the inside and outside campus into special places where the community comes and prays at altars to worship the Eucharistic Christ.

Several of the parish's groups build altars around the campus. Provincial Vicar and local house Superior Father William Fickel SSS led the blessings and the prayers during this annual event.

First International Youth Life in the Eucharist Retreat in Liverpool, England

Be the apostle of the divine Eucharist, like a flame which enlightens and warms, like the Angel of his heart who will go to proclaim him to those who don't know him and will encourage those who live him and are suffering.

-Saint Peter Julian Eymard

This quote opened what we know to be the first international Youth Teen Life in the Eucharist (LITE) retreat at Blessed Sacrament Shrine, Liverpool, England, UK. Youth Minister, Kindergarten teacher, and Associate Evamarie Cross and Provincial Father John Thomas Lane SSS led the group of 18 youth and chaperone adults from northeast Ohio and Saint Paschal Baylon (SPB) church, Highland Heights, Ohio, to safely travel together the long adventure to the United Kingdom. During last year's Center for Eucharistic Evangelizing (CEE) 6th International Eucharistic Congress, August 4 – 6 at the Provincialate, our keynote Father Darren Maslen, SSS (Liverpool), Father John Thomas Lane, SSS (Provincial) and

Evamarie had lunch together and said, “Why not bring LITE to England?” The dream began at the table and became fulfilled for our trip June 4–10, 2024, through many prayers, practices, and fundraisers to send our youth to England.



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who “came down” to share their support and, as they said, learn more about how they could do the LITE retreat the next time in Scotland. We were inspired by their wisdom, being so young at heart, and love for the Congregation and Saint Eymard. For those unfamiliar with the program/retreat, the youth-focused on “sacramental aspects” of the Eucharist, such as nourishment, reconciliation, transformation, abiding presence, and mission. Each section has a scripture reflection, teaching, and group activity. For some of us, the highlight is the skit where the temptations and sins ruin the relationship with the Teen, and she finally comes to her senses and calls out for Jesus Christ



to help her/us free us from all the sins. It is when we put together the “transformation” puzzle for others.

Father Lane ended the day with Mass in the Shrine with the entire Eymardian Family. Brother Gerald, Father Dennis, Father Darren, and Postulant Patrick from the SSS Liverpool Community were wonderful hosts for all of us. The regular crowd of Mass-goers was in awe, and the spirit of the youth was in the Shrine Chapel.



We are so grateful for our SPB generous parishioners who raised over \$27,000 for our trip to support our youth in their travels, mission, and fun. Many of our youth had to obtain their first passport – and for some, their first time on an airplane! For a few, Wales and England have now

become their favorite spots. Our youth – mostly 15 – have a dream now to bring the Eucharistic mission of Eymard around the globe. Alive with the Eucharistic flame, they continue to share Eymard’s and our CEE’s dreams.

What’s next? Our youth want to return to Arizona and Saint Michael Indian School [sic] in the Navajo Nation. (We’ll explain this connection and history after our Easter Octave visit in 2025.) They are alive with the flame of the Eucharist and inspire us “older teens” to “keep on keepin’ on,” setting the world on fire with this precious gift.





Sad Farewell and Thank You to Father RaviEarnest Sebastin SSS

The realities of the United States Immigration and Homeland Security struck the Province of Saint Ann (USA) again. During a Green Card process, the US Homeland Security office dismissed two appeals for one of our religious, Father RaviEarnest Sebastin SSS. Father RaviEarnest is originally from India and has been serving at Saint Jean Baptiste Church, New York, NY, and as the regional Associates' spiritual director. This means one is not legally in the country and must return to their country of origin. Father RaviEarnest served at Corpus Christi Church, Houston, Texas, for numerous years and, in 2023, transferred to serve in NYC for the past year and joined the province.

Here is an interesting fact about becoming a VISA recipient and the process to apply for a Green Card,



Father RaviEarnest Sebastin SSS

which is significant since the rules were revised in November 2023. Now, one must return to their country and be there for at least one year before applying to receive an appointment date to apply only for the Green Card process. Then, once you have an appointment date, you can apply for the Green Card. One can be at most four 4-years on an “R-1” (*religious worker*) VISA. In Father’s case, we have had his service to us since 2018.

Father RaviEarnest returns to his native city of Chennai in India and serves there again. We are grateful for his ministry and service to the USA in Houston and New York and wish him well with hopes of returning at some point to the US – we can only hope – that during the patience of the two years, until application may be made, he will be allowed to return. Sadly, there is never a guarantee.

We Participate in International SSS Meetings

Hear ye, hear ye! We are now implementing the 2023 SSS General Chapter Goals! And the work of great SSS and our staffs continues throughout the world! In the past two weeks, we have begun to do the hard work of implementing the 2023 General Chapter held in Vietnam with two meetings: the International Finance Commission and the Sacramentinos Americas Conference.

First, our province is part of the Americas Conference, which unites the SSS across the Americas. Province leaders and staff members focus on our vocation and initial formation goals set by the General Chapter and our provinces from the United States, Columbia, Peru, Argentina, and Brazil. Secondly, the International Finance Commission, led by Filipino General Treasurer Father Roel della Cruz SSS, had its first meeting. Our province accountant, Paula Beatrez, represents us as the first woman on the International Formation Commission. We will also have other groups and committees meeting over the next few weeks. We thank you for your prayers as we continue to various aspects of our mission and take the time to implement our goals.



ZOOM: International Finance Commission Meeting



ZOOM: Sacramentinos Americas Conference

Photos: Billy Stewart from San Antonio, Father Dominic Long SSS from Holiday, JT Lane and Paula Beatrez.