



SSS Grapevine

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Father Norman Pelletier's Retreat Presentation Highland Heights, Ohio

By Rosalie Lewis, Associate at Saint Paschal Baylon Parish

On December 7, 2024, 25 Associates met for our annual NE Ohio Retreat. Our presenter, Father Norman Pelletier SSS, started the day at 12:30 PM with his first talk on the difference between reliquaries and monstrances. He explained that this subject was due to the bus trip many of us took the previous Wednesday. On the trip, we visited the Sanctuary Museum, where many reliquaries were displayed. One of the visitors exclaimed, "Look at all those monstrances!"



Rosalie and Dan Lewis are both Associates, and Dan is a Daily Eucharistic Reflections author

Father brought a variety of reliquaries and monstrances to show us the differences. The reliquaries contain the body parts or fabric of a deceased saint or things touched by that person. The monstrance contains the Host - the living God. He spent some time focusing on the importance of saying Jesus Christ, or the Risen Christ – for we tend to say “Jesus,” or “Jesus, our brother,” when we see and experience the presence of Christ. This is an important theological point and difference.

Following Father’s presentation, we went to the Oratory of the Blessed Sacrament and Diocesan Shrine of Saint Ann and prayed in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. At break time, we had a variety of snacks that everyone enjoyed. It was a good time to meet other Associates we had not seen.

Father Norman’s second presentation highlighted the significant influence of Greek philosophy and Roman law on the formation of the early Church, noting that people from other Christian traditions in Asia and Africa may not relate in the same way as Western theologians.

Our final session focused on increasing participation in our Ongoing Formation Program. After a lengthy discussion, we decided to try Saturday mornings at 10:00 a.m. starting in January.

We assembled in the Church for the parish’s 4:30 P.M. Mass. After the homily, Father Louis Demba Ndione, SSS (*our new Blessed Sacrament priest and parochial vicar from Senegal in Africa*) called the Associates to gather around the sanctuary and renew their Associate Promises. It was good for the Saint Paschal Baylon parishioners and others from neighboring parishes to witness this renewal by the Associates.

Riddle for the Day: How many Associates does it take to light an Advent candle?
Answer: It took three. (*Too bad you can’t watch the video!*)

(This article was scheduled to be included in the previous number of The Grapevine, but we include it now.)

Rule of Life Retreat Summary Document



Mary Muehle

By Mary Muehle, Co-Director of the CEE

We are most grateful to Mary Muehle for compiling all of the brainstorming ideas mentioned throughout the days of our Rule of Life Retreat in August 2024. This is an excellent summary of our retreat days together. They will surely be helpful to our associate groups as they continue their reflection, discussions, and planning for the future.



Day One: Community

Each group will be asked to share one or more ways of **shaping the mission in the future by living the numbers discussed today.**

- Bring together SSS religious and Lay Associates as a community of contemplative, active ministry and mission
- Retired Lay Associates be part of a religious community and live with them
- Keep responsible resources in common to be shared by all, like the apostles.
- Reconciling with different individuals and groups
- International community
- Associates outside of the world to non-Catholics. How do we do it
- What is each of us take from Founder, Foundress
- Be open to the future and grow in/through
- Believe the best in others and situations
- Listen. Get to know what is important to others
- Take time to get to know each other's cultures
- Work through hurts
- We have to go out of ourselves and be open to all.
- Religious or Laity share vision
- Be sensitive to expanding the program for all from other nationalities
- Not having a Spanish-speaking priest for so long. The seeds are beginning to grow
- Gathering as a community lay and religious to live together for a set period (*4 days*) for retreat, staying in the same place
- Sharing resources with all at the local level, regional level, nationally, and internationally (*refer to Rule of Life, 8*)
- Focus on young people
- Using social media
- Aging population—supportive
- Fewer religious---open to internationality
- Each community with Associates practices prayer in the presence of the Sacrament (*Adoration*)
- Each community associates embrace and share their gift of self
- Each community with associates lives its mission of educating youth about the mutual collaboration of scientific fact and faith
- All of the above is achieved through proclaiming, liberating, and communing.

- Issue of community—what is the whole issue—look around the Populus movement
- More spirit—covenant—sisters/priests to combine but was divided
- History moves us along
- Community is a by-product of the Eucharist—it helps pull us together. The world is divided, but we, as SSS, are trying to come together.
- We are all in this together: a new form of the Church, a new form of religious life, and family evangelization.
- Learn and discern. Speak, Lord. Your servant is listening
- Continue Eymardian family reunions
- Continue the 3 International Bulletins
- Continue the DERs and increase the number of people receiving them
- Continue to advertise LITE, the DERs
- More catechesis on Eucharist
- Intensify our physical gatherings in the community of Religious and Associates
- How do we continue the Associates in Parishes that no longer have an SSS Religious on the staff
- How do we keep aging religious/Associates connected and active in the community
- Do we need a visitation ministry for religious and associates?
- Add Associates to the Necrology
- More activities to better unite Associates and SSS into one spiritual family.
- Love and respect all despite our differences
- Address the needs of others spiritually, physically, emotionally

Day Two: Prayer and Worship

- Teach more about the meaning of the Eucharist
- Develop the Eucharist as a Person rather than an object, especially for young people
- Catechesis on Adoration—educate on how to do Adoration (*Prayer in the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament*) types of prayers, reading
- Educate celebration of Eucharist –why we do certain things, how to fully actively celebrate
- Witness of Religious and Associates to the Eucharist by their Adoration and sharing their stories
- Contemplative Prayer—teaching and resources

- Parish communities continue to offer morning prayer before morning Mass with religious and lay people (chant instead of speak to slow it down and make it more prayerful)
- Religious (*fathers and brothers*) may invite lay persons in evening prayer (vespers)
- Monthly adoration gathering for young adults and/or pr you, including praise and worship music.
- Maintain focus on the pure message of Saint Peter Julian Eymard: the Eucharist as the source and summit of our faith.
- Celebration—Adoration and Life and Mission
- Reading and re-reading the ROL and meditating and living it
- Give top priority to the community life, Adoration, mission, and Eucharistic Celebration
- Reading on Eucharist
- Sharing the Eucharist with people
- “Associate” group having joy
- Eucharist should be desirable
- Also share particular individual causes of personal joy
- Joy needs to be “visible” on your face, not just talked about
- Encourage each other to share things that are joy and grow with.
- Prayer before the sacrament leads us to reflect on what we have celebrated at the Eucharistic celebration, and such celebration leads us to share new life with the community, people, and the world.
- What we celebrate at the Eucharist celebration we contemplate or reflect before at prayer before the sacrament, and both (*Eucharist celebration and prayer in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament*) lead us and encourage us to share our Eucharistic life in the Community with the faithful and the world.
- Commitment to prayer (*especially the hour of prayer morning and evening*)
- Live in the presence of God in the Eucharist
- Reach out in prayer for others.
- What we see in a piece of bread—outside people can’t understand
- Spruce up sacraments—use better materials, make ritual attractive
- Anyone who has a ministry of the sacrament has a uniform
- Young people appeal—scattered attraction of eastern (*on Eucharistic Congress*)
- Add more moments of prayer to our life—morning, midday—night
- Eucharist Adoration is a must, not a spare moment in our life
- Receiving the Eucharist must become a must

- Reconciliation
- How do we make the Eucharist “center of our lives”
- Eucharist is a celebration
- Eucharist is not static
- Eucharist is something we do together
- Family/Youth involvement in Mass/Prayer/Worship
- Comes from Laity—vowed not ordained
- Eucharistic Pilgrimages and revival to give awareness to the people
- Holy Year—Jubilee Year 2025—visit churches
- Colleges—Adoration groups of students
- The Eymardian family is coming together, praying, celebrating the Eucharist, and doing the mission to further formation.
- LITE—promote for youth and adults
- Following together, outing together—(*Retreat together*)
- Let go of the old and embrace the new that gives life and meaning
- Visible witness of the Eucharist by sign and symbol.
- Intensify the celebrations of the Feasts of the Congregation—e.g., Triduum, St. Ann, Saint Peter Julian Eymard
- Participate in ecumenical prayer experiences

Day Three: Service

- More creative interaction with the lonely, sick elderly who need help and light
- Deeper focus on celebration of the Eucharist and Sacrament of Reconciliation
- To enrich our ministries in the mission field with the input we received from the retreat. Take the Eucharist to the homebound.
- Teaching how to establish commitment
- Service to others who are we leaving out of the gathering, who should we invite
- Bring youth together
- Communication
- Ask Associates what do you do? As a framework
- Continue to improve our outreach ministries
- Combine with other faith communities in service and outreach
- Emphasize studying the Rule that deals with service/social justice
- Evangelization

- Catechetics—Church practice
- Teaching catechesis, especially the children.
- Welcoming
- Inspire worship and prayer
- Promote Associates—increase awareness of personal invitations to join/discern to become Associates
- Personal invite people who have been away from the church—a place of welcome
- Faith in Action - and have associates and the SSS community join with other parish groups, i.e., Knights of Columbus, Legion of Mary, Faith in Action Committee, and other ministries/groups in the parish to reach people with low incomes—service project
- Service Project—SSS religious associates will invite parishioners to expand resources and outreach to the community.
- Inspire parishioners to attend Adoration and Holy Hours to experience Eucharist in addition to Sunday Mass
- Identify the needs of the local community and offer to help to fulfill those needs (*homeless, jobless, young families, financial*)
- offer ourselves in service to others



Brother Michael Perez SSS with the 125th Anniversary Banner