

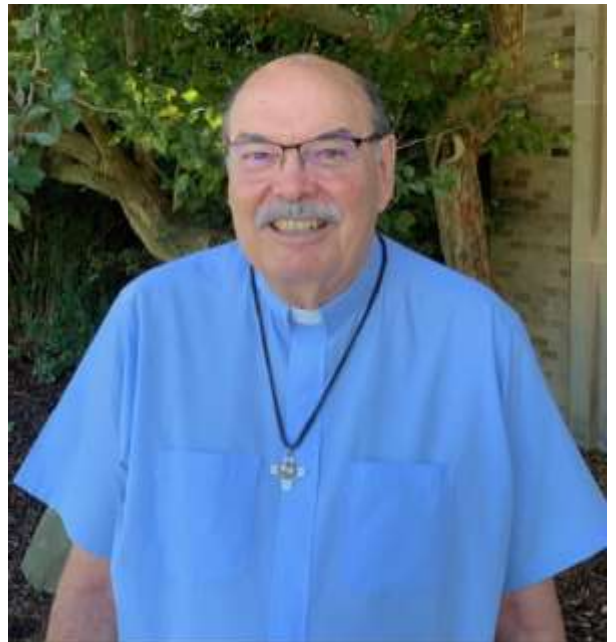


SSS Grapevine

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Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament
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Congratulations, Father Thomas Smithson SSS!

The tremendous pastoral service and hospital chaplaincy of Father Thomas Smithson SSS is being honored at Women's Hospital in Houston, Texas. He was nominated, along with six other hospital staff members, for a new service wall. The "Why?" The award is presented to him and the others for their tireless service to their hospital community and for the inspiration they have provided in their chosen roles within the hospital. And do not ask, "Why?" but provide the service to the patients. Congratulations, faithful servant leader!



We also pray for Father Tom as he prepares for prostate cancer surgery on April 22 and a 3-week to month-long recovery! We are grateful for your service and care, and we're glad it's being recognized. Now, we can serve and take care of you for a bit, Father Tom!

The General is Coming! The General is Coming!



We are blessed that our Father General Superior from Rome, Philip Benzy Romician SSS, will be making a canonical visit to the United States and the Province of Saint Ann from August 3 to 30. A canonical visit is when you visit with the individual religious and their communities, the Associates of the Blessed Sacrament, and the key ministries of a province, assessing the mission about the *Rule of Life* and how it is being lived out. Additionally, in light of the final message of the November 2023 General Chapter in Vietnam, Father General will enlighten and animate the province with the goals of this recent event. Here is the tentative

schedule and events Father Benzy will participate in:

- August 3: Arrives to the Provincialate, Highland Heights, Ohio, from our Generalate in Rome, Italy.
- August 4 – 8: Province Assembly retreat director, Highland Heights, Ohio
- August 9: Visit to Regina Health Center, Retreat talks in NE Ohio Associates, Mass & Potluck
- August 10: Parish Mass and Picnic, Visit to University Heights
- August 11: Annual SSS Cemetery Mass, Evening Meeting with Parish Leadership
- August 13 – 14: Visit our seminary, Catholic Theological Union (CTU), Chicago, Illinois
- August 15: Saint Mary Church, Menasha, Wisconsin, 125th Anniversary Celebration
- August 16 – 18: Corpus Christi, Houston, Texas, Sunday Associates Gathering, Monday Parish Leadership meeting
- August 19 – 21: Saint Joseph, San Antonio, Texas, Associates evening Mass and Potluck, meeting with the Archbishop
- August 22 – 24: Holiday, Tampa, FL gatherings of Associates and Parish Leaders
- August 25: Orlando, Florida Associates, Mass and meal together
- August 26 – 29: Saint Jean Baptiste, New York, New York, with Associates and Long Island, Visit to our Norwalk, CT Associates
- August 31: Farewell and departure from JFK

The “General Superior” is the highest form of authority in a religious institute. As some have questioned, “Is he the true Pope of the SSS?” The short answer is “yes.”

We look forward to his visit and wish him safe travels as he accompanies us. He will be coming from Sri Lanka, where he will make a canonical visit to that province before embarking on his journey with us. We are blessed to receive him during our 125th year of ministry in the Province of Saint Ann (*USA*).