



# SSS Grapevine

An Internal Publication of the  
Province of Saint Ann (USA)  
Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament

**August 17, 2025 – 2025.20**

## Gratitude to Saint Ann Province

By Father Simon Peter Zikusooka SSS (*Uganda*)



We wanted to share a brief report and good news of a blessing we had on July 4. Thank God for Saint Ann Province's love. Your contributions from mission appeals and Saint Jean Baptiste/New York foundations enabled us to secure \$57,500 to finance the accommodation issues for the brothers who are staying in leaking rooms. This has been done. It's a gift to us that we can't stop thanking God for. We now have the rest of the house, including the common areas: refectory lounge, the laundry, the chapel, washrooms, and other rooms, which we hope to renovate slowly and bless in January. We were blessed to have Most Reverend Augustin Kassujja, nuncio emeritus of Belgium and Luxembourg, now back in Kampala for his retirement, bless the place for our usage. Praise God!

Most Reverend Augustin Kassujja blesses the new construction financed by the Province of Saint Ann in Uganda

## The Province Assembly Prepares the SSS and Associates for the Next Year's Provincial Chapter

By John Thomas Lane SSS

On August 4-8, 2025, religious of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament (SSS) gathered at the Provincialate in Highland Heights, Ohio (*in the Diocese of Cleveland*) to prepare for their 27<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter, scheduled for 2027. The theme of both the Assembly this year and the Chapter next year is from the Pope Francis Jubilee Year: Abound in Hope. And that we did as we began with our special liturgies, singing the Jubilee Hymn.

The Very Reverend Philip Benzy Romician SSS, Superior General, attended the assembly and gave two opening talks during the Mass and the first business session. He stressed the



Father General addresses the Northeast Ohio Associates in an afternoon reflection

final message of the November 2023 General Chapter and how we are implementing the theme/concept of the “Cenacle” into our province (*the USA mission and our members – including the Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament*).

As part of the business meeting, the SSS must complete some continuing education to provide and maintain safe environments for children and vulnerable adults. We completed our education with Doctor Father John Keenan SSS, Doctor David Hussey (*Service Assistant*

*Coordinator*), Review Board chair Doctor Susan Painter, and Susan Work, giving their specific talks. This is part of the requirement for the re-accreditation of the SSS by Praesidium. This national organization ensures that the procedures for institutes are in place for their ministry and service.

Provincial Superior John Thomas Lane SSS, with the Provincial Council, gave a “state of the province” report and invited members to take time to study, review, and discuss the importance of the goals over the last three years: international religious and ministry, communication and finances, especially around the SSS properties in New York City and Highland Heights.

The Assembly spent two full days on key topics: the ministry of our religious and their intercultural relationships, and one day on the Associates and their lifestyle, ministry, and continuing education. The



Father Benzy addressed the Saint Paschal Baylon parish leaders during their annual pastoral planning evening, focusing on the *Rule of Life* and why the Congregation’s parishes are so important in living the Eucharist



Greeted at Regina Health Center in Richfield, Ohio, by Deacon Joseph Bourgeois SSS and Brother Michael Perez SSS during Father General’s Canonical Visit

highlight for many of the assembly was the special 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary Mass with Most Reverend Edward C. Malesic, bishop of the Diocese of Cleveland. He presided and preached with a gathering of almost 300 to give thanks to God for the service and care of the SSS in the USA, but especially in the important work in the diocese since 1931. The celebration was filled with amazing music and proclamations and followed by a delicious reception in the parish’s Family Life Center.





Father Benzy visits Father Paul Bernier SSS in his room



Regina leaders, Deacon Mark, administrator, and social worker Shawn Mickel with Father General



Group photo of the SSS men at Regina Health Center in Richfield, Ohio. *(Left to right)* Brother Michael Perez SSS, Deacon Joseph Bourgeois SSS, Brother Allen Boeckman SSS, Father Ernest Falardeau SSS, Father Paul Bernier SSS, and Father William Young SSS are pictured with Father Phillip Benzy Romician SSS, Superior General, and Father John Thomas Lane SSS, Provincial Superior

## New Local Superior and Assistant Superior for the Northeast Ohio SSS Communities

With the departure of Father Juancho (*Choy*) Ramos SSS back to his home province of the Philippines, the local communities (*3 locations, one community of men*) needed new leadership to assist them in caring for the administration of the house(s). After a discernment process, our men requested that the Provincial appoint Father Joseph Kiet (JK) Nguyen Huy SSS (*originally from the Martyrs of Vietnam Province*) and Father Rosario Pushparaj SSS (*originally from the Indian province*) as their new local leaders. Father Lane, provincial superior, welcomed them to this new ministry with a special installation ceremony before Night Prayer during the Province Assembly, August 6, 2025, where Associates from NEO Ohio's leadership and the CEE Director welcome our new local superior and assistant superior. We thank Fathers JK and Rosario for their "yes" and care of the local men. It is terrific for the leadership of the



New superior, Father Joseph Kiet Nguyen SSS (*left*) and assistant superior, Father Rosario Pushparaj SSS (*right*)



Bishop Edward Malesic of the Diocese of Cleveland pictured with Father Juancho C. Ramos SSS

Province of Saint Ann that we can appoint international SSS religious to assist in the administration of the Province of Saint Ann. These two men join Brother Gary LaVerdiere SSS (*House Manager*), and Fathers Roger Bourgeois SSS (*Bethany representative*) and John Thomas Lane SSS (*Pastor*) as members of the local community's house council, mandated in the SSS's *Rule of Life*.

## Welcome, Father Martin and Father Anthony, to the Province of Saint Ann



Father Martin Hien Tran SSS joins the pastoral staff  
at Saint Paschal Baylon Parish

we are blessed to have them with their new R1  
visas for the next few years.



With the permission of the United States Homeland Security, the Province of Saint Ann (USA) can welcome two more SSS Vietnamese religious to serve in the USA. Father Martin Hien Tran SSS, who recently completed another master's degree in dogmatic theology, will be the new parochial vicar at Saint Paschal Baylon Church, Highland Heights, Ohio. He fulfills the position vacated by Father Choy. Father Anthony Trang Pham SSS, who is also recently completing another master's degree in dogmatic theology, will assist in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, Texas, and in our parish there, Downtown Saint Joseph. We are so grateful to their home province of Vietnam, which has provided SSS religious priests for ministry in the USA, and



Father Anthony Trang Pham SSS will now relocate  
to San Antonio, Texas, to minister there



## Father Superior General Begins Canonical Visit to the Province of Saint Ann (USA)

Mandated by the Church's Canon Law and the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament's (SSS) own statutes implementing the *Rule of Life*, General Superiors of the SSS visit the religious in each of the provinces and countries where we serve across the globe. Since being elected as Father General in November 2023, Philip Benzy Romician SSS (*originally from India*), has made visits to several provinces of the SSS. With the special events of the Province of Saint Ann's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the Province Assembly, preparing for next year's Provincial Chapter, Father Benzy took the opportunity to spend August in the USA. He normally resides in Rome, but for 8 months of the year, he travels to the different SSS sites around the world.

After arriving from a canonical visit in Sri Lanka, Father Benzy quickly acclimated to the new time at the Province Assembly at the Provinciate in Highland Heights, Ohio. Since his August 3 arrival, here are some highlights, both in Ohio and in Chicago, Illinois, and Menasha, Wisconsin:

- Celebrate a retreat talk and Mass at the province assembly, including attendance at all the sessions and focus time with the USA Provincial Council
- Visit with the religious in the three communities of Northeast Ohio
- Retreat afternoon with the Northeast Ohio Associates
- Meet with Bishop Edward Malesic, Bishop of Cleveland, and the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration
- Celebrate Mass with Regina Health Center, Richfield, Ohio, and meet with the leadership of this facility
- Visit Catholic Theological Union and the new president of the "pope's seminary," Father Salvatore "Enzo" DelBrocco CPS
- Visit the former parish we administered, Notre Dame de Chicago, and assist in the retrieval of the Congregation's paschal candle stand
- Celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary at our former SSS parish, Saint Mary, Menasha, Wisconsin, and meet many of our wonderful benefactors and donors
- Drive through these midwestern states, see their beauty, and have a canonical visit with the USA provincial

The visits will continue to other SSS sites throughout August, and also include a chance to

visit the Philippine Province's religious and ministries in the dioceses of Pueblo and Honolulu. We will highlight this in a future *Grapevine* and pray for his continued safe travels, accompanied by our own provincial.



The new president of Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, Illinois, Father Salvatore “Enzo” DelBrocco CPS, greets us at the entrance of the “Pope’s Seminary”



The new pastor of Notre Dame de Chicago is Father Chris Landfried, a longtime parishioner, and Audrey Wasik, who has known the SSS since 1973. He helped us load the Paschal Candle stand into the car. We are grateful to Father Chris for returning this to the Congregation during our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary year



Remembering former times at Notre Dame de Chicago Church with archdiocesan priest Father Donald Craig at the rectory built by the SSS on Harrison Street. The SSS served at Notre Dame from 1918 until 1991.





Saint Mary, Menasha, Wisconsin, celebrates its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The SSS served this parish from 1971 to 2003, and many benefactors and friends still support us and our mission. Pictured here are Louise Enders, Sharon and Don Thiede. Don worked at Saint Mary's for 38 years as chief of maintenance and decorating the church



Parishioners made special greeting cupcakes



The Streck family of Menasha shares memories and laughs



Long-time SSS novitiate supporters, Kathy and Wayne Humski, share time with us too, while Wayne celebrates a milestone birthday with us and a special 60 years of marriage too!



Before Mass in the beautiful, recently-restored Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church in Menasha, Wisconsin