

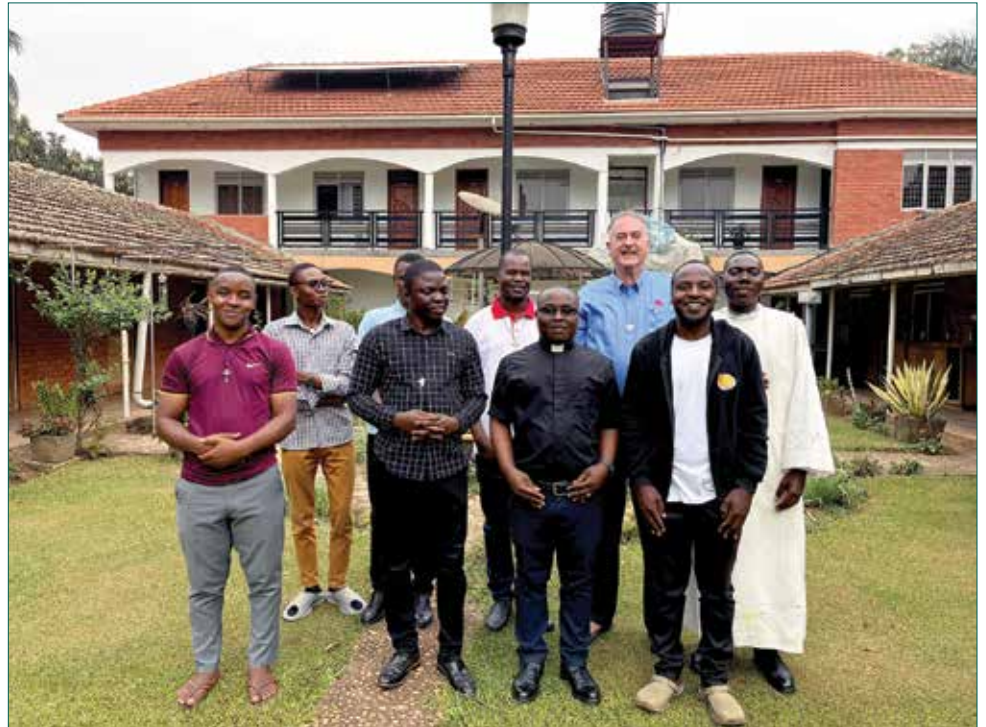
Bread Broken & Shared

A Publication of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament Province of Saint Ann for the Eymardian Family and Friends

Our Mission in Uganda: Most Welcome, Most Grateful

By John Thomas Lane SSS, Provincial

To conclude our 125th Anniversary year celebrations, I visited another Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament foundation, which is a heritage site of the Province of Saint Ann. I accepted the invitation of fellow Blessed Sacrament Father Simon Peter Zikusooka SSS, the local superior of the three foundations in the east African country of Uganda. Like Saint Mary Menasha, Wisconsin, and Saint Charles Borromeo, Albuquerque, New Mexico as examples, our long-time presence and service, sharing the Eucharistic charism of Saint Peter Julian Eymard have had long serving and lasting effects.



The USA Province spread its wings several times throughout the years, from first going to Australia in 1929, the Philippines in 1953, Great Britain and Ireland, Vietnam and in 1959 Uganda and the city of Masaka. Through the generous invitation of our superior general and the local bishop, three Blessed Sacrament religious, led by Father Roger Pageot forged a dream to bring the SSS mission to eastern, English-speaking Africa. With the locals, a new parish, Blessed Sacrament – how appropriate – began in 1959 on a nearly 50-acre parcel on the edge of town. First the rectory with an inner courtyard, followed by a church (which had hoped to become the parish hall one day – a dream for the future!) with school buildings, and other places for gatherings, a parish flourishes to this day.

For over twenty years, the SSS were not able to administer the parish due to the regime of Idi Amin who booted out the foreign religious. Through the welcome hope of Father Norman Pelletier, SSS, at the time Superior General

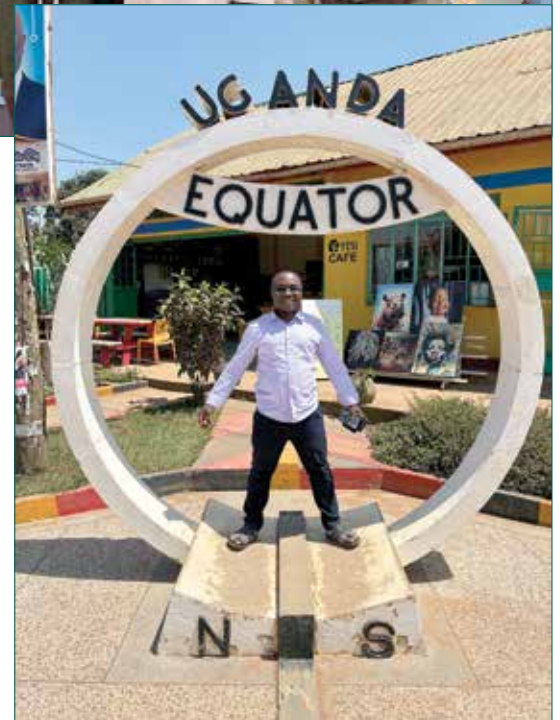
Local SSS Community in front of the new wing that we recently assisted with YOUR HELP by your gifts to the Uganda missions. Father Lane is with the local community.

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from 1993 – 1999, he worked with the local bishop and was able to bring back the SSS through the Philippine Province to administer the Blessed Sacrament Parish once again. After two decades of service with the support of this Asian province, the General Administration partnered the Uganda foundations with the province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. By this point the native Ugandan SSS had added formation houses in the city of Jinja on the northern shore of Lake Victoria capital of Uganda, Kampala. Later during this administration with the Philippines, this house closed, but had hopes of another foundation once again.

As part of our 125th anniversary year, the USA SSS leadership team made a commitment to once again partner in financial support of the Uganda mission during 2023 planning. **This means funds from Saint Ann Shrine, our readers, benefactors and other**

CLOCKWISE from top LEFT:

- The American SSS built this parish, Blessed Sacrament Parish and the church's facade is the story of the Uganda Martyrs

- Our chapel and formation house at Jinja, Uganda with the local professed members.

- My host, Father Simon Peter Zikussoka, SSS as we travel from one of the three houses past the equator memorial.

donors, YOU our dear readers, have contributed to the mission of the province in the United States and Uganda. Those who have made a donation "to the SSS missions," have been so generous. **THANK YOU!**

Additionally, our SSS New York parish, Eglise Saint Jean Baptiste, wished to be a sister parish to Blessed Sacrament, Masaka. With these two institutions, we have financially supported the replacement of roofs and the addition of a second floor to the rectory to accommodate retreatants and guests and have new offices for the local community at Masaka. Furthermore, the Province and Saint Jean's funds have supported the 27 men in formation: philosophy-aspirancy (11 men), all African continent novitiate in Senegal (4), students studying in the DRC their theology for ordination (10), those on a pastoral

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year between the end of their studies, final vows and diaconate ordination (2). In American dollars each one in formation has cost of living amounts that are around \$3,500. **WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THOSE WHO HAVE "ADOPTED" these men. Would you too?** We would be most welcome and most grateful.

When the first eight men arrived in New York City in 1900, they were told over and over how welcome they were to the States and New York. The SSS men felt so grateful for the generosity of so many who built a house, a church and a dream to serve the Eucharistic mission of Saint Peter Julian Eymard – all from the generosity of their hearts. When our men went to new foundations through the USA and world, but especially Uganda, we felt most welcome and most grateful. With every person I met during my January week in Uganda, I was told, **"Father, we hope you feel most welcome, for we are most grateful for all you have done for us."** During my journey to discover, learn and be with our Eymardian Family (the brothers, deacons, fathers, Aggregation and Servitium Christi), in our current three locations throughout Uganda, I was told over and over, "you are most welcome, we are most grateful." I came to give some talks, bless a building, recruit future Ugandan religious to support the USA SSS mission. It was I who was touched and transformed to see how they have grown the mission first brought in 1959, and continue to forge a mission of welcome and gratitude. After all, this is Eucharist that continues the dream of Saint Peter Julian Eymard to set the world

on fire with God's Eucharistic love. Thank you, SSS Uganda! Thank you, dear host, Father Simon Peter and your family. I am truly most grateful. Let us continue to pray and support them in their efforts to rebuild and refurbish their damaged rectory and adopt other men in their formation to be grateful religious serving the Lord and God's people. Being always most welcome and most grateful.

For your special donation to SSS Uganda Mission, you may contribute to the mission through Saint Ann Shrine or also directly with a check in the mail to the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament or online giving at our website. Please make a memo note: "SSS Uganda." Your kindness and generosity breathes life into our ministry and SSS men serving there. Thank you! We are deeply grateful!



TOP - On the grounds of the parish there is an outdoor shrine/altar area for the outdoor Masses or other events that support up to 3,000 around the space.

CENTER - I was blessed to preside at Masses there and this couple celebrated with me and asked for a "one month old" marriage blessing.

BOTTOM - Our Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament members (the third branch of the Eymard SSS family) at Masaka, Uganda



Welcome Our New International Priest

Dear Greetings to all of you!

I am Rev Father Fredrick Bugembe SSS, (*People call me Father Fred*) a member of the Blessed Sacrament Congregation in Uganda, currently working at Eglise Saint Jean Baptiste parish, New York City. I was born on June 13, 1992. I joined the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament in 2012 and made my first profession of vows in 2018. I was ordained a priest on February 2, 2024. I thank my parents Mr. Magembe Fred and Mrs Namusoke Maxy who accepted me to join religious life. I am a fourth child out of eight, five boys and three girls. I thank my siblings, too for supporting me in whatever way possible in my priestly journey. May God bless abundantly.

I thank my superiors who saw it fitting that I would be of great value to this new mission in New York bringing with me new energies and life, celebrating the Eucharist, hearing confessions, accompanying catechumens, and serving the girls high school: all these bring new life to the parish and to me. I arrived on December 3 in the cold winter. [It is a change from equatorial Uganda climate.] I thank all of you who helped me fly from Uganda to the United States, a journey of more than 18 hours. May my presence



[L-R] Father John Kamas, SSS, Father John Thomas Lane, SSS and Father Fred Bugembe, SSS

be a source of light for many I will encounter and may it give renewed spirits among the parishioners of Saint Jean Baptiste parish. I pray that God's will may prevail in all circumstances and, as our founder, Saint Peter Julian Eymard would say, "May the Eucharistic kingdom come."

Father Fred Bugembe, SSS



A Word of Thanks to our Partners in Ministry

Many of you returned the enclosed response card in with a generous donation to the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament. We are most grateful to you for making it possible for our priests and brothers to continue their ministry. Your gift, whether large or small, helps you to actually share in the ministry of the Congregation in the USA. You are remembered daily in the prayer intentions of the priests and brothers of the Congregation.

Bread Broken & Shared

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CONGREGATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

5384 Wilson Mills Road

Highland Heights (Cleveland), Ohio 44143

Since 1900, our Eymardian Family serves the United States and now in Connecticut, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Maine, New Mexico, New York, Ohio and Texas

Become an Apostle of the Eucharist: Brother, Sister, Deacon, Ordained Priest or Associate

Featured Staff Person - Susan Work

Executive Assistant to the Provincial and Province, Mrs. Susan Work has worked with the Blessed Sacrament Community since August 15, 2005. She has been a valuable resource to our province and to the other provinces of the Congregation in supporting our mission, the religious and other staff members. She shares with us a little about her family, her work/ministry with the SSS and her enjoyment of living her Eucharistic life with us as an Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament member since 2010.

Susan Work was born in Cleveland Ohio. She is the oldest of three daughters. Susan lives in Willoughby, Ohio with her husband Dean. They will celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary in May. Susan and Dean have three grown children: Eric, Mary and Deanna and three grandchildren, a dog named Arya and two kittens.

She began working for the Congregation on August 15, 2005 as Executive Secretary/Assistant to the Provincial Superior and the Province of Saint Ann. Each year she works with the Mission Cooperative Program which is a program to support the ministries of various religious institutes worldwide. Being involved in this program consists of issuing correspondence to each of the Archdioceses and dioceses in the country to request the Congregation's inclusion each year and calling parishes across the country that we have been assigned and scheduling weekends for a Mission Appeal to take place in a particular parish. There is much paperwork that is involved in these assignments.

She began applying for R1 Visas for our SSS Missionaries to come to the U.S. to minister giving the mission appeals. Susan is now the Congregation's "Immigration Specialist". She applies for R1 religious Worker Visas and Visa extensions for our priests. She has also applied for and received approvals for Adjustment of Status, or Green cards also known as Permanent Residency for our religious. This task involves keeping up with immigration law as there are



many changes and additions.

She has worked on the Congregation's first accreditation from Praesidium and is currently in the process of getting the Congregation re-Accredited. Praesidium is an Institute that requires standards and policies be followed to ensure everything is being done to protect the Safety of Children and Vulnerable Adults in compliance with the USCCB.

She works with the Provincial Superior on day to day administrative tasks and projects and reports. Susan is grateful to have been the opportunity to work for and with the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament. ❖



Clockwise from left:
 - Susan and husband, Dean
 - Susan with her granddaughters;
 - Susan's pets [L-R] Arya, Farrah and Finney



From the Provincial's Perspective

By John Thomas Lane SSS

Recently, Cleveland Ursuline Sister Gretchen Rodenfels wrote on the occasion of their order's 175th anniversary year how they feel so much **welcome** from the people that they have served these many years through their different institutions. She wrote, "Welcome is a Catholic word which springs easily to the lips of a person of faith." For 125 years and counting, you have welcomed us Blessed Sacrament religious (the SSS) with such generosity, kindness, hospitality, support and care. Welcome love, welcome prayer and welcome service in a mutual way of building up the Body of Christ.

In this issue of *Bread, Broken and Shared*, (BB&S) made possible by **YOUR DONATIONS** to our mission and, especially with the envelope enclosed, helps spread the good news of our Eucharistic charism. A charism that is characterized by welcome, joy, hospitality, service and much more that touches our hearts. This past year, hearing the stories of the past "century plus" of our **SSS men who have touched your lives**, helped me admire more than ever our greater gift, a Eucharistic gift: **we are for each other**.

BB&S focuses on the gift of mission come full circle by the sharing of the first Ugandan SSS to mission to the USA at Saint Jean Baptiste in New York City (*read about Father Fred*). The Eucharistic vocation has come full circle. We also have in this issue stories from our Center for Eucharistic Evangelization of the welcome of those in formation this year, the addition of new members of the Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament, the initiatives of our Advancement Office and the 20+ year witness of our Province's Executive Assistant, Susan Work who has been an inspiration of faith, service and dedication to each of our religious and members of the Aggregation. (We are so grateful for all Susan does for and with us, especially with the immigration work she does for bringing international SSS religious/priest to serve with us at our parishes and hospitals.)

May you enjoy a blessed Lent where the one aspect of this holy season, almsgiving, renews your life as it has us in province leadership through the stewardship of the many blessed gifts we receive from you! May Easter Time be a true renewal of your baptismal and Eucharistic commitment to serve the Lord always in gladness and joy. It's a joy that always makes us feel so welcome and supported. We receive so much from you in your welcome of us into your lives. May the Risen Lord continue to guide us as we live in a renewed commitment through our annual renewal of our baptismal covenant at the Easter Vigil or



Sunday. Like Peter and the other disciples, we are encouraged to go forward to Galilee, or a place where Christ was calling them. May you find this new spirit in your heart this Paschal time. Let us continue to pray for each other.

In Christ our Eucharist,

Very Reverend John Thomas Lane, SSS
14th Provincial Superior, Province of Saint Ann (USA)

P.S. Please pray for the religious of the Province of Saint Ann, who throughout this year until August 3-7 are in preparation for their 27th Chapter, a meeting where we renew our commitment to each other, forge our future and elect leadership to serve one another. Our meetings will be held in two places in Northeast Ohio, Regina Health Center in Richfield and Saint Paschal Baylon in Highland Heights, so that we may have all our religious participate as best they can. Our chapter prayer is on page 12. ✠

Shrine of Saint Ann Celebrates 125th Anniversary of Blessed Sacrament Service

By Scott Gongos, Director of Mission Advancement

What a wonderful year it was celebrating the 125th Anniversary of the Blessed Sacrament in the United States! I had the privilege to participate in our seven celebrations across the country and it was such a pleasure meeting so many of you during my trip! Putting faces to names and voices is such an enjoyable part of my job. I was so happy to have the opportunity to spend quality time with so many of you. I look forward to meeting those of you whom I haven't met yet. Please let me know when you'd be able to meet this year and I will schedule my travel plans ASAP! I also enjoyed seeing all of our parish churches and admired their beauty and uniqueness. The diversity of each parish group makes all of our communities so special and I'm grateful to be a part of them! You are all indeed people of faith and I felt that everywhere we went!

In addition to this special Anniversary, Saint Ann Shrine had the honor of being named a special place of distinction by Diocese of Cleveland Bishop Edward Malesic during the Jubilee Year of Hope. I was so honored to participate in the procession that kicked off this special year in December of 2024. We closed out this distinct time with Mass at Saint John Cathedral in downtown Cleveland in December of 2025. During this time, Saint Ann Shrine hosted



many people who had never visited us before. We had visitors and groups join us from all over Ohio, in addition to numerous other states. Most of you looked forward to learning about Saint Ann, the history of the Shrine, and enjoyed quiet prayer time during your visits. Thank you for spending

-TOP: Provincial Father Lane, Father JK, and Scott celebrating the kickoff Mass to the Jubilee year at the Cathedral of Saint John the Evangelist with Bishop Malesic and Auxiliary Bishop Woost

-CENTER: General Superior Father Benzy, Provincial Father Lane, and Cleveland Bishop Malesic at the 125th Anniversary celebration of the Blessed Sacrament in Cleveland

-LEFT: Statue of Saint Ann, Blessed Virgin Mary, and Jesus outside of Saint Ann Shrine decorated for the Jubilee Year of Hope

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time with us and we look forward to you visiting again soon!

Our Annual Triduum for Saint Ann and Saint Joachim will be celebrated July 24-26th in Cleveland and we hope you can join us! The three-day celebration is such an amazing and beautiful way to honor the grandparents of Jesus. If you're planning on visiting from out of town, I'd be happy to assist you with your trip planning. I can be reached at 440-449-2700 or sgongos@blessedsacrament.com. This year's celebrant is Father Paul Raj Gnanasekar, SSS, our Pastor from Corpus Christi Parish in Houston, Texas. Our parish in New York City, Saint Jean Baptiste, will celebrate a nine-day Novena for Saint Ann with Mass at Noon from July 17-26th. Call 212-288-5082 or visit www.stjeanbaptisteny.org.

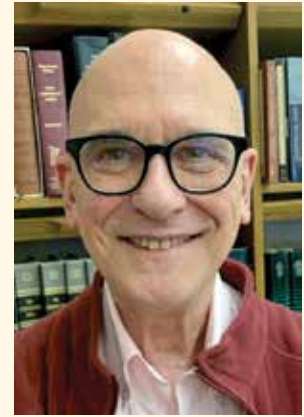
Your prayers and financial support help care for the members of the Blessed Sacrament Community who've cared for you throughout your life. If you'd like to consider other alternatives in which to support the Blessed Sacrament and/or Saint Ann Shrine, there is the opportunity to include us in your estate plans, donate gifts of stock, or a Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA. It's a very easy process and I'd be happy to help you with any of these opportunities. Thank you for your generous support of our mission!

Please continue to share your stories of how your relationship with the Blessed Sacrament and/or Saint Ann Shrine came to be by emailing me at sgongos@blessedsacrament.com or by calling me at 440-449-2700. I'm so thankful when I receive your phone calls as it always brightens my day! Thank you for your continued generosity and kindness in supporting the Blessed Sacrament Community and Saint Ann Shrine. Because of you, we are able to support the ministries we serve and care for the members in retirement. We are so grateful for your commitment!
God Bless You! ❖

A nine-day Novena in honor of Saint Ann is celebrated at Saint Jean Baptiste Church in New York City from July 17 through July 26.

This year's Novena will be celebrated by Father John Kamas SSS.

Contact information for the Novena is:
phone: 212.288.5082 or
website:
www.stjeanbaptisteny.org



-LEFT: members of the Blessed Sacrament at Regina Health Center for the 125th Anniversary celebration

-RIGHT: Group from the Diocese of Cleveland's Newman Campus Ministry program

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SAINT ANN SHRINE & CONGREGATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT



Celebrate Saint Ann Triduum

Friday-Saturday-Sunday

July 24, 25 & 26, 2026

Saint Paschal Baylon Church

5384 Wilson Mills Road
Highland Heights, Ohio 44143
Parking Lot South of the Church

This Triduum is the annual three days of prayer leading up to the Solemnity of Saint Ann on July 26th celebrated by the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament at Saint Ann Shrine in Highland Heights, Ohio. The Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament is a Roman Catholic religious Congregation of priests, brothers and deacons whose mission is to share the riches of God's love manifested in the Eucharist.



- Day 1 Mass at 6:30pm: Special Blessing for Children
- Day 2 Mass at 4:30pm: Anointing of the Sick
- Day 3 Mass at 6:30pm: Special Candlelight Procession



All three Masses will be celebrated by Father Paul Raj Gnanasekar SSS
All three Masses will include Veneration of the Relic of Saint Ann

All three Masses will be livestreamed on the
Saint Paschal Baylon YouTube page:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCf2NQ5-tyoSnnDlpIoC7qsg>

R.S.V.P. or for more information contact Scott R. Gongos

Director of Mission Advancement
sgongos@blessedsacrament.com
440.449.2700

www.blessedsacrament.com

NOTE: A discounted hotel rate has been secured for those of you joining us from out of town. We'd also love to have you join the Blessed Sacrament for dinner on the evenings you'll be joining us! Please RSVP with Scott!

Additionally, a nine-day Novena in honor of Saint Ann is celebrated at Saint Jean Baptiste Church in New York City from July 17 through July 26.

Contact information for the Novena is:

phone: 212.288.5082 or website: www.stjeanbaptisteny.org

Who We Are

“Following in the footsteps of St. Peter Julian Eymard, our mission is to respond to the hungers of the human family with the riches of God’s love manifested in the Eucharist.” *Rule of Life 3*

Conscious of our call to bear prophetic witness to the Eucharist, we commit ourselves to the renewal of Church and society through this sacrament, especially by:

- ◆gathering communities characterized by hospitality, reconciliation, and service;
- ◆celebrating the Eucharist as the source and summit of the life of the Church;
- ◆associating others with our prayer;
- ◆giving personal witness to the presence of Christ in the Eucharist;
- ◆sharing our Eucharistic mission with others in full collaboration.



Visit our website at www.blessedsacrament.com. You can support our newsletter by visiting [Make A Gift - Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament](#). Thank you so much for supporting our Mission Work!

Recalling the Blessings of 2025

By Mona Grigsby-Suárez, *Director for the Center for Eucharistic Evangelizing*

2025 was an altering godsend year for myself and my Eymardian family: so many events in so many cities with so many blessings! The beginning months of the year focused on lots of planning and preparing for the following months of activities at local and national Aggregation happenings, and was the start of my several thousand miles of traveling. Saint Peter Julian Eymard would feel very pleased as the world was set ablaze with his evangelical spirit throughout the entire year!



Father Benzy and Mona with the local Aggregation leadership team from the Diocese of Orlando, Florida.

I celebrated New Year's Day in the clouds on the way to Madrid Spain for a reunion with our Spanish Blessed Sacrament's Congregation and Aggregation. My good friend Mercedes Cabrejas Manchado and I are both on the newly created International Committee for the Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament and we shared with each other stories, resources, and visions of our hope to unite our Eymardian Aggregation family at an international level.

Throughout 2025 our SSS Provincial, Father John Thomas Lane, and myself visited our Blessed Sacrament parishes and our Aggregation groups extended throughout the USA to celebrate the Congregation's 125th anniversary. These visits reunited old friends, and created and expanded bonds among our

Our International Eymardian Family English Institute participants' closing Mass.



growing Eymardian family members.

When not traveling, I spent much of my time translating Aggregation materials from English into Spanish to respond to our goal of reaching out to the Hispanic communities at our SSS parishes – especially in Houston and San Antonio, Texas. Currently we offer the entire *Initial Formation* program, the two *Life in the Eucharist* retreats resources, two volumes of the *Manna Series*, and many *Eucharistic Holy Hours*, and a wide variety of short articles, prayers, and other useful worship aids.

One of the goals of the SSS Americas Conference is to increase interaction among the three American provinces. At our SSS Headquarters in Highland Heights, in the Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio, we responded to this goal with the inception of the *International Eymardian Family English Institute*

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Recalling Blessings...Continued from previous page

(IEFEI). For the entire month of July, participants gathered from Brazil, Colombia, Argentina, and Viet Nam for a USA English immersion experience. Each day started with Morning Prayer, followed by Mass, a quick breakfast, English instruction, and then lunch with the SSS community. The afternoons were dedicated to “hands on” activities and local outings with members of our Aggregation and individuals of our local parish. Evenings and weekends included cultural events, service projects, and some R & R! It was a month of memories that will remain forever in the hearts of all who were a part of this initial international Eymardian adventure.

For two weeks in the month of August, I had the incredible privilege of journeying with the international leader of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament’s Superior General Father Philip Benzy Romician SSS,(aka Fr Benzy!) along with our national SSS Provincial, Father John Thomas Lane, Rising very early each morning, sometimes wondering where I was, I once again had the opportunity for repeat visits with our members of the Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament throughout the country. Once again, we shared our Eymardain charism breaking bread at the altar and afterwards in the parish halls. I now recognized familiar faces and knew names, sharing new stories, new dreams, new challenges. I truly witnessed what it means to be family, united not by blood, but by our Eymardian spirituality.

A major development for the USA Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament has been the founding of its national



Council in October of 2023. Its purpose is to enable communication, communion, and collaboration among its 400 plus members. I am an ex-officio member of the Executive Board of the Aggregation which met as a group for the first time during our final SSS 125th Anniversary celebrations at the Bethany retreat Center in Lutz, Florida in December. We met for a full day of bonding, review, assessment, and planning to develop a one-and a 5-year action plan to achieve enriched sustainability of the Aggregation. We are committed to completing the effort by August, 2026 and will share it at

our national Eymardian gathering at the SSS Headquarters.

The ending of 2025 replicated the beginning of the year, with proposals for new projects, more gatherings, and exciting ventures for 2026! Again, one can hear the voice of Saint Peter Julian Eymard advising us all though, not to dwell too long on the past, but to get to work – because “tomorrow will be too late”! ✠

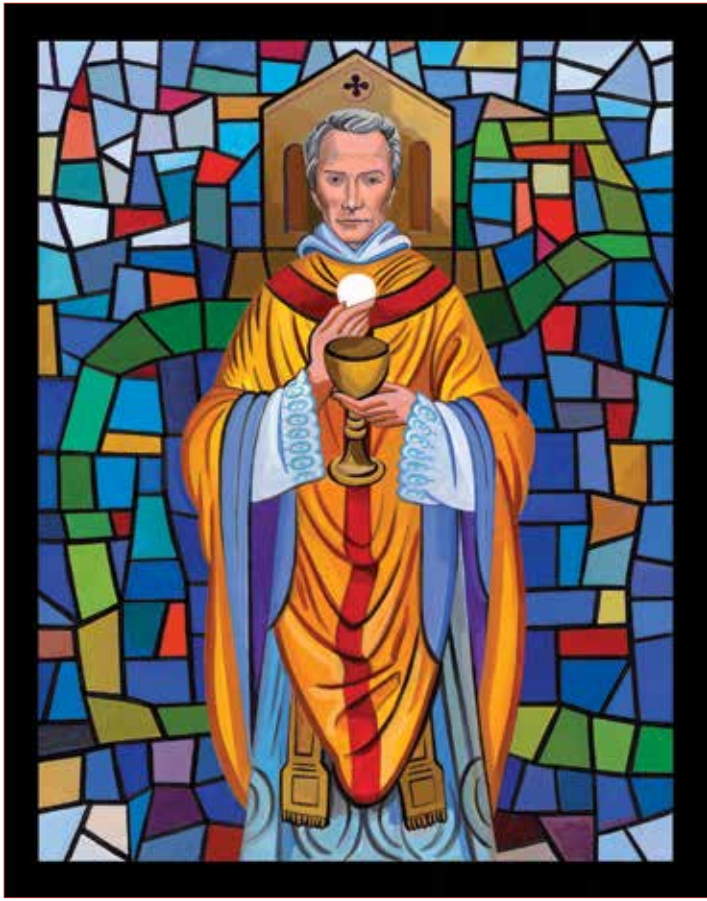


TOP - Our Houston extended Eymardian family

CENTER - Saint Joseph parish in San Antonio, Texas gathering with Father Benzy.

BOTTOM - Our Eymardian family at Saint Vincent de Paul parish’s celebration in Holiday, Florida with the Congregation’s General Superior-Father “Benzy” in the center.





Prayer for the 2026 Chapter

Divine Source of Wisdom and Light
we pray to ask for your presence in our midst
for you are the guiding force of our decision-making
and are the fabric of Eucharistic love that binds our province together.
We are grateful for your care for us and the years of guidance
that helps us to serve in unity.
Give us the strength to collaborate
with the essential matters that forge our future.
May we see the complexities before us
and with your Spirit make long-term choices
that navigate our future with courage and empathy.
With your Spirit, may we listen to your inspiration
and achieve remarkable things together.
May the inspiration of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament
and our holy founder, Saint Peter Julian,
support us still in our mission to serve you.
Through Christ our Eucharist. Amen.

Image of Saint Peter Julian Eymard executed by a parishioner of
Corpus Christi Parish in Houston, Texas, Joan Steinman