



SSS Grapevine

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Americas Conference Welcomes New Provincial

Recently, our Blessed Sacrament Province (SSS) in Colombia marked their Chapter – a meeting of the men for the countries of Colombia and Peru who serve there. The men of the province elected Very Reverend Gustavo Ceballos to be their provincial for the next four years. *(He is in the middle of the photo with Father Marcello de Silva SSS from Brazil, top left, Mona Grigsby-Suarez and me, top right, and Father Francisco Junior Marquez SSS, middle right in the photo.)* The SSS Americas Conference (SAC) on Zoom, Tuesday, April 14, welcomed him, that is, the provincial of Brazil, Father Marcello, and me. Other leaders of our provinces are invited to join the regular planning as we work collaboratively with the SSS geographic conference. With a new member, we spent time reviewing the SAC guidelines and discussing hopes and dreams for our future work together as a region of the SSS. Father Gustavo and Brother Juan David will travel to attend the USA SSS Chapter August 3 – 7, 2026.



Faith & Seminary Leaders Gather in Chicago to Pray for International Peace

Religious leaders of the major faith traditions in Chicago heeded the advice of Pope Leo XIV to have regional, national, and international gatherings of faith leaders to witness peace and pray together for it. Catholic Theological Union, the Lutheran School of Theology, and McCormack Seminary, which share the same education building in Chicago’s Hyde Park



neighborhood, hosted an Interfaith Prayer Gathering for peace on April 27, 2026, with leaders of these seminaries (*including the seminary presidents, staff, and provincials*) and the Hyde Park community. The service was prayed in Arabic, Hebrew, and English, with amazing passages from Sacred Scripture drawn from our traditions. This was an important witness to the fact that we, as faith leaders, are called

to bear witness to peace as we sang the mantra, “peace, salaam, shalom” (*the three languages in the service for the same word in each language: peace*).

We, too, as the Eymardian Family in the USA, pray for peace and an end to the senseless wars in Iran, Lebanon, Gaza, Sudan, and Ukraine. We echo words from the service:

One: God, most Merciful, most Generous, You lead us in the ways of peace.

One: God of compassion, You unite us in solidarity and love.

One: God of justice and consolation. You are near to the brokenhearted and the oppressed.

One: God, you are peace, and from you is peace. Blessed are you, Holy One, Ruler of the World.

Make us instruments of peace.

Board of Trustees & Corporate Members Meeting at CTU



The quarterly meeting of the Board of Trustees and Corporation Leaders of Catholic Theological Union (CTU) was held the week of April 27 – 30 at the Chicago campus. Most members, including yours truly, met in person with 20 also joining on Zoom. In the year since Pope Leo XIV was elected pope, CTU’s most famous graduate has honored the pope with a new statue created by Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmaltz and donated by the Board of Trustees. Recently unveiled, it adorns the lobby of the seminary building. The “Leo effect” has brought increased interest in lay and clerical formation, as evidenced by new student inquiries. Furthermore, a recent grant to the school, along

with other institutions in Chicagoland, has made CTU the center for a “Synodality Center Initiative” as part of training not just those who attend CTU, but also those at the service of the church and other institutions that wish to use this important process of collaboration.

Next to me in the photo is the new president of CTU, Passionist Father Enzo Del Brocco, who has had a very busy first year and has used his voice as president of the school to regularly write pastoral letters on the issues facing our country and our world. He has been quite impressed by how CTU develops leaders to serve the world and by the incredible amount of faith among the faculty and students. "CTU is not a place or a center to teach something, but a way of being something with our vocation." Every six years, there is an audit of the Master of Divinity, or the priesthood studies track. This is currently going well, especially with input from graduates of the last 5 years who say they were well prepared for ministry in the Church where they are. Father Enzo reported that CTU's finances have never been better, especially with the leases of the other two theological schools on the top floors of the building, which provide a strong source of income to sustain CTU's mission.



A Marketing Support Initiative for CTU Corporation Members

This author and Mister Young Shin (*photo to the right*), Director of Strategic Initiative and Business Development at CTU, met on Wednesday, April 29 to partner on a corporation charism and visibility support initiative. CTU is willing to assist its corporate members, that is, the 21 male religious orders, such as the SSS, that are part of the corporation that makes up CTU, to work together on marketing and effective communication of our messaging. Due to a special grant CTU received, Young is meeting with the provincial to assess the current media coverage of religious orders or institutes. Furthermore, they will offer advice and support to improve our online presence. CTU wishes to engage and assist corporate members, as there is a need to tap into them. Young people, especially young men, need to work together to enhance the CTU and SSS mission. Helping to enhance outreach efforts together is vital to recruiting future seminarians who will, in the words of the CTU mission statement, "to become effective religious, ordained and lay leaders for the Church, ready to witness to Christ's good news of justice, love and peace."



You may have heard the phrase, "What is your elevator speech?" This is a device one uses in an elevator, and if someone has your attention between floors, you share who you are in a very short sentence. As Sacramentinos, we say, "We make all of reality in the light of the Eucharist" (see *Rule of Life* 34). But in working with the young, it was helpful to synthesize what we are about with the Eucharist into three words: **worship, prayer, and service.**

These three aspects of Eucharistic living uniquely identify us – and become our elevator speech. This is one example of how partnering with Young and this CTU initiative will help young people come to our particular religious orders and our charisms. We look forward to future meetings, assessments, and development to improve our marketing strategy.

Blessed Are the Peacemakers: Cardinal Cupich Receives Prestigious Honor



Each year, CTU hosts an annual gala to support the seminary and its mission. It is called “Blessed Are the Peacemakers,” reminding us that, through specially honored recipients, we acknowledge hardworking individuals or institutions who work tirelessly for peace in our world and make a difference. This year, on the evening of Wednesday, April 29, at the David Rubenstein Forum on the campus of the University of Chicago, a sold-out crowd of 440, raising just over \$600,000, came to support CTU and share gratitude to the Precious Blood Spirituality Institute and Cardinal Blasé Cupich of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Past

recipients have included Queen Noor, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Sister Helen Prejean CSJ, Doctor Christine Grady, and Doctor Anthony Fauci, among many other great leaders of peace and care.

Cardinal Cupich’s speech at the dinner has gone viral: he echoed Pope Leo XIV’s late messages, highlighting the importance of laying down weapons of war and people coming together to dialogue and find peace. The cardinal stressed to families around the world that many wars are displacing us and that each of us is called to be an instrument of peace. Quoting the late Cardinal Joseph Berardin of Chicago, “peacemakers, those who put an end to violence, lay down the sword, work for



harmonious relationships and break patterns of hatred. We are called to love even our enemies, for this is how we can be called children of God. All great religious traditions are called from their sacred texts to be peacemakers – let us join in these efforts!

As members of the corporation and trustees, the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament sponsors a table. We were delighted to share in the grand event with some of our staff and family, Dominican partners who host us in Oak Park (*because we no longer have an SSS house there*), and former SSS religious or friends of the community who have been our grand supporters for years (*see photo above on previous page*).

Save the Dates!

- **International SSS Priests Meeting – Part 2** with Ferdinand Okorie CMF (*picture to the right*): Interculturality & Mission. What does presbyteral identity mean to you in the context of your ministry? **FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM EDT – on Zoom or in Highland Heights at the Provincialate**
- **Provincial Chapter 27:** August 3 – 8, 2026, Provincialate & Regina Health Center – Aggregation Members join with us on August 4.
- **Life in the Eucharist Congress** for New Members of the Aggregation and International SSS: August 6 – 8, 2027, Provincialate
- **In the Footsteps of Eymard Pilgrimage:** October 7 – 21, 2027, Barcelona & France
- **International Eucharistic Congress:** 2028, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia



SSS with the Archbishop of Sydney, Anthony Fisher OP, at the last International Eucharistic Congress in Quito, Ecuador, just after the announcement of the new host city.