



SSS Grapevine

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Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament
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Youth LITE Retreat Goes to NYC



The hope of bringing the youth edition of the Life of the Eucharist Retreat around the world was reinforced this past week in New York City. A dream of Evamarie Cross, Youth Minister and Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament Member and Father Provincial John Thomas Lane SSS (*former pastor of Saint Paschal Baylon and pastor-elect of Église Saint Jean Baptiste, New York City*) brought ten members of the Saint Paschal Baylon (SPB) High School Youth Group traveled to bring the Life in the Eucharist (LITE) retreat to the first-year students (ninth grade) and graduating seniors of

Saint Jean Baptiste High School, New York City (SJB)¹. SJB is part of the Blessed Sacrament Community parish, also called SJB. Additionally, the Congregation of Notre Dame-Montreal sisters (CND), founded by Saint Marguerite Bourgeoys, began this school shortly after the parish was established in 1886. Since then, the CNDs have continued to support the high school by volunteering and providing financial support to keep this now-diocesan Catholic all-girls high school open, offering an outstanding education to ladies seeking a Catholic education throughout the economically challenged boroughs of New York City. The 100 participants, with faculty from SJB and 5 adult chaperones from SPB² provided a very special retreat day on Thursday, June 4. Greg Rabito, campus minister and theology teacher (*in the right photo, standing in the middle of the Great Hall of SJB*), worked tirelessly with Evamarie to organize the day and the many supplies.

¹ Some of these youth also traveled to Liverpool, England, two years ago to present the LITE Retreat there the first weekend of June 2024.

² The adults included the Youth Minister Evamarie Cross, Aggregation Member, and Blessed Sacrament Father Louis Demba Ndione, Parochial Vicar of SPB on mission from the Senegal SSS Province.

While we have mentioned the format of the LITE retreat, it bears worth repeating. These youth engaged in sacramental reflections on the Eucharist and on nourishment, reconciliation, transformation, abiding presence, and mission. Each youth rotated leading the group in prayer, Sacred Scripture, a brief teaching, and personal witness-reflection. The youth gave very moving talks. For the abiding presence's presentation, the youth moved from the "Great Hall" below the SJB church into the church to gather in prayer in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the setting of exposition. This time of prayer mixed moments of silence, Sacred Scripture, "praise and worship" music, and one more personal talk by one of our men.



The youth express their gratitude to their home parishioners, who donated toward their trip, and to the youth themselves, who raised the funds through dances, a Halloween carnival, and other events throughout the academic year. We are grateful for the amazing hospitality of SJB High School and the SSS local community of Fathers John Kamas SSS, pastor (*photo below in the middle chatting with our youth*), Fred Bugembe SSS, parochial vicar (*next page bottom photo blessing the youth present with the Blessed Sacrament*), and



Jim Hayes SSS, in residence. Also present for the evening meal were the CNDs who live on three floors of the rectory in their own private area. The day ended, as any day should, with ice cream sandwiches on the roof of the rectory before our youth went back to their hotel in Brooklyn. For two more days, the youth toured Manhattan, seeing some famous sites, the new hit play "Stranger Things," and the Empire State Building with its observatory, as well as shopping around town. We are grateful for the successful sharing of our Eucharistic faith, especially as a spiritual preparation/retreat for the



Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, and for the opportunity to bring an SSS dream to fulfillment. Father Lane SSS, pastor-elect, exhorted the youth to learn from this retreat now and to share it in the future. *(In the pictures below, we see the final group photo, taken after the Vigil Mass of the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, with the pastor-elect of Église Saint Jean Baptiste.)*



S.H.A.R.E. Lives – Our Aggregation Promise to the Eymardian Family

by Northeast Ohio Member of the Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament (ABS)



Share a meal!

It's so simple, yet it's very powerful. The Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament of Northeast Ohio is engaged in a new ministry with our Eymardian Family at Regina Health Care. June 6 was the vigil of the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. This was our second meal shared with our Blessed Sacrament religious at Regina, and we truly believe it is in the spirit of what Saint Peter Julian Eymard envisioned. The members of the Aggregation were welcomed by 6 of our religious: Fathers Bernard and Paul, Deacon Joe, Brothers Michael and Allen, and resident Tim, who wishes to become a member of the Aggregation. Our Aggregates found this a perfect opportunity to thank our religious who have spent their entire lives in service to the Church and for us! Saint Peter Julian Eymard had such wonderful insight into how important it is for everyone to share food and time. This time with our SSS religious at Regina Health Center is precious, fragile, and filled with joy. We thank God for this beautiful experience.

If any of our Aggregates are interested in being included in future events at Regina, please contact Kathleen Catanese at **+1 (440) 336-6195**.

We are trying to live part three of the *Project of Life*. *NEO Aggregation members began this year visiting the Blessed Sacrament Community members and other residents at Regina Health Center in Richfield, Ohio*. We currently have seven religious in residence there:

- Father Paul Bernier SSS
- Brother Allen Boeckmen SSS
- Deacon Joe Bourgeois SSS
- Father Bernard Camiré SSS
- Father Ernest Falardeau SSS
- Brother Michael Perez SSS
- Father William Young SSS

SHARE means “Sharing Hospitality: Aggregates & Religious Enrichment.” This is a chance to make a deliberate point of staying connected to our religious community, which is located half an hour from the local Aggregation membership. The religious at Regina enjoyed the time together, as did the Aggregation members (*and the two in formation*), who loved fulfilling **Project of Life 17 - Service of Charity and Social Commitment:**

In the Eucharist,
 Christ totally offers us the total “gift of self,”
 and food for the journey,
 by which we receive the inspiration,
 the strength for our service of charity
 and our commitment to transform society.

We share in Christ’s mission
 of bringing the Good News of salvation to the least and the excluded,
 to those oppressed by poverty, weakness, illness and hardship
 and to those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice.

We take an active part in the actions of our local Church
 to foster solidarity, human dignity and the holistic development of peoples.
 We take our inspiration for this mission from the social doctrine of the Church.

Drop a card or note, or give a call to stay connected: **Regina Health Center +1 (330) 659-5135 at 5232 Broadview Road, Richfield, Ohio USA 44286-9608** (*Surrounding Deacon Joe, on the left, Kathy Sanson - in formation, Chris Hart - ABS, Rosalie Lewis - ABS, Jennifer Morton - in formation*)



Don't Forget the Quarterly Gathering: Eucharist & Scripture



Join watch parties at different folks' homes or in your own home, as Blessed Sacrament Father Arul Tharcus SSS, pastor of Downtown Saint Joseph Church in San Antonio, Texas, is the special guest speaker, reflecting on "The Eucharist & Scripture." Father Arul is from the SSS Province in India but has previously served in the Province of Saint Ann in Houston, Texas, and Holiday, Florida. **ALL ARE WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE,** Zoom Gathering, this **Saturday, June 13, 2026**, at **10:00 AM EDT/9:00 AM CDT/8:00 AM MTD.**

To access the Zoom Meeting:

https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/LESXc16He5q3w2C-kdVrjzgwrX_NxydypuFdCQiVkfGTsVtDYfx3YzjB_ojNgqE.-Yeu93DRwEjnk7q?pwd=DLE0gkFK-yZla_gkGAAAIAAAFF2DYCTFE2z5W7jfy3L8AsAAktaMkeL3aJcGC_jbxSNg082Gb0bpnIKYZDm5Q7DAwMDAwNA&from=hub

Spanish SSS is Lead Commentator for Pope's Visit to Spain

We are all familiar with the commentators who accompany television and media anchors covering the church, especially papal visits. One of our own SSS in Spain, Father Lino Emilio Diez Valladares SSS, member of the Province of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament (*Spain-Italy*), is providing the national commentary for Pope Leo XIV's apostolic visit to Spain, June 6 – 12, 2026. Padre Lino is pastor of one of our two SSS parishes in Madrid, teaches at the Instituto Superior de Pastoral de la Facultad de Teología de la Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, in Madrid, and is also a professor of liturgy at El Instituto Teológico de Vida Religiosa. Tune in to the Spanish Episcopal Conference TV, TRECE TV, for Spanish coverage of the visit with our very own!



Prayers for the Province of Saints Peter & Paul Provincial Chapter This Week



This week begins another chapter, or meeting, of the religious of the Great Britain and Ireland Province to decide on future planning and leadership. This province, which has communities in Dublin, Liverpool, and Glasgow, is under the patronage of Saints Peter and Paul. Members will gather June 7 – 12 in Wales's Noddfa Catholic Retreat Center. Our novice, Matthew Vlastelica, reports that his final hours there were spent in prayerful celebration, again of the Congregation's special solemnity, and with Father General, the Very Reverend Philip Benzy Romician SSS, who is in attendance at the event.

Matthew returns for the final weeks of his novitiate in Houston, Texas. Pictured above, left to right, are fellow novices for Matthew's six-month immersion process: Novice Patrick Tang; Father Dennis Francis SSS (*shrine vicar*); Father General SSS; Father Darren Maslen SSS (*shrine rector and novice director*); and the Province of Saint Ann novice, Matthew.

Matthew wrote a heartfelt letter to the province as they begin their chapter, and here are some of the highlights from him and of this province's ministries in Liverpool and Glasgow:

I am grateful for the opportunity to have met such a diverse range of people from across the United Kingdom and Ireland, and to have listened to their varied stories. With Maria Novani at the helm, the tour of Glasgow was excellent. I am thankful for all the experiences prepared for me there, which included meeting and spending time with parishioners, youth groups, and even Scottish schoolchildren.

In addition, I appreciate the opportunity afforded to me to go on retreat to Wales with Father Melville and Father Roy, and to visit the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Taper. I will never forget the Welsh countryside or my journey through it.

In Liverpool, seeing how a shrine operates and meeting its attendees, listening to their life stories and reflections on the shrine, has left a lasting impression on me. I should note that most of the attendees I spoke with cited the regular availability of confession, frequent Masses, and extended hours of Exposition as the principal reasons for their attendance.

All of these experiences will undoubtedly contribute to my future ministry and will be lessons that I carry back with me to the Province of Saint Ann.

Welcome home, Matthew – and we look forward to your first profession of vows in the Congregation on **Sunday, August 2, 2026, at the 9:00 am Mass on the Solemnity of Saint Peter Julian Eymard**, at Corpus Christi Church, Houston, Texas. *(The picture below is of the Liverpool community, with Father Dennis taking the picture, and the lady is the facilitator of their chapter.)*



For the next Grapevine: Share your pictures from the celebration of the Body & Blood of Christ, our Province's solemnity, in the next issue of The Grapevine! Let's see your processions, your dinners, and your wonderful faces! Please email your contributions to ssscommunications@blessedsacrament.com.