



SSS Grapevine

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Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament
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Annual Processions Celebrate the Joy of Our Eucharistic Life

Each year on the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, our parishes celebrate this grand solemnity in the “SSS Way” and style. Here are some pictures sent to us at the Grapevine, along with a brief article from our Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament leader in San Antonio, Billy Stewart, highlighting the annual procession through downtown San Antonio that our Aggregation there organizes with the archdiocese.



Above, a photo taken from Saint Mary Church Balcony, where the Eucharist was showered with petals from above while Sarah Kroger sang two songs to Jesus, along with prayers and Gospel readings, in the center of downtown.

By Billy Stewart

Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament (ABS) – San Antonio, Texas



On Sunday, June 6, 2026, the people of San Antonio encountered the Risen and Glorious Christ in the center of our city as we celebrated the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. Thousands came to honor, worship, and adore the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Hundreds of thousands of flower petals were showered from above and at His feet to soften the path, as numerous choirs sang his praises,

accompanied by trumpet blasts, a police escort, and honor guards!!

The Cathedral was standing-room only as Mass was being celebrated; hundreds of volunteers lined the procession route and evangelized about the Real Presence of Our King to everyone present. The beauty of the joyful Body of Christ coming together as One was extremely attractive as tourists were handed petals to join the celebration. The Light of Christ was visible on this day outside the walls of our beautiful Cathedral for all to “Come and See” the source of our joy!

The evening began with the Vigil Mass celebrated by Auxiliary Bishop Arturo Cepeda, followed by the city’s largest Eucharistic Procession and concluded with a live celebratory concert of faith by GMA Dove Award-nominated singer, songwriter, and Catholic worship leader Sara Kroger.

The members of our San Antonio Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament help to organize, promote, and volunteer for this glorious Procession in collaboration with the Archdiocese of San Antonio and with the blessing of Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller. Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, was visible on this day in the heart of our city and in the hearts of everyone present!!

This year, Pastor Father Arul Dhairiam SSS and Aggregation members, specifically from Downtown Saint Joseph, were also able to join us in the process. *(See photos below.)* Let us continue to perpetuate this Feast Day every day!!



Below are images from Corpus Christi Church, Houston, Texas. This also included a farewell party for Father Thomas Smithson SSS, who is moving to San Antonio to serve as the local superior there and to work at a nearby hospital in the archdiocese, while living at Downtown Saint Joseph and serving as a parochial vicar.





Below are a few images from Saint Paschal Baylon Parish's celebration (SPB), Highland Heights, with Fathers Louis Dembe Ndione and Rosario Pushparaj (new pastor) leading the procession with First Communicants and a larger-than-usual crowd.





Welcome Retired Sri Lankan SSS Bishop Winston Fernando



We welcome the recently retired Most Reverend Winston Fernando, SSS, a Blessed Sacrament bishop who served in a diocese in Sri Lanka. He will be visiting the USA for “holiday” (*vacation as we say*), from June 1 until July 10 in Texas (*pictured with the Houston SSS Community: In the center is Bishop Winston with Novice Matthew Vlastelica to the far left, Father Gnanasekar Paulraj (India), then to the right of the bishop Father Christian*

Christopher (Sri Lanka) and Father Jaime Ario Rodriguez Reyes (Colombia)) and our communities in Ohio and New York the following days.

Saint Ann Statue & Reliquary Restored and Returned to Our Shrine

Back in the late 1980’s, the idea of establishing a second shrine to Saint Ann percolated, with the site located at the national headquarters of the USA SSS. The first USA Shrine of Saint Ann is in New York City at Saint Jean Baptiste. When the HQ moved from New York to Highland Heights (*Diocese of Cleveland*), next to the campus of Saint Paschal Baylon Parish, the old seminary chapel was used only occasionally. With special donations from our Saint Ann Development Office, the seminary chapel was transformed in 1988 into the Shrine of Saint Ann in the Oratory of the Blessed Sacrament (the consecrated name of this holy place). In 2023, Bishop Edward Malesic elevated this shrine to a **diocesan shrine**.

Pictured here is the restored statue, first carved in wood and painted in a special European fashion by Norbert and Victoria Koehn of South Euclid, Ohio. In the





restoration, they removed all the paint, treated the wood, and repainted the statue. The reliquary was also touched up, and the tabernacle in the shrine is next for improvements. These improvements to the shrine, including air conditioning and new flooring, are all possible due to a very generous anonymous donation in honor of Good Saint Ann, who worked a miracle for this family.

Plan to participate in the Saint Ann Triduum at SPB on July 24 – 26 (*live via livestream*) or the original novena in New York City on July 16 – 26.

Congratulations New UK & Ireland Provincial Superior and Council



We celebrate the new provincial of the Province of Saints Peter and Paul (*United Kingdom and Ireland*), a Province of Saint Ann and Catholic Theological Union (CTU) trained member of this province, Father Darren Maslen. (*In the picture above, he is in the center, with his provincial vicar, Father James Campbell (on his left), and new provincial treasurer Father Peter Dowling (on his right). Father Peter is the outgoing provincial. Father General, Philip Benzy Romician SSS, is on the far left.*) Many of you may remember Father Darren as a novice in New York City, a student in Chicago, or as the keynote speaker at our Eucharistic Congress in 2023. We pray for the new leadership and our continued collaboration together with the USA Province.

Second International Priests' Meeting Focuses on Interculturality, Mission & Context

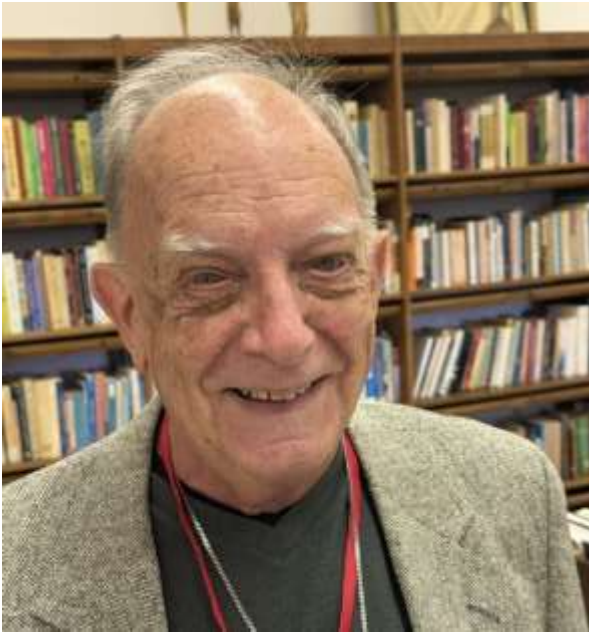


All our International Religious supporting the mission of the Congregation here in the USA joined for their second gathering this year on Friday, June 12, 2026. CTU Vice President and Academic Dean, Claretian Missionary Father Ferdinand Okorie, led the Zoom meeting. This was a follow-up to the first meeting in February and gatherings suggested by our General Council.

Our focus was on the popes since Saint John Paul II's documents on the ordained priesthood until today, and how, as another Christ, the priest lives the sacraments, belongs to the "People of God," and manifests the real presence of Christ by their "smelling like the sheep" that they are with. We had members discuss how their ministry is shaping them as "men of communion," how their presence before and after Mass, even at the Masses they are not presider, helps the people feel we are with them in their lives, bring our preaching into context with the special USA events, such as the Consecration of the Sacred Heart, preaching about mothers and fathers on their day, the USA Saints and more. Our men reflected upon, "How am I adapting my priestly ministry in the American context?" "What must I still learn and listen to from the people with whom I serve?"

We are grateful for the stewardship of our parishes and for our donors and benefactors who support the presence of these international SSS men serving with us in the United States. We hope to implement some of the ideas from this workshop and grow in closeness, compassion, and tenderness as the pontifical documents inspire us to be as ordained religious serving the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament.

Pastor Emeritus William Fickel SSS Moves Back to Ohio, His Native State



After 13 years of service at Saint Vincent de Paul Church in Holiday, Florida (*Diocese of Saint Petersburg*), 10 of which as pastor, Father William Fickel will return to his home parish, where he is already “pastor emeritus.” Closer to his family and to some medical care assistance that we all need at some point, he will continue his monumental work with the Center for Eucharistic Evangelizing (CEE), assisting with the updating of the initial formation program, workshops for the local ABS members, support the Saint Paschal Baylon parish and Saint Ann Shrine when needed, and other needs as he always jumps in to assist. Father Bill is known for his gracious gift of spiritual direction and compassionate care.

We thank him for his outstanding service throughout Florida, but especially in the dioceses of Saint Petersburg and Orlando, and look forward to his return on July 15 to Bethany Center and Saint Paschal Baylon. Thank you so much, Father Bill!!