

SSS Grapevine

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Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament
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3rd Year Anniversary of the Province Aggregation Council

By Greg Dufour, ABS Houston, Chair of the Province Aggregation Council



As the Saint Ann (USA) Province Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament (ABS) Council marks its third-year anniversary, I want to share how the council has come together over the past year to continue to serve as a resource and a community builder, supporting the Center for Eucharistic Evangelizing (CEE) and the Aggregation leaders and members.

The current council has an executive team which consists of the Chair (*me at present*), Co-Vice Chairs Alex Petrilak and Jim Ziegler,

and Secretary Annmarie Nicora. The ex-officio members are CEE Director Mona Grigsby-Suarez, CEE Director Emeritus Father William Fickel SSS, and Provincial Father John Thomas Lane SSS. The council representatives from the province's Aggregation branches are from Northeast Ohio, San Antonio, New York City, Houston, the Diocese of Saint Petersburg, the Diocese of Orlando, and the Sister Servants of the Blessed Sacrament in Waterville, Maine. (*Sometimes a representative from Norwalk, CT, and Albuquerque, NM, join us too.*)

The council meets on Zoom every other month (*usually a Wednesday*), following an agenda set by the executive team. During meetings, members receive updates on CEE activities and provincial news, share information from their Aggregation branches, exchange ideas, offer support, address challenges, and discuss solutions. Members then share this information with their Aggregation leaders and members.

In 2026, the Executive team began setting goals and projects for the next 5 years based on proposals from the 2024 SSS retreat attended by Aggregation members. After hearing from newly formed and current Aggregation members across the Province, the executive council decided to focus immediately on the Aggregation Initial Formation Program, adding a focus on the *Project of Life* and other enhancements to the 12-session formation guide. To further enhance initial formation and broaden the communal experience, the ABS Initial Formation Program was expanded to an 18-month schedule. The updated program will foster a sense of national community. It will include two sessions on the life of Saint Peter Julian Eymard, candidate Zoom meetings, a group project/activity with a Eucharistic focus (*with the local branch*), and a Life in the Eucharist (LITE) retreat. *(Have you saved the date for August 6 – 8, 2027, for Highland Heights, Ohio?)* The executive team will help facilitate the additional Zoom meetings. We are excited to announce that the new edition of the ABS Initial Formation Guide is now available. Thank you to our executive team, council representatives, local ABS leaders, ABS formation teams, and Fathers Lane and Fickel for supporting this enhanced, expanded program. As formation teams plan, we will implement this process across the province in February 2027.

The council continues to offer Quarterly Ongoing Formation Zoom Events on various topics to support ongoing formation and provide an opportunity to meet Aggregation members across the province. Quarterly Events will continue in 2027. Mark your calendar for Saturday, December 12, for an Initial Formation update, and Saturday, March 13, for the revised *Liturgy of the Hours* with Father Lane.

The Aggregation's resource link is now on the SSS homepage: www.blessedsacrament.com. Ongoing formation materials, videos, and other resources are available, with additional resources and enhancements planned for 2027.

The SSS Communications Office Distribution List, which includes over 500 Aggregation members, is now used to send notices about upcoming Aggregation and Province activities and events, including ABS Quarterly Ongoing Formation Zoom Events and live-streamed Eucharistic Holy Hours.



Looking Ahead to 2027, we hope to:

- Promote the Aggregation: Update informational brochure about the Aggregation.
- Promote LITE: Update informational brochure on Life In The Eucharist (LITE) retreats
- Enhance Aggregation visibility on the SSS website
- Update Aggregation Council structure and Aggregation Organizational Chart
- Collaborate with the CEE to expand offerings for ongoing formation resources for the Aggregation, essential for growth in our Eucharistic vocation.
- Assist in planning a Life in the Eucharist (LITE) retreat for Aggregation members and SSS religious at Saint Paschal Baylon, Highland Heights, OH. Save the date: August 6 – 8, 2027.
- Establish LITE teams in every Aggregation branch. Mona has trained a LITE team in San Antonio, and another LITE team will soon be established in Holiday, FL, at Saint Vincent de Paul. LITE teams are currently in the Northeast Ohio Aggregation branch and several in the Diocese of Orlando, both planning a retreat for this Lent.
- Connect with international Aggregation groups

We have set meaningful goals and collaborated to complete important tasks. We look forward to continuing to support and serve one another as the Eymardian family. Together, our experiences and gifts strengthen our Aggregation community as we live out the Eucharistic charism with conviction and joy.

New Aggregation Welcomed Members in Holiday, Florida



On Saturday, October 24, 2026, the parish community of Saint Vincent de Paul, Holiday, Florida, welcomes newly formed Aggregation members into the Eymard Family. In a unique collaboration, members of this Aggregation group will join the Martyrs in Vietnam Province of the Eymard Family because they speak Vietnamese. Blessed Sacrament Father and Parochial Vicar Martin Hien Tran SSS received the 15 new members' promises in a special celebration following the Mass. The

photo on the following page also shows the local SSS superior, Joseph Thai Minh Tran SSS, and Father Joseph Kiet Nguyen SSS, who gave the Mission Appeal for the SSS Students in Vietnam. Congratulations and welcome into the Eymard Family!



Passionist Community Welcomes Brother Matthew



On Friday, October 23, 2026, Brother Matthew Vlastelica SSS, our student preparing for ordination to the priesthood, arrived safely in Chicago, Illinois, after traveling from Australia. He lives across the street from Catholic Theological Union (CTU) in the Passionists Community Student House. Due to student visa status, cardholders must now attend classes in person. The Passionist Community at CTU graciously opened its doors to Brother Matthew and us, assisting with the formation process and

providing housing and care. With only one student currently, this lets us maximize our resources in the province, provide Brother Matthew with a student environment for collaborative learning, and keep our seminary, CTU, literally on the doorstep. The picture shows most of the students in the house, the local superior, Father Jack Conley CP (*right of the chapel altar*), and Father Arthur, Province Archivist. (*The provincial superior, president of CTU, and CTU professor were not available for this picture due to their work schedules.*) We thank you for your prayers for Brother Matthew, his sister, who is battling cancer, and his family during these last few weeks.

Please Keep in Your Prayers

Father Ernest Falardeau SSS (*age 97*) had a fall at Regina Health Center on Monday night, October 26, and was hospitalized for lacerations and a broken bone.