



CONNECTIONS

Celebrating Our Eucharistic Partnership in the Eymardian Family

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Eucharistic Living in a Year of Mercy

Any of us who have studied the life of Saint Peter Julian Eymard are touched by how much this saint was a man of deep compassion and mercy. As Mario Vecchiato, SSS, wrote in a past *Emmanuel* article that is found in the book *“May God Be Praised!”*: “Father Eymard lived an intense life of prayer, contemplating the Eucharist as the gift of the Father, who shows us his face as one of tenderness and goodness in the paschal mystery of Christ” (37). “It was from such an intense prayer,” says Father Vecchiato, “that the compassion of Father Eymard sprang” (38).

Father Eymard reached out to serve the poorest of the poor in both Lyons and Paris, France. He not only worked with his lay partners to catechize parents and children alike to make their First Communion but also involved them in providing clothes, material assistance, and special banquets on their First Communion day. Sister Catherine Marie Caron, SSS, reminds us that at a time in France of great division between the social classes, Father Eymard remarkably reached out to both the rich and the poor. She writes in

“*MGBP!*” that “he had friends among the nobility and was championed as a friend of the workers” (22). She also points out poignantly that “in his spiritual direction . . . he reminded (them) that after all we are all beggars in the sight of God and we can learn from beggars how to be grateful and so express our gratitude to God for all the blessings received” (22).

When one reads from among the 2,500-plus letters Father Eymard wrote to religious and lay alike, we experience a man of great empathy and mercy. To one young person, a Miss Stephanie Gourd, he wrote at least 55 letters. He would offer the kindest of advice as she dealt with things like taking care of ailing parents, numerous suitors asking for her hand in marriage, worry and fear over the political situation of the day, and even an upsetting dryness in her prayer life. He wrote to her: “Then, my daughter, always go to the Lord very simply, with the surrender of a small child. Tell the Good Lord what you are thinking, what you want, what is upsetting you. Oh! How happy we become when we discover this interior

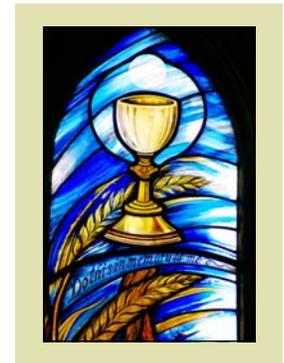
conversation with our Lord” (1/29/1848).

“. . . present your needs to him like a poor little one, tell him your gratitude, your love” (11/25/1850).

Saint Peter Julian Eymard certainly shows us a way to eucharistic living. He provides for us an example of how to live both the corporal and spiritual acts of mercy. Whether it is working in a soup kitchen, ministering to the homeless, catechizing youngsters for their First Communion, or writing a letter or note to a godchild, a grandchild, a friend, or an associate who is experiencing difficulties, we can join with Pope Francis and enter into this Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Jim Brown

**Let us know
what you
are praying about
and/or doing
to enter into
the Year of Mercy.**



PLEASE NOTE

For those who will be attending the Province Convocation in Cleveland July 29-31, there will be a special brunch business meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, July 31, for all associates and those engaged in the ministry of eucharistic evangelizing. We'll share successes and resources and explore future possibilities together.

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Life and Death in Our Eymardian Family

LITE TEENS

We are excited to announce that a group of teenagers from Saint Paschal Baylon Church in Highland Heights, Ohio, will be taking their Life in the Eucharist Program for Teens on the road. Last summer, a group of ten travelled to Florida to be trained by the LITE Teen group at Saint Stephen's Parish in Winter Springs. They then conducted their own first LITE Teen program in August at Saint Paschal's. Father Tom Smithson, SSS, the pastor of Corpus Christ Parish in Houston, has invited the group to come to Texas at the end of March to present the "Sacramental Reflections" program for both the junior high students of the parish elementary school and those teens involved in the religious education program and youth ministry there.

Needless to say, Evamarie Mickol, the youth minister at Saint Paschal's, is ecstatic about taking the LITE Teen group to Houston. She and this young group of eucharistic evangelizers have a passion for the Eucharist and want to share its meaning and impact on their lives with fellow teens. We wish them Godspeed on their journey west.

I should also note that Father John Thomas Lane, SSS, the pastor and local superior of the Cleveland community, started a new tradition by inviting the LITE Teen group to join the religious community for an Epiphany dinner on January 5. The menu requested by the teens was tacos. This dinner followed the annual Epiphany dinner the night before for the adult associates at Saint Paschal Baylon, which is held each year on the Monday after Epiphany in the community dining room.

CEE MISSION TEAM

Father John Thomas Lane, SSS, will be travelling in March to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to visit the Associates of the Blessed Sacrament there and present a Lenten mission at Saint Therese Little Flower Parish, where they meet. He will preach at the weekend liturgies and present on three successive evenings on the theme *A Eucharistic Life*, highlighting prayer before the Eucharist (adoration), reconciliation, and studying the saints who model eucharistic living, especially Saint Peter Julian Eymard.

Father Anthony Marshall, SSS, will present a Lenten parish mission at Holy Family Parish in Stow, Ohio, in mid-March. The theme is *Eucharist and Mercy: A Taste of Divine Mercy in Eucharistic Adoration*. He will preach at all the weekend Masses and preach the mission on three evenings of the week.

WE REMEMBER

Arthur Morrill, Associate of the Blessed Sacrament at Saint Vincent de Paul Church in Holiday, Florida, passed away on December 7. According to fellow associate Gloria Jung, Art was also a Knight of Columbus and an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion. He was involved with pro-life activities, parish hospitality, the annual gala, Bible Study, Metropolitan Ministries, and the Saint Vincent de Paul Society. Art also served in the United States Marine Corps. The Funeral Mass was celebrated on his birthday, December 17, at Saint Vincent de Paul Church by the pastor, Father Bill Fickel, SSS, who commented: "Art was an outspoken man and had a great compassion for the poor. He was very generous and encouraged others to get involved in living the Gospel. We had a full church because Artie died unexpectedly and was known by everyone in the parish."

On December 8, 2015, Paul J. Mastropolo, Jr., Associate of the Blessed Sacrament at Saint Eulalia's Church in the Chicago suburb of Maywood, passed away after a battle with cancer. Paul and his wife Martha were among the first group of associates at Saint Eulalia's two years ago. Father Mike Arkins, SSS, the pastor of Saint Eulalia, celebrated the Funeral Mass on December 14.

Robert Hollingsworth, an Associate of the Blessed Sacrament at Corpus Christi Parish in Houston, Texas, passed away unexpectedly on December 20. Bob and his wife Veronica were received as associates in December 2012 and attended formation sessions for prospective associates and the monthly Holy Hours put on by the associates of the parish. The two of them also participated in the Province Eymard Pilgrimage back in 2001. A Memorial Mass was celebrated by Father Tom Smithson, the pastor, on January 2.

The *Rule of Life* of the Congregation says: "The death of a religious shall be celebrated as a paschal event, in a prayer filled with hope" (13). The same spirit of Christian hopefulness and prayer extends to all who are members of the Eymardian Family. Please pray for the repose of the souls of Art, Paul, and Robert, and for the comfort of their wives, families, friends, and fellow associates.

NEW ASSOCIATES

Seven parishioners of Corpus Christi Parish in Houston, Texas, will make their Promise Commitment at the Vigil Mass on Saturday, January 30, as Lay Associates of the Blessed Sacrament. We welcome them into the Eymardian Family!

Jim Brown