



CONNECTIONS

Celebrating Our Eucharistic Partnership in the Eymardian Family

AUGUST 2, 2016 — FEAST OF SAINT PETER JULIAN EYMARD

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 6

A Wonderful Gathering of the Eymardian Family

Lay associates of the Blessed Sacrament from the Province of Saint Ann joined religious of the Province and other friends of the Congregation for a celebration of Saint Peter Julian Eymard's insight into the "gift of self" and Pope Francis' Jubilee of Mercy.

The convocation, held this past weekend at Saint Paschal Baylon Church in suburban Cleveland, Ohio, was a response to a hope by many associates for a national gathering of those who over the past four years have made the Promise Commitment as a Lay Associate of the Blessed Sacrament — *now numbering 215! across the United States*. And, indeed, women, men, and Blessed Sacrament religious from seven of the eight associate "branches" in the United States joined us for what one person wrote was "such a rich time to understand the Founder's emphasis on mercy as well as some practical applications."

Planning for the event began in late 2015, the year which marked the 150th anniversary of Saint Peter Julian's "gift of self" and the Advent beginning of the Jubilee Year of

Mercy. And as we all experienced in the three keynote addresses and the workshop presentations, there is such a marvelous connection between the spirituality of Father Eymard and the vision of mercy expressed in *Misericordiae Vultus* (The Face of Mercy), the papal letter written to announce the Year of Mercy.

The three keynote addresses were:

- Sister Dianne Bergant, CSA, walked us through the Old and New Testaments, giving many insights on the theme "Jesus Christ is the Face of the Father's Mercy."
- Sister Catherine Marie Caron, SSS, reflected on "Saint Peter Julian Eymard's Understanding of Mercy."
- Father Anthony Schueler, SSS, weaved together many of the insights of these two speakers in a practical reflection, "A Pastoral Response to the Year of Mercy."

Ten workshops were presented exploring various aspects of these themes. On Sunday morning, the associates gathered for a breakfast

meeting. It was an opportunity to meet the leadership of each of our branches and to hear about the wide range of activities and ministries being done by our associates. Resource materials were distributed and offered as samples of what might be done locally to promote the Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament and its prayer and mission activities in collaboration with the Congregation.

It was a special joy that five of the newest associates, representing the 19 who just made their Promise Commitment at Saint Stephen's Church in Winter Springs Florida, on Sunday, July 10, were present along with their director and animator, Father George Dunne, SSS.

A comment on one evaluation expresses what so many of us who planned the event heard throughout the weekend: "Thank you for these wonderful days of Eucharistic 'celebrations.' I leave with much 'food' for prayer and the inner journey (with God's help) toward the total gift of self. I am proud to be a part of the Eymardian Family and would like more time for quiet reflection and more days like these."

AND ON THIS NOTE . . .

Participants expressed or wrote on their evaluation forms — among other things — that they wished more associates were able to attend *and* that we make copies of all the presentations available to them.

In response, the CEE will be developing a program that includes the ideas covered in all the presentations, along with reflection questions and prayer suggestions. This will provide a vehicle by which the associates who attended can share with their fellow associates the insights and fruits of the experience of this much appreciated celebration and convocation.

Jim Brown



*Celebrating
the Gift of Self
in the
Year of Mercy*

CONNECTIONS

Blessing of Reliquary of Saint Peter Julian Eymard in Norwalk, Connecticut

On Saturday, June 25, associate Daniel Krenicki and Diane Sileo were married in a joyous ceremony at Saint Philip's Church in Norwalk, Connecticut. Father Michael Boccaccio, the pastor of Saint Philip's, presided at the wedding Mass, which Father Anthony Schueller, SSS, provincial superior, concelebrated. Reverend Kent J. Saladi, conference minister of the United Church of Christ in Connecticut and a lifelong friend of Diane's, offered a prayer of blessing at the end. It was a day to remember.

The following day was also memorable for Saint Philip's and for the growing number of associates in the parish. It saw the completion of a very special project: the blessing of a reliquary of Saint Peter Julian Eymard which Father Mike had discovered in a cabinet in the sacristy of the chapel at the Catholic Center of the Diocese of Bridgeport nine months earlier. You can read all about this in the November 13, 2015, *Connections*. It is a story of priestly persistence and heavenly attraction.

Once Father Mike had the reliquary in hand, he put the Saint Philip Artists' Guild, artists in residence at the church, to work in designing a display for the small, monstrance-like reliquary. They created a clear case with a beautiful painting of Our Lady and Saint Peter Julian above the reliquary. It is now permanently enshrined near the tabernacle on a facing wall, as if pointing to the tabernacle and the divine presence within.

During the Mass, Father Tony blessed the reliquary and then Father Mike led the assembly in praying the Prayer for the Jubilee of Mercy and the Gift of Self. God bless Saint Philip's!

Anthony Schueller, SSS



Nineteen New Associates in Winter Springs, Florida



Fifteen years of dramatic growth in the ministry of eucharistic evangelizing at Saint Stephen's Church in Winter Springs, Florida, reached a new plateau on Sunday, July 10, when nineteen parishioners made their Promise Commitment as Associates of the Blessed Sacrament at the 11:00 parish liturgy. Father George Dunne, SSS, the animator and guide of the associate candidates during their time of formation, presided at the Mass along with Father Anthony Schueller, SSS, provincial superior.

Saint Stephen's is a dynamic, vibrant faith community where the Eucharist is celebrated and lived in fellowship, witness, and service to others. We welcome the newest Associates of the Blessed Sacrament Congregation (in alphabetical order): Colleen Aboud, Rob Aboud, Kathy Churchill, Caryl Degrandi, Jim Degrandi, Deacon Jim Ferruzzi, Kathy Ford, Dale Greene, Mary Isaacs, Erica Jacques, Lionel Jacques, Dan Johannes, Lisa Johannes, Mike Long, Diana McGinty, Joe Pankowiecki, Zeynep Portway, Sheri Stevenson, and Michele Wales. Exciting things are ahead for Saint Stephen's and the Diocese of Orlando!

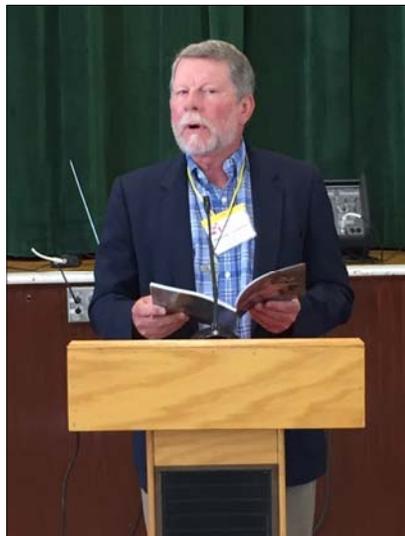
Anthony Schueller, SSS; Photo by Bob Ford



Celebrating the Gift of Self in the Year of Mercy

Convocation of
Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament,
Servants of the Blessed Sacrament,
Associates, LITE Team Members,
Friends, and Benefactors

Provincial Center
Saint Paschal Baylon Church
Highland Heights, Ohio
July 29-31, 2016



“Inspired by the spirit of
Saint Peter Julian Eymard . . .
and in partnership with
the Congregation of the
Blessed Sacrament
and the Servants of the
Blessed Sacrament,
we seek to pursue
our Christian vocation
and our call to holiness
by following
the evangelical way
taught by
Saint Peter Julian Eymard.”

Rule of Life for Associates, 1