



CONNECTIONS

Celebrating Our Eucharistic Partnership in the Eymardian Family

FEBRUARY 4-5, 2017 — BIRTH AND BAPTISM OF SAINT PETER JULIAN EYMARD

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Celebrating Father Eymard’s Birth and Baptism

We are fortunate today to have a number of inspiring “Blessed Sacrament biographies” of Saint Peter Julian Eymard as well as works by other Eymard scholars like Sister Catherine Marie Caron and Father Manuel Barbiero. Among the biographies are Father Norman Pelletier’s *Tomorrow Will Be Too Late* and Father André Guitton’s *Peter Julian Eymard*. Online you can find still other biographical materials on sites like *Eymardian Places* by the Australian historian and archivist Damien Cash.

Father Guitton’s biography of the Apostle of the Eucharist opens with these words: “Father Eymard was a La Mure boy. He loved his

native place, its mountains, and its people. He was proud of this area which was called the ‘Matheysine.’ He wholeheartedly made his own the words of his friend and compatriot Father Dumolard: ‘Long live la Mure and our countryside! Our people of the Matheysine are as great as any other.’”

Peter Julian’s parents were devout, hardworking, and honest. He was born on February 4, 1811, the tenth child of Julien Eymard and his second wife Marie Pelorce, and baptized the following day. “Peter Julian never experienced living in the large Eymard family,” Father Guitton writes. Infant mortality took many of them as babies.

He adds: “Their mother was able to cuddle them for merely the length of a smile.” Others died in their teens and 20s.

For this reason, Peter Julian was baptized the day after his birth. “In the old church of La Mure, which bears the name of Saint Peter Julian, the old stone baptistery where Peter Julian was baptized is preserved. Whenever [he] later returned to his native place, he never forgot to venerate the baptismal font. He loved to celebrate the anniversary of his baptism.”

He was born in love into a good family. He was born in love into the family of God, the Church, the next day!



Saint Peter Julian Eymard

*Born
February 4, 1811*

*Baptized
February 5, 1811*

*La Mure d’Isère,
France*



Sad News



Since our last *Connections*, three members of our Eymardian Family in the Province of Saint Ann have lost loved ones. Please remember them in your prayers as well as those for whom they grieve:

Gloria Jung, associate and member of Saint Vincent de Paul Church in Holiday, Florida, lost her dear brother Edward.

Sue Lenahan, associate and member of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Macedonia, Ohio, lost her beloved son Jimmy.

Louise Borgione, associate and member of Saint Paschal Baylon Church in Highland Heights, Ohio, lost her brother-in-law Anthony.

“In response to our baptismal vocation, we seek to witness to Christ’s presence at the crossroads of society, and starting from the Eucharist. . . .”
ROLA, 10

CONNECTIONS

Mercy, Marriage, and Relationships Beyond

We continue in the new year our project of sharing with you talks from the Convocation that was held in Cleveland July 29-31 last year.

Though the Jubilee of Mercy is officially ended, Pope Francis hopes that we will continue to practice this virtue. Patty and Bubba Pizzitola, longtime associates at Corpus Christi Church in Houston, Texas, have been involved in the Life in the Eucharist ministry for over 25 years. What follows is an edited version of the very interactive workshop they offered.

Jim Brown

During his homily for a Lenten penitential service, Pope Francis announced an extraordinary jubilee to start at the end of 2015, dedicated to a theme close to the pontiff's heart: *mercy*.

"I am convinced that the whole Church will be able to find in this jubilee the joy of rediscovering and making fruitful the mercy of God, with which we are all called to give consolation to every man and every woman of our time," Francis said, and he entrusted the Holy Year to Mary, Mother of Mercy.

Mercy is a theme that is dear to Pope Francis. In his first Angelus address as the Bishop of Rome on March 17, 2013, he spoke of "feeling mercy. . . . This word changes everything. Mercy is the best thing we can feel: it changes the world. A little mercy makes the world less cold and more just. We need to understand properly this mercy of God, this merciful Father who is so patient."

And so, in this Jubilee Year of Mercy, what better way can we mirror Luke 6:36, "Be merciful as your Father is merciful" than in the sacrament of marriage and the relationships that flow from the sacrament!

We read on the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops that "the best way to counsel someone is by the witness of your life so that he or she can see God's love revealed in your actions."

I learned a powerful lesson recently about giving comfort and consolation. Bubba was hospitalized several months ago for a severe infection that resulted in surgery, leaving a large, open wound in his lower back. The wound required twice daily packings for several weeks. I have to be honest. I struggled at first with the thought of being the person who would care for him. What if I made a mistake?

The first time I saw the wound, I felt physical pain and a deep sadness; not for me, but for him. What must this be like for him? That night I came home, poured a glass of wine, and prayed to God for strength. I realized that this was a true test of our marital vows: "For better or worse, in sickness and in health. . . ." This was mercy. And I remembered how loving and merciful Bubba was with his mom when she was dying and how I realized then that this could be me someday. If he was merciful to his mom, I knew how he would be with me.

From that moment, my burden was lifted. Now that this has passed, I realized that our relationship experienced a new kind of intimacy, one of trust, mercy, and compassion.

So we offer this: treat all your relationships with mercy and compassion. Be a good listener, and don't be afraid to weep with and for those you love. Tears wash away pain and are viable signs of our caring. Remember Jesus when he was told Lazarus was dead. "He wept."

As many of you know, two of the toughest things to do in any relationship are to forgive and to bear wrongs patiently. They are probably the most misunderstood of all the works of mercy. Why is that? Why is it so hard to say three words, "I am sorry" and to open ourselves to forgive? Perhaps it's because as humans we don't have God's limitless mercy and compassion.

So when we run into those old hurts and grudges that can erupt sometimes in any marriage, remember: actions often speak louder than words. And "I love you" and a warm embrace can heal a broken heart.

Patty and Bubba Pizzitola