



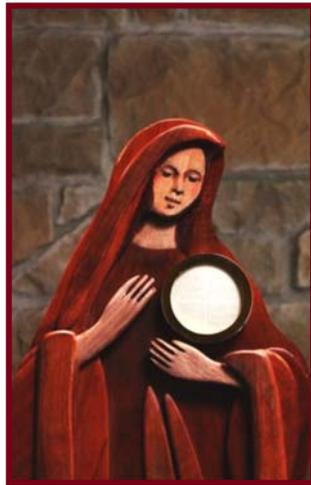
CONNECTIONS

Celebrating Our Eucharistic Partnership in the Eymardian Family

SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 9

A Preaching Mission in Fort Worth



Mother of the Eucharist Monstrance at Saint Andrew Church

This past February we received a request from Father Jim Gigliotti, TOR, the pastor of Saint Andrew Church in Fort Worth, Texas, for a religious of the Congregation to preach on adoration one weekend in the spring. He was in the process of building a new Adoration Chapel for the parish. Matching schedules with the parish calendar and who might be available turned out to be a challenge. Eventually, Father Paul Bernier, SSS, went out this month to preach at all the Masses. Readers of this newsletter know how extensively Father Paul has written on the subject of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, adoration.

In a follow-up phone call with Father Jim, I learned that Father Paul was well received by the parishioners of Saint Andrew's and more than 80 people signed up to join hundreds of other parishioners who weekly pray in the Sacred Heart Adoration Chapel. He was very pleased, for this was one of his goals in having an "outsider" preach on a devotion which has been close to Father Jim's heart throughout his whole life as a religious priest.

In a conversation with Father Paul, he mentioned a most interesting statue in the adoration chapel that held the sacred host. I went on the Saint Andrew's website to search it out. Once I saw it, I had to find out from Father Jim about its background and why he used it in place of a traditional monstrance. He wrote me immediately the following response (edited for brevity):

"Twenty-five years ago, I was involved with Rachel's Vineyard, a ministry of Priests for Life for healing after an abortion. I saw in their supervisor's notebook a picture of the Mother of the Eucharist Monstrance. I was captivated for many reasons!

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"We are inspired by the teachings and example of Saint Peter Julian Eymard, 'outstanding Apostle of the Eucharist.' He responded to the needs of the people of his time by proclaiming God's love manifested in a special way in Christ's gift in the Eucharist. He encouraged the faithful to share, as associated members, in the charism and the mission of the religious Congregations he founded."

Rule of Life for Associates, 3

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A Preaching Mission in Fort Worth (*Continued*)

“I called the Pennsylvania couple who made these. They said they only made them for RV. I told them I was beginning Eucharistic adoration and was seeking to buy one for our adoration oratory, but if these were limited to RV, I understood. An hour later, the lady called and said she was inspired to make an exception since we were going to use this always. So she sent me the one she was carving. It is still being used at that parish after many years.

“Then I moved to this city parish, large and in need of an infusion of Catholic spirituality. Going on the website to find this, it seems the couple who made these were now in their mid-80s and ailing. Their daughter does the painting impression of our Lady’s face. There were three available for purchase, but now they were much more expensive. Nearly two-thousand dollars. With the help of benefactors, I bought two — one for our new oratory, the other we presented to the Newman Center at Texas Christian University, two miles from our church. They have adoration there on occasion and were much in need of a decent monstrance.

“I have since found out that the makers are no longer able to carve these statues, but I located some on the Ziglar website, a religious goods vendor for churches.

“The whole theology and spirituality of the Mother of the Eucharist speaks volumes to our people, particularly when one preaches and teaches about her role in salvation history. The sign speaks! And this one very much does. Women and mothers are particularly drawn to this monstrance. I have found it is quite a healing experience when our people sit or kneel and let their souls be touched by the Lord and our Mother.”

I thanked Father Jim for sharing this story and told him that our readers would very much appreciate it, given the legacy of Saint Peter Julian Eymard.

Jim Brown

Additional News of Deaths in the Eymardian Family

It recently came to our attention that two Associates of the Blessed Sacrament passed away, both from Saint Vincent de Paul Church in Holiday, Florida.

Dalisay Lustre died on April 13 following open heart surgery. She was born in Davao, Philippines. She is survived by her husband Oscar Sr., three adult children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Dalisay made her Promise Commitment on June 7, 2013. She served in several parish ministries: an Extraordinary Eucharistic Minister and a lector, and she was a member of the Divine Mercy Cenacle.

Angel Manalo passed away on June 4, 2019. He was one of the original associates at Saint Vincent de Paul, making his Promise Commitment on December 9, 2012. Angel was a loving husband to his wife and fellow associate Ampy, a father, grandfather, and friend. His many parish involvements included being a daily Mass server, a member of the Divine Mercy Cenacle, and serving meals in the Metropolitan Ministries program.



May their souls and the souls of all Associates of the Blessed Sacrament who have passed away in these last seven years, rest in peace!

Information provided by Associate Gloria Jung

New Associates at Saint Stephen's

A group of men and women made their Promise Commitment as Associates of the Blessed Sacrament during Mass on Sunday, September 22, in Winter Springs, Florida.

The journey began July 24, 2018, with a *Come and See* reception for members of Saint Stephen's who had expressed a desire to learn more about becoming an Associate of the Blessed Sacrament Congregation. Twenty-nine began the twelve-month discernment and formation program with the first session on September 12, 2018.

The majority of the sessions were taught by Father George Dunne, SSS, while Jim Brown, the Director of the Center for Eucharistic Evangelizing, presented Session IV, "Historical Development of the Aggregation," and associate Joe Pankowiecki presented a teaching on Saint Peter Julian Eymard's life and mission during Session II. As the monthly gatherings continued, the candidates participated in rich discussions and looked forward to attending each meeting.



Twenty-six adults, including six couples participated in the Mass and Commitment Ceremony. Father Norman Pelletier, SSS, past-Superior General and Provincial Superior, and Father George concelebrated, with associate and Deacon Jim Ferruzzi assisting. The celebration included new associates who are Eucharistic Ministers serving in that role and new associate Mary Horne as the lector. Several of the existing 18 Saint Stephen associates were in attendance.

All may remember that Father Norman had brain surgery in April of this year in New York City. We were thrilled to have him join us and honored that Saint Stephen's was his first official long-distance travel destination to conduct the ceremony. Father Norman was the homilist at each of the weekend Masses and was welcomed by many parishioners who knew him from previous visits for the Life in the Eucharist Teams and traveling on two annual pilgrimages several years ago with Father George and members of the parish family.

New associate Rosalie Beckman shared: "After many years of walking my path and asking God for his guidance, I feel I've finally reached a prayed-for milestone. I look forward to the continued prayer, spiritual companionship and Eucharistic love that comes with this part of my earthly journey as an Associate of the Blessed Sacrament."

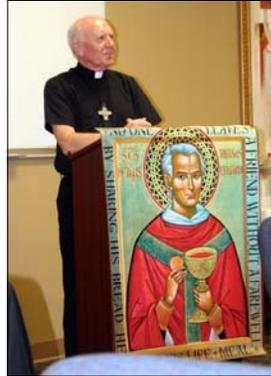
Longtime members of Saint Stephen, Sylvette and Scott Wittmer, stated, "Becoming Associates of the Blessed Sacrament is amazing and especially a spiritual-uplifting experience of our Catholic journey. The Eucharist is such an important piece of the paschal mystery, and through this journey we were able to connect to the Blessed Sacrament and gain a closer relationship with Jesus himself. We could not be more blessed by having Father George as our teacher, guide, and mentor. What a treat to have Father Norman present for our promise made to the Blessed Sacrament Congregation as associates!"

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New Associates at Saint Stephen's (*Continued*)

Ann Newhouse, who leads the evening Bible Study at Saint Stephen, said: “This was an incredible moment in my faith life journey of living a life centered on the Eucharist. It was a divine experience beginning with the beautiful Mass, gathering around the altar to make our Covenant Promise, receiving our crosses, then Communion from fellow new associates who are also Eucharistic Ministers, culminating with a delicious celebration luncheon of food, fellowship, and family members who supported us along the way. This yearlong journey has deepened our understanding of the Holy Scriptures, Eucharist, and the spirituality of Saint Peter Julian Eymard. I look forward to continuing to grow and serve during my faith journey by focusing on the Eucharist as the center of my life as an associate.”



A festive luncheon was held following the Mass and Commitment Ceremony with 55 in attendance in the Parish Conference Center. A day filled with the Holy Spirit as we gathered around the Table of the Eucharist, then the table of fellowship as one body in Christ!

Associate Board Member Diana McGinty

A Historical Note

During this month of September, 26 women and men were received as Associates of the Blessed Sacrament at Saint Stephen Church in the Diocese of Orlando, Florida and a group of approximately one hundred women and men from Prince of Peace Church in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, Texas, were received as new associates. They join some 280-plus members of the Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament. This is reason for great joy in the Eymardian Family here in the United States. It calls to mind an event that took place in September 1863.

The origins of the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament began with a small group of women from Lyons, France, who were lay members of the Third Order of Mary directed by then-Marist religious Father Eymard. Led by Marguerite Guillot, a number of the women moved to Paris in 1858 to form the nucleus of a sisters' community that Father Eymard envisioned after founding the men's community in 1856. They assisted Father Eymard in the ministry of preparing young people for their First Holy Communion (cf. volume 6, number 4).

In 1858, Father Eymard received a special blessing from Pope Pius IX to found a religious community of women whose center of life was the Blessed Sacrament. He stated their purpose in this way: that “the Holy Eucharist is your unique and universal purpose, guiding and dominating everything” (quoted on page 200 in *Peter Julian Eymard*, written by Father André Guitton, SSS). But the women could only make private vows since the association still had no canonical status.

In September 1863, Father Eymard was in Angers, France. He had written a draft of Constitutions for a women's community devoted to the Eucharist. He then appealed to the local bishop to receive the community. On September 12, the bishop approved the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament. It took until May for Father Eymard to find a house for the new community. This took place in May 1864. The Society of the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament was officially given canonical status.

Jim Brown