

SSS INTERNATIONAL

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SSS Generalate
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Session on the vow of personality La Mure 25/06 - 4/07 2018

We had decided to make this retreat at La Mure as proposed by Father Manuel Barbiero in order to deepen our understanding of the “gift of self” so dear to Father Eymard. I call this a “retreat” since these 10 days were not only a time of formation, nor even a simple session on the “gift of self”, but a valuable time to remain “at the Lord’s feet and to listen to his word” (Lk 10:39).

It was a valuable time in which we have allowed the Holy Spirit to lead us, but also a special place because we have experienced these 10 day in Father Eymard’s house. We were moved to celebrate the Eucharist and to pray in the room in which the saint spent his last days, entrusting ourselves as well to the Mother of God.

The following persons gathered with Father Manuel Barbiero: Fathers Claude Taffet from Canada, Gabriele di Nicolò and Guglielmo Rota from Italy, Richard Mouanda and Carlos Dos Santos from Congo Brazzaville, Mateus Almeida from Mozambique, who (to our great joy) came to La Mure only 2 months ago, as well as Edith Grimaud (a lay associate) and her husband Jean-Claude from Grenoble, and Valérie Giovanni from Lyons.

All together we read again the Great Retreat of Rome in order to try to understand all the insights, concerns and above all the path along which Father Eymard was led towards making the gift of his personality on 21 March 1865.

From our first day of the retreat, Father Eymard’s main concern became our own: “**Lord, what do you want me to do?**” (NR 44,4) This question enabled each one to experience all the interior dispositions of surrender that it implied. For to be a listener to God’s will and to welcome it into one’s heart entails understanding that one has first of all to “renounce one’s own will,” renounce self-love, renounce one’s self-assurance, inner securities, cut the moorings to go forward, to be freed from everything hindering the Holy Spirit from entering into our hearts and the paralysis in our attitudes.

Like Peter-Julian Eymard, we experienced all the difficulty, all the deep sadness of this path of renunciation. We were the children of Abraham addressed by the Lord: “Go! Leave your country...” And yet, the saint told us, it is only by being stripped of the old man in oneself that we would find peace and freedom (cf. NR 44,14).

After that, the second question that Father Eymard asked himself became also ours: “**how to get there?**”... how reach this kind of renunciation? His response springs up as a way: “**BY LOVE!**” (NR 44,62)

Following the footsteps of the Saint, we went to the rock of Saint-Romans, where Father Eymard discovered God’s tenderness. We took time to be silent in contemplating the wonders that God has done in our lives and to recall all the acts of love he bestowed on us. Because God first loves us (cf. 1 Jn 4:19), contemplating his infinite love stirred up in us gratitude, trust and the desire to return his love. Our love was thus but the response (a poor stammering) to God’s love.

Therefore, what we call “renunciation” or “stripping” of self the first day became an offering of love, a gift of the whole of one’s person. For the characteristic of love consists in giving, giving everything up to the gift of self, up to the giving of my interior, up to the renunciation of one own will...

Thus stripped of self, our heart was able to welcome Christ fully and to live **in communion** with him. This wonderful communion of love between our humanity and his divinity (some of us would speak joyously of a hypostatic union!) found its full realization in the Eucharist. It is there that Christ comes to be incarnate in us... to live in us! He is then able to whisper to our heart what he wants us to do: to love as he loves and to celebrate love... each one in his own cenacle. For indeed, Father Eymard understood this well: that Christ does not want to be enclosed in a tabernacle, in a cenacle nor even in our churches, but he longs to be incarnated in us, in our lives, our families, our communities, our workplaces. The Eucharist must be lived everywhere... in every house, in every street, everywhere that love is given and shared. This is for everyone to discover the cenacle where he is awaited, in order to celebrate the sacrament of love!



Behind: Mr Jean-Claude, fr. Guglielmo, fr. Mateus, fr. Carlos, Mrs Valérie
Front: fr. Richard, fr. Claude, fr. Manuel, fr. Gabriele, Mrs Edith

During these 10 days we shared our doubts, our hopes, our joys, our laughter, our sufferings... our lives. Perhaps even some tears of being moved were shed here or there. But... this was also time of the world cup and France has brilliantly defeated Argentine! In this gathering made up from a great diversity of culture, age, life, we shared a joyous brotherhood. Together, we gave thanks, celebrated love and broke bread... and this was not only in the chapel!

Finally, how not to thank Father Manuel for his flawless organisation, his thorough teaching, his patience, his kindness and the solicitude with which he sought to enable each one to move forward along his or her path of faith?

Thanks also is due to all the lay persons of the association of "The friends of Father Eymard in Matheysine", who discreetly ensured that we did not lack anything, as well as to our friendly cook, Séverine, a true cordon bleu!

We hope that all those who will read this account may be able to experience this time of grace in the very places where Father Eymard lived, and to hear also in the silence of their hearts the response to the question that all of us asked ourselves: "Lord, what do you want me to do?"

VALÉRIE GIOANNI

"I was like a bee in a field full of flowers... I collected my honey and shared it with others" (Father Claude Taffet)



Pilgrimage in the footsteps of Father Eymard 11-12 July 2018 Grenoble – La Mure – Our Lady of La Salette

After our pilgrimages in recent years to Lyons, Our Lady of Laus, Our Lady of Osier, Chatte, Saint-Romans, Ars, where we walked in Father Eymard's footsteps, Father Manuel Barbiero, who is in charge of the Eymard Centre of spirituality at La Mure, suggested to us to follow St Peter-Julian Eymard in the last days of his life. It is in fact 150 years this year that the saint said his last "yes" to God on 1 August 1868 at La Mure.

Three symbolic places were chosen to live this pilgrimage: the chapel of adoration in Grenoble, where Father Eymard celebrated his last Mass; the shrine of Our Lady of La Salette, which was so important in his life and which he was planning to revisit in July 1868; and, of course, La Mure where he breathed his last breath.

Guided by Father Manuel we were a group comprising thirteen pilgrims who share these two days, coming from the Matheysine, but also from the regions of Grenoble and Lyons.

On the morning of Tuesday 11 July we gathered in Grenoble at the chapel of adoration in Voltaire Street for the celebration of Mass, in which all together about thirty persons participated since some people of Grenoble joined us. This place is where Father Eymard, who had left his community in Paris under his doctor's orders to rest at La Mure, wanted despite his enormous fatigue to celebrate what would be his last Mass. The liturgy of this 11 July 2018 commemorated St Benedict, a patron of Europe. In Father Eymard's time this feast was held on 21 March, a day on which Father Eymard made the gift of his personality to God during the Great Retreat of Rome in 1865. After Communion we meditated on the notes he had written on that day: "The Cross of the saints."



After he had celebrated Mass, Father Eymard took the stagecoach for La Mure, where he arrived exhausted, suffering from a cerebral congestion. He reposed in his family house looked after by his sisters during his last days. On coming here on Tuesday afternoon, we followed Father Eymard's journey towards his Easter by reading in the Eymard chapel and near his tomb the accounts of witnesses regarding this last stage of his life and extracts of his letters that led us to meditate on the mystery of death.

October 1846 from his sister Marianne's letter to him a month following the event, he became immediately convinced about the truth of the story of the little shepherds and committed himself to defend it. Although he waited until 1852 for the official recognition before going there, he later visited the holy mountain more than a dozen times. This is because he had chosen Mary as his Mother and always walked hand in hand with her after his mother's death. Moreover, the Virgin's message about calling for conversion seemed directly in line with the reparative



Eucharistic adoration that was being established at that time in Paris and the devotion centred on the Eucharist that was cultivated at the place of the apparition. A final instance of the importance of this apparition for him is seen in the fact that Father Eymard died clasping in his hand a statuette of the Virgin of La Salette.

As pilgrims of the 21st century, we took part in the Eucharist in the basilica, listened to the account of the Virgin's message given by Father Michel, an account that this missionary of La Salette presented in a lively way, relating it to our present world, and we meditated on this message in the splendid environment chosen by the Virgin to reveal it to us.

On Wednesday, 12 July, we went up to the shrine of Our Lady of La Salette, a place so dear to Father Eymard. After having learnt of the Virgin's apparition in

These two days were rich from every point of view: as regards what we discovered, deep sharing, friendship and also little surprises such as that of a young pilgrim, Pierre-Alexis, who having set off on foot from Grenoble

to the shrine, passed by La Mure, and shared a part of what we experienced to our great joy.

Here are some words of what one of our group wanted to share. St Peter-Julian Eymard is “a friend,” “someone like us,” “a model,” but also “someone extraordinary,” “someone who encourages us...” His message is simple and contemporary: “The Eucharist contains all God’s love for us;” “We experienced an extract of what life means;” “we lived with Mary at the foot of the Cross, where she is our Mother.”

MARIE-THÉRÈSE JOUBERT



Launching the Programme of Preparation for Perpetual Profession (P4)

This is how it began, the tone being set and the gong being sounded, when while presiding at the celebration of the Eucharist on Sunday 15 July 2018 with a light breeze in the parish of St Peter Claver of Bacongo in Brazzaville Father Brel Daouda Malela, the Regional Superior of the Cardinal Emile Biayenda, opened the Programme of Preparation for Perpetual Profession (P4) by sending some disciples out on mission.

In his words of introduction by way of introducing the people of God about the remarkable unusual presence of the scholastics at the altar, all vested in white, Father Brel said: “(...) *having completed their academic formation, these young brothers are about to plunge into eymardian spirituality before entering the pastoral field. For three months they will experience the riches of God’s real and active presence in the Holy Eucharist in order to become through following our Father Founder diligent and committed disciples-apostles. This is a difficult exercise that only faith refines and strengthens (...) so that the missionary flame be ceaselessly enkindled in them.*”

In his homily, the Regional Superior shared his understanding about mission, which constantly and always pertains to the mission of Christ, who “*entrusts his saving activity on earth to his own, to his Church, in every era and place so that it may be perpetuated. This mission in every aspect, he continued saying, consists in becoming converted, to change one’s life, one’s attitudes. To proclaim the Gospel to others, the meaning of mission, is our mission. But we have to fulfil this mission in ourselves first, before carrying it out to*

others. For, it is up to us first of all to be convinced of what Christ tells us and what we must do to explain it better to others and to convince them.”



To be convinced about the mission! This is what the sixteen young men will be endeavouring to live in the course of three months, by means of mediation, inner silence, being immersed – as one would put it – in order to emerge from it well equipped to “fight the good fight” entailed by the mission.

The places of origin of these sixteen young brothers are as follows: 4 from Congo Brazzaville, 4 from Mozambique, 3 from Senegal, 3 from Uganda and 2 from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Their director of the P4 is Father Jean Jacques Nkodia and the treasurer is Father Rodolphe Mboya.

We look forward to singing the *Te Deum* enthusiastically at the end of their formation. Let us support them by our prayers.

FATHER JEAN DE DIEU PASSY, SSS
SECRETARY





BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

Appointment of Father Martin Tine, sss Bishop of Kaolack (Senegal)



On July 25, 2018, the General Curia SSS received the news that the Holy Father had appointed Father Martin Tine, Bishop of Kaolack (Senegal), currently Vicar General of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament.

Father Martin was born on September 16, 1966 in Koudiadiène, Senegal. He made his first profession in the Congregation on November 24, 1991 and received priestly ordination on July 6, 1996.

He served in various offices: director of the scholastics, superior of the community of Dakar, president of the African Conference, to then be elected superior of the Region *Notre Dame d'Afrique* from 2006 to 2011. He was finally elected general consultant on May 18, 2011 and was confirmed in this office on June 20, 2017.

On behalf of the whole Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament and the Eymardian Family, we extend our sincere congratulations to Father Martin.

What a blessing for the people of Senegal!

The Congregation suffers a loss but also shows its generosity towards the Church.

May God help him to be a Eucharistic bishop: open to the gift of self and the sacrifice of his own life, and may St. Peter Julian Eymard be his protector in this holy ministry.

With the assurance of our prayers.

Father Eugênio BARBOSA MARTINS, sss
Superior general



Saturday 1 August 1868

At seven o'clock Fr. Chanuet told Father that he would go to get him Communion. Fr. didn't seem happy. He would have liked the Mass. Fr. Chanuet was afraid to go against his conscience and Father accepted this new sacrifice. He received his Viaticum. It was seven hours before departure!

After Communion, Father got up again to let his bed be made.

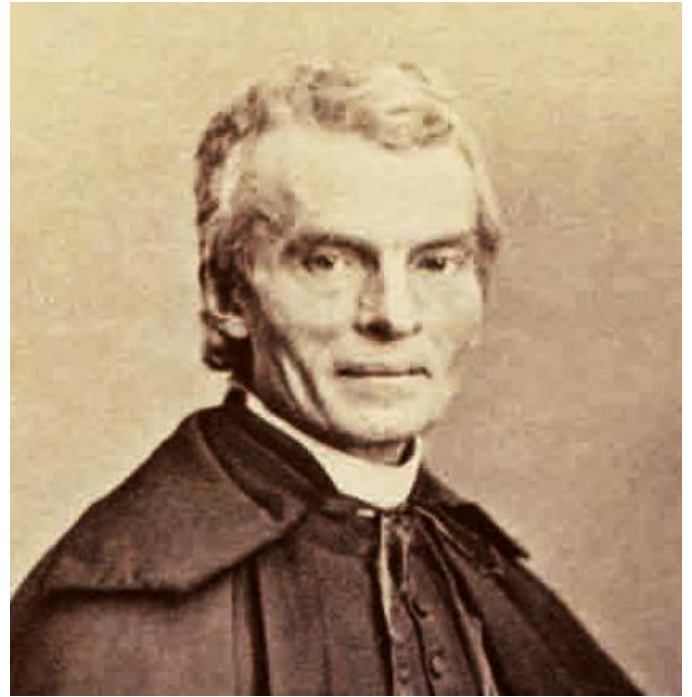
At ten o'clock, he embraced his sister saying to her: "So sister, good-bye it is the end!". Around eleven o'clock, the mustard plasters applied to his legs were no longer holding. Life was leaving him little by little. The blood drained from the extremities to the heart. With Father, probably more than with anyone else, the heart was life. The life fled there at this supreme moment, like in a last retreat.

At midday, they thought it was already finished. A fainting attack seemed like death. It lasted a few minutes. So Fr. Chanuet recited the prayers of the dying for Father. Father joined in them. All those present came to kneel at the foot of the bed. Father blessed them one by one. When he had finished this, he was still looking for someone, he looked from side to side and seemed to be calling. Then he fell asleep again. - Melle Thomas had always believed that it was me that he was looking for. He would have thought I had come back, or had not remembered that he had sent me to La Salette.

Coming up to two o'clock, Fr. Chanuet went to the Telegraph. Some signs of greater prostration did not escape Melle Thomas. She sent someone after Fr. Chanuet. Father wanted to expectorate. Melle Thomas lifted him a little on the pillow. The breath left him. It was finished. He fell back lifeless, or rather, he fell asleep gently. His hand was searching for his handkerchief to spit out. His eyes were fixed on a picture of the crucifixion.

Fr. Chanuet had arrived back a few seconds beforehand and had time to give Father a final blessing in *articulo mortis* from the door of the room. It was about half past two.

I forgot to mention that around midday, when the prayers for the dying were being said, Father seemed a bit tired. Melle Thomas showed him an image of the Sacred Heart with the litanies, asking him if he wanted them to be recited. Yes, said Father, and followed all the invocations with a constant interest and a piety. This was his last prayer here below. - One day Father had said to me "Ah! I owe everything to the devotion to the Sacred Heart, it saved me". And Jesus came to offer sight of His Heart to this dear dying man to ease his passage and to make him sit down in this boat safe from shipwreck!



It was on Saturday 1 August at half past two that Father passed away in the Lord. It was the feast of St. Peter-in-chains his patron and the time of the first Vespers of Our Lady of the Angels.

Extracted from "The last days in the life of St. Peter Julian Eymard", by Fr Albert Tesnière



The death of a brother will be celebrated as a Paschal event filled with hope. We shall faithfully carry out the prescribed prayers for our deceased (RL 13).

N. 1543 - Brother Alberto MEDINA VILLAROYA

Province: O. Lady of the Blessed Sacrament
 Community: Madrid-S.de Baranda, Spain
 Death: 15 July 2018
 Age: 91
 Profession: 65

