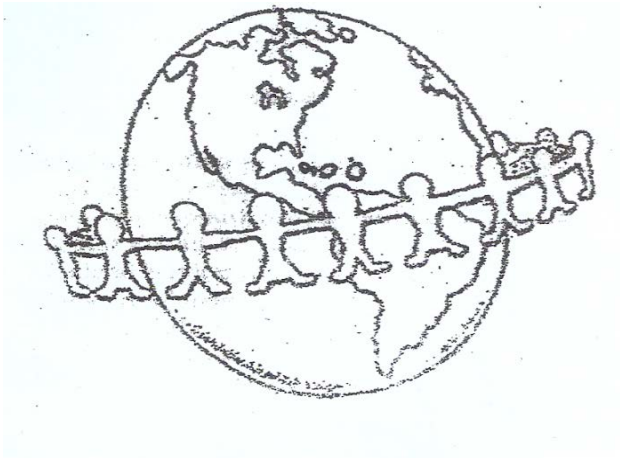




Vinculum

Newsletter of



**The Secular Institute
Servitium Christi**

EASTER 2018

25 March 2018

Dear Members,

Cordial greetings on Palm, or Passion Sunday, as we journey with Jesus on His entry to Jerusalem, and His road to Calvary and beyond.

In St. Luke's Gospel (19:41), we read how, as He approached Jerusalem, Jesus was overcome with sorrow and wept, not for what He was about to suffer there, but for the rejection by the people of what was being offered to them, and of the consequences for them of this rejection. St. Matthew also tells us of the concern Jesus felt for the people of Jerusalem (Mt. 23:37) and how He longed to gather them "as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings". The tumultuous welcome He received on His arrival must therefore have been a pleasant surprise to Him, and have given Him a brief flicker of hope that perhaps people had come to their senses and would indeed allow Him to gather them. As we know, however, the hope was all too soon to be extinguished.

The worldwide experience of secularisation and consumerisation of society has, no doubt, often caused us also to feel like weeping. The era in which we live has its own particular challenges. This is the world in which God has called us to be His presence. As the French Mystic, Madeleine Delbrel put it, "...We are surrounded today by agnostics and unbelievers.... They are our 'Neighbour' ". Our concerns may be centred on our own country, on the Church, on the world at large, or closer to home, on our own family. This is the world in which we have been called to live, and to bring Christ's presence by the example of our lives, knowing that He is weeping over us all.

St. John's Gospel tells how Jesus Himself gives us the words of encouragement we need to hear (Jn. 16:33) "In the world you will have trouble, but be brave: I HAVE CONQUERED THE WORLD". The week ahead brings us step by step with Jesus to the triumph of His resurrection. May we walk the road with Him in spirit, confident that He is with us as He promised and that our trials are a sharing in His trials.

As I write this Easter message, I have just returned from a visit to our Members in the Philippines, timed to coincide with the perpetual Profession of Vows by two Members. However, I do not wish to delay the issue of Vinculum, so I will defer reporting on the visit until the next issue. I therefore conclude by wishing each of you, together with your family and friends, all the joys and blessing of this holy Season, when we celebrate the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, and also the institution of the Eucharist, His fulfilment of His pledge to be with us always, yes, every step of the way.

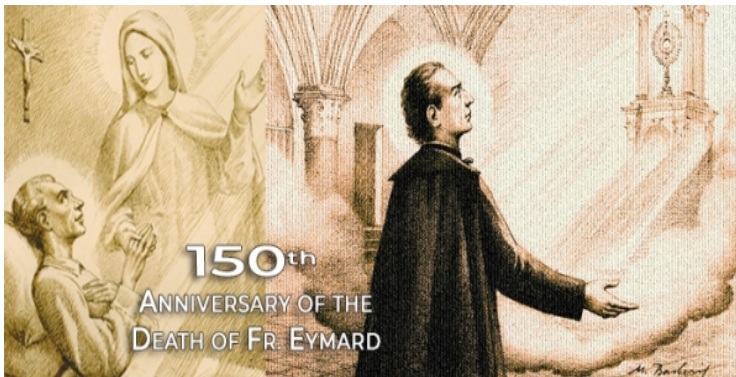
Love and Prayers

Mary Keane
General Directress

150° Anniversary of the Death Fr.Eymard

August 1868-2018

Father Eymard's Gift of Self



One of the important dates that notably marks the life of Saint Peter Julian Eymard, Apostle of the Eucharist, is March 21, 1865, when Father Eymard receives the Gift of self by the “Vow of his personality”. While he was searching always sincerely and courageously for the will of God concerning his life and his personal projects, Fr. Eymard planned to remain in Rome while waiting for a long-coming answer to his request to install an SSS community in the Cenacle of Jerusalem. In order to make this waiting time in Rome more valuable, with his coming and going to the Vatican as he awaited an answer, Fr. Eymard made the Great Retreat of Rome, from January 25 to March 30, 1865. The grace of God has its ways and surprises. When the human being is open and listening to this divine manifestation, it is possible that a response would come in a generous way.

In the daily celebration of the Eucharist and, in particular, through his deepening of the biblical texts of the liturgy of the Word, Fr. Eymard shapes his interior life, and, in a mirror of truth, arrives at the deepest roots of his existence. With courage, he becomes aware of his limitations and his sins, but also of the road that the Grace of God is realizing in him. In this laborious journey, he discovers the essential of his search: “the Inner Cenacle”. A new vision opens before him! Although frustrated in his request to obtain permission to install the Congregation in the Cenacle of Jerusalem, he is now reassured and he can contemplate the answer given by God himself: *it is not you who will abide in the Cenacle where the great Mystery of love was born, but it is I who will take possession of you as a living cenacle!* “It is Christ who lives in me!” Fr. Eymard attains a vital synthesis of this Pauline experience and opens for us, his spiritual sons and daughters, a sure means and a beautiful road of the Eucharistic life.

(Adapted from Father General Eugenio Barbosa Martin's introduction to "*Absque sui proprio*", *Eymard and the "Vow of Personality"* in *STUDIES ON THE ORIGINS OF THE CONGREGATIONS OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT* Vol. XI, 2015, Rome)

Published in **SSS Congregatio 150 Anniversary**

AN EXPECTED VISIT:

POPE FRANCIS IN CHILE

The Holy Father arrived in Santiago, Chile, on the afternoon of Monday, January 15. There were three days of multiple activities: meeting with the government authorities, with the imprisoned, the young, the consecrated life, the bishops, with the faithful of Santiago, Temuco (southern Chile) and Iquique (north of the country) from where he left for Peru on January 18.

Antonieta and María Angelica had the privilege of attending the Mass for Peace and Justice, held at the O'Higgins Park. Other 400,000 faithful were in the mass at the park.

Pope Francis centered his homily on the Gospel of Matthew 5. The first words of the text of the Beatitudes, "Seeing the crowd", put the emphasis on the purpose of his visit: meet people to listen to them, as he did Jesus "The first attitude of Jesus is to see, to see the face of his people. These faces set in motion the visceral love of God. It was not ideas or concepts that moved Jesus ... it was the faces, it was the people; it is the life that cries out to the Life that the Father wants to transmit to us". (Pope Francis).

He told us about "sowing peace by proximity, among neighbors". By means of leaving home and looking at faces, by going to meet the one who is having a bad time, who has not been treated as a person, as a worthy son of this land.

In the afternoon, together with Patricia, we attended the Encounter with the Consecrated Life, in the Cathedral of Santiago. This time, using the relationship between Peter and the first community of the Church as an image, he highlighted three moments in such community: when crushed, when filled with mercy and finally, when transfigured.

The Chilean Church has suffered pain caused by cases of abuse of minors." Painful because of the harm and sufferings of the victims and their families, who saw the trust they had placed in the Church's ministers betrayed"

They are "moments of turbulence" -said the Pope- as those moments of "*confusion and disturbance*" in the life of the disciples" after the death of Jesus.

Peter lived the pain of having betrayed Jesus, but after His resurrection, He called him and questioned him about love. "The Lord treated him with mercy." In the same way, we can remind all the times when the Lord has treated us with mercy. The consecrated person finds the signs of Resurrection in his own wounds. He is the one who can see in the wounds of the world the strength of Resurrection. He or she is who, in the style of Jesus, will not meet brothers or sisters with reproach and condemnation. "

“Peter learned from Jesus that his wounds could be a resurrection path. To know both, Peter disheartened and Peter transfigured, is an invitation to pass from being a Church of the unhappy and disheartened to a Church that serves all those people who are unhappy and disheartened in our midst. A Church capable of serving her Lord in those who are hungry, imprisoned, thirsting, homeless, naked and sick... (Mt 25:35). A service that has nothing to do with a welfare mentality or an attitude of paternalism, but rather with the conversion of hearts. The problem is not feeding the poor, or clothing the naked or visiting the sick, but rather recognizing that the poor, the naked, the sick, the prisoners and the homeless have the dignity to sit at our table, to feel “at home” among us, to feel part of a family. This is the sign that the kingdom of heaven is in our midst. This is the sign of a Church wounded by sin, shown mercy by the Lord, and made prophetic by his call.”

When Pope Francis arrived in the *Papamóvil*, his special car for the occasion, he surprised us by his fatherly and close figure. On two opportunities, while smiling and blessing, he passed very close to us. It was a great joy to see him so near.

On January 17, the Pope traveled to the lands of Araucanía (southern Chile).

Emelina and Maria, made a great pilgrimage, departing from Nueva Imperial to Temuco on January 16, at 23.30 hrs, and from there they walked for 6.5 km to arrive at the Maquehue Airport, the meeting place.

Here is the Maria’s story:

"The journey was made with prayers and songs. Upon arriving at the assigned site, we saw people from different places, including Argentina. The night passed very quickly and we saw the first rays of the sun. All ages attending people showed great enthusiasm and faith. Only God is able to gather thousands of people without feeling tired.

The Holy Mass, for the Progress of the Peoples, began in a climate of great recollection, the participation of the people was impressive. Oh, how one lives the faith when one feels the presence of Jesus Christ in the midst of his people!

Pope Francis started the homily greeting the people in *Mapudungun*, the language of the aborigines: ***Mari mari*** (Good morning), he said. To the ones who have never been in Chile, he referred quite poetically to this part of the country: “I thank God for allowing me to visit this beautiful part of our continent, the Araucanía. It is a land blessed by the Creator with immense and fertile green fields, with forests full of impressive araucarias – the fifth “praise” offered by Gabriela Mistral to this Chilean land. This landscape lifts us up to God, and it is easy to see his hand in every creature”.

(It is necessary to clarify that the Region of Araucanía lives very difficult situations, derived from long years of conflict for the legitimate ownership of the lands claimed by the original peoples). That is why the homily was based on the text of the Gospel of St. John, in which Jesus prays to the Father “that they may all be one” (Jn 17:21). “At a crucial moment in his own life, he stops to plea for unity. In his heart, he knows that one of the greatest threats for his disciples and for all mankind will be division and confrontation, the oppression of some by others.”

This unit, called by Jesus, is a gift that must be asked for insistently but attentive to possible temptations that may appear, which are *the false synonyms and the weapons of unity*.

False synonyms refer to confusing unity with uniformity. Jesus does not ask his Father that all be equal, identical since the unit is not born nor will be born to neutralize or silence the differences. The richness of a land is born of each party being encouraged to share its wisdom with others.

Another temptation may come from the consideration of what the weapons of the unit are. It is neither achieved with "beautiful" agreements that are never performed, so frustrating hope, nor based on the violence and destruction that ends up taking human lives

"That is why we pray: Lord, make us artisans of unity" and, as it is the voice of God through his representative on earth, we must try to live it at all times and in all circumstances of our life and "overcome all kinds of violence".

It was a Eucharist in which we felt that time flew.

I thank God for having lived this great experience where faith, hope and charity come true in young people, children, adults, the elderly, and the sick.

May the visit and the Pope's Message allow all Chileans to be grateful to God the Father for what we are and have in our Homeland and be more united among us. "

The visit culminated in Iquique, "a land scorched by the driest desert in the world" - where the Pope lived the Chilean religious religiosity and crowned the image of Our Lady of Carmen, Queen and Mother of Chile.

There, he called us to transform our communities and our hearts into a living sign of her presence, which is joyful and festive, because we have experienced that God is with us, because we have learned to host him in our hearts.

A beautiful experience certainly that leaves us the task of rereading his homilies and messages to continue building a true community of brothers and sisters.

Maria Valdebenito
D.R.

María Angélica Núñez

Servitium Christi in Vietnam



Responding to the call of God, on First Sunday morning of Advent (December 3, 2017) ten sisters of the Servitium Christi, a secular Institute in Vietnam, came together with other sisters of the Institute, with their friends and relatives. They met around the table of fellowship at the small chapel of the SSS Fathers located in the parish of Hai Duong belonging to Xuan Loc diocese, Dong Nai province, Vietnam, to celebrate the Eucharist and pray for the candidates who definitely engaged themselves in a way of life according to Eucharistic Spirituality promoted by Saint Peter Julian Eymard to the service of the Church and God's people.

Among the ten sisters, there were six candidates for perpetual profession and four candidates for first profession. Father Joseph Phan Ngoc Tro, Provincial Superior of the Province of the Vietnamese Martyrs presided the celebration. Miss Mary Keane came from Dublin, Ireland, as General Directress to witness and to accept the vows of the candidates. Father Norman Pelletier sss, former Superior general of the Blessed Sacrament Congregation and Father Anthony Schueller sss, Provincial Superior of the Province of Saint Ann, from New York and Cleveland, were concelebrants together with other SSS Fathers and some diocesan priests.

IN MEMORIAM

Mary Williams

She was born on January 14, 1931. She made her final vows on December 08, 1996.

She was the first member in Australia.

We can read in her letter about the beginning:

“The Blessed Sacrament is the centre of my life. My aim is to be like Him in His Eucharistic presence of LOVE. The Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus and Mother of the Church, is our model for consecration and total giving of oneself”

When I was a Sister in the Mercy Order, I was very fortunate to be exposed to the wonders of the Eucharistic experience. However, as time went by, I became convinced that I was not cut out to be a member of a religious congregation, and my attention moved towards Eucharistic spirituality in a lay Institute.

In 1984 I met a Blessed Sacrament priest at St. Francis Church, Melbourne and told him of my desire of joining a secular institute with Eucharistic spirituality. Father said that we could start or begin one and advised me to go to the Blessed Sacrament Sister's monthly day retreat. It was there that I met Sister Catherine Perko SSS. At that time she was Mother General's assistant and it was she who informed me about Servitium Christi. She said, “Mary, you are the right person at the right place at the right time”.

Sister Catherine then directed me to the Directress General of Servitium Christi. After that contact, I was interviewed by Fr. Dekker SSS, the Provincial, and Fr. J. Dirks, the Leader of the Blessed Sacrament Congregation at St. Francis Church, Melbourne. I was unknown to them at that time. During my interview, they told me that nothing could replace personal contact, so it would be necessary for me to go to Holland. For me personally, it was a big surprise, a big ask for me because I had never been out of Australia and had lived a fairly sheltered life.

While the priest were waiting for me answer, I thought in my heart: What would Our Lady say? So with a loud clear voice, I said, “Yes, I will go to Holland”.

In 1985 I spent some months in Holland and time in Germany and England. I was interviewed by the Servitium Christi members and by the General of the Blessed Sacrament Congregation, Fr. Tony McSweeney sss. What a joy it was to see a Servitium Christi member and a priest go to the map of the world and put a pin on Australia when I was accepted.”

Upon returning to Melbourne, Mary had to face the challenge of starting Servitium Christi there. In December 1996, she made her perpetual vows in the presence of Elaine Kozlowski, then a member of the General Council of Servitium Christi, and Fr. Dirks. SSS. Afterwards, the three of them asked Bishop Pell for the official acceptance of Servitium Christi in Melbourne.

Fr. Dirks was the Provincial of the sss Congregation and appointed Fr. Sullivan as the Spiritual Assistant. Through him, she met Maria Argentina Lazzaro, the only member who is now in Australia.

We thank the Lord for Mary's life and her work for Servitium Christi. May Maria Argentina be blessed and strengthened and shall give us new vocations for Australia.

María Angélica Núñez

EUCARÍSTIC CONGRESS IN CHILE



The Church of Chile is dedicating this year 2018 to contemplate Jesus Christ, who in the Eucharist gives His life for the love of the Father and each one of us.

Its motto is from a phrase pronounced by Chilean St. Albert Hurtado: "What would Christ do in my place?" The question reflects the intimate relationship between the Eucharist and life. What would Christ do when facing people suffering

injustice, poverty and marginalization? What would Christ do in front of the families that are burdened, tired, broken? What would Christ do when looking at grandparents' loneliness and immigrants' uncertainty? Anyway, what would Christ do in the situations that we have to live every day? Undoubtedly, these questions challenge us all.

We find the answer in the Eucharist, in which we remember the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. What does Christ do? He is moved by the people who suffer, puts his life at the service of them, heals them, forgives them and communicates his full life. This is what the Christian life consists of, in doing what Christ does. In short, it is about being coherent with what we live in each Eucharist.

The logo is made up of the following signs:

1. Christ Cross: Sign of the event we celebrate in each Eucharist: Jesus gave his life for the love for the Father and for all of us: "There is no greater love than the one who gives his life for his friends". The cross is yellow because it announces the joy of the Resurrection.
2. The cross embraces the map of our country. It represents our Chilean land, including the mountains, the desert, the valleys and the sea; also, each of the people who live in it: children, young people, adults and grandparents, the whole

family, priests and consecrated people, believers and non-believers. In sum, all Chileans who carry burdens, fatigue, sufferings and pains on their backs, all the ones who need the balm of Christ's love, a love that heals and forgives.

3. The arms of Christ that rise from the cross to give us new life, hope, consolation and peace.
4. The hands of Risen Christ who takes bread, blesses it, breaks it and offers it to satisfy the hunger for peace, justice and reconciliation that we all have, and the desire to make of Chile a home for all.
5. The wounds of Christ that remind us that the Risen Lord also suffered and accompanies us in our pain, He is the bread of life that invites us to make of ourselves bread for others.
6. The phrase of the motto: What would Christ do in my place?
7. The whole image expresses what Christ does for us: He gives us his life so that we can all have it, and that is what he invites us to do for our neighbor. In this way, the image becomes a concrete answer to the question of the motto: "What would Christ do in my place?"

May this Eucharistic year bring many blessings to our Homeland and to our Institute.



In Buenos Aires, Argentina, the "XII Latin American Congress of Secular Institutes" will take place from July 17 to July 21, 2018.

The motto is *We are living by the Spirit* (Gal.5, 25) and the theme to be developed is " *We have been called to be salt and light in the midst of the world: Secular Consecrated, let's live our identity in depth.*"

We join this important event so that:

"Scattered like light and salt,
let's be living testimonies
of the value of fraternity and friendship
of the search for dialogue and encounter.

And with Mary, let's announce with life
that it is possible to be men and women in Christ
related to the world and others without excluding anyone.”

(Extract from the Prayer for the Congress)

NEWS

Brazil

On March 4, Joana Cavalcante died in Fortaleza. She belonged to the founding group of Servitium Christi in that city, and remained faithful to her ideal. She was born on May 11, 1935, and made her final vows on May 31, 1976.

May her soul rest in peace and the Lord console her family and the members of her Center.

Region St. Clare

We have just received the sad news of the death of Mary Williams yesterday (10 March), Servitium Christi, Melbourne, Australia (St. Clare Region).

Mary had been in nursing home care for some years, and recent reports on her health status were not encouraging. Her death comes just a few weeks after the death of her dear friend and mentor, Fr. Laurie Sullivan sss.

May her dear soul rest in peace, and may God comfort those who mourn her, especially Tina Lazarro, the only remaining Australian Member. Mary and Tina visited Dublin together in January 2002 to join with the St. Clare Region in celebrating the 50th anniversary of the foundation of Servitium Christi. In praying for the happy repose of Mary's soul, please also keep Tina in your prayers.

Mary Keane

Philippines

Congratulations!

Final Profession of Vows of Susan Matutina and Lorna Castañares



with General Directress Mary Keane, Spiritual Asst. Rev. Fr. Mike Garcia, sss, Local Superior Rev Fr. Randy Vergara, sss, Parish Priest Rev Fr. Hermie Garcia, sss, Former Vicar Generalate, Rev. Fr. Bong Luistro, sss. Provincial Vicar, Rev. Fr. Rey Capili, sss -MC, Rev. Fr. Andres Malawis, sss, Sr. Beth Pederico, sss Local Superior -Sr. Leizel Panggay, sss, Postulants, Blessed Sacrament Congregation

Next issue: AUGUST 2018

Articles to be included in this issue should be sent no later than July 15th to María Angélica Núñez to **as an attachment** to e-mail address: servitiumchristi@hotmail.com