

Writings of Saint Peter Julian Eymard on the Internet

from a Press Release by the Generalate in Rome

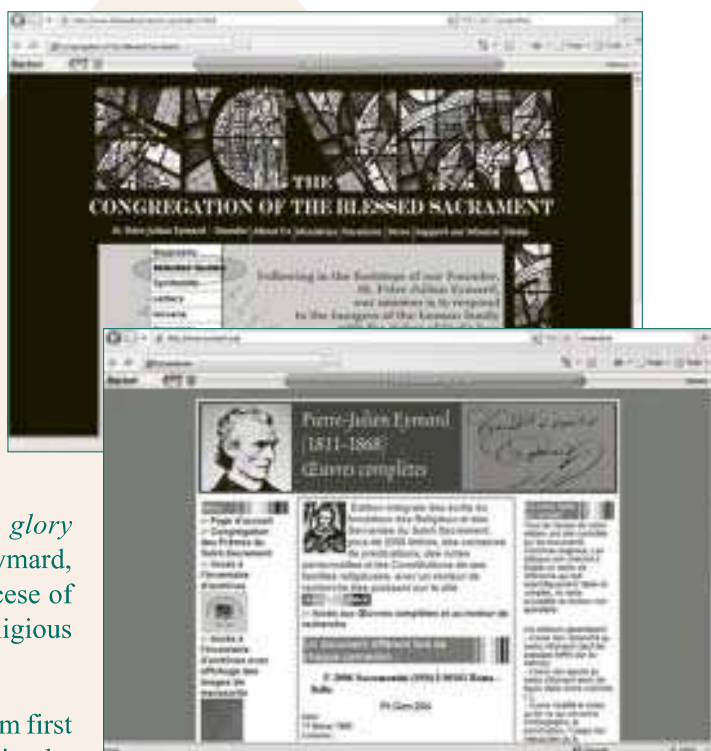
At 3:30 p.m. on December 5th 2006, at the Centro Convegna Matteo Ricci of the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, there was a presentation of the integral, official internet edition of the Writings of St Peter-Julian Eymard, apostle of the Eucharist and Founder of two religious congregations.

On December 9th 1962, at the end of the first session of the Second Vatican Council, before a vast gathering of Council Fathers and the faithful, Pope John XXIII proclaimed Peter Julian Eymard a saint: *“Beside a Vincent de Paul, a St John Eudes, and a Curé of Ars, Peter Julian Eymard takes his place today in the phalanx of these resplendent stars that are the glory and boast of the country of their birth.”* Peter Julian Eymard, who was born and died at La Mure d’Isère, in the diocese of Grenoble, 1811-1868, was a priest and founder of religious Congregations dedicated to the Eucharist.

At the end of an arduous path of searching, which led him first as a member of the secular clergy and then as a Marist, he founded at Paris on May 13th 1856 – 150 years ago – the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament and later the Congregation of the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament. He was rightly called *“an apostle of the Eucharist”*.

Today, the ensemble of his writings and sermons has been made accessible to the public at large on the internet site www.eynard.org. The realisation of this project (that became possible only a few years ago) took four years of intense work, which involved through their specific tasks and constant dialogue the collaboration between the *Commission of the Study on the Founder and his Work* (CEFO), comprising members from the male and female Congregations of the Blessed Sacrament, and the team called *Informatique & Bible* (and later *S.A. Mnémotique*) from the Benedictine monastery of Maredsous in Belgium. The complete work of Father Eymard is now available in a feasible manner. It consists of more than 44 million characters amounting to more than 10 thousand A4 size pages. Moreover, the CEFO has enriched the internet edition with notes and introductions that provide a context for the writings of the Saint and that situate them within the living tradition of the Congregations of the Blessed Sacrament.

The integral, official internet edition of Father Eymard’s writings has been made on the basis of 43 thousand numerical photos of the manuscripts (about 75 thousand pages) kept in the archives of the Religious and Servants of the Blessed Sacrament (AGRSS – AGSSS). Starting from these images all the unedited texts have been transcribed and all those already published have been checked. On the site www.knowhowsphere.net (likewise available on the internet site www.eynard.org), it is possible to consult freely the great collection of the



saint’s correspondence, his personal notes, juridical texts and rules pertaining to the Congregations he founded, and also the immense output of his sermons. The numerical photos of the original documents will be available on line only on request by those doing research.

“For the first time” – in the words of Father André Guitton, one of the experts to whom we are indebted for the realisation of this work – *“we have now his integral writings that have been verified according to scientific criteria. We know that his thought did not stop developing in the course of his life. The edition provides a field of considerable study in getting to know his life and the expression of his charism of founder. Far from being the last word about Eymard, it is rather the beginning of a renewed approach to his message.”* ✕