

St Francis' Newsletter

Blessed Sacrament Congregation

August 2012



The harder the soul has to work, the more it must eat.
(Eymard, on Holy Communion)

MASS TIMES

Sunday

6:00pm Saturday
7:00am, 8:00am,
9:00am, 10:00am
11:00am
(Choral),
12:30pm, 1:30pm,
4:30pm, 6:00pm

Monday- Thursday

7:30am, 8:00am,
11:00am,
12:05pm, 1:05pm,
5:30pm

Friday

7:30am, 8:00am,
11:00am,
12:00pm, 1:05pm,
5:30pm

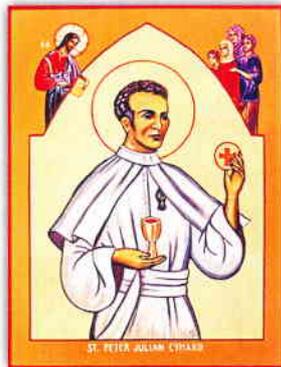
Saturday

8:00am, 11:00am,
12:05pm

Public Holidays

8:00am, 11:00am,
12:05pm, 5:30pm

August is Founder's Month for us here. This year, we will celebrate the feast of St Peter Julian Eymard on Thursday the second. Since 1997, this special feast of the Blessed Sacrament Congregation has been placed on the universal calendar of the Church. In 1811, Peter Julian Eymard was born into a post-revolutionary France, a dislocated nation with severe divisions in the social fabric of society: between the traditional



children each year. Many poor children lived in abandoned factories; Peter Julian developed a network of helpers to feed and clothe as many of them as they could. He also worked to formalise the marriages of their parents.

Of course, post-revolutionary France was not the only place where children suffered and were exploited. Conditions in the textile mills of England were appalling in 1816. 'Children as young as five were forced to work 16 hours a day, often crawling under moving machinery in thick fibrous dust and appalling heat'. (Kevin Rushby, *Paradise: A History of the Idea that rules the world*, Robinson, 2006, p. 172) St Peter Julian was one of the men who was prepared to do something to alleviate the suffering of the young. In common with St Mary of the Cross, he couldn't see a need without doing something about it.

Fr Eymard loved the work of the *First Communion of Adults*, strictly speaking, of young adults. He sought assistance in this ministry and found it in laymen and laywomen, some being members of the infant St Vincent de Paul Society. Louis Perret, a Lyons architect who had worked in the Marxist Missions in New Zealand, was an early volunteer and brought in his friends as well. The St Vincent de Paul Society assisted. Prominent women such as the Countess d'Andigne and her sister Mme Fraguier helped. The 'lady catechists' were to become members of the women's congregation Peter Julian founded - *Servants of the Blessed Sacrament*.

Fr Eymard was faithful to his apostolate to the poor to the end of his life, and the work continued as long as the Sisters remained in Paris. With the later transfer of the Paris Community to a wealthier area, the work of First Communions ceased. But it was not ignored. Thirty years after Fr Eymard's death, the Blessed Sacrament Congregation members supported the movement favouring frequent Communion and the earlier Communion of children.

Today children make their first communion at the age of eight and have special Eucharistic Prayers composed for them. It was much harder for children in the time of Fr Eymard. Despite his great love of the Blessed Sacrament, the young



Church at La Mure, France

Peter Julian was unable to make his first communion until Passion Sunday, 16 March 1823, when he was aged twelve. He prepared for this great event by making a 50 km pilgrimage on foot to the shrine of Our Lady of Laus. The reference to Passion Sunday is significant; it demonstrates the prevailing penitential spirit of the times.

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RECONCILIATION

Tuesday-Friday

11:30am - 2:00pm
3:30pm - 5:30pm

Saturday

10:30am - 12:30pm
3:30pm - 5:30pm

No Confessions on
Sundays, Mondays and
Public Holidays

A priest is usually available for consultation Tuesday to Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Pastoral Centre except on Holy Days & Public Holidays.

wealthy landowners, the urban poor and an emerging middle-class or 'bourgeoisie'. Even worse, the industrial revolution had resulted in new industries and factories, with a labour force mostly made up of poor and unemployed rural youth. These young people were frequently reduced to scavenging rags from the streets, partly to clothe themselves and partly in a desperate attempt to sell them for a few francs. Father Eymard's heart went out to these young rag-picker poor. Gathering them together, he catechized them with a view of them making their First Communions, and eventually prepared about 150

The harder the soul has to work ... (cont.) and Notices

In his adult years, Father Eymard eventually transcended this spirit and developed a new understanding of the love of God. As he expressed it: no longer 'PRO TE MORIAR' (Lord, may I die for You) but 'PRO TE VIVAM' (Lord, may I live for You). It was when Fr Eymard realised the enormity of what he termed the *Gift of Self* -the gift of himself given to us by Christ - that he became fully committed to the gift of himself to God, in love.

Just as Fr Eymard was committed to evangelising a country which lacked this Gift of Self, so today Australia presents as a country in need. According to the

2011 Census figures, the most godless place in Australia is the small Victorian community of Tankerton, French Island. The religious make-up of French Island is 6% Anglican, 3.4% Other Protestant, 8.6% Uniting Church, 17.2% Catholic and 53.4% No Religion. French Island, 60km southeast of Melbourne may have experienced a severe crisis of faith since the last national census in 2006, with a more than 13 per cent jump in those who ticked the 'no religion' box. By comparison, the most common religious responses of people in Docklands was 5.3% Hindu, 6.1% Buddhist, 8.1% Anglican, 17.9% Catholic and 27.7% No Religion. (These figures do not include all religious groups responding to the census.)

This is a new scenario; one that saints relish and mere mortals quake at. There was no 'turtling' with Father Eymard. He did not retreat into his carapace when he met with difference or opposition. He stood in solidarity with people. He rejoiced in being a liminal person, not afraid of being in the margins with people who felt they did not belong. Like Father Eymard, our faith will give us the courage to navigate the uncharted waters in which we find ourselves.

Jo Dirks SSS
Community Leader

VINNIES YOUTH BALL — SATURDAY 25 AUGUST

Venue: Aurora Receptions, 149 Donald Street, Brunswick East Time: 7:00 pm to midnight.

Dress is formal; the theme is 'Red Carpet Glamour'. Tickets are just \$65.00 and you can buy them online at www.trybooking.com/BMCL. For more information, call Catherine on 9895 5840 or send an email to youth@svdp-vic.org.au. Proceeds will go to an Overseas Development Project.

TOO OLD FOR A YOUTH GROUP?

Keen to build a network of Catholic friends?
Hearts in Action may be the group for you!

We are a welcoming group for people in their late 20s, 30s and 40s. Social events each month as well as Gospel reflection evenings.

For more information, or to join the email list, call Christina on 0420 377 478 or go to www.heartsinaction.yolasite.com

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION

(Holy Day of Obligation) Mass Times

Tuesday 14	Vigil	5.30 pm
Wednesday 15	7:30 am, 8:00 am, 11:00 am,	12:05 pm; 1:05 pm; 4:30 pm,
	5:30 pm, 6:30 pm	

ST FRANCIS' YOUTH CHOIR—A BUSY AUGUST!



Best wishes to the St Francis' Youth Choir, their conductor Mrs Marilyn Brown (*far right*) and organist Rhys Arvidson (*far left*) as they journey to Ballarat to compete in the Royal South Street Choral Competition on Sunday 26 August.

The evening before the competition, the choir will sing at the 6:30pm Vigil Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral in Ballarat. One of the items being prepared for these events ('Baba Yetu' -The Lord's Prayer in Swahili) will be accompanied by champion Djembe drummer Steve Durbin. You can enjoy a musical preview of *Baba-Yetu* at the 6:00 pm Tertiary Students Mass on Sunday 5 August at St Francis'.

The choir will also lead the singing at the Gracefest Opening Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral (Melbourne) at 7:00 pm on Wednesday 15 August, the Solemnity of the Assumption.