

**REFLECTIONS of members of the Laity (SYDNEY)**  
**Draft of AGGREGATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT/ LIFE PROJECT**



At the outset it should be noted that the opportunity to comment on such a document is not only applauded but also appreciated – a comment which must not be misinterpreted. It is a comment motivated by goodwill and in the hope that in the light of such an offer we all, both religious and laity can move forward. At a time when issues are somewhat clouded a renewed emphasis on spiritual matters, especially of a Eucharistic nature, is most welcome.

The chance of having the possibility of reflection and comment on the document is an indication of the collaboration now possible between religious and laity. Such collaboration was broached at the International LITE Congress held in Davao City in the Philippines last August. The concept of collaboration was referred to both by the Vicar-General (Fr Sebastian Luistro SSS) and by a member of the Generalate in Rome with the responsibility internationally for the LITE movement (Fr Andres Taborda SSS).

Historically the laity from the very foundation of the Congregation by St Peter Julian Eymard has had a role in the Congregation and the argument that it was appropriate for 19<sup>th</sup> century but no longer so now is not compelling. The world situation obviously is quite different in our 21<sup>st</sup> century but it would seem the need for lay collaboration is as great as ever (3).

For those seeking “a life shaped by the Eucharist” with the Vatican II dictum of the Eucharist as Source and Summit of our being, *the Aggregation/Life Project* suggested by the Congregation would be ideal both for those already engaged in one of the works associated with the SSS and also for those wanting to move closer to the powerhouse of Eucharistic Spirituality that the Congregation is. The spiritual exercises envisaged in the Aggregation will appeal to the two groups. And the notion of ongoing Formation will answer a great hunger on the part of many in the lay community who feel that the core of our faith is not sufficiently emphasised. It can be said that at times the ‘Mass’ is celebrated without due reference to the Eucharist! (6)

The attraction of *the Aggregation/ Life Project* will be two-pronged – it will appeal particularly to two groups which may be described loosely as ‘passive or contemplative’ and ‘active or engaged’ in what is called ‘Service of Charity’ in the draft (16). These reflect the varying roles willingly and indeed eagerly adopted by members of the laity.

Under 26 the draft states that the *local Director* may delegate the role to another priest of the Congregation. A query arises from this – is a Congregational brother precluded from this role?

It is indeed refreshing to have reiterated, as the Draft clearly does, that the connection and reason behind the exposed Eucharistic presence in the monstrance for contemplation and adoration is the celebration on the Eucharistic Table (8).



In conclusion the intention to proceed with this document is full of merit. The sense of Community and Strength flowing from such a sharing by the Congregation with the laity will be immeasurable.

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