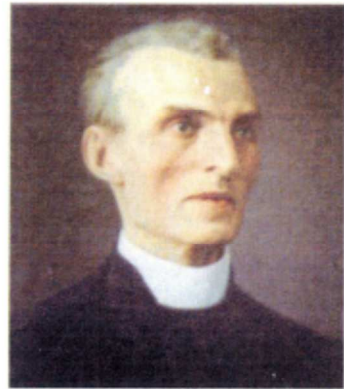


**St. Peter Julian Eymard**  
*Apostle of the Eucharist*

*A Thought for  
Every day*





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Selected Texts Chosen  
By  
Sister Suzanne Aylwin, sss

Thoughts taken from

Œuvres complètes  
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[www.eynard.org](http://www.eynard.org)

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## Références

- CO Correspondance
- NP Notes personnelles
- NR Notes de retraites personnelles
- NV Notes du Vade mecum
- PA Prédication à des Congrégations religieuses
- PC Prédication aux premiers communiant
- PD Prédication à des groupes divers
- PE Prédication à des ecclésiastiques
- PG Prédication générale
- PM Prédication à la Société de Marie (maristes)
- PO Prédication d'octaves, neuvaines, triduums
- PP Prédication publique
- PR Prédication aux Religieux du Saint-Sacrement
- PS Prédication aux Servantes du Saint-Sacrement
- PT Prédication au TOM (Tiers-Ordre de Marie)
- RA Règlement de l'Agrégation du Saint-Sacrement
- RR Règles et Constitutions des Religieux du Saint-Sacrement
- RS Règles et Constitutions des Servantes du Saint-Sacrement
- RT Règlement du TOM

## **« The Holy Eucharist is Jesus past, present, future »**

Saint Peter Julian Eymard was born in La Mure d'Isere on February 4, 1811 and died in the same town on August 1st 1868. God had led him step by step through providential and sometimes unusual ways, to discover his Eucharistic vocation. Also could he write three years before his death: "The good God has loved me so much! He has led me by the hand to the Society of the Most Blessed Sacrament.! All my graces have been graces of preparation. Every state of my soul was a novitiate! The Most Blessed Sacrament has always dominated my life."

From his childhood he was attracted by the Eucharist. He frequently visited the Blessed Sacrament and, on the day of his first communion, he promised to become a priest. But before the Eucharist becomes permanently the center of his life and his action, he must go step by step.

First landmark: his brief stay at the novitiate of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Marseilles (1829). Later he became a diocesan priest (1834-1839), he had

an experience of the sweet and strong love of God at the Calvary of Saint Romans. His spirituality knows a reversal which changes little by little a negative vision into a vision more in line with the grace he received.

The evolution of his spiritual life is also the fruit of the intellectual formation which he imposed on himself: regular readings of the Fathers of the Church and the spiritual writers, deepening of the doctrine of the Council of Trent, meditation on Saint Paul and on Saint John.

In 1839 he entered the Society of Mary where he would be a religious for 17 years.. Responsibilities accumulate, but also the spiritual and apostolic experiences that will lead him to his mission as a Founder. In 1845, at the church of Saint Paul in Lyons, the day of Corpus Christi, he carried the Blessed Sacrament. During the procession; he experienced a great spiritual force and asked God for the grace to have the apostolic zeal of Saint Paul.

In 1849, when he was Provincial, he visited the Marist House in Paris. He discovered in this city the work of the Nocturnal Adoration and on the same occasion he came in contact with Count Raymond de Cuers who would be his first companion in the foundation

of the Eucharistic work. He also met the foundress of the Reparatory Adoration, Mother Marie-Therese Dubouche.

January 21, 1851, at the shrine of Our Lady of Fourviere (Lyon), he felt it was urgent to work on the renewal of the Christian life through the Eucharist and saw the importance of a thorough formation for priests and laity. A few months later he wrote: "I must get down to work, save souls through the Eucharist, and awaken France and Europe numb in their sleep of indifference because they do not know the gift of God, Jesus Eucharistic Emmanuel." (CO 325) The recognition of this state of affairs constitutes the background of his Eucharistic vocation, and of his mission.

April 18, 1853, in La Seyne-sur-Mer, he receives a new call, "grace of donation" with regard to the Eucharistic projects which he develops with Raymond de Cuers and with a few other people. He had no idea then that the gift would require him to leave the Marists to found the Eucharistic work.

May 13, 1856, Bishop Marie-Dominique Sibour, archbishop of Paris, accepted the project presented by Father Eymard : " It is not a purely contemplative society. Yes we adore certainly, but we also want to



lead others to adore. We must take care of the First Communion of adults. We want to set fire to the four corners of France, beginning with the four corners of Paris, which need it so much”

That the Eucharistic life that Peter Julian proposed is not confined to the contemplative dimension. He wrote: “A purely contemplative life cannot be fully Eucharistic, the home has a flame.” (CO 1030)

May 25 1858, Marguerite Guillot arrived in Paris from Lyons, and on July 2 she was put at the head of a small group of candidates who had come in anticipation of the foundation for the women’s branch, the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament.

From the beginning and throughout his ministry, the apostolate of Father Eymard is multifaceted. He associates the laity in his work through the Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament, he set up the work of the First Communion of Adults and young workers, he devotes himself to preaching, and to spiritual direction. He promotes the Roman liturgy and tries to nourish the spiritual life of the priests through the Eucharist.

Father Eymard man of total commitment, wanted to include, in his own words, ” all aspects of Eucharistic

thoughts” His vision of the mass and the communion, as the summit of all Christian life, is contained in a text written in 1863: “Because of all the pious deeds, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the communion of the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ is, without doubt, the end and the life of any religion, that the piety of each is worthy cultivated and developed towards this divine mystery; that virtue and love are oriented as a means to an end.” (RR 74t,6)

During the long retreat which he made in Rome in 1865, Father broke through a final step on the “Interior Eucharistic reign” which leads the believer to the “gift of self” in union with Jesus Christ, in a Trinitarian and ecclesial dimension. His life’s journey, illuminated by the Eucharist reaches its summit. Father Eymard let the Holy Spirit shape him in order that Christ might live in him (cf. Ga 2, 20) to become Eucharist, bread for the life of men: Jesus Christ [...] is in me in order to live there for his Father, who is alive, and has sent me. And it is to be so for me, to give myself in Holy Communion. Just as the Father, who is alive, has sent me and I live by the Father, so whoever eats me also lives because of me. [Jn 6,57]. (NR 44,119)

The last years of Father Eymard were marked by illness and sufferings of all kinds: financial problems,

oppositions, misunderstandings, humiliations, loss of the esteem of the bishops. Despite this, his words continue to burn like fire and his letters of spiritual direction abound in invitations to joy and thanksgiving for the blessings of God.

Father Eymard died in La Mure d'Isère on August 1, 1868. At the end of the ordinary process of Grenoble and Paris, opened in 1898, he was beatified by Pius XI on July 12, 1925. On December 9, 1962, at the end of the first session of the Second Vatican Council, Jean XXIII proclaimed him saint. On December 9, 1995, John Paul II put his name in the universal calendar of the Church and fixed his feast day on August 2, recognizing him as "an eminent Apostle of the Eucharist."

As a result of a long work of editing, the Complete Works (*Cœuvres complètes*) of Peter Julian Eymard are now available in electronic versions ([www.eynard.org](http://www.eynard.org)) and in print. We are pleased to present a first anthology in the collection *A thought per day*. It is an invitation to rediscover a spiritual master beyond the editions of the 19th century. As the forerunner John the Baptist, with whom he liked to identify himself, announces to us new times, the times of Pentecost and the Eucharist.

These are the principles that have guided Sr. Suzanne Aylwin,sss. The choice and arrangement of thoughts

adhere to a logic that is at the same time constant and flexible. Some feasts are highlighted and others ignored, depending upon the possibility of finding or not finding appropriate texts of the right length. When the space left between the feasts permits it, she takes the opportunity to create small thematic sets – see index – that enable us to dwell on a certain subject to taste and grasp the various aspects. The month of June that Father always consecrated to the Blessed Sacrament, is entirely on the Eucharist. Contemplation - interiority; is the basic theme for Father Eymard, and it seemed appropriate for Advent. His devotion to Saint Joseph is reflected in the novena before the feast of the saint. Finally, she took the liberty of highlighting the great moments of grace in the spiritual journey of the Father.

The multitude of thoughts, thematic or not, allow us to enter into the world of this eminent Apostle of the Eucharist where the dimensions of depth, width, and height show the immensity of the fire which he had set ablaze. His words were of yesterday, but they challenge us today

*Fr. Manuel Barbiero, sss  
La Mure d'Isère*

## **BREAD FOR OUR JOURNEY**

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