

**Life and Letters**  
**of**  
**Saint Peter Julian Eymard**  
  
**Volume Five**  
**1865 - 1866**

Founder

Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament  
Fathers and Brothers,  
Congregation of the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament  
and a Eucharistic Association for the Laity

Translated and arranged chronologically by  
Sister Catherine Marie Caron SSS

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*“The Good Lord is blessing the Society. It is growing, and I, poor man, am here as its plowman.”*

*To the Countess d’Andigne, June 27, 1866*

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## INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the year 1865, St. Peter Julian was in Rome, his stay extended by the incessant delays caused by changes of agenda for the Assembly of Cardinals.

Unknown to him, his request for permission to break a centuries-old decree prohibiting access to the Holy Land to anyone other than the Franciscan Order was also being stalled because of false accusations that he had sent a women's group ahead of him to Jerusalem to get things underway.

If his attempt to secure the needed permissions failed, this journey proved to be a blessing in disguise. During this time, while waiting for his ardently desired permission, he entered into semi-seclusion and made a serious retreat. The Lord worked powerfully for Peter Julian and gave him the keys of the inner kingdom, the inner Cenacle, by insight into the gift of self, whereby He, Jesus, would become the focus and center of his life by a total inner transformation:

“I meditated on the words:

‘As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me will live because of Me. - John 6, 57.

‘It is as if my Savior said: In sending Me through the Incarnation the Father has torn out of Me every root of self-seeking by leaving Me without a human person and uniting Me to a divine Person in order to make Me live for Him; in the same way, through Communion, you will live for Me, for I shall be living in you. I will fill your soul with My desires and with My life, which will consume and reduce to nothing everything that is personal to you; so much so that it will be I instead of you that shall live and shall desire everything in you.

‘Thus you will be entirely invested with Me; My heart will beat within your body, My soul will act through your soul; your heart will be the receptacle and the pulsation of My heart. I shall be the person of your personality, and your personality will be the life of My person in you. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” (Gal. 2, 20)

- From the Retreat of Rome, Mar. 21, 1865

It was with this “new spiritual bread”<sup>1</sup> that St. Peter Julian returned to France to dedicate himself to the work of the Society. He called a General Convocation of the Society in the hope that another would now be chosen to lead it. Elected Superior General for life, he dedicated himself beyond his physical energies. He established three foundations and preached 21 spiritual exercises in a period of one and a half years. That is, seven retreats to his religious men and women, and fourteen Adoration or Parish Missions.

In the meantime, negotiations had begun for the transfer of two existing properties: Paris because of the city plan to develop Boulevard Arago, and Angers for a transfer of property.

While cholera raged in the city of Paris, taking an unbelievable toll of lives, Peter Julian continued to work there and to travel around France and to Belgium. He interpreted a serious attack of shingles while in Brussels as a first signal that the end was near and mustered his remaining energies to bring about the growth of the Society he loved.

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<sup>1</sup> cf. Guyot, Mar. 11, 1865, Doc. 1539.

## Key

The technicalities of translations deserve some consideration and explanation. Our effort was to be more literal than literary, to stay as close to the original text as possible, while however striving for smooth and readable English.

The headings for the letters are followed with a code which will enable the researcher to locate the original French letter and know the number of letters addressed to this correspondent. For ex.:

Miss Marianne Eymard (III 1/145 VI 10) means that this is the first of 145 letters to Marianne Eymard in the French Vol. III and that there are also 10 letters to her in the French Vol. VI.

St. Peter Julian often used abbreviations to begin his letters and after his signature. The meaning of these will be given in a footnote the first time the abbreviation is used. Ex.: A.R.T.E. = May your Eucharistic Kingdom Come! Abbreviations used after the signature have usually been written out in full when they were simple enough. Ex.: Sup. = Superior. Others are left as abbreviated when they did not translate easily from one language to another.

The capitalization of words by the author has been respected and left as in the originals. Therefore, Heaven, Will, Providence are constantly capitalized, which reveals a certain sensitivity or importance given by St. Eymard to these spiritual realities. However, the letters from Vol. II (to Marguerite Guillot) do not follow his usual pattern of capitalization. These were probably not transcribed from the original manuscript to the French publication. Other words were capitalized in English though they were not so in French, because custom or meaning required it. Ex.: Mass, Society and Work, when the latter two words referred to the Religious Institute he founded or other Works being undertaken in the Church of France at the time. The capitalization of the word cross and the words he, his and him, when referring to God, has been left as in the original.

Another pattern of his which has often been respected is that of placing dashes when least expected, or an exclamation point in the middle of a sentence, or a colon to precede an explanation.

Although it was customary for diocesan priests to be called Mr. whenever the context is clear, these have been translated as Father, as is current in English use.

The list of topics taught at retreats and conferences is incomplete. But it is the one presently available to the translator. Conferences given to the priests and brothers of the Blessed Sacrament are indicated by the abbreviation SSS, those given to the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament by the abbreviation Conf. Serv.

Whenever a phrase is bracketed in English, it is because additional words were needed to complete the original French thought. Lines of dots in the text, especially letters to Marguerite Guillot, indicate that the text was made illegible by the recipient (crossed out).

The determining guide in placing the Letters was the chronological listing of Fr. Garreau, S.S.S. Therefore, some letters have been relocated because that critical reading indicated that some dates had been misread for the French publication. For instance, in St. Eymard's handwriting May and March were difficult to distinguish, as were January and June. Occasionally, St. Eymard himself wrote an incorrect date or year as can be deduced from the postmark or content. The critical judgment of Fathers Garreau and Troussier have been followed in this matter. Other letters were without indication of date or place. These have been placed according to St. Eymard's pattern of correspondence. Letters begun on one date and finished on another have been placed at the earlier date except when the context dictated otherwise.

The Letters are divided into six volumes as follows:

I 1845-1852; II 1853-1857; III 1858-1861; IV 1862-1864; V 1865-1866; VI 1867-1868.

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Chronological listings of events have been compiled from chronologies available from the Blessed Sacrament Fathers, various biographies, and drawn from the letters themselves.

Sr. Catherine Marie Caron SSS