



Published by Pro Sanctity East

prosantitynewyork@verizon.net
www.nyprosantity.org

New York - Summer 2010

A Miracle at a Wedding

Ask any Christian about the story of the Miracle at the Wedding Feast of Cana and the overwhelming majority very likely will recount it with great accuracy, every detail in place. Most of us recognize this passage in Scripture as a milestone in the story of Christ’s ministry on earth and are aware of its significance as the first occasion Jesus performed a miracle. However, a recent experience at the Brooklyn Pro Sanctity Center caused this writer to consider what gifts might be missed from too circumspect a regard for Scripture.

Those present at the “Day of Formation”, an event which took place at the Pro Sanctity Center in Brooklyn, NY, were given a wonderful opportunity to explore a number of ways in which the “Call to Holiness” can be integrated into our day-to-day lives. Particularly striking to this writer was learning about and applying the “Explosive Gospel”, so aptly and lovingly dubbed

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by Pro Sanctity Founder, Bishop Guglielmo Giaquinta, who formulated it. A closer look at the “Explosive Gospel” reveals its apparent roots in the early monastic practice of *Lectio Divina*.¹ It might be said that through Bishop Giaquinta’s “Explosive Gospel”, the concept and practice of *Lectio Divina* is made more accessible to the modern Catholic. In any case, at the outset of the “Day of Formation”, I had no idea of the extraordinary experience my first encounter with the “Explosive Gospel” held in store for me.

It was through the story of the Miracle at the Wedding Feast at Cana as related in the Gospel of John 2:1-11 that many of us who attended the “Day of Formation” experienced the “Explosive Gospel” in action for the first time. Toward the close of the day, Jessi Kary, our PS

¹<http://www.usccb.org/catecheticalsunday/lectio-divina.shtml>

This Just In...

Nina Riti

Save the Date...

... April 14, 2011

Why so early? Well, we just signed the contract with IMMACULÉE ILIBAGIZA

WHO is SHE?

If you have not heard of her I am sure you will. She is an amazing lady whose inspiring story about survival in a tiny bathroom with eight other women for 91 days during the horrific genocide in Rwanda in 1994 is so profound. I was invited to hear a talk she gave during which she shared her encounters with God, as well as her epiphany on forgiveness that truly is inspirational.

Immaculée will give the culminating talk in a 4-part series on forgiveness. There will be three movies on forgiveness on the preceding Thursday evenings. What a perfect way to prepare for Holy Week next year.

Pro Sanctity will be hosting this event at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 2805 Fort Hamilton Parkway, Brooklyn, NY. We will be asking for your help when we sell tickets to cover the cost of presenting this worthwhile experience.

More information will be made available in the future.

Pro Sanctity East Newsletter Editors

Angela Di Paola, A.O.
Rosemary Darmstadt
Gail Elizabeth Evans
Sue Miller, A.O. - photo assembly
Nina Riti
Donna Spoto

Ask Pro Sanctity

What is the "Explosive Gospel?"



EXPLOSIVE GOSPEL

Bishop Giaquinta devised the Explosive Gospel for all people who are searching for a deeper spirituality so they would be able to interiorize God's Word and live it in their daily life.

Using his "Three Moments" we encounter the Gospel in the three following ways:

Contemplation of the Word – Read the text slowly and carefully in order to take in the maximum love that Christ, through his Word, wants to give you. Look with love at the Word in silence. The Word will inspire you and look back at you with love!

The Word Challenges – You are confronted by the Word, not only in love, but also in the way it enlightens you as to where you must grow or where there may be contradictions or unfulfilled needs in your life.

The Word Directs – You receive insight for the future and are called to conversion and to apostolic action. Here everyone, and especially every member of Pro Sanctity, is invited to make a commitment to spread the Gospel that revolutionizes not only their own lives, but also the lives of others.

PRAYER FOR GENEROSITY

St. Ignatius Loyola

**Eternal Word, only begotten Son of God,
Teach me true generosity.**

Teach me to serve you as you deserve.

To give without counting the cost,

To fight heedless of wounds,

To labor without seeking rest,

**To sacrifice myself without thought
of any reward**

**Save the knowledge that I have
done your will. Amen.**

A Miracle at a Wedding continued from page 1

Facilitator had us read this Scripture. She then explained the essentials of the “Explosive Gospel” and shared examples of how the technique can be applied.

Following this, a period of twenty minutes of silence was allotted for all to put the “Explosive Gospel” into practice, reflecting upon the Scripture we had just read. Afterward, smaller groups were formed in which individuals discussed each one’s experience. Donna Spoto, a veteran Pro Sanctity member, turned out to be my group leader. Well acquainted with the “Explosive Gospel”, it was she who encouraged me to share this written account of my own experience.

One’s first impression of that familiar story as related in John 2:1-11, would likely be that it is a story told with a certain brevity and economy of language. Armed with the “Explosive Gospel”, however, this writer came away with a number of insights, foremost of which was that John’s recounting perhaps in actuality underscores the essence of Christ’s life and ministry on earth. To me,

John accomplished this, despite his albeit conciseness, by relying on the use of richly layered symbolism rather than graphic detail. About halfway through the period of silence, I had the sense of perceiving this Scripture with new eyes. I was moved (actually to tears) by the particular vividness and significance the symbolism in John’s writing seemed to take on. (See *The Personal Challenge* for the insights she received.)



Gail Elizabeth Evans

Cantor at Queen of

All Saints Church

For this new Pro Sanctity member it was a re-discovery: A passage of Scripture once thought of as familiar became all the more meaningful and illuminating through the lens of the “Explosive Gospel”. Consider how the continued use of such a wonderful tool can align one’s life more closely to God’s Word. *Thank you Bishop Giaquinta.*

Comedy Corner

After the story of Adam and Eve was carefully explained to the children’s religion class, the teacher asked them to draw a picture to illustrate what happened.

One little boy drew a picture of a car with a man in the front seat and a man and a woman in the back seat.

The teacher asked the boy to explain how this illustrated the lesson of Adam and Eve. He explained that the picture showed God driving Adam and Eve out of the Garden.



Adapted from *The Book of Catholic Jokes* by Deacon Tom Sheridan

Words from the Founder

Why the “Explosive Gospel?”

When I first thought about the “Explosive Gospel,” I wanted something that would shake people up, forcing them to face the truth. Yet, we often fear the truth, even if we proclaim ourselves to be its promoters, because it’s one thing to proclaim, present, and explain the truth; it is an essentially different thing to face the truth in order to live it.

Certainly, not everyone feels God has given him/her the character of a hero. There are some cases, though, in which heroism becomes the law of life. Think of the parents who sacrifice themselves for their children. **We live in exceptional times, with the future filled with events and problems still more extraordinary than those we face now; they command a generous response – yes, even a heroic one.** Our call to sanctity means we must actually make ourselves a part of our environment and bring holiness to it. Each of us is a living part of our brothers and sisters, and we owe material aid and, especially spiritual assistance. While the body needs bread, the heart needs love.

Thus, when we speak of the “Explosive Gospel” or Gospel maximalism, we mean that Christ went to the furthest extent of his love in every aspect of his life, and ultimately his death. His “burning message” to us in Luke 12:49 says, *“I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing!”* It follows that the apostolic service we render as members of Pro Sanctity must be based on letting the Gospel we read burst out of the pages and into the actions we perform and the good that we do for others each and every day of our lives.

(Adapted from the Writings of Servant of God Bishop William Giaquinta)

The Personal Challenge

Gail Elizabeth Evans

Are we aware of the impact of Christ's life on us?

Further contemplation of the Wedding Feast at Cana as recounted in John 2:1-11 reveals John's unique way of delivering a personal challenge to each one of us as Christians and followers of God's Word. John, after all, is regarded by biblical scholars as distinct among the Evangelists, not only for the elevated, seemingly literary tone of his Gospels, but for his lavish use of symbolism in them. By these means, more than merely documenting certain events in the life of Christ, John gives emphasis to their significance.

Wedding - an end and beginning

What follows are examples of what one might derive from John's symbolism: John mentions that the events took place at a wedding feast. Archetypically, weddings

might be viewed as representing a coming together, a fulfillment, or culmination – in a sense, an end that is also a beginning. In John 2:1-11, we find Jesus, so often referred to as the Bridegroom of His Church, poised to perform His first miracle – His very presence on earth a fulfillment of what was prophesied. These first steps toward establishing His Church and ensuring our Redemption are being taken – not at an unspecified celebration, but at a wedding feast.

All things can be transformed

The presence at this wedding feast of Mary, the Blessed Mother of Jesus, is also mentioned. It was, after all, at her behest that Jesus was moved to perform His miracle. She was the instrument by which the Son of God was brought into the physical realm. At Cana, almost in parallel, she is witnessed as being instrumental to the beginning of Christ's spiritual ministry on earth.

The substances involved in the miracle are water and wine. Through Jesus, we see common water transformed into wine of the highest quality. This might be said to signify the potential for all things to become transformed, even elevated, through Christ.



Along with that is the significance of wine – the very substance first offered by Jesus as His Precious Blood. To this day, during the celebration of the Eucharist, wine continues to be transubstantiated, becoming His Precious Blood. This pairing of water and wine – with wine symbolizing blood – might also be viewed as a foreshadowing of Christ's Passion and Death on the Cross. After Jesus died, while

Continued on page 7

Bible Trivia



The Gospels

1. In which Gospel do we find the Marriage Feast of Cana?
2. Name the Synoptic Gospels.
(Synoptic means "viewing together" from the Greek *synopsis*)
3. Which Gospel is the shortest and first to be written (about 60 AD)?
4. Which Gospel was written for Jewish people who followed Christ?
5. Which Gospel was written for Gentiles, *i.e.*, non-Jews?
6. Which is the longest Gospel?
7. Which Gospel was written for the Greek followers of Christ?
8. In which Gospel does Peter walk on water?
9. Which Gospel's emphasis is on love?...he says, "God is Love."
10. In which Gospel do we find Mary's Canticle, The *Magnificat*?
11. Which is the only Gospel that records the words Jesus spoke to His Mother from the Cross?
12. Where do we find the symbols for the four Gospel Writers?
(Lion = Mark, Man = Matthew, Ox = Luke, Eagle = John)

Answers are on page 7

*We don't
change the
message;
the message
changes us.*

Our Stories

Jessi Kary at St. Fidelis Day of Formation where she shared How to Acknowledge, Relate, Receive and Respond



Fr. Fonti blesses each retreatant at the concluding mass of our annual retreat at Don Bosco.... Retreatants pray over Fr. Fonti in thanksgiving for such a spiritual experience.



*The outside grounds was a wonderful place for groups to meet & share....
... saying the rosary outside was very moving for all*



Giovanna and Palmira pause to smile for the camera as they remember starting their spiritual journey in the Institute of Apostolic Oblates 50 years ago, before renewing their vows.

A private moment when the Apostolic Oblates don their symbol of consecration which they wear only when they profess and renew their vows.



After the beautiful liturgical celebration that Msgr. Raymond Chappetto presided at with many priest friends all gathered for dinner and sharing in the Fr. Simonetti Center.

Our Models ... Saints for All Times

St. Ignatius Loyola

In 1491, Iñigo (more commonly called Ignatius, the Latin form of his first name) Loyola, was born the youngest of thirteen children. The entire family lived in the family castle in a Basque province. As was the custom for aristocratic children he became a page at the court of Ferdinand and Isabella, the rulers of Spain. This was the perfect environment for him to learn about gambling, drinking, womanizing and dueling. He even got in trouble with the law.

Does this sound like the making of a saint?

The only reason he did not get punished was because in those days the rich young men became "clerics". Not that they were studying to be priests, but rather as a precaution to avoid punishment as was the case with Ignatius when he was arrested over some dispute, and by claiming clerical immunity, was exempt from persecution after the case had dragged on for weeks.

Eventually, at the age of 30, he entered the military. While defending the town of Pamplona against the French in 1521 he wounded one leg and broke the other in his first and only battle. He was taken back to Loyola where they set his leg. The leg did not heal right so it was necessary to break it and reset it. It eventually healed but when it did the bone protruded and one leg was shorter than the other. Ignatius felt that this was totally unacceptable not to be able to

wear the long boots that were the style of the time. So because of his enormous vanity he ordered the doctors to saw off the offending knob of bone and underwent painful stretching. All three surgeries were done without anesthesia. Despite all that was done he was left with a permanent limp.

This ordeal resulted in his being bedridden for many months. He was so bored and desperate for distractions he asked for his favorite type books about knightly adventure and romance novels. He was told the only books available were a copy of the life of Christ and a book on the lives of the saints. Begrudgingly, he read them. As he did he was so impressed with their lives and



their exploits that he decided they were indeed worthy of imitating. He still was tempted with thoughts of fame and glory and fantasies of a noblewoman never identified. He finally realized that the latter thoughts always left him restless and unsatisfied while the former always left him peaceful and satisfied.

In March 1522 he recovered sufficiently to leave the castle and begin his true destiny. He went

on a pilgrimage, hung up his sword over the altar in Montserrat, spent a year at Manresa eventually taking refuge in a cave where he remained for ten months.

The beginning of his conversion

Not only was this the beginning of his conversion it was also the beginning of his spiritual discernment, which eventually led him to write his famous *Spiritual Exercises*.

The *Spiritual Exercises* is a manual of Christian prayer and meditation. He directs the reader to begin with an event in the life of Christ. Take the story of the Wedding at Cana - he urges one to imagine the scene in detail, to replay the episode in one's mind and try to feel as if you were right there witnessing the event, and then to use this experience as a motive for love, gratitude and dedication to the service of God. The *Spiritual Exercises* show us that not only do we need our intellect or cognitive thinking but we also need the emotions and feelings so as to help us come to a deeper knowledge of the Holy Spirit in our lives. This is truly a worthwhile spiritual journey....

He eventually started the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits of today. This society is best known for its main charism of education. They have built schools and universities to expedite this goal. Their motto is "*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*", to the greater glory of God. He died suddenly on July 31, 1556.

The Personal Challenge
Continued from page 4

His body still hung on the Cross. “...one soldier thrust his lance into his side and blood and water flowed out.” (John 19:34)

At Cana, the vessels which contained the water Christ transformed to wine are mentioned by John as having been for the purpose of “ceremonial washings” – cleansing of a high purpose. Symbolic here is the very essence of Christ’s becoming Man – to cleanse mankind of Original Sin. This might also be viewed as resonant with the Sacrament of Baptism. We are cleansed through Christ’s having shed His blood and established His Church with its Sacraments for mankind’s salvation.

John also points out the reaction of the headwaiter to the superior quality of the wine Jesus created. Something out of the ordinary had occurred. And, finally, through this extraordinary occurrence, “the beginning of His signs”, Jesus’ glory began to manifest itself among his disciples who “began to believe in Him.” Here might be seen John’s affirmation of Christ as He who came in fulfillment of the Scriptures.

In short, John’s brief narrative of the Miracle at the Wedding Feast at Cana might be viewed as representative of what is of supreme significance to the salvation of mankind: **Through use of imagery therein, John most compellingly challenges us to recognize the meaning of the cycle of Christ’s Birth, Passion, Death, and Resurrection.**

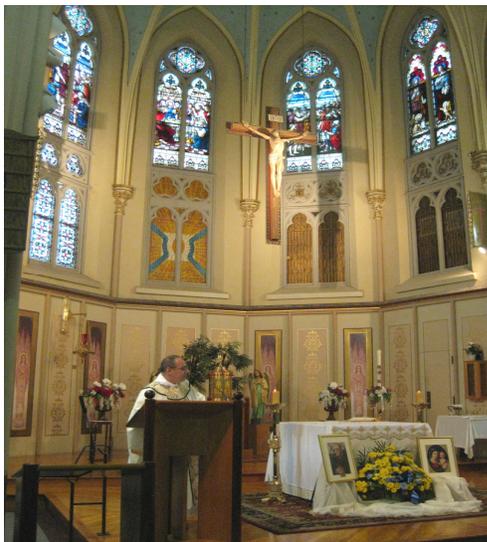
UPCOMING EVENT

SUMMER PICNIC

Sunday, September 12

3:00 PM

at the Pro Sanctity Center



**Founder’s Day
 Celebration
 at
 St. Fidelis Church**



*Msgr. Steven Aguggia
 reflected on the Life and
 Spirituality of Bishop
 Giaquinta during the
 liturgy ...*



- | Answers to Bible Trivia | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. John | 7. Luke |
| 2. Matthew,
Mark & Luke | 8. Matthew |
| 3. Mark | 9. John |
| 4. Matthew | 10. Luke |
| 5. Mark | 11. John |
| 6. Matthew | 12. Revelation |



*which was followed by a time of
 friendship and sharing*

Apostolic Oblates
Pro Sanctity
730 East 87th Street
Brooklyn NY 11236

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The Pro Sanctity Movement is a Catholic Organization dedicated to promoting the Universal Call to Holiness by seeking to address the needs of the mind with theology, the heart with spirituality, and the hands with ministry.

You are cordially invited to join us to celebrate the
DAY OF UNIVERSAL SANCTIFICATION

Saturday, November 13, 2010
11:00 AM

Our Lady of the Snows Church
258-15 80th Avenue
Floral Park, NY 11004

Celebrant: Rt. Rev. Msgr. Raymond F. Chappetto
Pastor of Our Lady of the Snows

For information please call 718-649-0324

Directions and Fall Schedule to follow