

# Good News



## The Pro Sanctity Newsletter

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## Our Roadmap to...

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After 2000 years, St. Paul certainly deserves a year dedicated to him! Pope Benedict has dedicated the year from June 28, 2008 to June 29, 2009, to honor the 2000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Saint Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles. How can we follow the road to holiness during this special year? In our Pro Sanctity Formation Manual for 2008-2009, which is available on our website at

[www.prosanctity.org](http://www.prosanctity.org), we try to understand the call to holiness in the light of Saint Paul's phrase: "Life is Christ." From the day he was converted to Christ on that road to Damascus, nothing made sense to Saint Paul without the Lord Jesus. St. Paul knew where he wanted to go, and even though he reached the city he set out for, God brought him to a different destination in his life.

If we are going to follow the roadmap to holiness this year, it will help if we stay close to Saint Paul. There are several ways to do this. One is to take time to read the Acts of the Apostles so you will become more familiar with the life of Saint Paul. Or, you might read his letters one at a time. Begin with one of the shorter ones, for example, the Letter to the Ephesians, which you can read through in one sitting. Then go back and try to learn by heart some of the beautiful passages there. Also, try to pay special attention to the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading on Sundays, since it is usually from one of his letters.

**In today's world**, it is not easy to become a saint. So many temptations surround us and many

*(Continued on page 3)*

## This Just In...

Nina Riti

On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, Pro Sanctity and the three cluster churches in Canarsie sponsored the first of, what we hope will be, an ongoing effort to inform and enlighten interested parties on various issues of concern in the church and the community. The first workshop: **Annulments and Family Life** was presented by Fr. Steven Aguggia along with Ana Puentes. This was a joint action on the part of Pro Sanctity and the three cluster churches as an attempt to answer questions after clarifying some common misconceptions on annulments. Fr. started by stating that annulments were **NOT** "Catholic divorces" but a process in which the tribunal ascertains if there exist grounds for declaring a marriage invalid. These reasons were discussed and the process explained. Ms. Puentes then talked about the family, all parties involved, and what they could do before, during, and after this process. All in all, it was a very informative night.

## The Personal Challenge...

Nina Riti

**This is the Advent season.** We are all going to be faced with the challenge of how we use this special time. Are we going to be caught up with the commercialism that has saturated the Christmas season to the point that we forget what Christmas is really about? We all have read the saying, "**Jesus is the reason for the season.**" Well, how about making sure in your busy pre-Christmas preparations of buying presents to decorating your tree, you incorporate some of the suggestions that were presented in the article on page 1. Take time this Christmas season to relax, not in front of the TV, but to read scripture, especially Paul. Try revisiting Corinthians as a starter. St. Paul wrote his Corinthian friends and in part of that letter he reminded them what Love really is. Why not try and read the whole letter as a challenge for Advent and continue to read all of Paul's letters as your time permits. Additionally, in the hustle and bustle of that frenzy of Christmas running...make sure you see the Christ in the people you encounter and more importantly let them see the Christ in **you**. This will certainly prove to be a challenge when you encounter tired and harried customers on those long lines filled with last minute shoppers. If you meet this challenge I am sure you **will** find what Christmas promises.



Highlights of the Church celebration

On November 1st, 2008 We were invited by Fr. Steven Aguggia to Celebrate the **Day of Prayer for Universal Sanctification** at St. Margaret's Church in Middle Village, Queens.



(Continued from page 1)

people we know pay no attention to the spiritual life. In Pro Sanctity, we have to be different. We have to try to become brothers and sisters to one another, saints for one another, to all around us, whether they are in the Church or not. If you are really trying to become a saint, it is easy to feel isolated in the world around you. This is why it is so important to surround yourself with friends and family members who have similar interests. Work to build up these relationships. **The support of others on the road to holiness is so important**, especially if we are tempted to become discouraged.

At times we may be faced with decisions at the crossroads of our lives. We

have to make an informed decision by learning as much as we can to decide what is right. Decisions we have to make should be placed before God in prayer and **ask God for the wisdom** and strength to know and to do his will. Jesus prayed the whole night before he chose his Apostles. Ask the Saints to pray for you and learn from them how they acted in situations which are similar to what you may be in. Speak with someone you trust who is a spiritual guide, to get holy advice regarding your decision.

One of the surest signs that we are following the road map to holiness is if we pray and participate in the Sacraments. Take the time to go to Mass and to pray before the Blessed Sacrament as often as

you can. Make it a point to go to Confession regularly. Pray to the Blessed Mother, hopefully the Rosary, every day and entrust your cares to her, Our Lady of Trust. **Respect yourself and respect others, as we are temples of the Holy Spirit and are precious to the Lord.** Another sure sign is our love of neighbor and our love of enemies. Look for ways to be of service, even to those it would be easier to avoid. This is what the Lord has done for us!

These are not new directions on the roadmap to holiness. The route is familiar but the challenges can intimidate us. Still, nothing except our own sin can separate us from the love of Christ. With that hope, we will follow the Lord to the end, as did Saint Paul.

**Msgr. Andrew Vaccari**  
National Pro Sanctity  
Spiritual Advisor

*May the birth of Jesus bring peace to your home,  
your heart, and to the far corners of the world.  
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year*



## Tools for the Journey

**Rosemary Darmstadt**

- We could have no better roadmap than the Word of God – Holy Scripture. But don't just "read" Scripture, pray it Pro Sanctity Style, as an **Explosive Gospel**. To find out "why" and "how," see the Formation Guide for 2008-2009, "All Saints: All Brothers and Sisters" on the Internet. (At [prosanctity.org](http://prosanctity.org) click on Library, click on Spiritual Reading **F**. Scroll down to Formation Plan for Pro Sanctity Members and Friends 2008-2009 and scroll down to the Appendix, where you'll find the explosive gospel.) You can read the Guide on-line or print parts, or all of it, if you wish.



- Here's another suggestion passed on by one of our Pro Sanctity members. One of her colleagues at work asked her, "What's new in the Church?" The PS member replied that the Church is encouraging us to read the Bible. The woman said, "Oh, no, I can't do that." (Sound familiar?) The PS member responded, "When you get home from work, you open your mail, don't you? Then read just 10 lines of the Bible each day and think of it as a letter from God." The woman replied with a smile, "Sure, I can do that."

# Ask Pro Sanctity...

Nina Riti

## What is a Synod?

The best answer to this question is to refer to Pope Benedict's response to the same question at the beginning of the World Synod of Bishops on the Bible. In his typical Benedict style he reviewed a bit of Church history as well as the roots of the Greek word "synodos." "Syn" means with and "odos" means road. This suggests the idea of traveling together. He explained very succinctly that the basic role of the Synod of Bishops, which is held every three years, is to advise the pope and solidify Church

communion. He reminded us that Pope Paul VI established the synod as a regular institution in 1965 toward the end of the Second Vatican Council. He listed the four main functions of the assemblies, namely, to promote closer union and cooperation between the pope and the bishops of the world, to furnish direct and accurate information about the church's situation and problems, to encourage harmony between doctrine and pastoral action and finally, to deal with themes of great importance and timeliness. At this point the synod is strictly a consultative role. Pope Benedict said, "The synodical dimension is an essen-

tial component of the church. It consists in the coming together of every population and culture to become one in Christ and walk together behind him." The profound wisdom of Vatican II is certainly seen in the establishment of the synod. To sum up: in my opinion, a synod is a way the pope keeps in touch with all his people, listens first and shares. The Synod of 2008 came up with 55 propositions to present to Pope Benedict XVI...the first part of the list was "The Word..." Put another way, this synod encouraged reading and meditating on Scripture.



PEACE



### What Happened at the 2008 Synod

Rosemary Darmstadt

For three weeks in October, several hundred bishops, priests, religious, lay men and women, and for the first time, a full ecumenical representation of movements and other religions, met in the Vatican to take part in a Synod on Holy Scripture. To be more specific, the overall theme of the Synod was "The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church." Pope Benedict XVI, who celebrated the opening mass, asked his audience to support and pray for the work of the Synod, and in a special way to seek "the maternal intercession of the Virgin Mary, the perfect Disciple of the Divine Word."

Workshops and discussions at the Synod were divided into four sub-themes:

Reading the Bible in the Context of the Church – It is important for Catholics to read scripture within the doctrinal and spiritual traditions of the Church. What this calls for is better preaching and greater use of *Lectio Divina* (prayerful and meditative reading of Scripture).

Making the Bible Accessible – Translations in local languages are needed; methods to bring Scripture to the illiterate must be developed; the Scriptures must be presented in a way that is understandable and interesting. Suggestions were made to be more creative in use of the media and in encouraging public performances, such as the Way of the Cross.

Making the Bible Relevant – Bishops, particularly from developing countries, insisted that the Bible must address the everyday problems of their people – poverty, war, disease, and cultural and religious diversity. Latin American and Asian Bishops stressed inculturation, i.e., to take seriously the values and perspectives of local cultures.

Reliance on the Laity – In view of the priest shortage formation of the laity, lay initiatives (new movements, "ecclesial" communities linked with the broader Church), and Liturgies of the Word led by the laity, were emphasized.

The fact that all the comments of the delegates, not simply brief summaries, were published on the Internet, is an excellent sign of the openness with which this Synod was conducted.

# Our Stories

Congratulation!  
Teresa and Brian  
on their Wedding Day  
October 11, 2008



All ages were  
present at our  
Summer picnic



Conference Day at St. Fidelis parish , organized by Pro Sanctity & Association. Latino Laico, presented worshops on spirituality, finance, budget, health, family and information on mortgages



Our celebration of November 1st continued with a social and friendship time in the parish hall of St. Margaret Church



## Words From the Founder

### A Christmas Prayer

By Bishop William Giaquinta

*Lord, I wish to make up  
for the love you were denied.*

*You were born in a deserted stable,  
for no one wanted to take you in.*

*It was the beginning  
of your silent, entreating journey  
in search of people  
who would receive you.*

*It is Christmas,  
the time when you, Lord, come again  
to beg for our love.*

*We wish to welcome you,  
Little Child.*

Thus we beg you, transform our hearts  
from cold dismal stables  
into warm abodes  
worthy of the gift of you.

### NEWS FLASH

#### Be the First to Enter the Modern Age

The Pro Sanctity Newsletter will be available electronically via e-mail in the future. If you would like to avail yourself of this easy way to have a newsletter at your fingertips, please send your e-mail address to us at [prosantitynewyork@verizon.net](mailto:prosantitynewyork@verizon.net).



The Servant of God, Bishop William Giaquinta  
always at his desk working for the  
Reign of God

### COMEDY CORNER The Pastor's Secretary

Gladys was the pastor's secretary and went to Mass each Sunday. One particular Sunday when his sermon seemed to go on forever, many in the congregation fell asleep.

After the service, to be sociable, she walked up to a very sleepy looking gentleman. In an attempt to revive him from his stupor, she extended her hand in greeting, and said, "Hello, I'm Gladys Dunn."

To which the gentleman replied, "You're not the only one!"



Look at Acts 20:7-12  
and you will see why St. Paul  
would appreciate this.

# Mark Your Calendar 2008 / 2009 !

## **Women on the Journey**

*Personal Growth - Mind, Body and Spirit*  
Sunday, December 7, 2008 - 3:00 to 6:00 PM

## What do you know about St. PAUL?

YOU don't have the time for a weekend retreat, so why not treat yourself to a 6 Monday night retreat where you will journey with this great spiritual guide!

When: 7:30 - 9 PM

Jan. 26 - Feb. 2, 9, 23 - Mar. 2, 9, 2009

Where: Pro Sanctity Center - 730 East 87th Street, Brooklyn, NY

## **PRO SANCTITY ANNUAL WEEKEND RETREAT**

March 20 - 22

Don Bosco Retreat Center - Stony Point, NY

## **MONTHLY ADORATION**

Come and spend some time with the LORD in the Blessed Sacrament

Second Friday of the Month - 7:30 - 8:30 PM

January 9, February 13, March 13.

### FESTIVAL OF FAITH

for children 3-9 years

Arts and crafts

Saturdays, Jan 10, Feb. 14, Mar. 14

10:30 AM - 12:00 NOON



### BIBLE SHARING

Getting to know Jesus

Every Thursday

7:30 - 9:00 PM

### SPANISH MINI RETREAT

St. Fidelis Parish - 124th & 15th Ave,

College Point - Queens

7:00 PM - Madonna Rm -

January 16, February 20, March 20.



All programs will be taking place at the Pro Sanctity Center, 730 E. 87th Street, Brooklyn, NY, unless otherwise specified

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