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NEWSLETTER OF PRO SANCTITY WEST

# Good News

## A Note From the Editor... by Hugh J. Treacy

As I composed this issue of *Good News*, Antonietta and I found ourselves in the midst of great preparation. Television, radio and Internet all trumpeted the “holidays”—an opportunity to gift our friends and families with festively wrapped toys, fashionable clothing, electronic games and gadgets of all kinds, delicious treats, and precious gems or exquisite scents to please our loved ones. New Year’s Eve celebrations followed closely on the heels of this worldwide observance.



We’ve also been preparing for another event. In this new year, Antonietta and I will become “fost-adopt” parents to one or two young children whose own parents have been missing, in one way or another, from their short lives. We’ve nearly completed the process with a local, private agency. Classroom training, Red Cross first aid and lifesaving certification, and fingerprinting and criminal background checks have all been completed. Piles of paperwork have been made small. A “home study” awaits us. To make room for youngsters in our home, we are in the midst of a remodeling project; to make room for them in our hearts, we prepare by envisioning ourselves as parents. We know children will generate tremendous change in our lives, and we as parents certainly will alter theirs. We often reflect on our own childhood experiences long past, noting the ways our parents interacted with us, guided us, encouraged and protected us, and yes, made a few mistakes along the way. Most importantly, we pray about our desire to become parents, that it be a desire implanted in our hearts by God, so that we will successfully face the challenges we surely will encounter with kids who have already become suspicious, angry, and hurt, yet hungry for a “real” home and a “real” family.

Two thousand years ago and 10,000 miles from here, Mary and Joseph welcomed an infant into the world under the most humble of circumstances. As new parents, they anticipated His arrival with great joy and prepared for Him with utmost care and love. This event was for us, of course, the real meaning of the Christmas holy day.

Our Advent journey of preparation in remembrance of that event was one that readied our hearts, minds, and souls to commemorate the coming of Our Lord Jesus at Christmas. Yet, He comes to us *whenever* we call Him, throughout the year. He hears our cries, and tends to our needs and the desires of our hearts as children of God. We are His children, and that’s as “real” as family gets!

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# Creating a Culture of Holiness...Part I...by Rev. Frank Jindra, Apostolic Sodales

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*The following are reflections left for us by Fr. Frank Jindra from his presentation during the 60th Anniversary Celebration of Pro Sanctity, held on September 23, 2007. We would like to revisit such insightful reflections, ponder them, and apply them to our spiritual growth. In these reflections, Fr. Frank integrates Scripture with selected writings of our Founder, Bishop Giaquinta.*

## **Holiness as a Prophetic Call** ***What is this call we have received?***

### **Amos 7:15-17 A Dresser of Sycamores**

"I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go prophesy to my people Israel.' Now therefore hear the word of the Lord...."

Out of our comfort zones....

### **Mark 10:51-52 Blind Bartemaeus**

"Jesus said to him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' And the blind man said to him, 'Master, let me receive my sight.' And Jesus said to him, 'Go your way; your faith has made you well.' And immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.'

### **From Bishop Giaquinta**

"We look to Jesus to complete our transformation in the beatific vision of Heaven, yet we must start heaven on earth now by the greatest effort possible in imitating the life and virtues of the Lord. Union with Him will come through the death of the 'old (self)' to the result of mortification, and through particular virtues practiced in our daily life.... Humility is the first among all the virtues; root it deeply in your heart if you wish to take even the smallest step on the road to perfection." (Giaquinta—*Formation and Apostolate*, 1973)

### **Luke 12:32-34 Do Not Be Afraid...Little Flock....**

"Jesus said: 'Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms; provide yourselves with purses that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.'"

To be a prophet means to set aside the fears and selfishness of our own lives and be ready for **whatever** God chooses to send our way.

## **I Believe in One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church...**

by Caterina Fava, A. O.

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*As we continue our faith journey, we, members of the Pro Sanctity Movement, are invited to devote this year 2007-2008 to ponder the meaning of the title above. That is, we are invited to reflect on what we truly believe about our Catholic faith. The following reflections have been offered by Caterina Fava—current General Moderator of the Apostolic Oblates—to members on a journey of spiritual formation. Caterina taps into various authors, from the Founder of Pro Sanctity, to Pope Benedict XVI, and to other spiritual writers. The reflections can be helpful to our own meditation and the examination of our relationship with the Church of today. Caterina writes:*

**I Believe.** To believe means to have faith, to trust, and to hold fast to the main and primary truths of our faith. The synthesis or fusion of such truths is called "*profession of faith*" and also "*symbols of faith.*" St. Ambrose writes, "*A symbol of faith is like a spiritual seal, a meditation from the heart, and an ever present protection. Without a doubt, it is a treasure which we safeguard within our soul.*" (Sermon)

**The Church.** The Church is a mystery that can never be completely disclosed. It is a constantly renewed invitation to reflect on her many images presented by the Word of God, namely: "*a flock, a family, a holy temple, a new Jerusalem, a precious pearl, a treasure, leaven, the vine and branches, and the wheat and the weeds that grow together until harvest time.*" (Jn 10:16; Mt 13:33; Mt 13:44; Jn 15:5; Mt 13:46)

*(continued on next page)*

## I Believe ... (continued from previous page)

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**One.** The Church is one from her foundation. The Church is one in her Founder, Christ. The Church is one in her soul. The Holy Spirit brings all the faithful into communion and unites them intimately to Christ. Unity is the characteristic of the Church; it is our ID card.... *“This is the house of God, built on living stones, in which He delights to live and where his eyes find no offense in misfortune or division.”* (African Author)

**Holy.** The Church is holy because it is born out of love...and sanctified by Christ through the sacrifice of His life offered out of love. Love is the essence of holiness—it is the treasure hidden in the hearts of the saints. *“God is love,”* said Pope Benedict XVI; and he continues to reiterate, *“God is love! This expression should not remain just a tenet of our faith, but become the experience of our life!”* (Deus Caritas Est, n. 6)

**Catholic.** The Church is Catholic because Christ is present to it and sends it on a mission to the whole human race. Christ, the universal Man par excellence, is the ALL who gives Himself to all, without exception or preferences.

**Apostolic.** The apostolic Church is built on the foundation of the Apostles, chosen and sent by Christ. The Apostolic Church passes on the teachings, which the Apostles entrusted to their successors. *“Christ continues His work begun in the ‘Cenacle’ (the Upper Room) through the hierarchy, the priesthood, and the sacraments. Christ is still at service and sanctifies us through the action of the priest.... We must know our Church in order to love her in her ideal image. For we are not in the Church, we are Church!”* (W. Giaquinta, The Church, 1963)

Let us open our hearts to the mysterious horizons of redemption, in order to understand what it really means for each one of us to be Catholic.

## Bishop Giaquinta’s Cooperatives: Past, Present, Future

by Karen Fugate, Aspirant Cooperative

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During this celebration year of the Pro Sanctity Movement, I would like to review the nature of the Cooperative as an integral part of the Institute.

Mary Stemmer has been a Cooperative from almost the beginning. She fell in love with Msgr. Giaquinta and his heartfelt message of love. She states that he was the most beautiful man who was always so humble and down-to-earth. He loved children and had such a gentle nature. Even when he spoke Italian, one understood what he said by his wonderful spirit and by what was in his heart. She learned that *we* are the Movement. We are to be his arms, legs, and voice to grow in awareness of his message so we may all become saints!

Judy Kosko was introduced to the Cooperative movement at the ripe old age of six through her mother, Cecilia McKnight. She grew up with the Oblates and Bishop Giaquinta, who came to stay in California every summer. The concept of becoming a saint, becoming holy, was not a foreign concept to her. It seemed possible, especially reading about the lives of the saints *before* they were “saintly.” It was a natural progression for her to become a Cooperative when she became a mother. She remembers pearls of wisdom from Bishop Giaquinta that remain with her to this day. One in particular from our Founder, that water always must flow or it becomes stagnant. Relating that truism to our lives, he urged that we always continue to grow and to keep moving—move toward holiness and become saints!

I am an Aspirant Cooperative. I am the “newbie” in the Movement. I’ve only been learning about Bishop Giaquinta and his teachings for the past few years. I was introduced to the Movement by my friend, Antonietta Treacy. I saw that she felt a sense of community among the other Cooperatives and the Oblates. This feeling of community urged me to seek further. Thought I had never met Bishop Giaquinta, I have become familiar with him through his prayers and writings, and through others who knew him and live his messages. His teachings to strive for holiness and to become saints by living and spreading the spirituality of redemptive love resonates within me. Through his words, the retreats, and the outpouring of love and the feeling of “family” within the Institute, the support is here to work continually toward holiness and saintliness!

## At the Movies: *Bella*... How We Saw It...by Marko and Ruth Botich

Recently, we took part in a four-day conference in Tucson, Arizona with the Knights and Ladies belonging to the “Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.” The conference was filled with very intense spiritual activities, fellowship and interesting tours of churches and shrines. Yet, for Ruth and I, the most exciting, eye-opening and powerful moment came with the screening of the movie, *Bella*.

As we watched this powerful movie of a tragic event tempered by love and healing, we were strongly reminded of an experience of immense proportions within our own family that challenged us to our core. In the movie, Jose—a young, athletic soccer star played by Eduardo Verástegui—accidentally kills a small child who darts in front of his moving automobile. The young athlete goes to prison, where he remorsefully remembers every detail of that tragedy for the next four or five years.

Our grandson experienced a similar, horrific auto accident in which the car he was driving struck and killed a young child who unexpectedly ran into the path of his vehicle. Although our grandson was innocent of any wrong-doing and did not go to jail, he entered into the self-imposed prison of drug abuse in a futile effort to forget this horrible tragedy. Thankfully, he’s now doing well after rehabilitation in Phoenix House, Santa Ana, California.

Naturally, seeing this fictional depiction of tragic death and painful remorse on the theater screen reminded us all too well of the guilt and suffering experienced by our grandson. *Bella*’s Jose withdrew from life as a soccer star to the anonymous life of a simple cook, until by chance he encounters Nina, a young, unmarried waitress who had just found herself pregnant and unemployed, played by actress Tammy Blanchard. Her situation arouses within Jose a desire to help, and in so doing, brings both of them out of distress and emotional exile into lives in which love for each other and the unborn child clearly leads to a healing of their grievous wounds. As their relationship blossoms, Jose and Nina develop enthusiasm for what lies ahead tomorrow and all the days after.

*Bella* opened our eyes to the fact that God asks us not to judge one another, but instead to pray for one another, especially for those who suffer from tragic circumstances. We can help those in distress through prayer and compassion for their suffering and loss. Out of tragedy can come renewal of body, mind, and spirit if we extend ourselves to help. In this way, our support and prayers advocate strongly for life and its inestimable value.

Despite its small budget and the small number of theater screens upon which it has been shown, *Bella* is not a movie to miss. We highly recommend this movie for its cinematic excellence, even more for its upbeat message that out of tragedy can come healing love and celebration of life.

## Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati: An Inspiration to Us All...

by Hugh J. Treacy, *Good News* Editor

Pier Giorgio Frassati packed a lifetime of prayer and service to God in his short 24 years on this Earth. Born in Turin, Italy on April 6, 1901 to Alfredo and Adelaide Frassati, he was educated at home with his sister Luciana, then attended a public school and a Jesuit-run school. He joined a Marian sodality and obtained permission to receive the Eucharist daily. He developed a deeply spiritual life that focused on the Eucharist and the Virgin Mary in his daily prayers. At 17, he joined the St. Vincent de Paul Society and cared for the needy, orphans, and returning veterans of World War I. Pier Giorgio then attended the Royal Polytechnic University of Turin to become a mining engineer so that he could “serve Christ better among the miners,” he would tell friends. While a student, Pier Giorgio engaged in political activism, but his focus was primarily on the poor. He frequently gave away his bus fare to the needy, and he considered himself privileged to be a servant of the poor. In this capacity, he gave of himself completely to them, and he kept them in constant prayer. Just before graduation, Pier Giorgio contracted poliomyelitis, perhaps from the sick to whom he offered care. After six days of terrible suffering, he died on July 4, 1925. The streets of Turin were full of his mourners. In 1989, Pope John Paul II visited his tomb and said Pier Giorgio was “a young man who was able to witness to Christ with singular effectiveness in this century.... In my youth, I also felt the beneficial influence of his example, and as a student I was impressed by the force of his Christian testimony.” On May 20, 1990, Pope John Paul II beatified Pier Giorgio Frassati, the “Man of the Eight Beatitudes.”



# All About Pro Sanctity: Who We Are, What We Do...

by Cathy McDonnell, Pro Sanctity Board President

The Pro Sanctity Movement is a worldwide organization of people within the Catholic Church who are dedicated to spreading God's Call to Holiness. There are many ways to become a member of the Movement—we can become a Friend of the Movement, or a Praying Member, a General Member, or a Committed Member. All members of the Movement are asked to pray the Pro Sanctity Prayer daily.

**Friends** of the Movement are touched by the ministry and spirituality of Pro Sanctity but may be unable to participate actively. They may attend a retreat, a special Mass, or a Pro Sanctity function. Friends beget new friends, and Pro Sanctity welcomes all Friends of the Movement. We love our Friends!

We have **Praying Members**, too! A Praying Member is one who supports Pro Sanctity primarily through prayer. These members may pray individually for Pro Sanctity, or they may meet as a group such as some of our Praying Members do in Monrovia under the direction of our Cooperative Mary Stemmer. Our Praying Members are a powerful lobby storming heaven for us to intercede on behalf of our brothers and sisters. They pray that the Call to Holiness will spread so that all may come to know they are called to be saints in our time. Thank you, Praying Members!

We also have **General Members**. The General Members support Pro Sanctity through attendance, prayer, financial support and involvement. These members may be on the phone calling members to remind them of an upcoming day of prayer, a Pro Sanctity function, or the like. They may assist with a special project at the Center; assist with a garage sale; or volunteer to assist with the Pro Sanctity booth at the annual St. Polycarp Christmas Bazaar. These members often attend a day of prayer, a retreat, Thanksgiving Dinner or annual Seder Meal or New Year's Eve Mass. They pay annual dues that support *Good News* newsletter mailings and other functions of the Pro Sanctity Center. We could not do it without all of our generous General Members!

Finally, we have our **Committed Members**. A Committed Member is one who attends and organizes Pro Sanctity functions and actively promotes the Pro Sanctity Movement. These members may be on the Board or actively involved in the Extended Board. The individuals involved with the creation and publication of the Pro Sanctity *Good News* Newsletter are Committed Members. The members who planned the 60th Anniversary Celebration are Committed Members. Those members who, over the years, planned the Black & White Dinners and retreats for men and women are Committed Members. These dedicated members invite others to hear more about Pro Sanctity. They are always on the lookout for new members who

## Pro Sanctity Prayer

*Jesus, Divine Master, who came down from heaven to give us the abundance of grace, increase it within us and make it become a river that overflows into eternal life.*

*Of your free will, you chose the agony of your passion and death, and in the Eucharist you give yourself as food for all people: help us to understand the greatness of such an example.*

*May the fire of your love burn away the impurities of our human weakness, and give us the strength to follow the invitation to the infinite perfection of the Father.*

*Of faith, give us firmness; of charity, zeal; of hope, firm certainty. Give us the desire to be heroic in every virtue, and the trust to attain holiness with the help of Mary, your mother and our mother.*

*Amen.*

might like to attend various events and hear the Pro Sanctity message. These members also support Pro Sanctity through annual dues to support the spread of the Movement. Thank you, Committed Members for all that you do to spread the message and grow the Movement!

There are many kinds of Pro Sanctity Members. Some are actively involved in spreading the Movement, while others are quietly assisting us with their earnest prayers and presence at gatherings. The Pro Sanctity Movement is open to all levels of involvement. Please consider inviting a friend to the next Pro Sanctity function.

We want all people to hear the message, "All Saints, All Brothers and Sisters!"



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