
Jesus Explosion III

By Father Ian Taylor

During the second half of his pontificate, looking towards the New Millennium, Pope John Paul II called on Catholics everywhere to launch a "New Evangelization." The purpose of this drive was to present Christ to the large portion of the world that remains unevangelized, and also to evangelize and /or re-evangelize the lukewarm and the lapsed among the baptized and catechized. Recognizing the tremendous challenges of the Post Modern Era, the Pope called for an evangelization "new in its fervor, new in its expression and new in its methods."

Several Catholics responded enthusiastically and among the new expressions emerged The Youth Explosion for teenagers and young people up to age 35. This movement has born tremendous fruit over the past 13 years in the Dutch Caribbean Islands of Aruba, Bon Air and Curacao. Three years ago Father Ian Taylor and Mrs. Janet Chinnia, having preached at these "Youth Explosions" for several years, launched in Trinidad an adaptation of this. Thus was born the "Jesus Explosion." From an initial 600 plus, the numbers of young adults and adults has multiplied to over 1,000 in July 2005. In an age when catholic liturgical participation is generally low, what is its attraction?

Music plays a major part in the "Explosion." In fact music bands, experienced in leading crowds in praise and worship, minister for the entire weekend. This year, a young catholic music ministry from Aruba called 4 Co (For Christ Only) ministered powerfully and in the Spirit despite their relative newness and youth. Their ages ranged from 14 to 21, except for the leader, Gregory Goedgedraag. English is also not their native language (Papiamento and Dutch are) yet, they performed masterfully. To win over youth to Christ one especially needs the medium of music. GRACE, a local Catholic music band shared the ministry time with 4 Co and helped to make Catholic worship truly alive and joyful for the participants.

Preaching should be a key factor of Catholic services, including the mass. No one could sleep or feel bored during these sessions. Speakers were chosen from among priests and lay preachers who have a charism for preaching. More and more we are seeing the emergence of good lay preachers. Among these was a lay preacher from Brazil, Celso Deretti, a single young man, devoted to the ministry, who demonstrated a gift to make Jesus real to the people. Women preachers are equally capable, and Janet Chinnia in her

fiery charismatic style invoked the Holy Spirit upon the assembly. When one preaches with expectancy, things happen; God is allowed to work. And many came forward in response, and as they committed themselves to their Lord, many 'rested in the Spirit!' This type of experience is most often an opportunity for an encounter with God – a grace for submission to Him. This has been our experience at the Jesus Explosion.

Mention must also be made of the workshops held on Sunday. Topics such as Spiritual Warfare, Defense of the Catholic Faith, Men in Ministry, Pro-Life and several others were enthusiastically communicated and received by our participants. Numerous have been the testimonies of the tremendous benefits of each of the weekend's ministries.

For the people it is important for them to see their priests on fire for Jesus in celebrating the Eucharist, in preaching the Word of God, and even in dancing before the Lord. Fathers Moses, Khan, Nathasingh, Makhan (42 years a priest), and Taylor entered fully into the weekend worship, communicating the Gospel with their whole being. Drove of young people, and adults too, streamed to confession. All the priests who assisted must be highly commended.

A treat this year was the
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Newsletter material from all Fraternity members is gratefully accepted!

Oh no, he's back!! Well folks, they've pulled me out of drydock—I am the chairman of the board for one year. Then, like Fr. Tim Graff, my term is over—I guess that makes me an interim chair. Wasn't Pope John XXIII an interim pope? Great things can happen, "for with God nothing is impossible" (Lk. 1.37). I want to take this time to honor Fr. Tim Graff for his service as chairman for the past two years. He is an example of true brotherhood and his zeal for the Fraternity of Priests is unparalleled. Thanks, Fr. Tim, you are a true brother and a valued friend!

I have recently returned from from our 2005 Annual Meeting in Cleveland, Ohio (Drew Carey is right, "Cleveland rocks!"). It is always exhilarating for me when we get together—16 fraternities were represented including brothers from Trinidad and Slovenia. What a sense of universal brotherhood! When I came home to Woonsocket, R.I., the readings of the 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time touched me deeply. In the first reading the prophet Elijah has been fleeing the evil Queen Jezebel who is seeking his life. He is the only prophet left in all of Israel. He finds himself in a cave on Mt. Horeb (Sinai) and he is despondent, depressed and quite weary of life. God reveals himself to Elijah in a way that touches the prophet deeply: not in wind, or earthquake, or fire as he did to Moses, but in a soft blowing breeze. This revelation restored and renewed the prophet for the rest of his ministry. You see, God never fails his friends.

In the gospel Jesus comes to his disciples who are struggling with an adverse wind on the Sea of Galilee "in the fourth watch of the night" (between 3 and 6am). He walks on the water to them seeing that they are in trouble. Of course the disciples think they are seeing a ghost and they start to scream. What does he say to them? "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid" (Mt. 14. 27). Even when Peter walks on water and starts to sink, Jesus is there to catch him and save him. God

never fails his friends.

"Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." Pope John Paul II quoted this phrase over and over around the entire world



throughout his papacy. Friends, throughout all the storms of life, the heartbreaks, the discouragements, the struggles with our concerns, temptations, our kids, and our circumstances, the message is the same: "...do not be afraid." Even as we live with the insecurity of world-wide terrorism, the pledge and promise of our God is always the same: "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid."

To you, our benefactors and intercessors—our friends—I would like to say, "Thanks", on behalf of all my brother priests. Thank you for your prayers and generosity over the years. Be assured of our prayers for your intentions.

In Jesus,

Fr. John

Fraternity Financial Report

One of the objectives for the Fraternity of Priests is to inform our donors about the ongoing financial health and details of the organization. We're providing this information to help communicate our specific need and to thank those many faithful benefactors who help make our service possible. Thank you!

Monthly Donation Budget: **\$6,300.00**

Actual Donations: **\$8,177.00**

Budget Surplus (shortage) **\$1,877.00**

Current as of July 31, 2005.

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anointed and beautiful voice of Kristin Taylor, a native of Tampa, Florida and a princess of Samoa in the South Pacific. At age 12, after praying to God desperately for a singing voice, it suddenly happened and with it, the gift to play the guitar. All her songs are received by inspiration. At age 44 she is the mother of 14 children, 4 biologically and 10 by adoption. She shared how she literally had to pray her young child back to life after finding him lifeless at the bottom of the pool one day. Our God is an awesome God!

Drama can effectively communicate the Gospel. Valerie Bethel and The Morne Diablo Youth proved this with a dramatized display of disaster news around the world. Then by contrast they presented the “Jesus Explosion” as a powerful sign from God indicating the true answer to this world’s problems: Jesus.

Invariably, the climax of the Youth Explosion and the Jesus Explosion is the procession with the Blessed Sacrament. To even a casual observer, it must appear that Jesus himself is walking among the crowd as they fell to their knees, wept in repentance, reached out to touch Him and rose victorious, their burdens lifted. This moment has sealed the faith of so many in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Even Pentecostals and other non-Catholics have had to admit the powerful presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament at that moment!

The Jesus Explosion had proven such a success that the organizers had to launch “The Jesus Revival” in September of 2004, as a follow-up. This year it will be held on Sept.24. Yet, one wonders, should not at least some of this joyful and powerful “Jesus Explosion” become the norm at Sunday masses and other liturgical services? Why should Catholics have to wait for an event to revive their faith? Perhaps it is time for the New Evangelization to become part of the mainstream of Catholic liturgical services. If this is of God, dare we allow Him to have His way? Dare we allow Him to renew ‘His’ Church? Wouldn’t our Catholics then acquire a new zeal for mission to the world? Do we dare?

Thoughts to Consider

On the occasion of his ordination to the priesthood St. Norbert said:

“O Priest! You are not yourself because you are God. You are not of yourself because you are the servant and minister of Christ. You are not your own because you are the spouse of the Church. You are not yourself because you are the mediator between God and man. You are not from yourself because you are nothing. What then are you? Nothing and everything. O Priest! Take care lest what was said to Christ on the cross be said to you: “He saved others, himself he cannot save.”

AN EXHORTATION

“Every priest—without exception—needs a spiritual director whom he sees regularly and to whom he opens his heart, and so too does every bishop. We need a pastor in our own lives who challenges us and supports us and calls us to real growth in the Spirit. Priests need to challenge one another when we see a brother going astray and following an inauthentic lifestyle. That is what real priestly fraternity and love demand. It is not about protection, cover-up, excuses; it is about supporting one another in holiness...

We cannot possibly succeed as priests without the support and encouragement of one another. I encourage each one of you to consider carefully the priestly friendships that complement your lives. Work hard at those friendships...Priestly fraternity is not contradictory to other types of friendships. In fact, we need those as well. Yet it must be within the bond of fraternal care that we have for one another that we will become better priests and bishops.”

Most Rev. Wilton Gregory
Archbishop of Atlanta, 2002

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A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

O Jesus, Eternal High Priest, live in (name of priest), act in him, speak in and through him. Think your thoughts in his mind, love through his heart. Give him your own disposition and feelings. Teach, lead and guide him always. Correct, enlighten and expand his thoughts and behavior. Possess his soul, take over his entire personality and life. Replace him with yourself. Incline him to constant adoration and thanksgiving; pray in and through him. Let him live in you and keep him in this intimate union always.

O Mary, Immaculate Conception, Mother of Jesus and Mother of priests, pray and intercede for (.....). Amen.

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O Mary, Immaculate Conception, Mother of Jesus and Mother of priests, pray and intercede for (.....). Amen.



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