

PENTECOST *Today*

April/May/June 2002 Volume 27, Number 2



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Editorial

by Ron Ryan

A glimpse of the face of God

This issue is about holiness—a difficult thing to describe. Spiritual directors, retreat masters and writers have been trying to put it into words for millennia, some having succeeded better than others; but holiness itself—in word and in deed—remains beyond the grasp of most of us.

We sometimes recognize it when we see it—but not always. We can identify it in people like Mother Theresa, Padre Pio, and the singularly faithful women and men we occasionally encounter. But the lives of the saints are peppered with stories of the times they were ridiculed, rejected and even persecuted because of their holiness. Francis of Assisi was mocked by his townsfolk; John of the Cross was imprisoned by his fellow Carmelites; Dorothy Day was stymied in her efforts by her own bishop.

We sometimes do not recognize holiness because it looks so different from what we expect it to be. It can easily be confused with foolishness, because it is the living out of the message of the cross, which Paul reminds us is folly to this world (1 Cor. 1:23). It is sometimes seen as subversive because the Gospel itself is radical. Holiness almost always makes us uncomfortable.

Perhaps the reason why holiness is difficult for us to recognize, and why it is so disconcerting, is because it is a glimpse of the face of God. In the vision of Isaiah, the prophet wails in fear and the seraphs themselves cover their faces as they behold the One they describe as “holy, holy, holy” (6:3). The holiness we perceive in others is a reflection of

the Holy One, our God whom the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us is infinitely beyond our understanding (n. 42).

And yet holiness is not foreign to our nature. After all, we are created in the image and likeness of God. Our call as children of God and as disciples of Jesus Christ is to be holy as our heavenly Father is holy, to reflect in our own way the face of the One who has created us and given us a share in the Holy Spirit.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit gives us a glimpse of the face of the all-holy creator. It enables us to overcome our fear and discomfort, to open ourselves to our awe-inspiring God, and to be immersed in the Father’s love.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit also gives us a glimpse of ourselves—our true identity—as daughters and sons of the One who is holy. We sense that there is more to our lives than what we have yet experienced, a freedom and joy to life that we have yet to know. And we come to realize that the Holy Spirit that we have been given is at work empowering us to live out our identity as holy people. If we cooperate, our lives “grow brighter and brighter, as we are turned into the very image that we reflect” (2 Cor. 3:18).

In doing so, we will probably make some people around us uncomfortable. They may think us foolish or radical. We may be ridiculed and rejected. But in our joy and graciousness, may we help them catch a glimpse of the face of God—and a hint of the beauty of their own reflection. ♦

PENTECOST Today

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This is a publication of the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the United States, Inc. The mission of the NSC is to stir into flame the grace of Pentecost within and beyond the church, to broaden and deepen the understanding that baptism in the Holy Spirit is the Christian inheritance of all, and to strengthen the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

The National Service Committee-Chariscenter USA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Contributions to defray the cost of this publication are gratefully accepted and are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please mail to:

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HOLINESS

The Charismatic Renewal and the call to holiness

by Mark H. Nehrbas

More than ten years ago Fr. Michael Scanlan, T.O.R., gave a teaching to our charismatic covenant community entitled “Knowing God’s Will.” The thought he shared has been etched in my mind ever since. He said, “If you want to know God’s will for your life, it can be found in 1 Thessalonias 4:3. ‘It is God’s will that you should be holy.’”

But what does it mean to be holy? For years prior to and shortly after Vatican II, many people in the church didn’t think too much about holiness. Lay people were not reading the Bible and simply followed the teachings of the nuns in Catholic schools or CCD classes. We learned that it was a mortal sin not to fulfill our Sunday obligation by attending Sunday Mass. It was important to go to confession once a month or so. As long as we didn’t commit a big sin (or quickly went to confession when we did) we were okay and we were probably going to make it to heaven.

We thought holiness was for the priests and nuns who lived the celibate life.

Because of God’s mercy many of us in the Renewal have experienced the Spirit’s power to overcome our sinfulness and to live a life growing in holiness.

The promulgation of the teachings of Vatican II and the fresh experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit began to change all that. There was a powerful coming together of the institutional and the charismatic elements of the church in the late sixties.

Vatican II clearly defined holiness and put out a clarion call to the laity. The Church Fathers wanted us to know that “all Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity” (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 40). Vatican II made it clear that even lay people were called to holiness. No longer were we able to avoid our responsibility to live a holy life by saying, “that’s for the priests and the nuns.”

At the same time, God’s lay faithful, many clergy, sisters and brothers were experiencing a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit. People were discovering a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit to change their lives. The Spirit was working to change people’s lives by empowering them to leave a life of sin and providing the desire and grace to live a life of faith and righteousness. ►

When I was 19 (in 1971) I was living a very sinful life. While traveling the country searching for meaning, I met a fellow college student. He shared the Gospel with me and I surrendered my life to the Lord. As soon as I finished praying the prayer of commitment to Jesus, I had a sense that the life I was leading was “the darkness” and Christ was “the light.” When I prayed for baptism in the Holy Spirit later that day, I received the release of the power of the sacraments to change me and to live a righteous life. I did not understand that as a call to holiness at the time, but in my heart I wanted to stop doing what was wrong. The Holy Spirit was already beginning to help me.

Holiness is a call from God to be transformed from our sinful tendencies and behaviors into tendencies and behaviors that are more God-like. Dr. Alan Schreck says holiness is the action of the Holy Spirit instilling “in people the virtues and character of God” (*Hearts Aflame*, p. 89). It is not just getting rid of sin in our lives, although that is necessary. It is also the positive living out of a life that is more God-like.

Scripture and church tradition tell us that the Holy Spirit is the “Sanctifier” (see *Dominum et Vivificantem*, Pope John Paul II), the one who makes us holy. It is because of the merits of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that we can become holy; but it is the Spirit who lives in our hearts that makes us holy.

Pope John Paul II refers to the sanctifying work of the Spirit many times in his writings. He spoke on this topic during a Wednesday general audience in December 1990. Referring to the apostles gathered with Mary in the upper room, he said: “From that time until the end of time, that holiness, the fullness of which is always Christ from whom we receive all grace (cf. Jn. 1:16) is bestowed on all those who open themselves to the power of the Holy Spirit through the apostles’ teaching. As the apostle Peter said in his Pentecost discourse, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit’ (Acts 2:38).”

The Spirit first helps us to grow in holiness by showing us our sin. Jesus, referring to the Spirit in John 16:8, says, “When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin, and righteousness and judgment.” We need to see our sin and repent of it in order to grow in holiness. Sin blocks our ability to see God and worship him. It also blocks our ability to receive the new life that God has for us.

But the Spirit does more than just show us our sins. He also leads us to repent of them and fills us with the very life of God. “If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit who dwells in you” (Rm. 8:10-11). This is not something we can do on our own power, because we are sinners incapable of restoring a right relationship with God. Only Jesus can make us righteous with God (see Rm. 5:19).

Excerpts from *Lumen Gentium*

Christian married couples and parents, following their own way, should support one another in grace all through life with faithful love, and should train their children (lovingly received from God) in Christian doctrine and evangelical virtues. Because in this way they present to all an example of unflinching and generous love, they build up the communion of charity, and they stand as witnesses and cooperators of the fruitfulness of mother church, as a sign of and as a share in that love with which Christ loved his bride and gave himself for her.

In a different way, a similar example is given by widows and single people, who can also greatly contribute to the holiness and activity of the church.

Those who engage in human work, often of a heavy kind, should perfect themselves through it, help their fellow citizens, and promote the betterment of the whole of human society and the whole of creation. Indeed, with their active charity...they should imitate Christ who plied his hands with carpenter’s tools and is always working with the Father for the salvation of all; and they should rise to a higher sanctity, truly apostolic, by their everyday work itself. (n. 41)

Because of God’s mercy many of us in the Renewal have experienced the Spirit’s power to overcome our sinfulness and to live a life growing in holiness. “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17-18).

Finally, the power of the Spirit continually works in us so we can bear the fruit of love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (see Gal. 5:22). If we possess these in our lives, we will be holy indeed!

It is not always easy to be open to God’s grace to grow in holiness. There are times when we will fail. But I am so grateful for the gifts of the teaching of our church and the power of the Holy Spirit!



God truly gives us all that we need to live the life of holiness that is pleasing to him. ♦

A member of the National Service Committee, Mark Nehrbas serves as interim Vice-President for University Relations at the Franciscan University of Steubenville.

Test of faith

LOSS

and the call to holiness

by Karen Archer

“Duc in altum!” In his apostolic letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, Pope John Paul II echoes the call to faith that Jesus gave to his apostles to “put out into the deep.” He calls the faithful to step out in faith and open our hearts to the tide of grace, and thus allow the word of Christ to flow through us in all its power.

I was reflecting on this passage from Luke 5 where Peter and the disciples were returning from fishing all night. Jesus comes aboard and tells them to set out again and to drop their fishing nets. I imagined them looking around at each other and mumbling, “What does he know? He’s not a fisherman...just the son of a carpenter...doesn’t he know we’re tired? We’ve been out here all night and we want to get home to bed!” But Jesus, sensing their hesitation, persisted. “Drop your nets; put out into the deep; have faith.”

Can you imagine that, too? Can you think about the times in your life that Jesus has challenged you to put out into the deep? Where the call to faith has been far more than you imagined? Can you place yourself in the boat—grumbling? I can.

I can place myself there on a May morning in 1983 when my son, Christopher, was diagnosed with cancer at the age of 2. I picture myself grumbling as he went through treatment and I worried about him and wondered, “Where is God?”

It is easy to get discouraged when things are going badly. But we need not lose heart because we know that God is at work in our lives, even in the midst of pain and suffering.

I can place myself there in December 1987 when we learned that my daughter, Kelley Anne, who had just celebrated her first birthday, was also diagnosed with cancer. I heard the call to faith from Christopher’s oncologist, now Kelley Anne’s doctor, reminding my husband, Jim, and me of the faith that carried us through Christopher’s illness—how we needed to step out again and have hope for Kelley Anne and to expect God to work.

I can picture myself on that boat on the morning of May 19, 1992, when I woke to find Kelley Anne had gone to eternity while she lay sleeping in my arms.

I can picture myself there in September 1992 when we learned that Christopher had relapsed.

I can picture myself there on the evening of January 16, 2000, with the family gathered around Christopher, his father holding him in his arms, Chris holding my hands, caressing them to his face, as he struggled with his last breath.

I can put myself there each day as I struggle with the reality that the circle of human life was broken in my family, that two of my children have already gone to be with their eternal Father.

How do we respond to that call when challenged time and again? It is easy to get discouraged when things are going badly. But we need not lose heart because we know that God is at work in our lives, even in the midst of pain and suffering.

Luke’s gospel goes on to say that when they threw out the nets they were overwhelmed by what they caught. We, too, were overwhelmed. We were blessed with communities that supported us and family and friends that held us together. And our children were blessed. Christopher sailed through treatment with little or no side effects and went into a remission that lasted for almost ten years. Kelley Anne grew in faith and by the age of five came to know Jesus as her Lord and savior. She showed me what simple faith is like—to be childlike before the Father and to desire Jesus no matter what!

See *Loss* page 13



Pilgrimage to holiness

by *Francee Karpiej*

It was 1989 when we first made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and to see the words of Scripture come alive. On one occasion we visited the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus was arrested. I prayed and reflected deeply about the agony of our Lord in the garden, but my heart was not moved. The pilgrimage then led us to the house of Caiphas, the High Priest, where Jesus was taken after his arrest. We came to a place where prisoners were kept. It is believed that this is where Jesus was held overnight. It was a small pit hewn out of rock. A cold, damp, dark place.

When traveling to places made holy by blessed men and women, we gain a broader understanding of our own pathway to holiness.

Our group of pilgrims stood shoulder to shoulder in this stone-cold holding place. We looked above our heads to the hole in the ceiling which, in those days, was

the only way in and out of the pit. The guide turned out the light for a moment to give us a deeper sense of how Jesus might have felt there that night. A silence overcame us. I heard someone read from Psalm 88: "For my soul is full of trouble and my life draws near the grave. I am counted among those who go down to the pit. I am like a man without strength" (v. 3, 4).

It was here I encountered Christ. Here, I wept and experienced a deeper conversion of heart. It seemed for the first time I understood what Jesus endured for me—for my sins. Abandoned by his friends, he was thrust into a dark, dreary pit. Alone, Jesus cried out to God, his Father. In some mystical way, I related to his human weakness and suffering and I knew deep inside that he truly related to mine.

I was not prepared for such an internal experience that would call me deeper into my faith. Nor was I prepared for the subsequent

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Joy Joy Joy

by Dorothy Ranaghan

"A sad saint is a sorry sort of saint." This stinging remark of St. Francis de Sales reminds me of St. Augustine's zinger, "A Christian should be an alleluia from head to toe." Are these sainted men asking the impossible? What is Christian joy? I remember reading once that Christian joy is not a vague, fuzzy, unknowable reality, but "as hard and real and as clear as the New York skyline seen from the New Jersey shore." Yet in a few brief and tragic hours last September 11th, we saw what could happen to the New York skyline, and how easily such certainties can be marred by terror, fear and distress.

The Spirit is the smile of the Father on the face of Jesus, in whose presence "is the fullness of joy."

We know joy has come into the world. Having found him, can we avoid sorrow and suffering? Never. But Francis de Sales issues this firm reminder: "We may be excused for not being always in good spirits, for no one has such control over cheerfulness as to be cheerful at will. But it is inexcusable for us not to be pleasant, agreeable and considerate at all times. This is always in the power of our will. And to overcome a contrary humor and inclination, it is only necessary to resolve to do so." These are tough words, but true. They are not true because of the firmness of our will, however, but because of the mercy of God's provision. He has sent his Holy Spirit.

God knew that living the life he was calling us to would be difficult, and so he put his very own joy into us so that it would be possible for us to live as his followers. In John 17:13, Jesus says that he wants to share his joy with us to the full. Just as his teachings were not just his own but were of and from the Father, so too his joy, his disposition, was of and from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the disposition of God. The Holy Spirit produces an abundant harvest in

our lives. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit. To Jesus and to us, the Father says, "God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness." This oil of gladness, this Spirit, makes it possible for us to begin to understand the text of Scripture that calls us to rejoice in the Lord always.

It is the Spirit who helps us to keep our wills united with that of our Father. Turmoil is a red flag that alerts us to a misalignment of our will. Jesus went through turmoil in Gethsemane, but having surrendered, he went with great serenity to Calvary. If the foolishness of joy in the midst of sadness is a scandal, it is the foolishness of the cross of Jesus.

In John's gospel, chapter 15, verse 11, Jesus says, "I have told you *this* so that my own joy may be in you and your joy may be complete." Since we want complete joy, we need to know what is *this* of which he speaks. It is that we keep his commandments. And Jesus makes sure we know precisely what he commands: "This is my commandment; love one another as I have loved you" (15:12). Christ's way to joy lies in giving himself away.

We too will experience joy in giving ourselves in love. In fact, its opposite brings sadness. Sick and sad people are often too self-absorbed, too lacking in humility to see humor in anything. Good psychologists recognize that one of the signs of mental illness is a rigid or brittle disposition with no room for mirth. Cheerfulness is a way of loving others. If we form a habit of cheerfulness, it is not so that we will feel better, or because we are Pollyannas, but because cheerfulness makes families places of joy and openness. Cheerfulness makes hospitality a true welcoming of others, and it aids evangelization. No one is attracted to a sourpuss. We can't be fishers of men unless we are juicy, happy-looking bait! We are not supposed to be what Bob Mumford once called "the white knuckle club of Christianity," holding it all together by sheer force and strain, but we are to be joyous and free. Saints excel at it—think of St. Lawrence on the rack—showing an ability to laugh at one's circumstances no matter how difficult, while surrendering to God's will in all things.





Spiritual Formation

The Spirit is the smile of the Father on the face of Jesus, in whose presence “is the fullness of joy.” The words to a simple song many of us have sung before remind us that in the presence of our God we will find joy both now and forever. Joy “is a flag flown high from the castle of my heart when the king is

in residence there.” It is an image that comes from the time of medieval castles where the custom was to fly a flag when its resident was at home. We have similar customs today. In the wake of terrorism, as patriotism was high in the United States, flags flew everywhere to remind the whole world that we would not be defeated. In the United States, a flag flown at half-mast means someone is dead. The Christian flag of joy should never be at half-mast. Jesus, the king of our castle, is both joy to and Lord of the world, and he is risen and alive.

If the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead lives in us, then the joy of the Lord will be our strength. Though our lives and circumstances are filled with fear, difficulty, pain, suffering or terror, the flag of our joy will be up and flying high for the whole world to see—and believe. ♦

Dorothy Garrity Ranaghan is a founding member of the People of Praise Community.

A former member of the National Service Committee and former editor of the Chariscenter USA Newsletter, Dorothy currently does writing and retreat work. She and her husband, Kevin, live in South Bend, Indiana, and have six children and seven grandchildren.



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Joy

Teaching Outline

- A. Joy has come into the world in the person of Jesus.
- B. The world tries to rob us of joy.
- C. We can experience and maintain joy because of the Spirit.

Joy is a fruit of the Spirit.
- D. Christ's joy manifested itself in self-emptying love, and we are commanded to do the same.

Cheerfulness is possible and is a way of loving.
- E. In Jesus' presence is the fullness of joy and our strength.

Discussion Questions

1. Is Christian joy possible in this world? Why?
2. What does joy look like in daily life?
3. What is the relationship between joy and love?
4. What kind of sign are we to the world?

Raising our hearts, minds and voices

by Bill Richart

After a recent night of healing praise, a woman came up to me with tears streaming down her face and told me that the Lord had touched her deeply during the worship. After we thanked him together, she told me that she was going to go home to change a few things, because “I just can’t stay the way I am anymore.” In the Lord’s incredible Presence she could not remain the same.

The Lord is calling us into *much* deeper holiness.

One of the ways that the Lord has given us to grow in holiness is through praise and worship. My “mission statement” or philosophy of ministry is this: “My greatest joy is bringing the people of God, through worship, to that place of Presence where the Lord moves in power.” When the Spirit is moving in power, lives are changed, tears flow and healing takes place.

It is no mistake that Billy Graham invites crowds to accept Christ as their Lord and savior while the choir sings “Just As I Am.” Music

has the ability to cut through the noise in our minds and speak straight to the heart—because God made it that way. As St. Augustine said, “He who sings, prays twice.” Prayer brings us into the Presence of the living God and singing our prayer brings us into a special Presence, a special grace.

Pope John Paul II stated in *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, “Training in holiness calls for a Christian life distinguished above all in the art of prayer. . . Prayer can progress, as a genuine dialogue of love, to the point of rendering the person wholly possessed by the divine Beloved, vibrating at the Spirit’s touch. . . Our Christian communities must become genuine ‘schools’ of prayer, where the meeting with Christ is expressed not just in imploring help, but also in thanksgiving, praise, adoration, contemplation, listening and ardent devotion until the heart truly ‘falls in love’” (n. 32, 33). As people involved in the Charismatic Re-

newal, we have a special gift of prayer which pours from us and through us as we pray in the Spirit (cf. Rm. 8:26).

So, how do we get into—and stay in—that place of Presence? A few suggestions:

- ❖ First, recognize that the Lord moves powerfully in praise and make it a priority in our private prayer time, our prayer meetings and our conferences. Too often it is the first thing cut if we are running late or have a teaching to give. Not giving God the time he deserves is a quick way to stifle the transforming move of the Spirit.

- ❖ Set a *minimum* time of praise. Too often praise leaders are given a maximum time and are unable to respond when the Spirit moves in an unexpected way. Why put the Holy Spirit—the third person of the Trinity, the fire of God—in a box? I have no doubt that what-



ever wonderful things the Spirit has planned will be infinitely better than what I have planned.

❖ Let the anointing build through the worship session; don't cut off the praise. Once the Spirit is interrupted, it's almost necessary to start over. I keep the music going between songs—this encourages singing in tongues and often will release this gift in those who have not received it.

❖ Speak the truth in love. I know someone who genuinely believes that, when she interrupts the "flow" to read a whole chapter of Ephesians, she is being obedient to the Spirit. I believe that charismatic leadership is not about "leading" but rather discerning what the Spirit is doing, and *getting out of the way*—and not letting anything or anyone else get in the way. If someone is out of order, speak the truth in love and clear the way for the Lord!

❖ Do not be afraid of silence. Sometimes the Lord will move us into a time of sustained worship in tongues, followed by an intense period of quiet. Good worship tends to lead into silence, the type of silence that is presence, where the Lord is speaking beyond words. Stay there; don't go to the next thing. If he is speaking beyond words, a return to words (another song, a Scripture, even a prophetic word) is actually a step away from the intimacy of gazing upon his face. Stand in the glory!

❖ Make provisions for praise. If your worship leader needs to improve (and we all do), pray for him/her, then send him/her to a workshop and cover the expense. If you don't have a live musician, try tapes. We recorded a live praise tape in Detroit which is used by prayer groups all over the country. One live session with praise, worship, glory, singing in tongues, silence, etc. (rather than a compilation of songs) most truly reflects what we (and

the Lord) do during a praise set. However you do it, plan on praising!

❖ Be sure that your praise leader is part of the leadership of the prayer group. One song "out of order" can totally change the direction of a prayer group. Leaders must share the same vision for the meeting!

Yes, entering into the Lord's Presence through deep praise and worship causes us to love him more, to want him more, and to grow in holiness, the very reflection of the face of God. Let Jesus Christ be Lord and praise him with all you've got! ♦



Bill Richart is an itinerant preacher and minister of praise and worship. He is a member of the NSC Council.

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NEWSBRIEFS

NSC elects three new members

At the National Service Committee's January meeting in San Antonio, Texas, two members were re-elected (Fr. Art Cooney, OFM, and Aggie Neck) and three new members were elected: Fr. Richard Loch, Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner, SSND, and David Thorp.



Fr. Richard Loch is a priest of the Diocese of Scranton, Pennsylvania, and was ordained in 1979. Since 1996 he has served as pastor of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish. Involved in the Charismatic Renewal since 1972, he has been Moderator and Liaison to the Renewal since 1985.

Fr. Loch served from 1995 to 2001 on the Diocesan Liaison Steering Committee, the last three years of which he served as Chairperson. In that capacity he served as the Liaison Consultant to the National Service Committee from September 1998 to April 2001.



Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner is a member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. She is currently the Community Life Coordinator at Church of the Risen Savior in Burnsville, Minnesota. Formerly the Liaison in the Diocese of Winona, she served on the Diocesan Liaison Steering Committee for six years. For several years she worked as a hospital chaplain and then as a care minister for the elderly sisters in her order.

Gathering of National Leadership Groups

Members of the Association of Diocesan Liaisons Steering Committee, the National Service Committee, the Korean Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the US of America, *Comité Nacional de Servicio Hispano*, *Le Conseil du Renouveau Charismatique Catholique Des Haïtiens D'Outre-Mer* and the Alliance of Filipino Catholic Charismatic Prayer Communities met in mid-January in San Antonio, Texas, with Bishop Sam Jacobs, Chairman of the Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Bishop Tom Flanagan, and two representatives of the Catholic Fraternity of Charismatic Covenant Communities and Fellowships. The gathering met un-

Sr. Mary Anne was first appointed to the former Advisory Committee to the NSC in 1992. She then became a member of the NSC Council when it was formed in 2000.



David Thorp is the Director of Evangelization for St. Patrick Parish in Natick, Massachusetts. David has held various positions in the Charismatic Renewal and in the Archdiocese of Boston, including Director of the Charismatic Renewal Office from 1979 to 1986, and again from 1995 to 1999; Archdiocesan Director of Evangelization from 1988 to 1994; and Program Director for the Espousal Retreat House from 1994 to 1995. David has served as Liaison to the Charismatic Renewal for the Archdiocese of Boston since 1996.

David was first appointed to the Advisory Committee to the NSC in 1982. In 1984 he was elected to the NSC and served until 1991. From 1989-1992 David was a member of the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Office (now known as ICCRS) Council. In the early 80s he worked for the NSC as a Traveling Timothy and, with Sr. Nancy Kellar, SC, developed and produced the NSC's Leadership Training Videos. From 1992 to his current election to the Service Committee he again served on the Advisory Committee and more recently on the NSC Council. David and his wife, Barbara, have three children. ♦

der the direction of a Committee of Five led by Bishop Jacobs and consisting of the Chairpersons of the NSC (outgoing, Fr. Patsy Iaquina, and incoming, Aggie Neck) and the Diocesan Liaisons Steering Committee (Judith Hughes), an ethnic representative (Msgr. Joseph Malagrecia), and a representative of the Fraternity (Dennis McBride).

The purpose of the Gathering is to bring the groups together for prayer, fellowship and hearing the word of the Lord for the Renewal. About forty-three leaders were present in San Antonio. There were two new additions to the Gathering. Jim Murphy was present as the US representative to ICCRS. Each of the leadership groups was also encouraged to bring one or two younger leaders (i.e. under 35). There were seven such leaders present.

National Service Committee Meets

The National Service Committee met in mid-January in San Antonio, Texas. Following the elections of new members and new Chairman, the agenda included a variety of topics:

- * review of the status and membership of the NSC Council;
- * discussion of the Committee's 2001 financial report and fundraising challenges;
- * prayer for the Renewal;
- * discussion of the upcoming Regional Leaders' Gatherings;
- * approval of plans for several of the working groups formed in the October 2001 NSC/NSC Council meeting;
- * preparation for its meeting with the Diocesan Liaison Steering Committee and the Gathering of National Leadership Groups.

The NSC then met with the Association of Diocesan Liaisons Steering Committee to prayerfully assess the state of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the US. Following its meeting with the ADL Steering Committee, the NSC participated in the Gathering of National Leadership Groups (see accompanying article). ♦

Most of the time together was spent in prayer, small group sharing and discussion. Several reports were given by those present who had attended the Vatican-sponsored colloquium on "Prayer for Healing and the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church" last November (see the report in *Pentecost Today*, January/February/March 2002, p. 11).

The attendees reaffirmed the Unity Statement as revised in Alexandria, Louisiana, in January 2001 and adopted three resolutions:

- Following the will of God and responding to the call of the Holy Father to go deeper:
 - We commit ourselves to grow in personal holiness and to encourage the people to whom we minister to a greater holiness by providing proper teaching and example.
 - We renew our commitment to *communio* by promoting and living out the various points in our Unity Statement and by seeking out ways to strive for the unity God desires within the Charismatic Renewal.
 - We will continue to seek in prayer and discernment the *new thing* God is doing in the present grace moment and to follow the lead of his anointing. ♦

*New Life in the Spirit Seminars
Catholic Edition 2000*

The baptism of Jesus and the *New Life in the Spirit Seminars*

The most striking difference in the talks presented during the *New Life in the Spirit Seminars Catholic Edition 2000* are entitled “New Life.” This talk invites participants to imitate Jesus in his surrender to the Spirit. It gives special attention to his baptism in the Jordan as a time of anointing. The idea of imitating the disciples of Jesus in their surrender to the Spirit at Pentecost is left for the following week. This new approach is actually quite old and was important in the early centuries of church history, as noted in *Fanning the Flame*. Here are several reasons why this approach is taken.

1. Treating the baptism of Jesus gives more time and attention to building a relationship with Jesus. We are called to imitate Jesus as the one who models new life for us. The actions of Jesus are steeped in the gifts, fruits and charisms of the Spirit. He responds to the needs of those around him through his own intimate relationship with the Spirit. Choosing Jesus as Lord means choosing to live in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life. We can only follow Jesus through the power of the Spirit.
2. Paying attention to the baptism of Jesus underlines the importance of the sacraments of baptism and confirmation. These sacraments are meant to be ongoing, palpable realities. Just as we use water on a daily basis for drinking and washing, we can draw daily strength from these sacraments. We say “yes” to our own baptisms when we pray the creed at Mass and as we renew our baptismal vows during the seminar. The importance of living water is also reflected in the prominence of baptismal fonts and holy water in our churches. Even though most Catholics find it to be much easier to envision the central role of the Eucharist, all three sacraments of initiation are meant to work together in our daily lives.
3. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (n. 438) draws attention to the baptism of Jesus as an important time of anointing. Mark’s Gospel also considers the baptism

of Jesus as a very significant event, important enough to use as the beginning of his gospel. Mark portrays the Spirit as a dynamic force in the life of Jesus. The Spirit drives Jesus into the desert after his baptism. In Mark 15:39, Jesus breathes his last, relinquishing the breath of life, the Spirit of God. And it is in this gesture that the centurion recognizes Jesus as the Son of God. Luke also stresses the importance of the Spirit in the ministry of Jesus when he recounts the events in the synagogue at Nazareth where Jesus declares, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me” (Lk. 4:16). When we take this declaration seriously we see the proclamation of the good news, the preaching, healing and ministry of Jesus as acts of the Spirit.

4. In considering the baptism of Jesus we are dealing with a paradox. Jesus was conceived in the Holy Spirit and was uniquely “filled” with the Spirit long before his baptism, but something more did happen on that day by the Jordan River. The baptism in the Jordan was a powerful new manifestation of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. One of the strengths of the Charismatic Renewal is an excitement about the unfolding manifestations of all three persons of the Trinity. God has given us a desire for more through many “baptisms” and outpourings of the Spirit. The *New Life in the Spirit Seminars* offer an awareness of the Spirit as what St. Cyril of Jerusalem calls “a new kind of water” that flows on a continual basis. We too can surrender to the Holy Spirit over and over again, letting the Spirit unfold in greater ways for the sake of the world around us.

Jesus leads the way in seeking both an ongoing intimacy with the Father and with the Spirit. Just as we can appreciate the gospel intimacy that Jesus had with the Father, we can also appreciate the way Jesus grew in intimacy with the Holy Spirit. As Jacob of Serugh states, we are called to realize that “all who follow Christ into the Jordan put on a garment of living fire”—the fire of the Spirit. ♦

The *New Life in the Spirit Seminars Team Manual: Catholic Edition 2000* sells at \$9.95.

A bulk discount of 30% is available for purchase of five copies or more (shipping and handling extra). For more information, call Chariscenter USA at 1-800-338-2445.

Loss from p. 5

When Chris was little we had a word from God that God's glory would surround him and that he would grow into a man of God. In Christopher's later illness he showed me endurance and steadfastness, humility and quiet piety. He had grown into that man of God. Christopher was a witness, a sign of ongoing conversion. He knew that God loved him. He did not understand why things happened the way they did, but that did not change the fact that he believed that God loved him and was with him.

Peter's faith was tested that day on the Lake of Gennesaret. Jesus asked him to go beyond what he knew and to trust him. My faith was tested and continues to be tested. In his book, *Job and the Mystery of Suffering*, Fr. Richard Rohr writes: "Untested faith tends to produce

Pilgrimage from p. 6

call within my heart to deeper prayer. Becoming a pilgrim led me closer to God and gave me a greater desire to live my Christian faith, yielding to God's grace to make me a better person, a *holy* person. I am convinced God's love was revealed to me in a mighty way that day in the pit, and it was only a beginning.

A pilgrimage is a retreat on your feet. When traveling to places made holy by blessed men and women, we gain a broader understanding of our own pathway to holiness. Whether we journey to the Holy Land, Fatima, Lourdes, Rome, Assisi or other sacred shrines near or far, God invites us to seek and to yield to his all-encompassing love along the way. Our willingness to step out of our comfort zone and journey towards God will not leave us disappointed.

My experience over the years as a pilgrim has brought me from the "pit" to Pentecost and—hopefully—to eternity. I am very grateful. ♦



Francee Karpiej, a former member the NSC Council, is a national speaker and retreat director. She and her husband, Joe, lead pilgrimages through Sharing Christ Ministry based in Trumbull, Connecticut.

a very mechanic and impersonal spirituality. Mature faith, however, has almost always a quality of paradox and mystery about it—as if to leave room for the freedom of God."

Let us continue then to put out into the deep, to walk forward with unyielding faith, leaving room for God and trusting in his goodness and mercy. For it is that faith which leads to hope and "hope does not

disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (Rm. 5:5). ♦



Karen Archer and her husband, Jim, are leaders in the Charismatic Renewal in Bridgeport, West Virginia.



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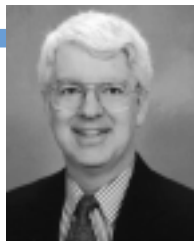


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From the Director

by Walter Matthews



NSC changes and challenges

As reported elsewhere in this issue, in January the National Service Committee elected three new members and a new Chairman. The Committee said goodbye to two senior members, Fr. Patsy Iaquina and Rudy Pruden, both of whom had reached their term limits. (Ron Ochner had resigned in the middle of last year.)

This is the third major changeover in the Service Committee since I came to work for the NSC seventeen years ago. The first was in 1984 when a number of covenant community leaders on the Service Committee stepped down and six new members, mostly from diocesan expressions of the Renewal, were elected.

The second was a result of a decision in the late 80s to introduce terms for members. In 1990 three members did not continue and four new members were elected. Over the next two years five new members were elected.

The third transition began last year when Sr. Martha Jean McGarry and Lois Doyle reached their term limits, a policy adopted by the Service Committee in 1998. Today a new member is elected for a three-year term. He or she can only be reelected if nominated, and only for two additional terms for a total of nine years service. A member must then be off the Committee for one year before being nominated and reelected.

At the time of the adoption of the term limits, several members' terms were "grandfathered" and those terms are now coming to an end. This was the case with

Rudy Pruden who first was elected to the Committee in November 1984. He holds the distinction (which will probably never be broken) of serving on the NSC the longest, over 17 years. Now the only one left on the Committee with a "grandfathered" term is Michele Greischar, whose term ends next January. She has been a member since 1991. Currently, six members have been on the Committee for three years or less.

These recent changes in NSC membership have now been accompanied by a change in the Chairman of the Service Committee. Fr. Patsy Iaquina was first elected Chairman in June 1996. Fr. Patsy holds the distinction as the longest-serving Chairman, five years and seven months, surpassing Bishop Sam Jacobs' chairmanship of five years and four months. Aggie Neck holds the distinction of being the first female Chairman of the NSC.

Change in leadership is not only challenging, but healthy. Fortunately, the Service Committee has been blessed over the years with some very capable and outstanding leaders. The NSC roster reads like a *Who's Who* of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the US: Martin, Clark, Ghezzi, Ranaghan, Scanlan, Shields, Forrest, McKinney, Kellar, Jacobs...

Several years ago the Service Committee defined the type of person it felt it was looking for to serve on the Committee—"men and women of visionary and pastoral gifts." It also described itself as "a body of leaders in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal who work together 'as discerners of the Spirit' to serve the Lord in renewing the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church."

In the mid 1990s the Committee sought to clarify the relationship between itself and other leadership groups, between itself and its Executive Director and between the Executive Director and the Chairman. It is these clearly defined roles that enable the Committee to absorb so many changes at a time like this.

Allow me to quote the "Restructuring Memo":

- The Service Committee "shares pastoral responsibility for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal with a number of other leadership bodies in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal with whom it seeks to be in good relationship." These would include the US Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, the Association of Diocesan Liaisons, and the various ethnic committees.
- The Chairman, besides "being responsible for the inner life of the Committee, including the organization and conduct of NSC meetings" is, with the Executive Director, responsible for speaking for the Service Committee, relating to other leadership groups "and for exercising a pastoral ministry in maintaining good relationships with leaders in the Charismatic Renewal and other renewal movements in the church."

"The Service Committee's primary means of implementing its vision and mission is through its Executive Director whom the Service Committee hires...While corporately reporting to and responsible to the National Service Committee, the Executive Director is a full partner with the Service Committee. Indeed, they are brothers and sisters becoming one for the sake of the common work."

These delineations enable the NSC's work of renewing the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church to go forward. Indeed, to go "forward in hope" as Pope John Paul II has encouraged us all.

Leaders in diocesan service committees, prayer groups and covenant communities would do well to clarify roles and terms, and to provide an orderly process for transition, lest changes become divisive and fracturing rather than unifying. "Father, may they be one..." ♦

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Walter Matthews". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a diamond symbol at the end.

Friends of the NSC

Everyone who makes a donation to the National Service Committee/Chariscenter USA becomes a "Friend of the NSC." In 2001 there were approximately 2500 such people. Their gifts ranged from a few dollars to over ten thousand dollars. Each one and each gift was needed to move forward in our work of strengthening the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the US and of fostering the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church—going "forward in hope" as the Holy Father encourages us in *Novo Millennio Ineunte*.

The fact is that, even with the generosity of so many, we ended the year about \$60,000 short. This ate up our cash reserves and the NSC has been existing month-to-month, trusting in God's provision. As of this column (late February) we are still alive.

But we need many more donors if we are to continue to respond to this moment: not with "complacency, and still less should it lead us to relax our commitment...rather it should inspire in us new energy" (Pope John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, n. 15).

If you are a donor, please consider asking your prayer group or another individual or couple to become a donor.

If you are not a donor—and over 7000 recipients of *Pentecost Today* are not—please consider becoming one.

We need your help.

Fanning the Flame Partners

In the fall we launched a new initiative to ask our current donors, as well as new ones, to make a five-year pledge of support to the National Service Committee.

If you can make a commitment of \$300 or more a year (we also have levels of giving at \$1000, \$5000 and \$15,000), we would like to hear from you.

A generous response to Fanning the Flame Partners will help stabilize our finances for years to come. ♦

This past January the National Service Committee met in San Antonio. We said goodbye to three people who have served us well and for a long time, as the terms of Rudy Pruden, Deacon Ron Ochner and Fr. Patsy Iaquina expired. They have each submitted reflections on their service as members of the NSC.

Rudy Pruden

What has it been like as a member of the NSC? Actually, as a neophyte on the Committee, I remember the awe that I had as I served with the mighty prayer warriors from the inception of the Charismatic Renewal in the sixties. This was quickly replaced with some awareness of the enormity of the great work the Lord had begun in Pittsburgh, and a desire to put every spiritual gift I possess—all intellectual, management skills, every gift of empathy and of listening—to put all the components of myself into service of our Lord.

The NSC that I have experienced has always been a group of strong, talented people of God. I have been called to function differently on different NSC committees with different NSC members. Thankfully, the Lord never required anything of me without also providing the giftedness. As my membership extended for many years, I can only say that as I experienced new challenges, the Lord preceded action with his anointing.

I will miss the fellowship that I have enjoyed with so many members who have served their time on the Committee and then have moved on.

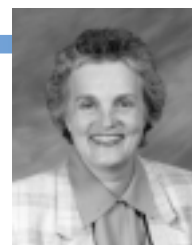
The Lord's works are beautiful and marvelous to behold. I am thankful for how the Holy Spirit began to really open my eyes to the wonder of his works when I was prayed over for baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Deacon Ron Ochner

My time of service on behalf of the NSC was an extraordinary period of faith building. From my first days a member of the Advisory Committee through my last days as a member of the Service Committee itself, my faith was continually increased and motivated by the people of God that I met and worked with. I remain in awe of the spiritual army of men and women of all ages and walks of life that

Ministry Update

by Aggie Neck



labor in the service of our Lord. Whether it was in a local prayer group, a diocesan service team, a renewal center, a state, regional or national committee, their commitment and dedication was a constant source of inspiration to me. Best of all I was privileged to minister with many of them.

St. Paul wrote, "Your faith strengthens me." I found myself repeating that phrase over and over to individuals and groups as well, and I still harbor in my heart and memory the truth of what Paul said as I saw it lived out in the people I met. I say it again to all of you: "Your faith strengthens me."

I have been so blessed and am so grateful to the Lord for allowing me to serve him and his people along with each of you. Thank you. God bless you. May Jesus Christ continue to be praised in your lives every day.

Fr. Patsy Iaquina

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the Renewal, to help others to open to the grace of Pentecost. I have seen people transformed by the grace of the Holy Spirit on the pilgrimages to the Holy Land and Italy. Establishing and reaffirming relationship with ICCRS and the Charismatic Renewal in the States is another blessing. God is good. I shall continue to actively support the Renewal in any way possible.

The Renewal is grateful to God for leaders who have given years of service helping to set vision and goals and follow the Holy Spirit's lead. Rudy has served the longest of any NSC member—15 years. Fr. Patsy is the longest-serving Chairman of the NSC—5½ years. All three of these men have brought much giftedness to the NSC and the Renewal in the United States. Thanks, gentlemen.

This scripture from the Letter to the Hebrews is appropriate: "God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him by your service, past and present, to his holy people" (6:10). ♦

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