

Publication of the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

PENTECOST *Today*

July/August/September 2008



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Photo: Sr. Mary Anne Schaefer

Renewing the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church.



Chairman's Corner

by Aggie Neck

The bond of love

One of the distinct characteristics of baptism in the Holy Spirit is the desire to be with people who have had the same experience. There is a common thread, a denominator, that common trait, that unites us and a bond of love that surpasses just friendship. It is a holy attraction that transcends the boundaries of social ranking, or economic standing. There is a strong desire to be together. Even when we encounter each other in different settings there is joy in the encounter. We have become the body of Christ. What a transformation this is! St. Paul tells us "The old order has passed away now all is new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

Webster's Dictionary defines community as: a unified body of individuals; a group linked by a common policy; and fellowship. This is who we are and who we are called to be, that unified body with a purpose and a goal.

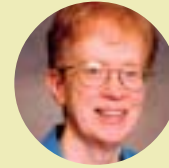
As much as we love the people in our prayer groups, community goes beyond the local bond of fellowship. No matter where we go, when we are with those who have had the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit we are drawn together in holy fellowship. We have accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord, we have become aware of the love of God the Father for us, and the focus of our lives has changed as we allow the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us. There is now a meaning to life that goes beyond the day-to-day routine. In his writing

St. Paul points out to us that we now have a hope and a destiny: "life on high in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14). This unites us as a community of believers.

St. Paul continues to inspire us with scripture that helps us to know what our role is in the community of those who follow Jesus. One of my favorites is in Colossians 3:12-17. It has the subtitle "The Practice of Virtues." "Because you are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with heartfelt mercy, with kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive whatever grievances you have against one another. Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you. Over all these virtues put on love which binds the rest together and makes them perfect. Christ's peace must reign in your hearts, since as members of the one body you have been called to that peace. Dedicate yourselves to thankfulness. Let the word of Christ, rich as it is, dwell in you. In wisdom made perfect instruct and admonish one another. Sing gratefully to God from your hearts in psalms, hymns, and inspired songs. Whatever you do, whether in speech or in action, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus. Give thanks to God the Father through him."

These instructions are the definition of community at its best. When we have been able to perfect these virtues among us, we will indeed be a unified body of individuals, a group linked by common policy and fellowship. We will have become the Body of Christ in its fullness. It would be the Kingdom of God on earth. ♦

Aggie Neck is Chairman of the National Service Committee.



Editor's Desk

by Sr. Martha Jean McGarry

✱ How fitting it is to welcome the National Association of Diocesan Liaisons as a regular contributor to our magazine in this issue, where our focus is drawn to community. We delight in their partnership with us in proclaiming the love of Jesus Christ and the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit.

✱ In this **The Year of St. Paul** (June 28, 2008 – June 29, 2009) you will find many of our articles reflecting on St. Paul's writings regarding the theme of each issue. As we study the Word in his epistles may our hearts and minds expand with deep knowledge and love of our savior Jesus Christ.

Fr. George Montague, in this issue, gives us several insights into Paul's understanding of community. Check it out! Was Paul a Lone Ranger or a community builder?

Stephen Clark will share how our experience of baptism in the Spirit adds to our understanding and efforts to live the call to community. The article, *Growing in Ecclesial Maturity*, by **Walter Matthews** and **Aggie Neck's** column make practical what it means to be part of the Body of Christ.

Kay Murdy shares a perspective on the charisms as gleaned from her study of Paul's writings.

The witness given on page 3 and the leaders' sharing (pages 8-9) demonstrate the fruitfulness of building church where God has planted us.

How good it is, how pleasant, where people dwell as one! (Ps. 133:1) ♦

How small groups have made a difference in my life

by Fr. John Gordon

I recall a conversation a while back in which a good friend and mentor in the Lord shared with me that she had made three, what she called, “life-changing” decisions: in the first place; the ‘decision’ to give her life to the Lord; secondly, to pray every day; and then, to be part of a small group. Each of these ‘decisions’ resonated within me as true. I, also, am eternally grateful to the Lord for these graces. I remember well the teaching that I received, both during the Life in the Spirit Seminar, and in subsequent talks at prayer meetings and growth seminars and conferences. It was not until I moved to New Jersey and was part of the People of Hope that the teaching and value of small groups came alive.

Up to this point, my life in the Lord had been marked by the trial and error of new and exuberant faith striving to be expressed in the events of daily life. I relied on what some of the people in the prayer group shared about their lives, and I tried to read the various witness stories that spoke of living life in the Spirit. But it was not until I was part of a small group of brothers in the Lord, where we met every week to share and serve each other in love, that I began to go beyond growing in the Lord, to becoming mature in the Lord.

As I searched the Scriptures, I was taught to see how the Lord called some of the disciples aside to be particularly close to him. These are the apostles. Among the apostles, He called three to share a particular closeness with him; Peter, James and John. These were with him both on the Mount of Transfiguration as well as the Garden of Gethsemane. So, it became clear, that the Lord works in us most powerfully when we are part of a small group of disciples. Thus, the value of the small group was also having a biblical foundation. At the same time, as I participated in a small group, I was experiencing the practical effects of this way of life.

I was sharing with the same group of men every week. In sharing joys and sorrows, fears and hopes, I was being loved and encouraged, and corrected, to live a more fervent life in the Lord. My desire and ability to respond to grace grew tremendously. Ever since, I have been part of a small group; whether as a single man, or in the seminary, or now as a priest, I have experienced the blessing of being part of a small group.

Another aspect of small groups that I have found particularly helpful is how they can be an environment in which one can grow in confidence. I have often commented how the prayer meeting is a school for the spiritual gifts [see *Pentecost Today: vol 28, no 3 July/ August/September 2003*]. This is especially true when there is, in the prayer group, the opportunity to share and discover the charisms. My own experience bears this out. I first encountered the Charismatic Renewal at a small prayer group in my home parish. There I found others who were living the grace of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. As we met each week to pray I was able to see how the outpouring of gifts from the Holy Spirit is intended to be exercised everywhere, not just in the prayer meeting. As we grew and shared with each other, we discovered all the doors that the Lord was opening.

I am currently meeting with a group of priests that I have been part of for over twenty years. We meet each week to pray, to grow together and to share deeply about our lives. When we share in our small group, we open ourselves to the healing grace of God, calling us to be more faithful and zealous in his service.

A similar model can be used by any group of people who are committed to this way of growing in the Lord. To get something like this started, find a few others who would be open to this plan of small groups. Agree to meet together on a regular basis; once a week seems excellent, but that may be too much, especially as one is getting started. The most important element to keep this alive is the level of commitment from the people in the group to the meeting. If some come in and out, it makes it very difficult for the small group to grow. It takes a while to trust and share deeply with one another. Another important element to keep in mind is that this is for the long haul. If, for a while, the group misses some gatherings, or there seems to be a hurdle in developing the trust and confidence to grow together, be patient with one another. It is my experience, and has been born witness to by many others, that this process can help to change our lives.

Fr. John Gordon is a priest of the Archdiocese of Newark assigned as parochial vicar at Holy Family Parish in Nutley, NJ. A favorite conference speaker, Fr. John is presently a member of the National Service Committee of the National Catholic Charismatic Renewal.



A lot of people, I'm afraid, have that image of Paul: a fiery preacher who conquered Asia Minor and Greece for Christ single-handedly. But that is far from the real Paul. He traveled with others, he ministered in teams, he built communities, and he gave a magnificent theology of the church as community.

First of all, nobody in those days would think of traveling the distances he did without at least one companion. To do so would have put Paul in danger of mugging or murder, and, without a cell phone or e-mail, how could he send messages ahead or back to headquarters? All communication was either in person or by hand-carried papyrus.

Secondly, look at how Paul begins many of his letters: "Paul, Silvanus and Timothy" (1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:10), "Paul and Timothy" (Phil. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; Philemon 1:1), "Paul...and Sosthenes" (1 Cor. 1:1). The Acts of the Apostles tell us of his traveling with Barnabas, with Silas and Titus. And Luke was probably with him on several of his trips. It seems that the only time Paul is alone is in jail.

Thirdly, it suffices to read 1 Corinthians to see how hard Paul works to build a unified community. He scolds them for their cliques, for their self-centeredness, for turning the Lord's Supper into a fast-food service where the wealthy eat their food before the poor arrive and "one goes hungry, while another gets drunk" (1 Cor. 11:21). He shows how the charisms are meant to build up the community, and he has that classic chapter 13 on love.

His greatest problem was convincing the Jewish converts that the Gentiles are on an equal footing with them, that in Christ there is neither "Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

PAUL:

lone ranger or community builder?

by Fr. George Montague, SM

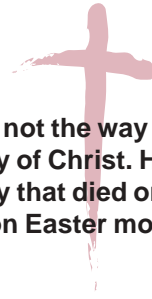
In Texas Ranger Lore, there is a story about the sheriff confronted with a riot that was out of control. He put in a frantic call to the Texas Rangers for help. Sure, they would help: "Wait at the station for the next train and you will have all the help you need." When the train arrived, a single ranger got off the train.

"Only one Ranger?" shouted the flabbergasted sheriff.

"Well, you've only got one riot, haven't you?" replied the Ranger.

But why was this so? Because in the death and resurrection of Christ, God had begun to remake the human race. Shattered from its original unity and grace by sin, the sin of Adam and his descendants (Genesis 1-11), all humankind is offered the unity of a new creation in Christ, the last Adam (Rom. 5:14-19) who by his resurrection has become a "life-giving Spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45). In a very rich passage Paul tells how this can bring each person into the unity of the new creation: "In one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of the one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13).

All baptized into one body. We would normally think of the "one body" here as being a collectivity, that is, the Church, as we might say that all the students in a school make up the student body. But that is not the way Paul thinks of the body of Christ. He is thinking of the body that died on the cross and rose on Easter morning. Baptism joins us in a very real, though sacramental way to that body. If the collectivity becomes the body of Christ, it is only because all are joined in a very realistic way to Christ's risen body. This becomes evident if we look at 1 Corinthians 6:15: "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take Christ's members and make them the member of a prostitute?" He then proceeds to contrast the bodily union with the prostitute to the bodily union with Christ (he uses the same word for the union with each) and cites the Genesis text about the two becoming one flesh to show that union with the prostitute is adultery in relation to one's "bodily" union with Christ. The effect, of course, of this bodily union with the risen Christ, unlike that with the prostitute, is a spiritual transformation. We become



But that is not the way Paul thinks of the body of Christ. He is thinking of the body that died on the cross and rose on Easter morning.

"one spirit with him" (6:17). Think of what happens when we plug a cord into an electric socket. There is the physical contact between the plug and the socket. But then the electric current automatically flows into the plug and the cord. So by baptism we are joined to the risen Christ and automatically are charged with his Holy Spirit.

Why is this important for understanding Paul's theology of community? Because our becoming the body of Christ, and therefore our union with one another, is not like the metaphor of matriculation. It is a very real union, however mysterious, with the person of Jesus Christ. We become *his* members, an extension of his risen body. That intimate personal union with Christ, which each of us has by our baptism, far from isolating us from one another with a "Jesus and Me" spirituality, brings us into a sacred union with one another, closer than hand to arm, neck to torso.

If Baptism joins us to his body, the Eucharist nourishes us with the body to whom we are joined. Paul emphasizes that in 1 Corinthians when he says that "The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf" (10:16-17). We have the unspeakable grace of renewing daily that "bodily" union with the risen Christ when we receive the Eucharist. But communion itself, however intimate, is also corporate (a Latin

derivative that means "bodily"). And thus we become not only members of Christ but "members of one another" (Eph. 4:25).

The Holy Spirit, who inhabits the body of the risen Lord, therefore inhabits our body too. And, in another figure, we become individually and collectively, the temple of the Holy Spirit. "Do you not know that you (plural) are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16). "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you?" (1 Cor. 6:19).

Paul draws a lot of practical consequences from this mystery. The Holy Spirit endows the members of the church with charisms for building up the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12-14; Eph. 4:11-16). Paul urges his readers to seek them earnestly (1 Cor. 14:1), and 1 Peter 4:10 urges his readers to use them. Further consequences concern holiness of behavior, as we can see throughout Paul's letters. There is no place for petty rivalries or jealousies or quarrels. On the contrary, everything should be done for building up one another and the community (1 Cor. 14:26). Quite a challenge in a culture where climbing to the top is the rule in the "corporate" world.

So for Paul it's not "one riot, one ranger." It's "one Lord, one body." ♦

Fr. George T. Montague, S.M. is a well known speaker and an author of more than twenty books in the area of biblical and pastoral theology. He has served as seminary rector in the U. S. and Canada and was di-



rector of novices for six years in Kathmandu, Nepal. In 1995 he began a new religious community in the Marianist family, the "Brothers of the Beloved Disciple."



Worship seems to be a major cause of the strength of charismatic communities.



Baptism in the Holy Spirit and community

by Steve Clark

I believe it is no accident that the outbreak of the charismatic renewal brought with it a flowering of new communities in the church.

We might simply attribute the new communities to the fact that charismatic renewal is a renewal movement. All renewal movements from the early ascetic or monastic movement on have given rise to new communities. Those who have entered into a renewed Christian life naturally want to be with others who have had the same experience.

Sometimes people say that those with a renewed Christian life seek one another out for support and personal help in living the renewed Christian life. That is certainly an aspect of it, but there is more to it. They seek others out because they need others to live the Christian life.

Christianity is something that you live with others. Even those of us born into societies as individualistic as modern

American society can see that the scripture teaches that Christian life is something you do with others. And the ages of Christian history confirm that. John, speaking to the Christians of the communities he worked with exhorted them to love one another (1 Jn. 4:7, 11), and renewed Christians respond to that word readily.

There is, however, more to why the charismatic renewal has given rise to communities, and that has to do with the very nature of being baptized in the Spirit. Baptism in the Spirit is a renewal of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian, and central to the work of the Spirit is unity. The Holy Spirit is at work to unite Christians, first of all with God, and then with one another. He makes us “one” by “dwelling in us and being in us” (Jn. 17:21, 14:17). He does this so that we can be the “one body” of Christ in the world (Eph. 4:3-4) and so that the world may believe through us (Jn. 17:21).

Many have an image of the day of Pentecost as a time when the Holy Spirit came down upon the disciples, empowered them, and then scattered them on mission throughout the world. But that is not what the Acts of the Apostles says. Rather, it says that when the Spirit came upon the disciples, they “were together and had all things in common” (Acts 2:44). They were “of one heart and soul” (Acts 4:32), and it was in the context of the united company of disciples that the apostles gave their testimony with great power (Acts 4:33). It was not until they were persecuted that they scattered (Acts 8:1), and where they went, they formed new communities that evangelized.

Those of us who were part of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal at the beginning experienced the same thing. We immediately began to form community. No doubt it had something to do with the Cursillo Movement, from which most of the early leaders came and which taught the formation of



“Christian communities in action”, but baptism in the Spirit added a great impetus. It only took three years for the first charismatic community, the community in Ann Arbor, Michigan, to establish itself in a formal way, but even before that, when people were touched by the renewal in the Holy Spirit, they came together informally with enthusiasm.

Christianity is something that you live with others.

It is no accident that when the core of those involved in the charismatic prayer meetings in Ann Arbor formed a community, others around the world followed suit in a rapid way. It is also no accident that many of the communities were ecumenical, recognizing the same Holy Spirit in Christians of other churches, nor that many charismatic Protestants sought to bring community into their churches or form new charismatic churches. Renewal in the Holy Spirit brings a new impetus to community, and it allows Christians from many backgrounds to recognize in one another the same spiritual life.

We are in a time of renewed growth of communities in the Catholic Church (and of renewed community in many Protestant churches). Not all these new communities are charismatic. But in my experience, charismatic renewal brings a special strength to the formation of community.

Worship seems to be a major cause of the strength of charismatic communities. When we gathered together in the beginning, we gathered together primarily to worship. We had experienced renewal in the Holy Spirit as we worshipped, and when we came together we could experience the same Holy

(Acts 4:31) and this added others to the community.

The strength that comes from knowing the Lord and experiencing the presence of the Holy Spirit is another factor. We are more able to love others than we were before, and we can also stand better in an adverse environment. The experience of the Holy Spirit provides a confidence and a motivation that is a significant help in persevering with other Christians in living for and following the Lord in the face of a society that is negative, and nowadays, one that provides the added obstacle of many options and distractions. The Holy Spirit is also at work renewing us within, allowing us to live with the fruit with which he equips us to love God and one another (Gal. 5:13ff).

Community is popular among Catholics nowadays. It can, however, easily be confused with human togetherness or with working for some human cause or just with socializing. In my experience, charismatic renewal is an antidote to that. Members of charismatic communities usually know that they are together with these others because of the work of the Holy Spirit. It is spiritual (Christian) community we are after.

We live in a time of great challenge for the Christian people throughout the world. The renewal that began among

Spirit again. Moreover, like the early Christians, when we prayed and were filled again with the Holy Spirit, we were more ready to speak the word of God with boldness

Prayer Card

For renewing the grace of Pentecost in the Church and in the world we pray:

Father, send your Holy Spirit with fires of hope from heaven to consume us.

Set our hearts ablaze with zeal, so that we will carry your message of hope to all nations.

Renew the youth of your bride, the Church, like the eagle's and carry us on the wings of Love into that divine transforming union that changes the entire world into your own kingdom.

Living Flame of Love, unite us all as one in the heart of the Blessed Trinity.

We make this prayer in Jesus' Name. AMEN!

us forty years ago was for “a time like this” (Esth. 4:14). The movement of charismatic communities that came with it continues to grow and hopefully will increasingly be able to make the contribution to the renewal and strengthening of the church for which the Lord brought it about. ♦

Stephen B. Clark is the President of The Sword of the Spirit, an international, ecumenical Christian community and is a regional coordinator of Christ the King



Association, an association of Catholic communities and fellowships. He presently resides in Chelsea, Michigan.



Please pray for the following initiatives, activities and concerns of the National Service Committee:

- That the Lord will draw together all leaders for the National Leadership Conference to be held in Nashville, November 14-16, 2008, for the September NSC Retreat and for the NSC pilgrimages to bear great fruit.
- That the faith community of the Church will be strengthened and bound together with a three ply cord of faith, hope and love through the Holy Spirit.
- For the unity of all the children of God and for a powerful outpouring of the Holy Spirit at World Youth Day in Australia in July.
- For deeper conversion and holiness in all souls.
- For the spiritual renewal of the priesthood and the hierarchy of the Church.

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Finding a Home

by Deacon Edgar Torres

Our Prayer Group, Nueva Esperanza, was founded to evangelize the Mexican people coming into our city. We were disappointed the first two years. Our hall was filled to capacity with local New Mexican people who spoke both English and Spanish. Once in a while a Mexican family would stop by asking for help, for food and clothing and perhaps some directions for obtaining work or housing. Once they obtained what they wanted, we would no longer see them. However, to our surprise, one night a family came and remained with us and then another. Slowly but surely they began to come and stay. Now after 30 years of service more than 95% of the people attending Nueva Esperanza are Mexicans who have recently come from Mexico. Recognizing the blessings of the immigrants' culture and roots as integral to their life and faith was an important focal point of our prayer group. Use of the Spanish language, the Bible and other materials in Spanish became necessities in our group. Community is important to our Mexican people and we have learned to develop it through several means.

Since this prayer meeting was organized precisely to evangelize, the **teaching** is one of the main features of our gathering each week. Occasionally we bring in a priest to talk about some special subject that we feel necessary for giving strength to our great family. **Praying for the sick and needy** is another great avenue opening our

people to evangelistic efforts. So this is done every week. **Visiting the sick and inactive members** strengthen our bonds with our prayer group members. Another great feature is the **music** ministry where a group of women have developed a choir to lead people at praising the Lord and lifting up the people's spirits. The Lord has provided us with two men who play the keyboard that is a real asset to develop the spirit of those who come together. All these means have created us into a strong community. To fortify and help each other we have **workshops** about immigration and what Mexicans have to do to stay in this country legally. **Assisting members with special needs and occasional meals** together also furthers our commitment to each other. Our Mexican people love to share their food and resources when they are able. Giving our members opportunities to **intercede** for others, and **Eucharistic Adoration** have been effective ways of drawing us together as family. **Holy Spirit Seminars** also help us to build community and draw our people into deeper commitment to Jesus as their Lord and Savior, as well as giving them the opportunity to share their faith.

Praise God! He is forming us into a community of faith and love. Our immigrants have found a home among us and in our Church. ♦

Deacon Edgar Torres serves at St. Anne's Parish in Albuquerque, NM and is also a member of the leadership team of Nueva Esperanza Prayer Group.



One mind struggling together

(Philippians 1:27)
by Deacon Michael R. Wesley

One of the blessings that can come from a charismatic prayer group is an experience of community. Also known as fellowship or *koinonia*, the effect of this gift is that people are authentically drawn together in love by the power of the Holy Spirit. Community doesn't just happen, though. It needs to be nurtured and given the opportunity to bear fruit.

One of the ways our prayer group has been doing this is by encouraging people who are not serving in a ministry to become a part of one. Someone from the prayer ministry, for instance, might ask one of our members to help them pray with people. Another per-

son might be asked to help out with hospitality or bring goodies to the next prayer meeting. Since we use a PowerPoint program to display our songs we frequently ask people to press the "down" arrow on the laptop to rotate the slides. Giving people a ministry in the prayer meeting, even temporarily, gives them a sense of being a part of a community.

Celebrating special events is also a good means of developing community. Once a year we celebrate the anniversary of our prayer group with a Mass or Communion service and a potluck. We do this for Christmas as well. To celebrate the beginning of Lent this year we had an all night charismatic prayer vigil to end abortion, and to obtain peace in Jerusalem.

Praying together throughout the week is another way that our prayer group has been striving to grow in community. Once a week we come together

for our Worship for Revival. Following the exposition of the Eucharist we offer to God a charismatic bouquet of praise for revival in the Church. Occasionally, someone will ask us to pray with a family member in their home. These are intimate, grace-filled moments of praise, sharing and song when our prayer group becomes a part of this member's family. We have found that a deepened level of community is formed when we not only pray together, but share in each other's needs.

St. Paul calls out to us, in Philippians 1:27 to be a community "...one in spirit, with one mind struggling together for the faith..." What's exciting about this is that the grace needed to obtain this kind of unity in our prayer groups has already been given to us by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:1-7). ♦

Deacon Michael R. Wesley is one of the leaders of Holy Fire Prayer Group in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

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The mystery of community: Growing in ecclesial consciousness

by Walter Matthews

About a year into marriage I was giving a talk when I heard the Lord say to me, “You are doing this all wrong!” “Lord, what do you mean?” “You are speaking just as you used to before you were married!” “What?” “You are speaking as a single not as a married man.”

The Lord then began to show me that I was no longer just a “me” but I was an “us.” We are one by our sacrament of Matrimony: “so they are no longer two, but one flesh” (Mt. 19:6).

In an analogous way, through the Sacraments of Initiation we are made one in Christ: with him (and the Father and the Spirit) and with one another.

It is one thing to “be married” and another to live that reality every day, every hour. In the same way, it is one thing to profess that “we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church,” and another to develop what Pope John Paul II called “an *ecclesial consciousness*, which is ever mindful of what it means to be members of the Church of Jesus Christ, participants in her mystery of communion and in her dynamism in mission and the apostolate” (*Christifidelis Laici*, 64).

How might we develop and deepen such ecclesial consciousness?

First, reflect on our life situations and vocations for in them we can find the seeds of connection, communion, that move us beyond an isolated view of ourselves. No man (or woman) is an island. God—who is a communion of Persons—has made us in his image and likeness. We too are to be a communion of persons (See *CCC* 383).

Second, we who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit have been introduced “to an experience of Christian community that transcends anything [we] have previously known” (*Fanning the Flame*). We see in others, brothers and sisters who love the Lord as we see ourselves loving him and our desire is to be together with them. As we deepen our consciousness of our lived experience in the Renewal we grow in our ecclesial consciousness.

Third, Pope John Paul II offers his own answer to the question of how do we grow in an ecclesial consciousness when he writes “Therefore I make a strong appeal to one and all... never to become tired of maintaining – indeed always taking an active part to fix deeply in one’s mind, heart and life – an ecclesial consciousness ...” (*CL* 64).

Just like in a marriage where one or both parties tire of maintaining their commitment to die to self and love the other (“their marriage promise of total mutual self-giving” Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio* 19 quoted in *CCC* 1644), we may tire of dying to self and loving the other members of Christ’s body and lose our ecclesial consciousness.

Further, it is not enough to simply not tire but we must actively engage the reality. For me, while I often introduce my wife to the audience to whom I am speaking if she is present I also “introduce” her if she is not. They may not see her but I do and it helps remind me that I do not go alone, that she always goes with me.

The Pope exhorts us that this ecclesial consciousness must take root in our

minds (“let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind” Rms. 12:2), in our hearts (“love one another constantly from the heart” 1Pt. 1:22) and in our lives, everyday and not just on Sundays!

Fourth, let us deepen our ecclesial consciousness by making each Mass and the reception of the Eucharist an “epiphany of communion” with Jesus and one another. “Receiving the Eucharist means entering into a profound communion with Jesus... This special closeness... cannot be adequately understood or fully experienced apart from ecclesial communion... The Eucharist is both the *source* of ecclesial unity and its greatest *manifestation*. The Eucharist is an *epiphany of communion*” (*Mane Nobiscum Domine*, 19-21).

Fifth, in this Year of St. Paul, reread and restudy what he wrote about the Church as a body of Christ using the analogy of the human body in 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4 (see Fr. George Montague’s article this issue), about being “citizens together with God’s people and members of the family of God” (Eph. 2:19), and about being “God’s building” and “God’s temple” (1Cor. 3:9-17).

As we grow in our ecclesial consciousness and self awareness as members of the Body of Christ we grow deeper in love with Jesus Christ (with the Father and the Spirit), with the Church and all its members and our hearts are opened to that love of neighbor Pope Benedict XVI has written so movingly about in *Deus Caritas Est* (see #18-20) and to the mission of evangelization and transformation of society—building a civilization of love.

Walter Matthews, a long time leader in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal serves as Executive Director of the National Service Committee.

International Colloquium on Charisms

One hundred and forty invited Renewal leaders and theologians from forty-six countries attended an International Colloquium April 3-6 in Rome on: "Charisms and the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church." It was co-sponsored by ICCRS and the Catholic Fraternity of Charismatic Covenant Communities and Fellowships in collaboration with the Pontifical Council for the Laity (PCL).

Speakers from the U.S. were Fr. Francis Martin, Francis MacNutt, Fr. Bob Faricy, S.J. and Dr. Mary Healy. International speakers included Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa and Cardinal Stanislaw Rylko of the PCL.

Aggie Neck and Walter Matthews of the NSC were

among the sixteen participants from the U.S. including representatives of the Hispanic, Haitian, and Filipino leadership groups in the U.S.

Our time was spent in prayer, Eucharistic celebrations and fellowship; listening to talks on the Biblical, Patristic and Theological Approaches, and Discernment and Accompaniment of Charisms; and Roundtables featuring shorter talks on "Baptism in the Holy Spirit" and on "Healing."

There were two Study Group times: one on "Baptism in the Spirit" and the second on the "Correct Use of the Charisms." There was also some time for questions for the speakers.

The overall aim of the Colloquium was to reflect on the understanding of and use of the charisms in the Church from the perspective of the experience of the Renewal.

A highlight of the Colloquium was the comprehensive talk by Dr. Healy that seemed to take in much that had been said earlier in the Colloquium and move all of our thinking forward: The Second Vatican Council had laid the theological foundation for the resurgence of "everyday" charisms that emerged in the Renewal. Whereas, the Church is more comfortable referring to, identifying and celebrating the charisms associated with the new movements and ecclesial communities, it is the Renewal that has brought to the fore an aware-

ness of the charisms available to the faithful of every rank.

Michelle Moran, President of ICCRS, in her report in the recent issue of the *ICCRS Newsletter* (May-June 2008) concluded, "It seemed appropriate to hold this Colloquium just after our 40th Anniversary. As the Church has rediscovered the charismatic dimension it is highly appropriate at this stage in our history we consolidate and reflect on what has taken place. We can then be open to the future unfolding of the Lord's vision for the [Catholic Charismatic Renewal]." (To read her full report go to www.iccrs.org/communication/NL/newsletter.htm). They hope to publish a fuller report with the papers presented at a later date. ♦

Why include the NSC in your will?

As you know the National Service Committee relies almost entirely on gifts from individuals to continue its mission. We ask you to please consider a gift to the National Service Committee when you make your will or update it. Making a gift to the NSC can be as simple as adding a codicil to your existing will or estate plan.

You may use this or a similar statement: "I/we bequeath \$ _____ (or % of my residual estate) to the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the United States, Inc. P.O. Box 628, Locust Grove, VA 22508-0628."

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What Paul teaches us about the charisms

by Kay Murdy

Everything we claim as our own flows from God's graciousness. The Greek word is *charis*, which is used in the New Testament for the "grace" or "favor" of God to heal and save us. The gifts that come from the Spirit are called "*charisma*," free expressions of God's *charis* toward us, which enable us to be channels of God's *charis* to others.

In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul uses the analogy of the body to teach us how the charisms unite the Church, which is the body of Christ: "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ" (12:12).

Paul emphasizes that unity does not mean uniformity. Just as every part in a body has a role to play, there are a variety of gifts that function differently within the Church. These gifts come from the Spirit, and are given, not for the glory of the individual, but for the "common good" (12:7).

In chapter twelve of 1 Corinthians, Paul uses the generic term *pneumatika* for the "spiritual gifts" (12:1), as a corrective to an overemphasis on a few gifts by the 'super spiritual' Corinthians. In verse four, the word *charisma* is used for the "gifts" of the Spirit. In verse five, the word *diakonia* signifies the variety of "services" that Paul attributes to Christ. In verse six, *energema* are the "activities" or "works" of God the Father whose power (energy) is manifested in the world in visible ways.

In verses eight to ten Paul lists nine examples of the Spirit's manifestations:

Gifts of Grace (*charis*) The power to speak, sometimes called Word Gifts *Prophecy, Tongues, Interpretation of Tongues*.

◆ **Prophecy** is God's message spoken through an individual to the community. Prophecy does not necessarily mean predicting the future. Paul says the purpose of prophecy is for the "upbuilding and encouragement and consolation" of God's people (14:3).

◆ **Tongues (*glossolalia*)** are God's messages spoken through an individual, which must be interpreted for the good of the community. It is akin to the language of lovers, or of a parent to a child. Yielding to tongues opens us up to receive and use the other gifts.

◆ **Interpretation of Tongues** is the ability to interpret (not translate) a message given in tongues into the vernacular. Tongues along with interpretation amounts to prophecy.

Gifts of Service (*diakonia*) The power to know - *Wisdom, knowledge, Discernment*. These gifts are the ability to express and understand various aspects of God's nature or plan in a manner that brings effective results.

◆ **Wisdom** is the facility to offer a solution to a problem or to give insightful teachings that opens the hearer to God's wisdom.

◆ **Knowledge** is the ability to clearly communicate God's word or doctrinal truths, or to know how God is working within an individual or in the community at a particular time.

◆ **Discernment** is the capacity to know whether a gift or inspiration has at its source the Holy Spirit, is of human origin or of evil influence. Paul says that the Spirit always bears witness to Jesus (12:3).

Gifts of Works (*energema*) The power to do - *Faith, Miracles, Healing*. Jesus' preaching was always accompanied by cures, miracles and deliverance that led the people to faith and enabled them to experience as well as hear the good news.

◆ **Faith** is a supernatural infusion to know with full certainty that God will bring something about. (Charismatic faith is not the same as the virtue of faith with which we receive our salvation in Christ.)

◆ **Miracles** are God's supernatural interventions into the natural realm to demonstrate divine power. Miracles help strengthen faith or bring about faith.

◆ **Healing** is the manifestation of God's power to restore a person's spiritual, psychological, or physical well-being. This may be instantaneous or gradual, and often through the use of natural means.

These are not all the charisms illustrated in the New Testament. They are also found in Romans 12 and Ephesians 4. At least 27 gifts are listed covering a broad range from gifts like prophecy and healing to teaching and almsgiving. Charismatic gifts are as important for the Church today as they were in Apostolic times. These gifts work to bring unity, to empower, and serve the Church's needs.

The Church has declared: "Whether these charisms be very remarkable or more simple and widely diffused, they are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation since they are fitting and useful for the needs of the church"

Now what?

by Deacon Patrick Frye

We stand at a crossroads in the Renewal. We've looked back at the first 40 years with all its blessings and challenges and now we look forward in hope. Many of us are like the disciples after the Lord's Ascension, looking up to the sky wondering, "Now what?"

Ascending back to the Father, Jesus said, "Go... make disciples of all nations." Now the risen Christ expands his message to the ends of the earth. He will do it through his disciples. But the disciples still didn't understand. The angels asked, "Why are you standing here looking at the sky?" There was work to do.

One word stands out for me in this passage, "disciples"... He doesn't say, "Make followers" or "believers" but "make disciples of all nations."

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church it says disciples speak to others about what they see, hear and believe. They proclaim Jesus in order to lead others to faith in him. They invite others into the joy of being in communion with him. Disciples keep the faith, live it, profess it, confidently bear witness and spread it.

Our history in the Church is that people viewed this role for clergy, religious and a few laity who were called into leadership. Even in the Renewal certain leaders are looked at as those gifted for discipleship. Now, more than ever, we must claim our common discipleship as children of God, bathed in water and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus told us, "You will receive power when my Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses." This Holy Spirit power, received at Baptism, makes it possible for Jesus to teach,

counsel, heal, awaken, transform, and open hearts to the Father through those who serve God's people.

Never hesitate to share God's love, or to use your gifts to build God's Church and change this world. Jesus gives each of us the same power which governed his life so that we can give it to everyone else.

Leaders, ordained or laity, come and go but "Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever." His Spirit works through each and every one of us so that we may build his Church Community.

"Now What?" Let's move on together in faith. Let's be the Body of Christ. ♦

Deacon Patrick Frye was appointed Liaison for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee in 2002. He is on the steering committee for the Association of Diocesan Liaisons and is on the NSC Council.

(Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, #12).

Paul stresses the fact that no one has all the gifts (1 Cor 12:29-30), but each person should be open to manifesting any gift at any time. He exhorts us to "strive" for the gifts and not to suppress them (14:1, 39). We must widen our expectations and try not to limit what God can do through us. We need to adopt the attitude of Mary: "Be it done unto me according to your will." Paul says the effect of the gifts upon unbelievers should lead them to say: "God is really among you" (14:25). ♦



Kay Murdy is an author, columnist and speaker. Kay and her husband Bob have been married for 48 years and reside in Whittier, California.

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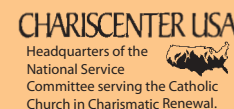
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**From the
Executive
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.....
by Walter Matthews

Called to serve as brothers and sisters

One of the first decisions made by the first leadership team our prayer group formed in 1973 was to meet weekly, apart from the large prayer meeting for which we had accepted responsibility.

During those weekly meetings we shared about how we saw the Lord acting in our lives, our struggles, and our faith and trust. We grew in our love for the Lord and one another. We became what we were by virtue of our sacramental baptism: brothers and sisters in Christ.

“From the communion that Christians experience in Christ there immediately flows the communion which they experience with one another: all are branches of a single vine, namely, Christ” (*Christifidelis Laici*, 18).

Though we were committed to serve the Lord and the prayer group, and to love one another, we were five different people: we didn’t always agree, we sometimes struggled to love one or the other of us, and, as needed, we repented and restored our relationships.

Like that early prayer group leadership team, the NSC “members commit themselves to support, accept, affirm and strengthen one another through personal relationships, shared prayer and ministry...They are brothers and sisters becoming one for the sake of the common work,” as an internal document states.

The Committee members seek to extend this love by developing personal relationships of mutual love and support with the members of the NSC Council so that their partnership in the work of the Renewal can be fruitful.

Because relationship is at the heart of this Renewal, when the Service Committee developed the Regional Leaders’ Gatherings in 1998 we described their purpose as “to strengthen leaders in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal by building relationships with attending leaders from within a smaller geographic area, encouraging their networking with the NSC and one another...”

Nationally, one of the purposes of bringing together the Gathering of National Leadership Groups has been to build up the unity of the Renewal in the U.S. by breaking down the “not knowing” one another and becoming brothers and sisters.

In the Unity Statement adopted in the first meeting we committed ourselves to “work...for unity in all relationships through repentance, reconciliation and friendship.” (For a copy go to www.nsc-chariscenter.org/PDF/Unity_statement.pdf.)

All the groups and communities in the Renewal—certainly all the leadership or core groups/pastoral or service teams—should consider adopting the Unity Statement as an explicit commitment to serve as brothers and sisters.

As Pope Benedict XVI taught in *Deus Caritas Est*, “Since God has first loved us (cf *1 Jn* 4:10), love is now no longer a mere ‘command’; it is the response to the gift of love with which God draws near to us.”

Friends of the NSC

With this year’s Pentecost Appeal we launched our \$50 for the 50th Anniversary Appeal to Prayer Groups.

At the 2007 National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference, Bishop Sam Jacobs challenged us to begin to think and pray about preparing for the Renewal’s Jubilee in 2017. We have begun to do so and have even made some suggestions to ICCRS about what they might do on the international level as we approach our Jubilee Year.

Because of the success of our \$40 for the 40th Anniversary Appeal to Prayer Groups last year we have decided to make the \$50 for the 50th Anniversary an annual component for the next ten years.

We recognize that this will be a “tight” year for many, including prayer groups, but our trust must be in the Lord and so we do not hesitate to be bold in asking prayer groups to either continue to support us or, for the many that have not yet become active donors, to begin to do so. We need you for we can do so much more together.

In one of those surprises of the Spirit, we received earlier this year a bequest for nearly \$13,000 from a couple from Louisiana who had died a few years ago. They had been active donors for six years in the 1990’s but their giving in most years never exceeded \$100. They decided to include this generous gift in their will as others have over the years. May they rest in peace and we ask that you please say a prayer for them.

“Let us go forth as heralds of hope...In this way, the Church in America will know a new springtime in the Spirit” (Pope Benedict XVI).

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For Your Information

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.

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What we have seen and heard

.....

by Sr. Mary Anne Schaenzer



Communicating by print, podcasts, online, blackberries...

What we see and hear and *how* we see and hear: When it was written in the Acts of the Apostles that, "It is impossible for us not to speak about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20), the way of sharing was by speaking in person and hearing in person.

This was long before our current ways of communicating with one another, long before the printed word, long before the various media opportunities we employ today, long before the speed with which we can communicate in numerous ways across oceans.

For some of you there is great comfort in taking *Pentecost Today* into your hands in the comfort of your chair at home and allowing yourself to be inspired, motivated, and informed. Some of you wrote this on the survey we took at the Leaders' Conference in Albuquerque. For some of you, well, maybe you are not even reading this column in this paper magazine because you read the written word online or on your Blackberry or ... Many of us grew up listening to a radio and eventually watching a black and white television. Now many listen to pod casts and read and listen online.

Communication is instant and constant.

We are trying to keep up—but we have a long way to go. You can find *Pentecost Today* online. We are trying to offer more online. We want to use every possible avenue to proclaim the Lord Jesus Christ, to speak of what we have seen and heard. If you have ideas of avenues we could take, please commu-

nicate that to us. Here I am referring not so much to the content as to how we communicate the content.

The special Jubilee Year of St. Paul, proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI, will begin on June 28, 2008. One of the ways that the National Service Committee would like to celebrate The Year of Saint Paul is by offering monthly articles written by National Service Committee members. Our hope is to email articles to interested parties. There are many email addresses that we already have for a variety of reasons. If you would like to be sure to receive these articles as they are published, please contact us through our website, www.nsc-chariscenter.org, (select *Contact us*) and give us your email address along with your request to receive the Year of Saint Paul articles.

We also invite you, if you have not done so recently, to donate \$15 or more, to continue receiving *Pentecost Today*. You can do this online (as above) by selecting Donations, then making a donation today, and selecting *Pentecost Today* as the purpose of your donation or by sending a check through the mail. Whether you receive a paper copy or read this online, there are expenses to be covered.

We believe that *Pentecost Today* is one effective communication tool through which we can share what we have seen and heard and proclaim the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We want to do more. Thank you for helping us with your ideas and financial gifts. ♦

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