

Opening our ears to God's prophetic whispers

by Joseph DeBlassie

"Is there any word from the Lord?" In Jeremiah 37:17, King Zedekiah asked Jeremiah the prophet this question. This is the question that the world is asking today in the midst of a fast-paced society filled with anxiety, stress and a longing for direction. Are you in a predicament? Do you need answers? Is your heart crying, "I need a word from the Lord?" Know that the Lord is telling you, "I will attend to your faintest cries and will answer you!"

Faced with all the challenging moments, financial struggles and many sleepless nights that come with being a husband, father and businessman, I know what it is to yearn for God to speak words of deliverance and be in the immediate presence of my situation. As I have progressed spiritually, I have come to recognize that he, in fact, is near to his people and longs for us to awaken to his prophetic whispers. Our problem is that we do not recognize the way the Holy Spirit speaks. There are parts of our inner workings that have been lost in the culture we live in and our souls have been damaged. What helps us overcome this? Opening our hearts to worship the Lord.

If you are like me, you have petitioned the Lord a million times over for his help. But we fail to realize that we were created to minister to him. We need to lift him up in praise and worship. If we are to hear from God, we must first minister to him, which then places us in an atmosphere of being able to hear his prophetic whispers. Father Robert DeGrandis, in his book *The Gift of Prophecy*, reveals: "Praising God is difficult for most Catholics because we have been reared on petitioning the Lord rather than praising him. The difficulty with petitioning is that it makes *us* the center. It is difficult for people to maintain an attitude of praise for any length of time because people naturally want to go back to petitioning the Lord and talking to him of their needs. However, if we hold up Jesus—if we lift Jesus higher—if we focus on him and worship him, then he will minister to us! If you want to be blessed and hear his message to you, seek him through praise." "And when

I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men to myself" (Jn. 12:32).

As a businessman, I was in a heavy career strait awhile back and had all the associated financial burdens that go along with it. The spirit of poverty was threatening to hang me as I was sweating blood amidst the stress. Sound familiar? Been sweating any blood lately? Start worshipping Jesus!

I went to my spirit-filled neighbor, Eugene, and we began to minister to Jesus in praise and worship. Soon prophetic whispers started to bubble forth out of Eugene: "Stay quietly in my presence and do not rush out in an attempt to salvage your career. The stresses associated with your career have nearly cost you your life. It is the prayers of your wife, Cyndee, that have saved you from premature death."

Wives, stand in the gap for your husband! You are his saving grace! I felt a deep sense of relief. Early the next morning while worshipping the Lord, prophetic whispers once again began to come to me revealing that I had done nothing wrong. It was a generational curse that was causing my career to be shipwrecked. With this piece of information now exposed, I quickly moved to put this curse under the blood of Jesus. A few weeks went by and the Holy Spirit again spoke and revealed that the curse of poverty had been broken.

A few Saturdays later, during a prayer meeting in Beverly Hills, the leader of the meeting (who did not know me) looked at me and

asked, "Are you a businessman?" Having an MBA and being a business manager, I responded, "Yes." He simply responded with the prophetic words, "You will be doing business for the Lord, big business."

Our dear friend, Laura, later revealed to my wife that we were about to enter a beautiful city but my eyes had been blinded because of the trauma that I had experienced.

The Holy Spirit continued moving and I happened to run across Eugene's sister, Kelly Jo, and we began to pray. The Lord began to speak through her. "You are a vessel broken in a million pieces. I will piece you back together as something beautiful and give you back double for your trouble." The Lord continued to speak: "Before year-end you will sell your house for a healthy profit, obtain a new house that is even nicer than the one you have, and I will grant you another job that will pay as much or more than what you have been making." To add to my faith, my precious brother/mentor in the Lord, Delano, came to my house to pray and bubbled forth the words, "How could I not come through for you when you have come through for me?"

In less than two weeks of being on the market, my house did sell for a healthy profit. Furthermore, the Lord did lead me to another well-paying job in a new city, affording me the ability to buy a beautiful new home.

In retrospect, I stand in awe wondering what type of confusion I would be in were it not for the Holy Spirit's prophetic whispers. Prophetic words can expose strongholds in our lives and show us the way out. It is no wonder St. Paul admonishes us to "follow the way of love, eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy" (1 Cor. 1:14).

Do you desire to have your ears awakened to the Holy Spirit's prophetic whispers? Begin worshipping him and eagerly desire the prophetic gifts. The Holy Spirit longs to speak to you! ☸



Joseph DeBlassie is a leader in the Charismatic Renewal in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

NEWSBRIEFS

National Service Committee and NSC Council meet

The National Service Committee and members of the NSC Council met briefly at the end of the 2001 National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference in Houston in early June. The meeting was graced by international guests Cardinal Ivan Dias of Bombay, India, and Carmel and Allen Panozza of Australia, the relatively new Chairman of ICCRS. Cardinal Dias had come to the US for the first time specifically to experience the Catholic Charismatic Renewal here.

The NSC and NSC Council business consisted chiefly of prayerful reflection on the experience of the conference, which had been held in the midst of tropical storm Allison. Cardinal Dias shared that "I saw the Spirit working powerfully...the Lord has great plans for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal." His presence and that of the Panozzas was a great encouragement to the leaders gathered.

The National Service Committee then met for two days following the departure of the NSC Council members. Much time was spent in prayer and reflection on the unity, vision and mission of the National Service Committee. This was the first opportunity for three new members of the NSC (Ros Hernandez of San Antonio, Virginia King of Seattle, and Mark Nehrbas of Steubenville) to meet in person with the continuing members.

The Committee considered new initiatives in networking leaders, future national conferences and its own finances, which are always

a challenge. The Committee will meet again with the NSC Council in October.

Recently Deacon Ron Ochner, a member of the NSC since 1996, resigned. His solid wisdom will be missed.

Plans are underway for our 35th Anniversary Conference to be held in Pittsburgh, September 13-15, 2002. See the conference ad on the back cover for more information.

In brief:

◆ *Le Conseil Du Renouveau Charismatique Catolique Des Haitiens D'Outre-Mer* (the leadership of the Charismatic Renewal among Haitians in the US and Canada) held their national conference in August in Massachusetts. 2450 people attended.

◆ In May over two thousand gathered in Los Angeles for a conference sponsored by the Alliance of Filipino Catholic Charismatic Renewal Communities.

◆ The Catholic Fraternity of Charismatic Communities and Fellowships held a North American Regional Conference in Tempe, Arizona, in March. Bishop Stanislaw Rylko of the Pontifical Council of the Laity and Bishop Albert de Monleon of France were the featured speakers. Over 200 community leaders and invited guests attended.

◆ On June 9 Dean Condon, former member of the NSC (1992-1999) and currently Pastoral Administrator of Good Shepherd Parish in Rochester, New York, was ordained a deacon. We pray God's blessing on this new servant to the church. ☸

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 ◆ **Regional Leaders' Gatherings** For more information,
 ◆ November 2-4 Phoenix, Arizona contact Chariscenter
 ◆ December 7-9 Columbus, Ohio at 1-800-338-2445.



NSC honors Rev. Kilian McDonnell

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of your ordination to the priesthood, and the soon celebration of the eightieth anniversary of your birth, the National Service Committee, on behalf of all the participants in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the United States, thanks and honors you for your faithful service to the Lord Jesus Christ, the church and this Renewal.

Through your past and on-going service as a Theological Consultant to the National Service Committee (1973-), your involvement in early theological reflections on the Charismatic Renewal such as the Malines documents, and your more recent very important work with Fr. George Montague, S.M., entitled *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First Eight Centuries*, you have sought to help this Renewal remain firmly planted in the good earth of the Roman Catholic Church.

You have also led the way through your Chairmanship of the Vatican sponsored Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue in helping all of us, and the church as a whole, better understand the grace of this Renewal also as an ecumenical grace.

May the Holy Spirit continue to empower you as you continue to serve and to create, and to use your gifts for the glory of God.

June 2, 2001

Presented at the National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference, June 8-10, 2001.

New Life in the Spirit Seminars
Catholic Edition 2000

The Catechism and the *New Life in the Spirit Seminars*

We greet you, Holy Spirit, in the words of the Russian bishop and saint, Dimitrii of Rostov: “Come, my Light, and illumine my darkness. Come, my Life, and revive me from death...Come, Flame of Divine Love, and burn up the thorns of my sins, kindling my heart with the flame of your love.”

God has blessed the Charismatic Renewal with a profound confidence in the Holy Spirit as a source of life, light, conversion and faith. We have experienced the fulfillment of the promise of Jesus in John 14:26: “The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.” Hundreds of people have responded to this promise by offering witnesses and teachings for the building up of the body of Christ. Praise God!

Those on Life in the Spirit teams have relied on the inspiration of the Spirit in a particular way. Team members have probed important passages from the Scriptures and meditated on the meaning behind the words. They have sorted through personal faith stories for ones that would bring others to Jesus. Finally, they have prayerfully taken all these pieces and wed them with an outline from a seminar manual. We have all grown as a result of this spiritual approach.

One of the goals of the *New Life in the Spirit Seminars Team Manual: Catholic Edition 2000* is to add important and exciting church documents like the *Catechism*

of the Catholic Church to our repertoire of teaching tools. We are fortunate to have this tool since it is the first universal catechism since 1566! The Catechism is now a primary reference point for teaching. It is like a large quilt on a cold and rainy day, stitched together from all the important pieces of fabric that make us who we are as church—Scripture quotes, writings from the saints, council documents, and church doctrine. In its four parts it explains the four pillars of our faith: creed, sacraments, morality and prayer.

Life in the Spirit teams will have a particular interest in the section on the creed, since the new seminar is written with the creed in mind and because the “creed is the spiritual seal, our heart’s meditation and an ever-present guardian; it is, unquestionably, the treasure of our soul” (St. Ambrose, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 197). Seminar teams might choose to study sections together at their meetings. A person who is preparing a teaching could use related passages for personal prayer and study, or might use the index to look up the Scriptures from a particular talk and see where they are quoted in the Catechism. It is important to realize that the Catechism is *not* a textbook, so we would not normally quote from it during a talk. It is a valuable resource for broadening our understanding of the faith.

Accompanying this article is a list of Catechism sections associated with particular talks from the *New Life in the Spirit Seminars*. They can be used for prayer or study or to deepen an understanding of the material in the seminar. Don’t be surprised if a particular section raises questions. Don’t be afraid of questions and new adventures in faith formation. Those we teach are not only inspired by our love for the Lord and by an openness to God’s voice in Scripture, but also by a desire to learn. Questions can be a sign of someone who is teachable and docile to the Holy Spirit.

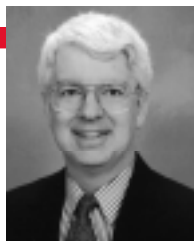
As we approach the Catechism, let us pray with St. Alphonse Liguori: “Grant me the gift of knowledge, so that I may know the things of God and, enlightened by your holy teaching, may walk, without deviation, in the path of eternal salvation. Grant me the gift of counsel, so that I may choose what is more conducive to my spiritual advancement...Grant me the gift of wisdom so that I may rightly direct all my actions, referring them to God as my last end.” ☩

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.

Seminar Session	Topics	Catechism Sections
Explanation session	Importance of the creed in faith, Jesus is Lord, baptism	186-189, 194-197, 426, 537
God's love	Belief in the Father, Creator	268-274, 315-322
Salvation	Jesus, Son, Savior, Christ	430-435, 452-455, 619-623
New life	Holy Spirit, giver of life	683-701, 1213
Receiving God's gift	Holy Spirit, everlasting life, confirmation, gifts, charisms	733-738, 1025-1029, 797-801, 1285, 1302-1304
Praying for baptism in the Spirit	Gifts and fruits	1814, 1817, 1822-1832
Growth	Church, communion of saints, growth, prayer	736, 753-757, 787-790, 946-953, 1116, 2558
Transformation in Christ	Holiness, mission	849-853, 2012-2015

**From the
Director**

by Walter Matthews



NATIONAL SERVICE COMMITTEE OF THE CATHOLIC
CHARISMATIC RENEWAL OF THE UNITED STATES, INC.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTABILITY
for the year ended December 31, 2000

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In the midst of tropical storm Allison the 2001 National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference in Houston managed to convene. There we heard Cardinal Ivan Dias of India tell us, "The church of the new springtime is already at work in the United States of America and you are the first fruits." Praise God!

On behalf of the National Service Committee, thanks for helping us continue the work on the national level of serving the Lord in "renewing the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church."

Jubilee Year 2000 was a productive year for the NSC.

★ We published the *New Life in the Spirit Seminars Team Manual: Catholic Edition 2000* which by year's end was in its third printing and had sold over 6,700 copies.

★ We gathered over 5000 Catholics in St. Louis to join with thousands of brothers and sisters of other Christian denominations and groups to celebrate Jesus 2000.

★ We published four quarterly issues of *Pentecost Today* which has won awards from the Catholic Press Association. With new color covers and new columns we are working to make *Pentecost Today* the best it can be to strengthen the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

★ We sponsored a major Jubilee pilgrimage to the Holy Land (which became a Catholic Shrines of Italy Pilgrimage in the light of the violence that broke out in Israel last fall).

★ We operated Chariscenter USA as a national office for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

★ We brought together diocesan, community and ministry leaders in various regions, held an end-of-Jubilee Prayer Summit in

PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Public Support		
Contributions		\$235,092
(Exclusive of Donor Development Receipts of \$12,680)		
		<u>\$235,092</u>

Revenue		
Conference registrations and receipts	\$181,912	
Interest	\$444	
Publication and material sales	\$68,452	
Other	\$17,725	\$268,533
		<u>\$268,533</u>

Total Public Support and Revenue **\$503,625**

EXPENDITURES

Program Services		
ICCRS	\$3,955	
Life in the Spirit Team Manual & workshops	\$19,158	
National Conferences	\$26,826	
NSC Council	(\$84)	
Other Communication	\$23,504	
Pentecost Today	\$47,912	
Pilgrimage	\$7,989	
Regional Leaders' Gatherings	\$450	
Renewal Resources	\$11,996	\$141,706
(includes Leadership Directory, Lift Your Voice Jubilee Booklet & videos)		
		<u>\$141,706</u>

Supporting Services		
Management and general (includes Christener USA)	\$183,712	
Fund Raising	\$77,414	
Donor Development	\$13,084	
(cost \$25,764 less receipts \$12,680)		
		<u>\$274,210</u>

Total Expenditures **\$415,916**

Excess of Expenses Over Public Support and Revenues **\$87,909**

This Statement of Accountability follows the format recommended by the National Catholic Development Conference to whose principles of good stewardship the National Service Committee subscribes. It is adapted from an audit prepared by an independent certified public accounting firm. A copy of the audit is available at the office of the National Service Committee upon request.

Chicago in February, supported the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services and the work they do in so many countries, and published the *Catholic Charismatic Renewal Leadership Directory* to keep the Renewal connected.

All in all it was a very good year. But in his Apostolic letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, our Holy Father challenges all of us: "What we have done this year cannot justify a sense of complacency, and still less should it lead us to relax our commitment. On the contrary, the experiences we have had should

inspire in us new energy, and impel us to invest in concrete initiatives the enthusiasm which we have felt." He then tells us to "go forward in hope."

With your continued support, we will be able to do so.

In Jesus, our Jubilee,

Walter Matthews
Executive Director
National Service Committee

Friends of the NSC

by Bob Brown



Thank you, Jack!

Jack left a bequest to the National Service Committee/Chariscenter USA last month. His gift will allow us to bring the life-giving message of Jesus Christ's love and the grace of Pentecost to the hearts, minds and souls of countless others.

Over a period of several years Jack had been a regular contributor, supporting the work of the NSC/Chariscenter USA, helping to bring the good news of Jesus the Christ to thousands of people throughout the country. Through his generosity Jack helped renew the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church in America and abroad.

Lives had been changed and lives had been empowered by Jack's gifts over the years. Thanks to his foresight and estate planning, more lives will continue to be affected, renewed and empowered. Again thank you, Jack.

The state made a will for you!

That is, if you have not done so yourself. There are no laws that say you have to make a will or other plans for your estate. However if you do not, the state will decide how to distribute your assets, large or small. Who will receive your property and how much of it varies from state to state.

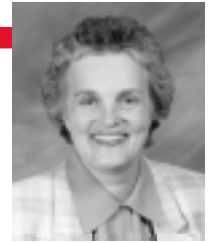
You get to make those decisions—if you plan ahead, as Jack did.

Also as Jack did, we ask that you please consider us, the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the United States, Inc., or Chariscenter USA, when you have your will drawn up or updated. A bequest to the National Service Committee will help continue the work of evangelization and service to the church and the Charismatic Renewal.

If you have any questions, please call 1-800-338-2445. ☞

Ministry Update

by Aggie Neck



At our January National Service Committee meeting in Alexandria, Louisiana, three new members were elected. I would like to introduce them to you and give you some personal information so you may come to know them better.

Rosbel Hernandez

Ros was born and raised in Raymondville, and now resides in Floresville, both southwest Texas towns. After graduating from high school, Ros joined the Air Force and remained on active duty for twenty-three years. The last five years he was a Senior Management Analyst, a position he held as a civilian employee for ten years after retirement.

A dramatic conversion to Christ in 1977 led him to answer a call to discipleship and he has been involved since then in parish and Charismatic Renewal leadership. Ros currently serves as Associate Liaison of the Archdiocese of San Antonio and as Director for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Center there. In 1996 Pope John Paul II invested Ros into the Pontifical Order of the Knights of St. Gregory the Great, an honor that makes him a member of the household of the Pope! Ros and his wife, Elida, have three children and four grandchildren.

Reflection: "We are blessed to be living and working in the Lord's vineyard at this time in history. What an opportunity to serve Jesus in this new springtime of evangelization! The angels in heaven rejoice as we on earth proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord. 'Renew us, oh Lord, as in a new Pentecost!'"

Virginia King

Born and raised in Seattle and still living there, Virginia says, "I live in the most beautiful city in the world!" She was baptized in the Holy Spirit twenty-five years ago and describes it as "when life really begins." She and her husband, Richard, have two adult children.

Virginia is the Executive Director of Western Washington Catholic Charismatic Renewal

and has served in that position for seventeen years. They sponsor conferences, healing Masses, and have a wonderful youth ministry that works closely with parish confirmation classes.

Reflection: "I believe that Catholic Charismatic Renewal can contribute a great deal to the church's response to the new springtime of evangelization. We read in the apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in America* of the need for each person to encounter the living Jesus Christ. We in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal have a responsibility to share with the whole church what we have learned over the years about helping people encounter the living Jesus Christ and experience the guidance of the Holy Spirit. These are exciting and challenging times for all of us."

Mark Nehrbas

Originally from Long Island, New York, Mark now lives in Steubenville, Ohio, with his wife, Carol, and their nine children who range in age from 22 to 4½. Mark serves as Senior Director of Ministry and Outreach at Franciscan University in Steubenville. He has worked with the FIRE Ministry for ten years, is currently a volunteer consultant for the National Resource Center for Catholic Men, and served as a charter board member of the organization. At the university's annual employees award ceremony this year, he was the recipient of the Spirit of St. Francis Award. Mark's oldest daughter just graduated from Franciscan university and one of his sons is currently attending the university, a fact in which Mark and Carol find great joy.

Reflection: "I was baptized in the Holy Spirit at age 19. It was a life-changing experience that set my heart on fire with love for Jesus Christ, brought me back into the Catholic Church, and gave me a passion for sharing the Gospel. I believe baptism in the Holy Spirit is the most effective means for personal conversion and the most powerful force for evangelization in the world today. It is humbling and exciting to serve on the NSC to help foster this grace in the church." ☞

Japan from p. 4

new gifts in helping—unobtrusively—to revitalize their parishes, especially by contributing to the formation of genuine Christian community there. We have had some success in this: many of our people are active in parish pastoral committees, religious education programs, music ministry, evangelical outreach, social welfare programs, care of the sick, etc. And their help is much appreciated.

The Holy Spirit has been drawing us into more intensive prayer in private and into greater praise at our prayer meetings. The praise often leads to deep adoration in the strongly felt presence of the Lord. The charisms, especially prophecy and the other word gifts, have become more and more manifest. There is a growing devotion to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and many quiet hours are spent before the tabernacle.

At a time when converts are becoming fewer and fewer, a great number of Japanese have had their first encounter with Christ in our prayer groups, especially the small home groups, and have gone on to baptism and a full church life.

The theme of our upcoming Tokyo conference is *Duc in altum*, (put out into the deep), one of the principal themes of Pope John Paul's recent apostolic letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*. This is the very direction in which the Holy Spirit seems to be leading us. Our experiences until now, to paraphrase the Holy Father, "inspire in us new energy, and impel us" to draw up an effective pastoral plan for the new millennium according to the lines he proposes in his letter.

Upon reconsideration, the Renewal in Japan is not so much like a *bonsai* as it is like the mustard seed of Jesus' parable. The slender stems that have grown out of that seed are still too small to call much attention to themselves, but promise—in God's time—to shoot up and reach to the sky. The ground in which the seed is sown is most fertile: it has been fertilized by the blood of several thousand martyrs (of the 17th century) that has not yet seen its harvest. ☞

Fr. Francis Mathy is a Jesuit missionary priest and leader in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Japan.

Pentecost Today Volume 26, 2001

The following is an abbreviated listing of articles from Volume 26 of Pentecost Today. For a full listing, visit our website at www.nsc-chariscenter.org or call Chariscenter at 1-800-338-2445.

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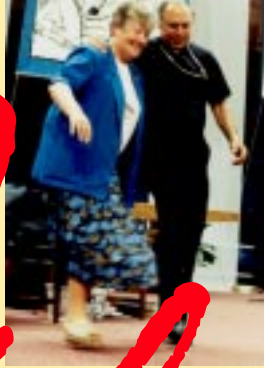
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Pope John Paul II on the Holy Spirit

Fr. Bill McCarthy has compiled all 120 discourses of Pope John Paul II—including his encyclical on the Holy Spirit. This most charismatic of Popes states clearly that the charismatic dimension is an essential element of the church's life. This is the most all-embracing, systematic and authoritative book on the Spirit—MUST READING! Write for: *The Holy Spirit in the Writings of John Paul II* by Fr. Bill McCarthy. Paperback \$19.95

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Celebrate!

35 YEARS

National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference

The 35th Anniversary of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal is upon us! The celebrations of our 25th (1992) and 30th (1997) anniversaries were anointed times of great blessing and joy! The Bishops' Committee, Association of Diocesan Liaisons, Ethnic Committees on Charismatic Renewal and others are joining with the National Service Committee to plan a momentous event in 2002 to thank the Lord for 35 years. Call or visit our website to receive your invitation for our 35th Anniversary Conference.



David Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh
September 13-15, 2002

website: www.nsc-chariscenter.org
phone: 1-866-NSC-CONF
(1-866-672-2663)

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