

# PENTECOST *Today*

January/February/March 2011

*Keep the  
flame  
alive!*

Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa appeals to Charismatic Renewal during national conference in St. Paul. See page 10

Bishop Sam Jacobs addresses those discerning a call to religious life.



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*New life in Christ Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.*



## NSC Executive Committee Corner

by Fr. Dave Pivonka



# Younger & older hearts together

I have seen a lot of beautiful things in the 25 years I have been involved in the Renewal.

I have seen powerful healings. I have seen miracles. I have seen the chains shattered and darkness illuminated.

What I was privileged to see on Saturday night of the 2010 National Leaders' and Ministries' Conference held in St. Paul, Minnesota was one of the most beautiful. The conference center's main ball room was packed with octogenarians, Generation Xers, and twenty-somethings dancing, singing and worshipping the Living God.

It was such a powerful experience to see the Holy Spirit being poured forth on such a gathering. Teenagers and those old enough to be their grandparents were giving prophetic words and praying for one another for healing. There was something so beautiful, so right about having a night full of such power being led by and experienced by people of all ages. Simply because those older don't have an iPod to listen to Hillsong does not mean

they are out of touch or they don't know what *worship* is. And merely because those younger folk never attended a Notre Dame or Kansas City conference or were not around for the "good ole days" does not mean they are not walking in the power of the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, God can, will and is using both groups. The evening was an answer to prayer and a testimony to God's faithfulness. (I might add, it was also a goal of the new mission statement for the NSC.)

The Renewal needs more gatherings such as this. The Renewal needs the breath of life that young people offer and the maturity and experience that those older provide. To be clear, both are essential for sustained authentic renewal! It is imperative that we walk this journey together. I believe in carrying the torch together. It is about learning from and supporting one another and celebrating each other's giftedness and differences. This is key for the Renewal as we move forward.

What those blessed to be present at the conference saw on Saturday night was God's Holy Spirit working in and through the hearts of his *children*. There were younger children and older children but in the end all were children of a loving Father God. I imagine the Father delighted in our praise. As the Spirit moved through our gathering I do not believe the Spirit was looking at one's age or credentials but rather was looking for an open heart. And when the Spirit found one the Spirit made a dwelling place. What a beautiful sight it was! ♦

*Fr. Dave Pivonka, TOR, Formation Director for his community, serves on the Executive Committee of the NSC.*



## Editor's Desk

by Sr. Martha Jean McGarry

Remember in 2 Timothy 1 where we are encouraged "to stir into flame" the gift that has been given to us? This issue is filled with such stirrings!

*Power from on high for all generations* was the theme of the recent National Leaders' and Ministries' Conference. You couldn't be there? The article beginning on page 10 and Fr. Dave Pivonka in his column on page 2 share highlights of this power-packed conference. Information is included in this issue on how to purchase talks from the conference (Page 11).

Fr. Bob Hogan continues to delve into the NSC Vision and Mission Statements as he draws our attention to the *full role* of the Holy Spirit in Charismatic Renewal.

Charisms are for service. David Thorp encourages and challenges us in the practical use of the charism of evangelization in our parishes.

When is the last time your group presented a Holy Spirit Seminar? Narciso Albarracin shares his experience on how the Seminars are a means of strengthening both your prayer group and the Church.

Still inspiring, still equipping, still challenging, still blessing—the articles on pages 6 and 7 show us how the Holy Spirit is active in a variety of ways today. Three of our diocesan Renewal Centers share their Spirit stories as they continue to serve in building the kingdom of God.

May the Spirit of God continue to stir up within us grateful hearts, afire for spreading the Good News. *Keep the flame alive!* ♦

*Photos: Cover, pages 4, 7, 10 Tammie Stevens*

Photo: Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner

# A Catalyst for Evangelization: Parish Teams

by David Thorp

The Church knows this. She has a vivid awareness of the fact that the Savior's words, "I must proclaim the Good News of the kingdom of God," apply in all truth to herself. She willingly adds with St. Paul: "Not that I boast of preaching the gospel, since it is a duty that has been laid on me; I should be punished if I did not preach it" Pope Paul VI, *On Evangelization in the Modern World*.

"Must," "duty laid on me," "I should be punished:" hard words to hear? But these are the words we need to hear. They are the truth we are called to bear as disciples of Jesus Christ. We can speak of a charism of evangelization bestowed on some in the Body of Christ. We all know such anointed people and see the great effect God produces as they exercise this gift. But, all who have been baptized into Christ are called to bear witness, to testify to Christ, to be bearers of the Good News, to be evangelizers.

In particular ways, because of God's goodness to people who have been baptized in the Spirit, participants in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal are called to embrace the call to evangelize. For most of us, our prayer groups and our ongoing life as Catholics are in parishes. What a great field of service, what a great field of mission! Prayer group members can be challenged to use the grace of God in two ways.

## Be a team in a particular area of parish life

Volunteer to become the RCIA team for your parish. Receive training to accompany those whom God is leading to baptism or full communion with the Catholic Church. God is converting hearts and your prayer group could assist through your prayer, witness, teaching, walking with others.

Go to your parish's Director of Religious Education and volunteer to teach every class of children preparing for First Communion. Also make this service an opportunity to reach out to their parents. My experience in parish religious education ministry, confirmed by every leader of parish religious education, is that many children come to class but are not at worship with the parish at Sunday Mass.

If your parish has a St. Vincent DePaul group caring for the material needs of people, join this. Combine the outreach of mercy with an evangelical outreach. Bring to every home visit a crucifix, a rosary, a bible. Pray with people. Tell those whom you are serving about the one who is the hope in your life, who has sustained you through every trial you have faced.

## Be the parish Evangelization Team

As a prayer group you could become the Parish Evangelization Team. A Parish Evangelization Team needs to have basically friendly people with these characteristics: an interest in parish renewal and growth; a personal conviction about the gospel message (you cannot share what you do not have); a conviction that they have something of great value to share with others; a desire to share faith; a conviction that life in Christ will enrich and bless others; a concern about inactive or alienated

Catholics and the unchurched. Doesn't this already sound like most members of your prayer group?

One way to draw attention to this essential ministry is through the weekly parish bulletin. A number of brief pamphlets that describe evangelization can be used as inserts. Another way is to plant seeds in people's minds through a brief column in the weekly bulletin, something like "Sharing Your Faith" or "Reaching Out to Those Around You."

A Parish Team works with other groups to help awaken them to the evangelical potential of all that they are doing. Greeters can be encouraged to grow in the charism of hospitality. Visitors who bring communion to the homebound can be exhorted to grow in the charism of healing. Lectors can be encouraged to deepen their relationship with Jesus, the Living Word, so that their proclamation of the Scriptures comes alive. On and on it could go, touching every aspect of parish life.

In the Catholic Charismatic Renewal we have received much: the greatest News there is. Let us become messengers of this Great Good News, right in our parishes. ♦

*If you want specific parish bulletin inserts, David Thorp has prepared 26 ready-to-use Thoughts on Evangelization. They are yours for the asking: [thorpdm@verizon.net](mailto:thorpdm@verizon.net).*



*David Thorp, a past member of the NSC, currently serves the Archdiocese of Boston as director of its evangelization initiative, Catholics Come Home.*



# Why did God start Catholic Charismatic Renewal?

by Fr. Bob Hogan, BBD

I would not be so bold to say that I know the full answer to this question! However, I believe that it is very important for us to reflect on what God has done in this Renewal, and seek to better understand God's purposes. Charismatic Renewal will be most fruitful when we are fully living the grace or charism that God has given for this Renewal. The Mission Statement of the National Service Committee for Catholic Charismatic Renewal gives us some important insights. Let me quote the section that will be our main focus:

Encouraging the awareness and experience of the **full role of the Holy Spirit** among Catholic Charismatic Renewal groups and ministries, with the goal of reminding the Church to be fully conscious of this role. This action of the Holy Spirit leads to:

- \* Experiencing union with God
- \* Inner transformation leading to personal holiness
- \* Ministry empowered by the charisms for evangelization and service
- \* Building communities that witness to a renewed Catholic life.

## Explaining the Purpose of Charismatic Renewal

What do we say to people who ask us "What is charismatic renewal?" A good starting point is to say that "we believe that God has called us to emphasize the importance of the role of the Holy Spirit." Pope John Paul II in his Encyclical on the *Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of Life* (1986, #2), wrote:

**Charismatic Renewal seeks to "make real again" the experience of Pentecost and the full life in the Spirit.**

The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council... brought out the need for a new study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as Paul VI emphasized: "The Christology and particularly the ecclesiology of the Council must be succeeded by a new study of and devotion to the Holy Spirit, precisely as the indispensable complement to the teaching of the Council" (General Audience, 6 June 1973).

Charismatic Renewal has been a living example of a "new devotion to the Holy Spirit." The Mission Statement in describing the four major aspects of the **full role of the Holy Spirit** calls us to be aware of all of them, rather than focusing on one or two. Steve Clark in his book, *Charismatic Spirituality*, states:

Probably everyone familiar with the Charismatic Renewal movement would agree that it has been concerned with "baptism in the Spirit" and "spiritual gifts." In the early days of the movement, these were the two most common topics of discussion and seemed to define the Renewal itself. But there is a more helpful way of defining "charismatic renewal." "Charismatic Renewal" is best understood as a renewal in the work of the Holy Spirit. That work includes baptism in the Spirit and spiritual gifts, but these can be only understood well in the context of the complete work of the Holy Spirit. They are not supposed to stand out by themselves (p.2).

What Steve Clark calls "the complete work of the Holy Spirit," and the Mission Statement calls "the full role of the Holy Spirit," involves the four dimensions of union with God, transformation for holiness, ministry empowered by charisms, and building community. Charismatic Renewal is strongest when we are seeking to live all four of these dimensions of the Spirit's work. We want to be fully "char-

ismatic,” ministering in the gifts and power of the Spirit. However, this needs to be balanced with being open to inner transformation that leads us to growth in holiness and the fruit of the Spirit. We need to be growing within community, since the gifts are only fully manifested and maturely lived as part of the body of Christ. Most of all, we need to keep our focus on growing in union with God, knowing Jesus as Lord, God as “Abba/Father,” and living as a temple of the Holy Spirit. It would be good to consciously ask ourselves how our groups can make sure that all four aspects are emphasized.

### Fully Aware, Fully Conscious and Living in the Spirit

I believe that God wants all his people to become more fully aware of the Holy Spirit in our lives; to more fully experience the Holy Spirit working in us and through us; and to have this Renewal be a reminder in the Church of the importance of being fully conscious of the role of the Holy Spirit in every aspect of Catholic living. Charismatic Renewal groups should be a training ground for learning to live fully in the Spirit. Our teaching should have a special emphasis on the Holy Spirit in all four of the major dimensions. However, we should also teach about all areas that are important for Catholic life, being especially conscious to show how the Holy Spirit relates to each topic. The Holy Spirit is important for evangelization, decision making, family life, communication and relationships, developing groups, pro-life ministry, counseling, overcoming compulsions and addictions, the Eucharist, all the Sacraments, preaching and teaching, etc. In Charismatic Renewal we are called to live with an ever growing, conscious awareness of our union with our Advocate, the Holy Spirit.

### Being a Reminder within the Church

The Holy Spirit works in many ways, not only in Charismatic Renewal. However, this renewal movement is called to be a reminder in the Church of the importance of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the “Great Reminder.” Jesus tells us that “The Advocate, the Holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name—he will teach you and remind you of all that I told you” (Jn 14:26). Paul says, “I remind you to stir into a flame the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power, love and self-control” (2 Tm 1:6-7). The word “remind” does not mean to simply recall a past event, but means to make something real again. Charismatic Renewal seeks to “make real again” the experience of Pentecost and the full life in the Spirit. We must first live this as completely as possible ourselves in

all its richness with all humility and joy. At the same time we are called to share what we have learned; learn from all the Spirit’s manifestations in the wider Church; and seek together to live more fully conscious of the role of the Holy Spirit.

Experiencing union with God

Inner transformation leading to personal holiness

Ministry empowered by the charisms for evangelization and service

Building communities that witness to a renewed Catholic life

We are called to remember that Advent is a season of the Holy Spirit since we celebrate the coming of the Messiah/the Christ/the Anointed One of the Spirit who is conceived by the Holy Spirit. In Lent we recall that it is the Holy Spirit that leads Jesus to the desert for 40 days to face temptation. In the Easter Season we see the Resurrected Lord breathe on the apostles and say, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” At his Ascension he tells his disciples, “I am sending the

promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high” (Lk 24:49). On Pentecost this promise is fulfilled.

Why did God start Charismatic Renewal? Why did God call St. Francis to start the Franciscans? Why did God call St. Faustina to promote devotion to Divine Mercy? Why did God develop the rosary in the Church over the course of the centuries? Why does God raise up new religious communities, Marian movements, devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, etc? The Holy Spirit makes all things new and is always seeking to bring renewal to the Church and remind us of the important realities of our faith. We need to understand and experience the Holy Spirit in order to understand the entire charismatic dimension of the Church. The Spirit blows where he wills. In our age God has decided to not only have the Holy Spirit remind us of other aspects of the faith, making them alive again, but to remind us and awaken again the call to live fully in union with the Holy Spirit, participating in all his gifts, fruits, love and power. What a great calling! Let us live it fully, share it with all joy and humility, and let the Holy Spirit show us how to be a reminder in the Church of this great gift. ♦



Fr. Bob Hogan is Co-founder of the Brothers of the Beloved Disciple, a Charismatic and Marian Religious community of priests and brothers. He is a member of the NSC and involved with working at the Catholic Center for Charismatic Renewal in San Antonio, Texas.

## The work of Renewal Centers and Offices

*We are filled with gratitude for the Renewal Centers and Offices throughout the country. They have nurtured, guided, and encouraged the growth of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in many and varied ways throughout our journey and continue their mission to spread the grace of Pentecost far and wide. In this issue three areas give us a glimpse of the wondrous ways that God is working in their midst.*

### From the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York

*by Josephine Cachia, Director*

#### Twenty Five Years of Mercy & Grace

*Come, let us praise the Lord. Ps.95:1*

**A**fter a powerful and inspiring retreat with Sr. Catherine Olinger at Bishop Molloy Retreat house in 1985, the English speaking Charismatic Renewal Pastoral Team of the Diocese of Brooklyn embarked upon a new adventure. With consultation from both the Hispanic and Haitian Pastoral Teams we combined our effort to start an office that would serve the number of growing prayer groups in our Diocese. Both Liaisons Msgr. John Keane and then Fr. Joseph Malagracia (now Msgr.) were united in the vision which began our journey of trust and confidence that the Holy Spirit would guide us into the future.

*Let us sing for joy to God who protects us! Ps.95:1*

During these twenty five years our Office has moved to 4 different locations and Pastoral teams have changed. Although we remain united with our brothers and sisters in the Hispanic and Haitian Renewal, they no longer share an office with us. Our bases of service remain the same as ever: "To bring the baptism of the Holy Spirit into the life of God's people by witnessing to the

Lordship of Jesus Christ and using the charisms in service of the Church." Unity, Community, Charism and Mission are the building blocks of our service. We provide leadership and direction to the prayer groups and to all those who are looking to deepen their relationship with the Lord. Our sponsored events include General and Youth Conferences, Retreats, Healing Services, Leadership Training, Life in the Spirit and Growth Seminars and networking with other Ecclesial Movements.

*Let us come before him with thanksgiving and sing songs of praise. Ps.95:2*

The prayer groups are not as many as in past years yet for those who continue to gather in the various parishes in the dioceses they are beacons of light. Our ministry includes 8 pastoral team members and a host of volunteers whom we call upon when needed. Our office staff consists of myself and 2 volunteers. Our finances fluctuate, yet we remain in a posture of trust that the Lord will provide.

*He is our God; we are the people he cares for, the flock for which he provides. Ps.95:7*

We pray that we will be faithful to our call of service and use the charisms generously given to us by the Holy Spirit to build up the Body of Christ in faith, hope and love. ♦

### Archdiocese of Los Angeles

*by Dominic Berardino, President, SCRC*

**T**he Southern California Renewal Communities (SCRC) Service Center was established in 1973. In those days, charismatic prayer groups were sprouting up throughout the Southern California landscape requesting teachings, guidance and network communications. Since that time, the SCRC outreach has operated from simple office space and has continuously sponsored major events, programs, seminars and retreats.

The heyday of prayer meetings has passed, at least for now. For the most part, prayer groups have diminished in both size and numbers, usually resulting in limited ministerial capacity. Today, it is often the case that when a prayer group desires to have a Holy Spirit Seminar or special Renewal event, assistance is requested from the Service Center.

Such trends have signaled some significant shifts in this locality. One example would be that of newcomers to Charismatic Renewal. In years past, the majority of newcomer's first-time exposure to the Renewal tended to be within the context of a prayer meeting. Currently, in this vicinity, more people seem to be getting their first taste of the grace of Pentecost through our conferences, special programs and events.

**Over 8,000 people** recently attended our most major event, the annual SCRC Catholic Renewal Convention. Known especially for its spirited liturgies and large array of excellent speakers, this very anointed gathering will celebrate its 40th anniversary next summer.

For some time now, SCRC has endeavored to reach out to all age groups. The Convention includes a Children's Program, a Teen Conference (attended by nearly 1500 teens and youth workers) and a Young Adult Conference.

**One particular challenge** we face with the Convention (as well as the SCRC ministry as a whole) is the ever-increasing attrition of the many aging long-time volunteers. Even though approximately one-fourth of the participants are from the younger generation, we are still searching for more effective ways in motivating them toward committed service roles.

A surprising and positive new development is the growing international popularity of our SCRC website. One of the many features on the website involves our long history of providing inspirational talks for spiritual nourishment and growth. These archives have swelled to well over 2,000 different offerings in various types of media formats. Online orders are beginning to arrive on an almost daily basis from far and wide. ♦

## Charismatic Renewal Office, Boston

by Vin Cerasuolo, Executive Director

In 2007 the Charismatic Renewal in the Archdiocese of Boston began to draw together the ethnic renewal groups which had previously been operating independently. At Council meetings we had representatives from 6 different ethnic communities: American, Brazilian, Haitian, Hispanic, Nigerian and Ugandan. You can imagine the communication challenge! Now that we Charismatic strangers were beginning to become brothers and sisters,

we prayed about what God wanted us to do as one community of faith.

This led us to identify several models on which we could base our common ministry in the future. The options discerned were:

1. The library model
2. The fraternal model
3. The shepherd model.

We defined **the library model** as offering events, e.g. days of renewal, a calendar of activities and a newsletter with information prayer groups could use as desired. **The fraternal model** added personal contact with prayer groups to invite them to participate and solicit feedback. **The shepherd model** included the other two but added an expectation that the groups would participate in common events sponsored by the Council.

Phone calls, prayer group visits and feedback were built into this approach to renewal life. We communicate what is happening in the Archdiocesan Renewal: our new vision and direction, success stories, challenges, upcoming events, invitation to participate more fully, etc. We also solicit feedback from the groups, including their successes, concerns, what they feel is their greatest need, and whatever else they think is important to say to the Council. This is carried back to our Council meetings to help build a stronger connection between the prayer groups and the Council.

After much discussion the multicultural Council prayed for God's guidance and through scriptural prophecy we discerned that we must concentrate on bringing into reality the loving family unity for which Jesus prayed. For this to happen among our prayer groups, with diverse cultural backgrounds and languages to challenge us, we needed

## Prayer Card



“Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,  
who alone does wonderful deeds.  
Blessed be his glorious name forever;  
may all the earth be filled with the Lord's glory.”

*Psalm 72:18-20*

May this prayer be fulfilled,  
as we grow in holiness and faithfulness to his word.

to commit ourselves to be present at meetings and important gatherings so we would develop a sense of family.

**The shepherd model** was unanimously adopted. It was a first step in a process which has turned the Boston Renewal around so that all ethnic representatives now meet once a month to share information with the Council and all leaders meet once a month for leadership formation in their own language. We are longing for the day when Jesus' prayer in John 15, that we all be one, will be a visible reality in the Boston Renewal. ♦

You may check the Chariscenter website Renewal Database for other Renewal Centers and Offices: [www.nsc-chariscenter.org](http://www.nsc-chariscenter.org).

Please pray for the following:

That many will be inspired to join in the Day of Prayer and Fasting on March 4, 2011, the Friday preceding Ash Wednesday, for the Charismatic Renewal and that the Church in our country might be renewed in the grace of Pentecost.

The National Leaders' and Ministries' Conference to be held in Baltimore, Nov.4-6, 2011.

The strengthening of prayer groups, their growth in gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit.

That the Outreach Events that are made available by the NSC will be sought after and be a blessing to the areas that host them.

The continued financial support for the NSC, that they may be fruitful in fulfilling the goals and mission of the NSC.

## Focus on Life in the Spirit Seminars

by Narciso S. Albarracin, Jr.

**M**y introduction to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) was through a Life in the Spirit Seminar (LSS). I attended this only to accompany my wife and relieve her of night-time driving alone. I was drawn to the 7-week program by the friendliness of the members and the testimonies. But even more than the testimonies themselves, I was attracted to the people delivering the testimonies for they seemed to be persons who were well “put together”—productive, joyful, respected members of the parish and the Columbus community. To fast-forward: my wife, Terri, and I eventually joined the prayer group and served in the music ministry, on the pastoral board, and the LSS team.

One powerful effect of the LSS on my wife and me was our renewed and shared interest in the Bible. Terri could not contain her joy. She started a Bible study group in our home among her circle of friends. This group eventually grew to 50 and became the core of a nascent charismatic prayer group. In 1995, a bus load of Filipino charismatic Catholics from New Jersey drove all the way to Columbus to hold a week-end LSS among the Filipinos in Central Ohio. The Pontifical College Josephinum was the venue. The result of this LSS was the birthing of the parish-based Jesus and Mary Family Bible Study Prayer Group which at its peak numbered 80-100 members with a youth group and baby sitting service.

It is clear that the LSS is an effective evangelistic tool that introduces and draws in people to the charismatic re-

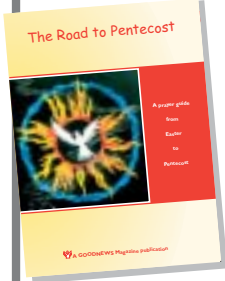
newal. Prayer group membership waxes and wanes. Life in the Spirit Seminars bolster membership and make the parish aware of the existence of a charismatic prayer group.

### Variations on a theme

The “method” of conducting LSS we experienced is highly organized. Preparations began 3 months before the event and included putting together working committees and organizing “prayer warriors” engaged in synchronized praying for the success of the project. During the LSS, a vigil room with the Blessed Sacrament exposed was maintained with round-the-clock prayers. A talk on repentance was followed by Confession, and then followed by an elaborate ritual that included washing of hands for symbolic cleansing, swearing on the Bible for commitment to God’s Word, lighting of the candle for new life, and praying over the candidates, individually, in the vigil room. Mass is held after the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This method is probably too elaborate for the usual prayer group but emphasizes the importance of a well-planned, well-conducted, prayer-supported LSS, with awareness of what appeals to ethnic groups, in this instance, Filipinos.

On a similar theme of traveling LSS teams, the Alliance of Filipino Catholic Charismatic Prayer Communities (AFCCPC), has organized a Speakers Bureau. I participated in a weekend LSS held in Charlotte, North Carolina. That event drew some 300 people and was held in the parish gymnasium. The variation in this LSS was a well-inten-

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tioned “hook”—the inclusion of a healing service on the Friday evening before the weekend LSS and following baptism in the Holy Spirit. People know what to expect in a healing service, but not as clearly in a Life in the Spirit Seminar.

As is probably true to other dioceses, our Renewal in Columbus, Ohio has an LSS team that assists prayer groups and is diocese-wide in its outreach.

### Strengthening prayer groups

Well-organized, well-conducted, Spirit-guided LSSs do strengthen prayer groups. A group “project” always excites, brings members closer together, encourages members to use their spiritual gifts—be it teaching, witnessing, music, hospitality, etc. It also brings prayer groups together as “dormant” prayer groups within the CCR community come and support the prayer group actively engaged in offering a LSS. A Life in the Spirit Seminar is one effective method of recruiting new members. Personal sponsorship of new attendees is important and the sponsor should meticulously provide nurture and follow-up. The effect of an LSS is frequently lost because of the lack of person-to-person follow-up.

Unexpected benefits can be reaped by those who repeat—attend again a LSS. When my wife and I began snowbirding in Ft. Myers, Florida, we looked around for a prayer community to belong to. There was an LSS in the Church of the Resurrection in Ft. Myers, which we attended. The couple teaching and witnessing that evening happened to be Gerry and Lois Mader. We made their acquaintance and have become friends in the charismatic renewal ever since. We recently had Gerry and Lois as guests in our Columbus, Ohio Renewal community; they conducted a weekend Gifts of the Spirit Workshop.

### The experience of others

**Father Ramon Valera**, Head Shepherd of the Alliance of Filipino Catholic Charismatic Prayer Communities (AFCCPC), and Pastor of St. Cyprian Catholic Church, Long Beach, California:

“LSSs should be offered at least every 3 months. What I have observed is that every time there is a schedule for healing masses more people come. Perhaps these occasions would be the best time to include Life in the Spirit Seminars so that more people can attend. When a LSS is well done, it should do the purpose of strengthening prayer groups. There has to be a follow up to such LSS by the different talks during prayer meetings throughout the year. The usual format in the Los Angeles area is the 2-day seminar. This works better for them than the 7-week. Also in the LA area, we celebrate a Pentecost experience on an annual basis wherein all the prayer groups gather in one designated place and celebrate praise and worship, a talk, and the celebration of Mass and then a short healing service.”

**Michael Tupaz**, Vice National Coordinator of Logistics and Resources, AFCCPC, and head servant of Teaching Ministry, St. Joseph the Worker Charismatic Prayer Group, Winnetka, California:

“The LSS is but one tool to gather and solidify the bond of personal relationship with God and among his people. The infinite grace which flows out from the Holy Spirit during baptism in the Holy Spirit releases spiritual gifts which empower participants to open up and share their faith to others. By saying ‘Yes’ to the Lord, it equips them to serve in various ministries and capacities. When being commissioned, their vows of willingness and commitment to serve and offer their lives to God make them truly committed disciples and shepherds of their prayer community.” ♦



*Narciso Albarracin, Jr. is a member of the Alliance of Filipino Catholic Charismatic Prayer Communities. He and wife Terri live in Columbus, Ohio.*

National Service Committee

## Catholic Italy Pilgrimage



**Tuscany**  
Padua, Basilica of St. Anthony  
**Florence**  
Piazzale Michelangelo,  
Church of San Lorenzo  
**Siena**  
Piazza del Campo  
**Assisi**  
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