



## Serving the community of our parish

by Dean Condon

**H**ow can leaders of charismatic groups help their pastors and parish lay ministers accomplish the mission of the parish? Collaboration between charismatic leaders and parish leaders has been a very mixed experience. Sometimes there has been a happy union bearing great fruit. More often, however, the experience has been frustrating for leaders of charismatic groups who have a passion for God and his church, but have been relegated to church basements and feel merely tolerated. How can we bring the wonderful gifts and resources of the Charismatic Renewal to bear on the ministry of the parish? Essentially it means making a three-fold match of gift, mission and need. Here is a three-step process to help make that match.

### Step one: understand your gifts

This step requires taking an honest assessment of what the prayer group is able to do ministerially. What are the gifts of your people—both individually and collectively? What kinds of ministries are you able and willing to do? Do you have the human re-

sources needed to do a quality ministry? For example, Life in the Spirit seminars have been effective tools of evangelization traditionally used by charismatic prayer groups. However, not all prayer groups have the resources to do them well or are willing to put forth the effort to do them well.

Once you have identified your gifts and their relative strength, ask yourself about your level of flexibility in applying these gifts. Are you willing to provide these ministries only under certain terms and conditions or are you willing to adapt your ministry significantly to address the needs of the parish? The latter disposition will create a greater potential for ministerial service in ways you may not have yet anticipated.

### Step two: understand the parish mission

All ministries in all parishes could be said to fall into one of six basic categories; some ministries will blend into more than one category. If a church is involved in activities that do not fall into one of these categories it

should probably not be doing this activity! Understanding how a ministry fits into these is key to understanding how a ministry relates to the overall mission of the parish.

Each ministry gets its theoretical, relative value based on how clearly it fits into the mission of the parish. Its actual value is determined by also considering the ministry's effectiveness. For example, eucharistic celebrations have a high, clear theoretical value to the mission of the church; however, they will not enjoy practical value unless they are celebrated well. What good is a Mass so poorly celebrated that no one comes?

### The six categories are:

- 1. Evangelization.** It includes ministries like RCIA, the Alpha course, Life in the Spirit seminars and ministries that bring inactive or unchurched people into relationship with Jesus and the community.
- 2. Discipleship.** This encompasses faith formation and religious education programs for children and adults, ministry training, Bible studies, sacramental preparation classes and the like.
- 3. Worship.** This covers eucharistic celebrations, sacraments, prayer ministries, prayer groups and any other occasions of worship.
- 4. Community building.** These ministries involve activities that build the relationships of the community's members such as picnics, socials, shared meals, coffee hours, faith-sharing groups, men's and women's groups.
- 5. Social outreach.** This includes ministries such as service to the poor, ministries to the unborn, visitation ministries and Stephen Ministries.
- 6. Stewardship.** This category entails all ministries that take care of the temporal goods of the parish such as building and grounds committees, finance committees and fundraising groups.

Only when you understand how your gifts and ministries relate to the overall mission of the church can you understand their value to the community. Likewise you can then help others understand that value. This understanding will also help you determine how you can work with and integrate your minis-



try into other parish ministries. Each parish will have its own prioritization of the categories giving it its own particular flavor.

### Step three: understand your pastor's and pastoral leaders' needs

The pastor has the single greatest impact on the ministries of any parish. On the practical level he is the shepherd, vision setter, gate keeper, manager, presider, CEO and CFO of the parish. Like it or not, right or wrong, he holds most of the cards. His vision, priorities, ministerial style, leadership, needs and passions will tend to dictate the direction of the parish. We might hope that he would become demonstratively charismatic, but experience has shown that we cannot control that reality—nor should we try. Also, it is the rare

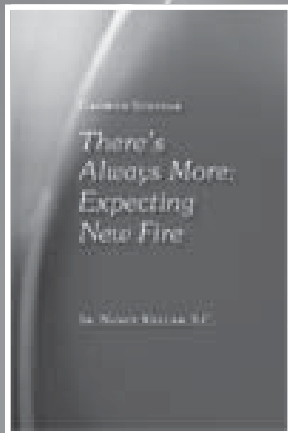
parish where the community, as a whole, is the primary vision setter, and even then it requires a pastor who will and can support the model of collaboration.

Comprehending how your pastor understands his own ministry and parish is crucial to determining the value he will assign to the ministry you can offer. For example, if he does not believe that a charismatic style of worship has any real value, he will not care whether you provide and hold a charismatic prayer meeting. However, if he has a heart for evangelization, you may be able to demonstrate how the Life in the Spirit seminars would be extremely valuable in accomplishing that very goal. Similarly, if you can determine what his greatest passions and needs are, you can then

flex your gifts and ministry to fit those needs and passions. Someone who sets up tables and chairs will be more valuable to a pastor than someone who teaches a Bible study if the pastor cares little for Bible studies and lacks the staff to set up chairs.

In summary, you will make great progress in your ability to help your pastor and his staff if you simply ask yourself: What can I offer? How does it fit in? How will this ministry be valuable to my pastor and other parish ministers? ♦

*A former member of the National Service Committee, Dean Condon serves as Pastoral Administrator of Guardian Angels Parish in Rochester, New York.*



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## NEWSBRIEFS



**Jim  
Murphy  
re-elected  
to ICCRS  
Council**

At its meeting earlier this year, Jim Murphy was re-elected to another three-year term on the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (ICCRS) Council. ICCRS is a body organized to provide leadership, vision and services to the worldwide Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Its statutes were first approved by the Vatican in 1993. ICCRS is a Private Association of the Faithful.

A former member and Chairman of the National Service Committee, Jim Murphy was first elected to ICCRS in 1996 and re-elected for a second term in 1999.

As ICCRS defines the role, Murphy brings an awareness of the needs, gifts and concerns of the Renewal in the US to ICCRS and is in turn ICCRS' presence in the US. In January of this year Murphy attended the Gathering of National Leadership Groups (see *Pentecost Today* April/May/June 2002, p. 11) and made a presentation about the work of ICCRS to the assembled leaders. ♦

## “Bring to life the culture of Pentecost”

**Pope John Paul II addresses Italian Catholic Charismatic Renewal leaders**

On March 14, Pope John Paul II addressed a delegation of leaders from the Italian Catholic Charismatic Renewal, marking the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the movement in that country. In his remarks, he affirmed the Renewal as a “special gift to the church” and called on leaders to “help bring to life that culture of Pentecost that alone can make fruitful the civilization of love and friendly coexistence among peoples.” The following are excerpts from the Pope’s address.

### Dear brothers and sisters,

With great joy I welcome you on the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your presence in Italy. I think back with pleasure to the meetings I have had with you in past years. I would also like to thank your directors for wishing to give the Renewal a definite emphasis on collaboration with the hierarchy and with the leaders of other movements, associations and communities.

Yes! The Renewal in the Spirit can be considered a special gift of the Holy Spirit to the church in our

time. Born in the church and for the church, your movement is one in which, following the light of the Gospel, the members experience the living encounter with Jesus, fidelity to God in personal and community prayer, confident listening to his Word, and a vital rediscovery of the sacraments, not to mention courage in trials and hope in hardship.

Love for the church and submission to her Magisterium, in the process of maturing in the church supported by a solid permanent formation, are relevant signs of your intention to avoid the risk of favoring unwittingly a purely emotional experience of the divine, and excessive pursuit of the “extraordinary” and a private withdrawal that may shrink from apostolic outreach...

In the final analysis, all your evangelistic activities tend to foster in the people of God constant growth in holiness. Indeed holiness is the priority in every age, and therefore also in our own time. The church and the world need saints, and we ourselves become holier the more we allow the Holy Spirit to configure us to Christ. This is the secret of the regenerating experience of the “outpouring of the Spirit,” a typical experience that defines the process of growth proposed for the members of your groups and communities. With all my heart I hope that Renewal in the Holy Spirit may be a true “gymnasium” in the church for prayer, asceticism, virtue and holiness.



In a special way continue to love and spread love for the prayer of praise, the form of prayer that recognizes more immediately that God is God, praises him for his own sake, and gives him glory for who he is long before thinking of what he does (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 2639).

In our time that is so hungry for hope, make the Holy Spirit known and loved. Help bring to life that culture of Pentecost that alone can make fruitful the civilization of love and friendly coexistence among peoples. With fervent insistence, never tire of praying, “Come, Holy Spirit! Come!”

May the Blessed Mother of Christ and of the church, the Virgin at prayer in the Upper Room, always be with you! May the blessing I cordially impart to you and to all the members of the Renewal of the Holy Spirit also go with you! ♦

### Regional Leaders' Gatherings

The 15<sup>th</sup> Regional Leaders' Gathering was held at the Center of Jesus the Lord in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 2-4. The event was held in cooperation with the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of New Orleans. NSC Chair Aggie Neck and member Mark Nehrbas were present.

Upcoming Regional Leaders' Gatherings are scheduled as follows:

November 1-3	Seattle, Washington
November 8-10	Bloomfield, Connecticut
January 31-February 2	Kearny, New Jersey
March 21-23	Lansing, Michigan
March 28-30	Dubuque, Iowa

Contact the Chariscenter office for information on these events.

**Communion from p. 5**

be able to see shining on the faces of the brothers and sisters around us” (n. 43).

The first example illustrates that spirituality of communion present in the family and highlights that this communion must be a “communion of love” (n. 42) and results in “the ability to see what is positive in others, to welcome it and prize it as a gift from God” (n. 43).

I would like to share some additional examples of how this spirituality of communion is lived out in my everyday life, especially with regard to marriage and family—for these are two important areas for most of us, and all of us are part of one family or another. John Paul II states that “a spirituality of communion also means an ability to think of our brothers and sisters in faith within the profound unity of the Mystical Body, and therefore as ‘those who are a part of me’. This makes us able to share their joys and sufferings, to sense their desires and attend to their needs, to offer them deep and genuine friendship” (n. 43). While he is talking about many different types of Christian communities, he also includes the community of family, (seen

earlier in n. 43) as one of the communities that must “promote a spirituality of communion” (n. 43).

I see this enfolded in many concrete ways in the community of marriage: having lunch and taking a walk with my wife when possible or meeting for coffee after work; spending time talking in the evenings after our daughter has gone to sleep (sometimes discussing the challenges of parenting); going to a movie while our daughter is at a birthday party; occasionally e-mailing each other at work; and working in the garden together.

I see this enfolded in many ways in the community of family: helping our daughter when she is hurt (physically or emotionally); helping her grow in her relationship with Christ—the first example above highlights how this task is not always straightforward and easy sailing (as most of you who are parents can attest to), but can be quite rewarding; helping her with her schoolwork (for example, she needed to practice counting from one to twenty and practice writing these numbers, and didn’t want to because it was “boring.” She found it fun when I put a group of M&M’s on the table and asked her to sort and count them. In fact, she was enjoying it

so much that she didn’t want to stop at twenty and kept going till she had counted the whole bag and wrote out all the numbers!); helping her learn that there are limits (disciplining falls under this category, for which I’m sure you have plenty of memories); doing fun things together; etc.

For the community of family that extends beyond the nuclear, consider how each of us has been on the receiving end of help in many instances. In all of the above it is the “heart’s contemplation of the mystery of the Trinity dwelling in us” that enables us to see them “as a gift from God” and “to ‘make room’ for” them, “bearing ‘each other’s burdens’ (Gal. 6:2)” (n. 43).

Let me conclude with the scripture passage that John Paul II uses to begin the sections where he talks about the spirituality of communion: “By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (Jn. 13:35). ♦



*Victor Leuci is a college instructor and a member of the NSC Council.*

**Grace from p. 6**

so much more was happening than I was doing. Something more, something greater was at work. It was a power and a truth that leads me to this day.

By God’s holy gift I was ordained to the priesthood in 1983. I felt then, and I feel now, most myself as a priest. I love the priesthood and I thank God that he called me to this life. Still, so much more happens than what I do. I do what I can do to be faithful, prayerful and prepared, but more often than not it is what God does that stirs my heart to humility and gratitude. God is always faithful, especially when I am not. In this I came to realize and accept the Holy Spirit.

It was in 1996 that I was first baptized in the Holy Spirit. It seemed quite new, but in reality it was what I had known all along. I embraced the Spirit with energy and desire. Ar-

ear of my life in which I had already felt blessed increased, especially in preaching and teaching. I was resistant to accept charismatic gifts but trusted the encouragement of others and now realize that God has used me to heal, inspire or awaken those he has given me. This is what I mean by the more. Jesus is the something more; the Holy Spirit is the power.

Not a small part of me has always wanted and waited for the big moment conversion, and I am not sure that I have really given that up. I know I need healing of various hurts that keep me from loving more freely and openly. Often I don’t understand why God does not just do it for me. I ask and I wait, I am sure, like so many do.

I know the grace is coming. Jesus is too loving, too wise and gentle, to tumble us off a horse unless it is really necessary. The witness of God we can all give is the day to day

grace upon grace that has brought us to the present hour with hope and courage, despite all that has hurt or burdened us. Despite myself and the awareness of my sinfulness, I see and believe that day by day I am being transformed more and more into the person of Christ. That is not always easy, is rarely pretty, and is often painful. But it is happening. And it is happening by the Holy Spirit.

I believe that I have always loved God, but I know now how much more I need and want to love him. I am a fraction of all I desire in him, but I am so daily blessed with the grace upon grace that draws me ever nearer to Jesus by the power of the Spirit. God uses me and I praise him for it. ♦

*Fr. John Esper is Liaison for the Charismatic Renewal in the Archdiocese of Detroit, and serves as pastor of St. Lucy Parish in St. Clair Shores, Michigan.*

From the  
Director  
.....  
by Walter Matthews



## Strengthening *communio*

In *Fanning the Flame* we wrote, “Baptism in the Holy Spirit introduces those who have known it to an experience of Christian community that transcends anything they have previously known” (p. 13). This was certainly true in my case thirty years ago when I attended my first prayer meetings at St. Jean Baptiste on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. The experience of loving brothers and sisters was one of the pillars that sustained my new life in the Spirit.

So it is not surprising that part of the work of the NSC is to strengthen the *communio* of the Renewal. It does this in a number of ways.

Appropriately, the National Service Committee members begin with themselves as expressed in an internal document adopted in 1996: “The Committee members commit themselves to support, accept, affirm and strengthen one another through personal relationships, shared prayer and ministry.” The Service Committee and the staff and I could not do the work the Lord has called us to do without that sense of community.

Second, the Service Committee has sought from its earliest days to bring other leaders into that deepened communion: first in a structure called the Advisory Committee, but more recently in the NSC Council. Last October the NSC Council adopted the following Mission Statement: “The NSC Council is called by the National Service Committee and gifted by God to work in partnership with the National Service Committee to foster the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church.” The partnership is one of brothers and sisters loving, respecting, appreciating and affirming one another.

Third, the NSC has held a number of different types of leaders’ meetings across the

country over the years. In January 1998 the Committee brought together over one hundred leaders in a National Leaders’ Gathering in Houston, Texas. Since then we have held fifteen Regional Leaders’ Gatherings with the aim of strengthening leaders by building relationships within a smaller geographic area.

Another way the Service Committee has worked to strengthen the *communio* of the Renewal is through making the National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference an opportunity for brothers and sisters from different areas to meet the NSC and to meet, befriend and draw strength from one another.

**We could not do the work the Lord has called us to do without that sense of community.**

In this vein, the National Service Committee announces that the 2003 National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference will be held May 30-June 1, 2003, in San Antonio, Texas, and that the NSC in collaboration with the Association of Diocesan Liaisons will convene its first National Leaders’ Conference since 1979 in Nashville, Tennessee, November 14-16, 2003. We will provide more information in future issues.

Finally, the Service Committee has always encouraged the growth of the relationships among brothers and sisters in prayer groups and in covenant communities. One whole tape in the NSC Leadership Training Videotape series (four half-hour interactive segments) is on “Unity: Building Relationships.”

In *Novo Millennio Ineunte* Pope John Paul II holds out the challenge of a spirituality of communion. “A spirituality of communion implies also the ability to see what is positive in others, to welcome it and prize it as a gift from God: not only as a gift for the brother or sister who has received it directly, but also as a ‘gift for me’” (n. 43).

We who believe that the charisms “closely associated with the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, [are] part of the normal Christian life” (*Grace for the New Springtime*) and

want others in the church to value them, must work the harder to appreciate that the gifts others have received are “for me”—for “us” in the Renewal—and that we are diminished without them.

Allow me to conclude with a request. Twelve years ago, the Heart of the Church Consultation which led to *Fanning the Flame*, wrote:

The recovery of baptism in the Holy Spirit and the charisms is needed in all the institutions of the church... We, however, are focusing on the parish because it is there that the needs of the overwhelming majority of Catholics can be addressed. In our vision, a renewed parish is a community worshipping in vibrant liturgy, bonded together by the Holy Spirit, serving one another, committed to ongoing conversion and growth, reaching out to the inactive, the unchurched and to the poor. Such parishes confront us with the gospel and evangelize our culture. In these communities, as in the Acts of the Apostles and the early church, the charisms of the Holy Spirit are identified and welcomed.

Subsequently, we did a survey to identify pastors and parishes that would meet the definition of a renewed parish as delineated in *Fanning the Flame*. We received very few names.

In the last issue I boldly suggested that “it is time for the Charismatic Renewal in the US to start a seminary for candidates for the priesthood.” So, too, isn’t it time to make the vision of renewed parish life a reality?

If you know of a pastor and parish that is “on the way,” please let us know. We would love to hear from you.

In the meantime, let us all continue to strengthen one another and this Renewal through our love for one another and through our acknowledgment that others’ gifts are “for me.” ♦



Ministry  
Update  
by Virginia King

## Friends of the NSC

Recently, one of our donors wrote: “We wish to encourage you in your ministry. I pray that the Lord will use you to bring true revival and renewal in the Catholic Church across the land! God is a prayer-answering God and I praise him and thank him for you all.”

We thank the one who wrote and all those who faithfully support this work.

As we approach the end of the year, we want to ask our Friends to consider a generous year-end gift, perhaps of stock or of life insurance. While the stock market has been on a roller coaster of late, the fact is that you may have stock that has appreciated in value. By giving a gift of stock instead of selling it and making a cash donation, you avoid capital gains taxes and are able to take the full deduction (to the extent allowed by law) of the appreciated stock.

Donation of paid-up life insurance not needed by spouse or family upon your death is also an effective means of supporting this work of renewing the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church. ♦

## Serving a unique vision

Renewing the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church! This is the vision of the National Service Committee. Nothing more and nothing less! I can assure you that we do not take it on lightly. We are eleven people—ordinary people, just like you. We come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. And I can guarantee that none of us feels “adequate” to be a leader in this important work of renewal.

We come to this task with fear and trembling, aware of our total dependence on the Lord. We rely on the Holy Spirit who has begun this good work in the church to “carry it through to completion” (Phil. 1:6).

We have, however, been called at this time to serve the church in this unique way. We bring to this Service Committee our various perspectives which enrich and enliven our discussions and our discernment of the direc-

tion that the Holy Spirit is leading Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the United States.

We are not an “elite” group of leaders but rather a group of simple servants. We each have our own struggles with family, community and ministry. We each have our own testimonies of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in our personal and communal lives. Our stories could be your stories. And one day, you may be the one who is called.

Please pray for the NSC, that we will be faithful to the Lord’s call to serve in this way. We need your prayers very much.

“At every opportunity pray in the Spirit, using prayers and petitions of every sort. Pray constantly and attentively for all in the holy company...pray perseveringly, be attentive to prayer, and pray in a spirit of thanksgiving. Pray for us, too, that God may provide us with an opening to proclaim the mystery of Christ” (Eph. 6:18; Col. 4:2-3). ♦

## Statement of Accountability

For many years we have published in the last issue of the year our Financial Statement from the previous year. It is missing from this issue intentionally. Here’s why.

Because we have waited for our accountants to complete their annual audit or review of our books which they usually complete in July, we have had to wait until the October/November/December issue of *Pentecost Today* to publish the Statement of Accountability, the format recommended by the National Catholic Development Conference to whose principles the National Service Committee adheres.

This delayed report has often caused confusion for our donors. If the current year was in the red, our donors would know the latter from a fund appeal letter; but if previous year had been in the black, the publication of the Statement of Accountability would seem to be contradictory. Similarly, if the previous year was in the red, but the current year in the black, our donors would write about why we had not told them of our need.

So recently the NSC’s Finance Committee decided that we would:

- ✓ not publish the Statement of Accountability for 2001 in *Pentecost Today* this year; it is available from Chariscenter USA (1-800-338-2445) or on our website ;
- ✓ mail the Statement of Accountability to our donors and others with our September appeal; and
- ✓ prepare the Statement of Accountability and make it available to our donors and on the website at an earlier point in the year.

We hope that this will not cause any confusion. We welcome your comments.

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# A PILGRIMAGE OF FAITH

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**Come and be renewed.** The National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal invites you to take a journey of faith to the historic center of the Catholic Church. We encourage you to accept this invitation and to bring a spouse, a child, a parent, a friend on a pilgrimage of faith.

This journey of faith may begin a transformation in you as you find yourself drawn deeper not only into the heart of the church, but also into the very heart of God.

For more information contact:  
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