

CHARIS • REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING • DELIVERANCE AND HEALING • GRACE

Summer 2018

# PENTECOST *Today*

Publication of the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal



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



## Chairman's Corner

by Ron Riggins

The last 12 months have been an exciting period for the NSC as we have entered the new season following our inspiring Jubilee Celebrations. We have completed some reorganization to align the interests of the NSC Council with the Service Committee, added some dynamic members to both entities, spent the past year formulating our newly-adopted strategic plan and began collaborating with other entities in the US in response to the CHARIS Initiative.

We are excited about our comprehensive strategic plan which features two foundational priorities and four strategic priorities, and each of these priorities has multiple strategies. The foundational priorities focus on making the NSC more effective in this new season and more fully utilizing media to reach a broader audience as we execute our overall vision and mission to bring baptism in the Holy

Spirit more to the Church. These foundational priorities support the four strategic priorities of evangelization, strengthening the Renewal, enhancing unity and empowering young adults, as we work to extend the grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit was clearly at work as we intensively worked on our strategic plan over the past year, as our strategic priorities closely “dovetail” with the objectives of the CHARIS initiative announced earlier this year.

We look forward to this new move of the Holy Spirit, working in unity with other entities proclaiming baptism in the Holy Spirit. We look forward to your input and collaborating with you in this new season as the Renewal is recognized by the Church in a new way with a clear commission from the Holy Father to earnestly work in unity to build the Church.

It is a time of commission! It is a time of unity! It is a time of empowerment! It is a time of grace! Come, Holy Spirit! ♦



## Editor's Desk

by Sr. Mary Anne  
Schaezner, SSND

**Mary Healy (pp 4-5)** writes “To be baptized in the Holy Spirit is to receive a life-changing personal revelation of the risen Lord Jesus, who is truly alive and who heals and sets people free today just as he did in his earthly ministry.” **Dave VanVickle (p 3)** writes of the mystery of suffering in his family and of persevering in prayer and the desire for healing. **Mark Nehrbas (p 11)** writes of his experience of redemptive suffering and healing.

Jesus went about healing and teaching. **Dave Nodar (p 6)** writes of his call to evangelization and how he carries that out. He ends by writing, “Be open to the new things the Lord is doing! He wants to use you.” **Fausto Franco (p 15)** challenges us to “...be bearers of light in the darkness...”.

**Pope Francis (p 10)** challenges us to holiness. (You are encouraged to pick up the entire document, *Gaudete et Exsultate*.) “May you come to realize what that word is, the message of Jesus that God wants to speak to the world by your life.”

**Casey Sprehe (p 12)** encourages connectedness among generations in sharing the reality of baptism in the Holy Spirit.

More about **CHARIS (pp 12-13)**, an acronym for Catholic Charismatic Renewal International Service.

We remember some pioneers in the Renewal (**p 9**), those who have gone before us: Jim Byrne and Fr. Tom Forrest. **Sr. Ana Chiara (p 8)** also shares the religious community experience of the death of the foundress of the Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, a Franciscan Charismatic Religious Community of Diocesan Rite.

As we walk the journey, may we carry the message, “Jesus is alive!” ♦

## PENTECOSTToday

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### For Your Information

The mission of *Pentecost Today* is to serve and be a voice for the National Service Committee's mission “to foster the dynamic grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit.” We do this by publishing articles that instruct and give practical wisdom, with a particular emphasis on strengthening leaders and leader formation, in a visually appealing and inviting format.

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by Dave VanVickle

**A**s a charismatic evangelist I know how important signs and wonders can be for someone who does not believe in Jesus. I have witnessed many healings and miracles over the years and I still pray regularly for signs and wonders to draw someone to God. Truthfully, in my own life, it has been the unanswered prayers that have brought me closer to Jesus, those things left unhealed that show me the depth of his love.

In 2016 we already had two children with serious medical conditions. My son Max has cerebral palsy and while that's not life threatening, it seriously affects our life and we have watched him struggle with pain and muscle tone for seven years. Our daughter, Josie, has an extremely rare genetic condition that caused a stroke at age one and puts her at high risk for another stroke. When we found out we were having another baby, like with all the others, we were thrilled for another gift from God. Then at the 18-week ultrasound the doctor found something troubling and subsequent ultrasounds revealed that our new daughter, Louisa, would have Spina Bifida which was caused by a genetic disorder affecting her bone structure. We were devastated. To witness another child struggle while her brothers, sisters, cousins and friends run and play freely was an unbearable thought. Even the doctors had a hard time dealing with it. I remember one doctor awkwardly searching for the right words to say when confronted with a family with three completely unrelated, but very serious medical conditions; he said it would be mathematically impossible, "like winning power ball twice in a row!"



## An Opportunity of Grace

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We are a family who firmly believe in miracles. We have been to hundreds of healing services and we pray over our children every day, so in faith we began to pray for a miracle while our daughter was still in the womb. We asked others to pray and at one point it seemed like the whole world was praying for a healing in utero for our daughter, but it did not come and when our daughter was born, she was rushed into surgery and it was determined that she would have no use of her legs at all.

The Spirit was leading us into the desert once again. It was the most difficult time in our life, but God was there in Louisa's hospital room and I heard him speaking clearly each day. We were surrounded almost constantly by our priest friends. We had Christmas Mass in the hospital waiting room with Fr. Dave Pivonka, and like the Nativity story, God was clearly coming into the mess of our lives even though we were devastated, worried about our future and even at times angry that he allowed this to happen.

Worrying about my wife and kids became a daily obsession. I was missing work, I was already getting behind on medical bills, our kids were staying with my in-laws for an extended period of time and I remember thinking that I am worried about every single thing in my

life. I was praying in Louisa's room and I remember the Lord just clearly saying, "Why are you so worried? You are in the center of the palm of my hand." I knew I had to stop the worrying and surrender the fear to the Lord. The whole situation, even in the darkest times, seemed dripping with grace, but I just could not feel it at all. God's presence was there, but it felt like he was keeping me at an arm's length.

During this time one of the principles from Fr. Jacques Phillippe's books that saved my soul and changed my perspective of this entire situation was the idea of asking *what* rather than *why*. In the midst of suffering it is only natural to ask God why, but there is grace in suspending the question of why and asking God what instead. What am I to do in this situation? How can I love you best? It expresses an incredible trust in God to not ask why. It also turns a situation of despair into an opportunity of grace. This was the key for me. I was now seeing the Holy Spirit move and could feel God's incredible providence and love even in the midst of the desert. ♦



*Dave VanVickle is a member of the NSC and the Director of Evangelization for a parish in Pittsburgh.*



# Healing and Deliverance

by Mary Healy

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A few decades ago, if you had asked someone whether healing and deliverance ministry is offered in their parish, you would probably have met with a blank stare. But today in many parts of the world, such a question is becoming common and, thankfully, sometimes the answer is “yes”! One of the ways the Charismatic Renewal is fulfilling its mission to be a current of grace in the Church is by normalizing ministries of healing and deliverance.

It was not accidental that healing and deliverance ministries arose in the context of the Charismatic Renewal. To be baptized in the Holy Spirit is to receive a life-changing personal revelation of the risen Lord Jesus, who is truly alive and who heals and sets people free today just as he did in his earthly ministry. At the same time, the Holy Spirit brings a deeper sensitivity to the activity of evil spirits and the need to be liberated from their influence.

Healing ministries began to arise as certain individuals, such as Fr. Emiliano Tardiff and Francis MacNutt, discovered that they had received a charism of healing that the Lord was using to powerful effect. The pioneers of this ministry usually had to learn by trial and error, not having received any prior formation in how to pray effectively for healing.

Deliverance ministries soon followed, as it became clear that some people needed not only healing but also deliverance from various forms of demonic affliction. Previously, Catholics had viewed liberation from evil spirits mainly in the context of exorcism, a liturgical rite of the Church used only in the relatively rare cases of demonic possession, and carried out only by a priest authorized by the bishop. But there are also lesser forms of demonic oppression, which are often linked with inner wounds in need of healing.

Pioneers like Fr. Rufus Pereira and Miles Dempsey developed the ministry of deliverance and helped place it on a sound footing.

Why has the Lord raised up these ministries in our time? Despite modern medical progress, we live in an era when vast numbers of people are suffering deeply from physical or emotional afflictions. Some of the contributing factors are the rise of a hedonistic and narcissistic culture, the resulting breakdown of the family, and the traumas of persecution, terrorism, or mass migration. The absence of God in much of western culture has left many people in a state of spiritual orphanhood, not knowing who they are, what their life is about, or whether they have any intrinsic value.

In this cultural situation, the rise of healing and deliverance ministries is a sign of the mercy of God, who created



us for the fullness of life and who wants us to experience the freedom that belongs to sons and daughters of the King. Healing and deliverance is thus an essential part of the Church's work of evangelization, just as it was at the center of Jesus' own ministry, as summed up by St. Peter: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil" (Acts 10:38).

Indeed, when Jesus first commissioned his disciples to continue his own mission, he made healing and deliverance an intrinsic part of their task: "Preach as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons" (Mt 10:7-8). In other words, proclaim the good news of the kingdom both in words and in supernatural deeds by which I, the Lord, will confirm the truth of the words! The gospel is good news precisely because it comes with divine power. Without power, it would not be good news. Imagine going into a prison where people are sitting in darkness, chained up, dirty, sick and miserable, and saying to them, "Listen, everybody, I have good news. There is a Savior who has come to set all prisoners free, to heal the sick and liberate the oppressed. I just wanted you to know that. Have a nice day." And then you walk out the door, leaving them all locked up. What kind of good news would that be?

The early Christians understood this well, and as they evangelized they also did works of healing and deliverance with bold faith and deep compassion. The Church Fathers speak of ordinary Christians frequently healing the sick and casting out demons—a major reason why pagans were flocking to

join the Church, even in the midst of persecution. Thus healing and deliverance today are not something novel, but rather a rediscovery of what belongs to our heritage as Christ's followers. The form is different (since healing and deliverance today are usually in the context of specific ministries that involve training and pastoral oversight, whereas in the past they were more spontaneous and ad hoc), but the object is the same. In a society that has

**"Training and models are important, but they can never substitute for the inner leading of the Holy Spirit, who knows every human heart and what each person most needs."**

rejected God and his ways, there are many casualties, but Christians are here to humbly care for the wounded and enable them to experience personally the mercy and grace of God.

One of the most noteworthy aspects of healing and deliverance today is the involvement of lay people in this ministry. Baptism in the Spirit awakens lay people to their full dignity as baptized believers and their call to share fully in the mission of the Church. Through these ministries lay people experience the joy of being an instrument of God's mercy to others—along with the travail and suffering that sometimes go with outreach to the wounded.

One danger in the wide dissemination of these ministries, however, is the risk of reducing them to a method or formula. Because healing and deliverance are a work of the Holy Spirit, they should only be carried out by those who are filled with the Holy Spirit and have learned to be sensitive to the Spirit's promptings. Training and models are important, but they can never substitute for the inner leading of the Holy Spirit, who knows every human heart and what each person most needs.

The Doctrinal Commission of ICCRS has published two books on this topic: *Guidelines on Prayers for Healing* (2012) and *Deliverance Ministry* (2017). Both are the fruit of several years of study and consultation with theologians and experts in ministry. Their purpose is to offer sound theological and pastoral principles for carrying out these ministries in accord with Catholic faith, and to help the wider Church understand what healing and deliverance are and why they are urgently needed today. Deliverance Ministry also clears up some common misunderstandings regarding the role of lay people in deliverance. It was vetted by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and received an enthusiastic preface from Cardinal Kevin Farrell, prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life. Both these books are recommended resources for those who practice healing and deliverance in the Church today. ♦



*Mary Healy is a professor of Scripture at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit and the chair of the ICCRS Doctrinal Commission.*

# Jesus Changed My Life and He Can Change Yours!

by Dave Nodar

In 1971 a friend of mine, who wasn't raised Christian, exhibited a radical change in his life. When he joyfully told me about it, he concluded by saying, "Dave, Jesus changed my life and he can change yours." A few months later, I called him on the phone and asked if I could come talk with him. I told him I wanted what he had but didn't know how to get it. When I arrived at his home, he told me to get down on my knees and tell Jesus out loud what I wanted. I thought, "Okay, do I say the Our Father or a Glory be?" He simply said speak out loud to Jesus and tell him what you want. From my guts, I prayed, "Jesus help me!"

The result was a tremendous outpouring of the Father's personal love for me, the forgiveness of my sins, and a certainty that he was giving me power to change. I thought, "This is so incredible, why isn't everyone Christian?" Though raised Catholic this personal encounter with God was something utterly new and life changing.

Jesus changed my life! The fruit was evident in the following days, months, and now over many years. I desired to pray, to be with him in the hidden life of friendship with God. I sensed him speaking to me through the Scriptures. The Sacraments became an essential means of grace in reality! I searched for others who wanted to live for Jesus and I hungered to tell everyone this good news of knowing the merciful love of the Father and the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit in the Lord Jesus!

## Power to be Jesus' witnesses

As you know this same power to evangelize has been experienced by millions of Catholics who have called upon the Lord to be baptized in the Spirit. In the Renewal this spirit of evangelizing was a key reason for the growth of the Renewal, and still is today in some regions of the world.

Yet for many the fire for evangelizing has died down. This key element of the Renewal is desperately needed by the Church today to help the next generation become missionary disciples. We who have grown older in the Renewal have the potential today to cry out, "From my youth you have taught me... even in old age... may I proclaim your might to generations to come!" (Ps. 71:17,18).

## Behold I am doing something new!

In the late 1980's, St John Paul II prophetically proclaimed that the times we are living in could be a spring time of apostolic fervor, *if we respond with generosity and prompt response to the impulse of the Holy Spirit*. I had the growing conviction that I could make a small contribution to the Church's mission of evangelization. I met with our Archbishop in 1995, to tell him I would like to start a ministry of evangelization. Cardinal William Keeler was so thrilled that any Catholic was actually evangelizing and wanted to help others to share Christ that he established ChristLife as an apostolate of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Since that time, we have used the wonderful gifts the Lord has poured out on you and me, to develop a relational process to begin making missionary disciples in our parishes and small groups. ChristLife is an evangelization process to reach anyone and everyone: young and old, baptized and unbaptized, to discover, follow, and share Jesus Christ as Lord.

As we conduct training conferences around the world, many of my friends in the Renewal ask, "Dave how is it possible that ChristLife is being used in so many parishes?!" The simple answer is that what the Lord has given us, baptism in the Holy Spirit, he is making available to his Church, in new ways. St. John Paul II called us to a new evangelization that is new in ardor, methods and expressions. We who have come to know the ardor of the Holy Spirit have a great opportunity, if we are teachable, humble and open to the new things the Lord is doing.

Evangelization is one of the fruits of the new Pentecost that you and I have experienced. The Lord is looking for laborers for his harvest. Be open to the new things the Lord is doing! He wants to use you.

*"I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest." (Jn 4:35). ♦*



Dave Nodar is founder and Director of ChristLife, Catholic ministry for evangelization and co-author of *Share Christ*. See [www.christlife.org](http://www.christlife.org)

*Personal Observations and Reflections on the*

## International Conference of the Catholic Fraternity

*June 29-July 1, 2018, Augusta GA*

*by Paul Dinolfo*

I was invited to attend and speak at the Catholic Fraternity Conference as a leader in the Sword of the Spirit, an international ecumenical association of covenant communities. I am also an Evangelical Protestant. I wasn't sure what to expect as this was my first Fraternity conference. However, as soon as we began to worship the Lord at the opening session, I felt very much at home.

The worship throughout the Conference was very rich and lively. The Lord was very present in our praise and word gifts. There were several opportunities to hear the Lord and pray for those around us. My wife, Marcia, also attended and during one of the ministry times she experienced the Lord work through her in a new way.

I was struck by several things the Lord did at the conference, which I believe are part of what the Lord is doing across the whole Body of Christ.

**Emphasis on Mission:** There was a strong emphasis at the Conference on renewing our commitment to mission. Jean Luc Moens, from Emmanuel Community, observed that some communities spend so much time forming their members in preparation for mission that they never get around to doing the mission. He encouraged us not to separate formation from mission, but to form our members while also engaging them in mission.

We also heard testimonies from several Fraternity leaders who shared about the mission of their communities. I was especially inspired by the witness of brothers and sisters who shared from China, Uganda, Brazil, and Malaysia.

**Emphasis on Charismatic Renewal and Gifts:** There was a strong emphasis on the importance of baptism in the Spirit and charisms for mission. Dr. Mary Healy spoke about the connection between the charismatic gifts and mission. She observed that whenever Jesus trained others in mission

(e.g., training of the twelve, the seventy, the great commission), he always linked preaching the gospel with the charisms, especially healing and deliverance. This confirmed what I hear the Lord saying in many places. We need to connect the charismatic gifts with mission.

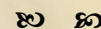
**Emphasis on Christian Unity:** There was a very strong emphasis on Christian unity throughout the Conference. Anglican Bishop Sean Larkin was invited to share deeply from his heart about our call to unity. Peter and Sharon Poppleton shared about their collaboration with Emmanuel Community to bring the John 17 Christian Unity Movement to Paris, France. As an Evangelical Protestant living in an ecumenical community I was very encouraged to see this. Truly the Catholic Fraternity has embraced the message of Pope Francis that baptism in the Spirit is an ecumenical grace for the whole church, intended to draw us into spiritual unity.

**Unity Within the Renewal:** The Lord has been moving in recent years to restore and bring about greater unity within the Renewal. CHARIS has been formed by the Vatican to unify the Renewal in all its diversity (e.g., prayer groups, renewal centers, mission organizations, covenant communities), and to reaffirm the role of the Renewal in fostering spiritual ecumenism.

In a similar way the Lord has been drawing networks of covenant communities (which had been separated for many years) back into relationship with each other. Our desire is to love and support each other as brothers and sisters, to share resources and work together wherever we can, while respecting our distinctive natures and callings. My being invited to speak to the Catholic Fraternity is a fruit of the restoration of relationship between the Fraternity and the Sword of the Spirit.

I was very encouraged by the warmth with which I was received at the conference. I grew as well in my appreciation for

## Prayer Card



### Enhancing Unity

"I pray not only for them,  
but also for those who  
will believe in me through  
their word, so that they  
may all be one, just as  
you, Father, are in me,  
and I in you, that  
they also may be in us,  
that the world may believe  
that you sent me."

John 17:20



the breadth of God's work in the Catholic Fraternity throughout the world. It was wonderful to reconnect with leaders whom I had not seen in many years, as well as to form many new relationships.

Finally, I would like to highly commend Alleluia Community, the host community. This was my third visit to Alleluia in the last two years. Each time I have experienced their warm hospitality and been very inspired by their community life. I cherish the personal relationships I have developed with many of their members. ♦



*Paul Dinolfo is the senior coordinator of the Work of Christ Community, an ecumenical covenant community (Catholics, Protestants, Eastern Orthodox) in East Lansing, Michigan. Paul served from 2008 to 2016*

*as president of the North American region of the Sword of the Spirit, an international ecumenical association of covenant communities.*



Please pray with the NSC  
for the following intentions:

Let us pray together...

- ◆ For the Leaders' and Ministries' Conference, that the Lord would renew and strengthen us in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ For all people who share in this "current of grace," baptism in the Holy Spirit, that we may foster peace and charity throughout the Church.
- ◆ For wisdom that reflects the heart of Jesus as we share the Good News of salvation with others.
- ◆ For CHARIS, the new coming together for all of the expressions of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, that they would be inspired as they lead us into this "new season of grace."

Sr. Mary Anne Schaefer

**Life is changed,  
not ended.**

*(Preface for Christian Death I)*

## HONORING Mother John Marie

by Sr. Ann Chiara Richardson, DLJC

I was with Mother John Marie during the last 12 hours of her life. Other than answering the questions of the E.R. staff, the last really meaningful words she spoke were, "Thank you, Michael." Michael was the EMT who responded to our 911 call when Mother reported a sudden and excruciating headache. Immediately preceding the ambulance ride to Amarillo, Michael witnessed Mother John Marie's reception of the last rites. When our chaplain gave the plenary indulgence available to those at the point of death, "I forgive you for the sins of your whole life..." Mother cried out, "Oh wow! Really?" Father smiled and the Sisters gathered around her laughed to hear her childlike wonder and see her eyes sparkling with gratitude.



"Thank you too much," was one of Mother's catch phrases. And being one of the privileged souls who was blessed to care for her in her final years, I can testify that she really did thank me too much! Every Monday morning, after I cleaned her room (and sometimes when I was just

getting started) she would shower me with "payment" – a myriad of "thank you's," a handful of M&M's and more blessings, prayers and compliments than I deserved.

She would even kiss my hands after I reached down to hug her goodbye.

Among the many virtues that marked Mother John Marie's life, gratitude was the one that impressed me the most. Even on the

morning of her burial, as I reached down to touch her cold hands one last time, I heard her whisper in my heart, "Thank you, thank you, thank you." I can only imagine the gratitude that sprang up in her heart when she finally saw her beloved Jesus face to face.

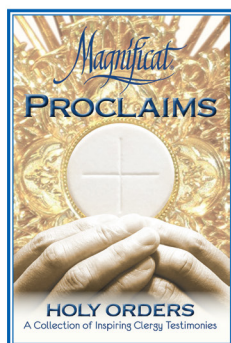
Early on the morning of May 26th, as the Church celebrated the memory of St. Philip Neri, we chanted Morning Prayer in Mother's hospice room; it would be the last Divine Office of her earthly life. And the reader's voice broke as she read the Scripture from the Common of Pastors: "Remember your leaders who spoke the word of God to you; consider how their lives ended, and imitate their faith..." Mother John Marie, for the witness of your life: Thank you too much! ◆

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## IN MEMORIAM Fr. Tom Forrest, CSsR 1927-2018

That Fr. Tom has preached to hundreds of thousands in about 120 nations, and has led many thousands of youth, nuns, married couples, priests, and bishops to a closer relationship with the Lord, is no news. He is one of the most respected Catholic evangelists of our time. I would like to highlight two simple yet profound lessons I received from Fr. Tom. Both illustrate his love and passion for God and for his people.

I invited Fr. Tom to accompany me to China. His response was, "If this means that I preach Jesus, I am in." He preached in China on three different occasions. There, he struck a relationship with a top government official. Fr. Tom wasted no opportunity to witness to him. Fr. Tom spoke of his relationship with the Lord and spent time praying with him, but he also shared about Mother Teresa and asked the official to grant the nun's request to bring the Missionaries of Charity to China as this would be good for "charity in truth" to be

witnessed. This request was technically granted. Much work of evangelization has happened in China since.

The second story: I was hosted in Europe with Fr. Tom for afternoon tea. The hostess told Fr. Tom that his tea already had sugar in it, but that he could add more. He started sipping the tea. Suddenly, the hostess, in panic from the kitchen, called out to Fr. Tom. "Stop drinking!" she said. By mistake, she had placed salt instead of sugar in the tea. Fr. Tom, however, continued the conversation as if nothing happened. Shortly after, he whispered to me, "I knew it, but of course one should never embarrass anyone, particularly if the person is the host!" A lesson I took to heart.

Fr. Tom, thank you. Though you reached the masses, you never missed the person. Pray for us, as we continue on our journey to make Him known to all.

Fr. Tom was a member of the NSC, 1975-1978.

- Henry Cappello, President:  
*Caritas in Veritate- CiV*



## IN MEMORIAM Jim Byrne 1945 – 2018

My husband, Jim Byrne was a man of faith, integrity, and excellence. He passionately loved God, our family, and everyone around him. Jim was a wonderful husband for 45 years.

Our four adult children felt deeply loved by Jim, and our four grandsons have told us they will miss Grandpa.

Jim encountered the Holy Spirit on a retreat around 1967 while a student at Notre Dame. Baptism in the Spirit had a profound impact on him. Consequently, Jim changed his career goals to remain at Notre Dame to evangelize and serve the students. He dedicated himself to a life of worship, service, and evangelization, built a covenant community on campus, and helped to found the Notre Dame Charismatic Conferences that began in 1967. He also wrote the books *Threshold of God's Promise* and *Living in the Spirit*.

Jim believed that if the Charismatic Renewal were to be valued within the Catholic Church, it would require a strong national leadership team. And so he became one of the founding members of the National Service Committee in 1970 and was a member for three years.

Jim was a law professor and attorney for 35 years. He authored 60 books on law, founded a non-profit institute, and sponsored 185 professional conferences, which were attended by the largest 25 international banks in the world. He chaired a U.N. delegation to write trade laws. Yet no matter how successful he became, Jim remained humble, approachable, and encouraging.

Since his cancer diagnosis in June 2017, Jim had many meaningful encounters with the Lord. His faith never wavered, and he was hopeful to the end. He would often say "Maria, be peaceful. We are in God's hands." And so we are.

- Maria Byrne

# Pope Francis: On the Call to Holiness in Today's World

## Quotes from *Gaudete et Exsultate*

(Editor's note: This is not meant to summarize what Pope Francis wrote but to foster a desire to reflect on the entire document.)

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**M**y modest goal is to repropose the call to holiness in a practical way for our own time, with all its risks, challenges and opportunities. For the Lord has chosen each one of us “to be holy and blameless before him in love” (Eph 1:4). [2]

**I**would like to insist primarily on the call to holiness that the Lord addresses to each of us, the call that he also addresses, personally, to you: “Be holy, for I am holy” (Lev 11:44; cf. 1 Pet 1:16). [10]

**W**e shape by many small gestures the holiness God has willed for us, not as men and women sufficient unto ourselves but rather “as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Pet 4:10). [18]

**E**ach saint is a mission, planned by the Father to reflect and embody, at a specific moment in history, a certain aspect of the Gospel. [19]

**A**llow the Spirit to forge in you the personal mystery that can reflect Jesus Christ in today's world. [23]

**M**ay you come to realize what that word is, the message of Jesus that God wants to speak to the world by your life. Let yourself be transformed. Let yourself be renewed by the Spirit, so that this can happen. [24]

**D**o not be afraid of holiness. It will take away none of your energy, vitality or joy. On the contrary, you will become what the Father had in mind when he created you, and you will be faithful to your deepest self. [32]

**T**he Beatitudes are like the Christian's identity card....In the Beatitudes we find a portrait of the Master, which we are called to reflect in our daily lives. [63]

**T**he word “happy” or “blessed” thus becomes a symbol for “holy”. It expresses the fact that those faithful to God and his word, by their self-giving, gain true happiness.” [64]

**Let us ask the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us a fervent longing to be saints for God's greater glory, and let us encourage one another in this effort. [177]**

**L**et us allow his words to unsettle us, to challenge us and to demand a real change in the way we live. [66] I would like to mention a few signs or spiritual attitudes that, in my opinion, are necessary if we are to understand the way of life to which the Lord calls us. [110] ...five great expressions of love for God and neighbor that I consider of particular importance in the light of certain dangers and limitations present in today's culture. [111]

**Titles of these five sections include:** Perseverance, Patience and Meekness

[112-121], Joy and a Sense of Humor [122-128], Boldness and Passion [129-139], In Community [140-146], and In Constant Prayer [147-157].

**G**od is eternal newness. He impels us constantly to set out anew, to pass beyond what is familiar, to the fringes and beyond. [135]

**T**rue enough, we need to open the door of our hearts to Jesus, who stands and knocks (cf. Rev 3:20). Sometimes I wonder, though, if perhaps Jesus is already inside us and knocking on the door for us to let him escape from our stale self-centeredness. In the Gospel, we see how Jesus “went through the cities and villages, preaching and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God” (Lk 8:1). After the resurrection, when the disciples went forth in all directions, the Lord accompanied them (cf. Mk 16:20). This is what happens as the result of true encounter. [136]

**L**et us ask the Lord for the grace not to hesitate when the Spirit calls us to take a step forward. Let us ask for the apostolic courage to share the Gospel with others and to stop trying to make our Christian life a museum of memories. [139]

**E**ach community is called to create a “God-enlightened space in which to experience the hidden presence of the risen Lord”. Sharing the word and celebrating the Eucharist together fosters fraternity and makes us a holy and missionary community. It also gives rise to authentic and shared mystical experiences. [142] ♦



# Redemptive Suffering

by Mark Nebrbas

*"Apart from the cross there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven."*

- St. Rose of Lima

The question is, will we suffer well and with the right attitude?

**F**r. Jacques Philippe is a renowned French spiritual director in the Community of the Beatitudes. He helps steer us to the right attitude about acceptance of the unexpected. More often than not, suffering comes to us unexpectedly. He wrote, "Perhaps the highest and most rewarding exercise of freedom is assenting to things we haven't chosen, welcoming in trust realities that transcend us." (Magnificat, Vol 20, No.5, July 2018, p.102) Redemptive Suffering is certainly a reality that transcends us.

St. Paul wrote in Colossians 1:24, "In my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body." This is a key scripture that helps us to understand redemptive suffering. We are given an opportunity by the Lord to offer up our suffering united with him on the cross for what needs to be completed in the Body of Christ.

I had a fairly basic and (I thought) good understanding of redemptive suffering until five and half years ago. Without warning one Monday morning in 2012 results from a test came back showing that I had a tumor in my stomach the size of a peach. Two days later it was confirmed that I had adenocarcinoma, a serious and aggressive form of cancer. Two days after that my entire stomach was removed. Within two months of that I began chemotherapy and radiation treatments that lasted another two months. I was thrust into embracing

suffering or not. I chose, with God's grace, to embrace it.

My wife, Carol, and I had moments of tears and clinging to each other when we first got the news.

Friends from near and far began to pray for my healing. God was at work.

I never felt sorry for myself, I never asked, *Why me?* The grace I had received from being baptized in the Holy Spirit nearly 40 years earlier, the support of a vibrant charismatic community, and the sacraments of the Church had prepared me to trust in God and embrace suffering. I learned that if we are faithful in small things like our daily duties and the crosses of normal life, then God will give us the grace for the big crosses he permits in our lives.

I was cancer free for four and one-half years when the cancer returned in March of 2017. After a second major surgery last May I underwent chemotherapy for a second time.

One of the many wonderful things I learned about suffering is that it is the "money" in the economy of salvation. Yes, our suffering will help us get to heaven but we can also offer it up for the salvation of others. I offered up my suffering for one of my adult children who left the Church. He was in his late 20's and hadn't been to the sacraments for eight years. Last March my oldest son invited him to attend a men's conference in Philadelphia. I prayed days before the event that my prodigal would go to Confession. He did, and then attended Mass and received the Eucharist! Praise

God! I felt very strongly that God had honored my suffering and heard the cry of this father's heart for his son to come home.

I was scheduled for a new round of treatments in May of this year. My oncologist informed me, when I returned from a trip to Lourdes, that my tumor markers were in the normal range, my recent PET scan was negative, and therefore, he was canceling the treatment plan because he couldn't find any evidence of cancer! I attribute this wonderful healing news to the many prayers from brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ and Our Lady of Lourdes.

There is tremendous value in suffering. However, that doesn't mean we should pray for it. St. Therese of Lisieux discourages us from doing that. What we should do is pray for God's grace when suffering comes our way assenting "to the realities that transcend us" with great trust in the Lord, confident that he has a plan. God will provide every grace we need to climb the ladder to heaven and help to bring as many people with us as possible! ♦



*Mark Nebrbas and his wife Carol reside in Steubenville, Ohio and have nine children and 14 grandchildren. A past Franciscan University employee, he has administered*

*Fire Rallies and led summer conferences. He currently serves on the leadership team for ChristLife in his parish and is on the Advisory Board for The Ark and The Dove.*



## Young Adult Ministry

by Casey Sprehe

This phrase is often used to describe a technique that's been tried, a milestone that's been reached, or a situation that's been overcome. There's a primary focus on "the now and the not yet" that portrays "the past" as irrelevant and unimportant. As this has become a generational norm, massive groups of people have begun to suffer from a historical amnesia of sorts. Forgetting the past to forge the future merely produces what George Santayana predicted: "Those who cannot learn from the past are doomed to repeat it."

It's important to know where we have been to see where we are going.

Often, among the younger generations in the Renewal there seems to be an almost allergic reaction to the reference of yesteryear. It's a dangerous reaction because knowing the roots of the Renewal is essential for continued growth. However, when an audio, talk or video opens with: "In 1967 . . ." the article is put down, the tab is closed.

# "Been There, Done That."

Why? I don't think it's because we, as young adults, don't care about what God did 50 years ago. I don't think it's because we aren't the lead roles in the story. I propose it's the lack of connectedness among the generational stories that causes us to lose interest.

An analogy might be helpful. I can tell a friend about the Exodus story and it remains just that: a story of God using Moses to lead his people out of slavery and bondage into freedom through the waters of the Red Sea. It isn't until that friend sees her story in light of the Exodus story that it takes on personal significance. It then becomes a forerunner to her story of God using Christ to lead her out of the muddy waters of sin and darkness into freedom and eternal life through the waters of baptism. The story didn't change; the connection in her life was made. Now "The Exodus story" becomes "Her Exodus Story."

When Pentecost is connected to the Duquesne Weekend and then to one's

personal baptism in the Holy Spirit, then "50 years ago" suddenly becomes part of a 30-something's story. It's a personal fulfillment. That peaks interest; that grabs attention. That invites people into a story they are helping write by their own experience.

Let's share the grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit with others by sharing the historical story, then our story, then inviting them to add their story. This is how the torch is passed on. This is how the story remains living and active and not a history book on a shelf. ♦

*Casey Sprehe is a member of the NSC. She is a lay evangelist who desires to bridge the generational gap within the Renewal. She and her husband Kevin have 4 children.*

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## U.S. Ad Hoc Committee See Newsbriefs, page 13

**Andrés Arango and Jane Guenther**, present members of the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services Council;

**Bob Canton**, representing the National Filipino Alliance;

**Chuck Hornsby**, representing the Catholic Fraternity of Charismatic Covenant Communities and Fellowships and the Alleluia Community;

**Fr. Anthony Ouellette**, representing the National Association of Diocesan Liaisons;

**Ron Riggins and Walter Matthews**, representing the National Service Committee; and

**Msgr. Joseph Malagrecra**, the chairperson of the Gathering Committee (see 13) as well as the representative of the Haitian and Hispanic National Committees.



## Newsbriefs

## CHARIS Update

In the Spring issue, we introduced the CHARIS initiative of Pope Francis (See p 8). CHARIS is the new name for a “single service for the one current of grace” for all the expressions of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is not being renamed. Rather CHARIS, is an acronym for Catholic Charismatic Renewal International Service.

In anticipation of the formation in the U.S. of a National Service of Communion as invited by the CHARIS Statutes, an Ad Hoc Committee (See shaded box on p 12) was formed to help all of us in the U.S. respond to this CHARIS initiative. The goal of the National Service of Communion will be to bring about greater communion between our diverse expressions, so that this current of grace might be experienced in a greater way throughout the Church.

We have met three times to date. We have mailed the CHARIS documents to all the bishops in the U.S. with a cover letter and received a number of positive replies. We are in the process of widening the tent of the Gathering of National Leaders Groups: Catholic Charismatic Renewal, which has been meeting for over 25 years and have invited about 40 additional key leaders and ministries to the Gathering in Tempe, Arizona next February. Our purpose will be that together we may discern how to realize and bring to fulfillment the Holy Father’s goal in the U.S.

On the International level, the Holy Father will personally appoint, on December 8, the first CHARIS Council,



## CHARIS Initiative Speaks to Liaisons

by Fr. Anthony G. Ouellette

The Association of Diocesan Liaisons (ADL) reflects the great diversity of “liaisonship” that exists throughout the United States and Canada, differences in titles, structures, communication, organization, and assets. This is the reason why “associating” with each other has been so mutually beneficial for many of us to see possibilities and gain insights into this complex work.

The CHARIS initiative in Rome speaks to us as liaisons and provides a possible template for diocesan service as well. The key “players” of the CHARIS structure are the Holy Father, the Dicastery for Laity, Family, and Life, an International Service of Communion representative body of 18, an Office, a Moderator, and an Ecclesiastical Assistant. A “Diocesan Service of Communion” could mirror this, the Local Ordinary, the Chancery, a diocesan representative body, and an office. But, it’s the positions of the Moderator and the Ecclesiastical Assistant that both connect with the lived experience of ADL members.

Understood in diocesan terms, the Moderator promotes and develops the Catholic Charismatic Renewal as a current of grace, promotes work for unity in the Body of Christ, ensures good communication between the

local Ordinary, his Chancery staff, and the local Renewal, leads the work of the representative body and any other larger representative bodies, as well as visits and serves local realities as needs arises. The Ecclesiastical Assistant accompanies all the activities of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal from a doctrinal and spiritual point of view, guarantees the faithfulness of all actions undertaken, takes part in meetings of the representative body, as well as in any other activities where his presence is deemed helpful or necessary.

As a liaison, depending on whether you are a lay person, deacon, or priest, appointed, confirmed, paid, or volunteer, you will find yourself identifying with at least some of these activities, if not all. Could your work be complemented by a Moderator or by an Ecclesiastical Assistant? Do you currently have a body that is representative of all parts of the Renewal in your diocese? If we use the CHARIS structure as a mirror, then we may find ourselves inviting others to accompany us, not only to create a greater service of communion for our diocese, but insight into what CHARIS means for us nationally, continentally, and internationally. ♦

For information on the Diocesan Liaison ministry go to [www.associationofdiocesanliaisons.org](http://www.associationofdiocesanliaisons.org).

a group of eighteen people. He will also appoint the first CHARIS Moderator. Pope Francis will do this as an aid to the transition. Future Councils and Moderators will be elected, according to the Statutes. On Pentecost 2019, the Holy Father will formally establish

CHARIS as a Public Association of the Faithful with juridical personality.

Pray for all of this. We are all very excited that our Holy Father has placed baptism in the Holy Spirit and the Renewal in the heart of the Church. ♦



## From the Executive Director

by Walter Matthews

## 50th Anniversaries

Earlier this summer, my high school class celebrated our 50th anniversary on our graduation date, June 16, the traditional feast of St. John Francis Regis, for whom the school is named, a 17th century French Jesuit known for his zealous missionary efforts and his care for the poor and marginalized. In 1997 Pope St. John Paul II commemorated the fourth centenary of his birth, by honoring him as a “lofty figure of holiness” and an example for the Church in our day.

For four years we lived, failed and tried again to live the Jesuit motto, *ad maiorem Dei gloriam* (to the greater glory of God). I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to attend Regis, survive and graduate, and to serve to the greater glory of God as a “man for others” in the footsteps of St. Ignatius Loyola and St. John Francis Regis.

Another 50th anniversary was recently celebrated for the restoration of the permanent diaconate and the men who serve as deacons in our Church (and their wives), “pioneers of the new civilization of love,” in the words of Pope Francis. I want to acknowledge all deacons in the Renewal. I want especially to acknowledge those deacons who have served on the NSC through the years: Kevin Ranaghan, Paul DeCelles, Dean Condon, Bill Brennan, Ron Ochner, and Dan Guinaugh, as well as the many who served on the Advisory Committee/NSC Council, including Dan Pudvah, Dan Foley and Ralph Poyo, current members. Blessings.

Finally, the third 50th Anniversary I want to note is that of a document written by Blessed Paul VI, entitled *Humanae Vitae*. In the words of Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, President of the USCCB, “In it, he reaffirmed the beautiful truth that a husband and wife are called to give themselves completely to each other. Marriage reflects the love of God, which is faithful, generous, and life-giving. Through their vocation, spouses cooperate with God by being open to new human life.”

In 1968, when Blessed Paul VI wrote I would have none of it. I was off to college to have “fun”. Even after my return to the Church and being baptized in the Holy Spirit in 1972, and for several years after, I was still unsure where I was with this “teaching of the Church.” It was only when Claire and I were approaching marriage did I have to come to grips with “the encyclical’s emphasis on the ‘inseparable connection’ between the ‘unitive and the procreative’ qualities of married love.” (Catholic News Service article)

As many writers have noted, many rejected the encyclical immediately and many continue to reject it. Yet, as one author has written, “After 50 years of attacking *Humanae Vitae*,’ the opponents need to address this question: In view of the cheapening and coarsening of sex in this time, the rise of the hookup culture, the vulgarization of popular entertainment and much else, is it possible “*Humanae Vitae*” got it right?” To say it in another way, is it not time for a “culture of life” to triumph over a “culture of death”?

My high school alma mater song has these words, “May ours be the noble heart, strong to endure, daring ‘tho’ skies be dark and roadways unsure, may ours be the heroes part ready to do.” May it be so for all of us as we continue to serve the Lord, the Church and this great Renewal in our day and into the days ahead. ♦

## FRIENDS OF THE NSC

We are grateful to a little over 700 individuals, couples, prayer groups, communities, ministries and other Renewal entities who have given one or more gifts in 2018. This compares to the over 5,000 recipients of *Pentecost Today*. If you value *Pentecost Today* for yourself or your group please consider a gift today: by mail or by using our secure website.

To date we are ahead in our Fund Raising, in part because of the generosity of Ramona Thompson who, we noted last fall, left us 5% of her residual estate. Without her bequest we would not be doing as well. This type of Planned Giving is essential in support of our mission as we go forward, as is our new Sustaining Partner Pledge Program. Please consider including both in your giving.

**Required Minimum Distribution (RMD):** If you are 70 ½ and older, you can make a gift transfer of some or all of your RMD directly to the National Service Committee. My wife and I made a decision to do this earlier this year.

Even if you choose the now increased standard deduction for 2018, you can reduce your taxes. Because this gift does not provide you a charitable deduction, it is a way for non-itemizers to reduce taxable income and support the ministry of the NSC as we respond to this New Season and Pope Francis’ CHARIS Initiative.

Finally, we would like to thank the donor who sent a Memorial gift in memory of Fr. Al Carney. May he rest in peace. ♦





# Be Bearers of Light in the Darkness

by Fausto Franco

**T**he Spirit of God is actively at work in the Catholic Church and the world that is in need of God. My sense is that God is ever making himself available to us as the pursuit for “truth” continues. Jesus tells us in sacred scripture, “But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth” (Jn 16:13). There are those within the world who are attempting to live in a world where God does not play part. We can see this by some of the current world affairs in parts of the world like Nicaragua where there has been attacks on clergy and christians. There is the ever pressing movement of governments pushing a culture of death.

In my opinion I believe this is the most blatant attack on the Christian faith. The Spirit, I believe, is moving the faithful to respond with love. This response can be seen by some of the men and women who have recently been canonized by our Church. The upcoming canonization of Blessed Oscar Romero is an indication of this

response of the Spirit through the Church. We also have the witness of St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta. They responded to God’s call to be love and truth. They taught the Gospel message that every single person has value and should be treated with dignity because God dwells within that person.

I believe that God in His infinite wisdom through the Church has raised these two and many others in the recent years to be a guide for the world. That with the Spirit’s assistance we too can be bearers of light in the darkness that tries to envelope the world. This light is love and truth. The Spirit is calling for those who have had an encounter with and relationship with God in three Persons to share that light with the world. Those of us who have had the grace to know the light of love and truth do not have the duty to just share it but to also become that light through the power of the Holy Spirit.

St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Blessed Oscar Romero serve as guides for the world as to how we can open ourselves to the Holy Spirit to

live in love and truth. How we can accompany our brother and sister in their suffering but also speak the truth and more importantly live that truth. ♦

*Fausto Franco, one of the panel speakers at the NSC Jubilee Conference, is past Coordinator for the Hispanic Catholic Charismatic Renewal for the youth and young adults in the USA and Canada.*



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St. Catherine of Siena (as quoted by Pope St. John Paul II, WYD 2000)

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