

Fall 2018

PENTECOST *Today*

Publication of the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal



*“Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life.”*

John 8:12

Photo by Sr. Mary Anne Schaefer



Chairman's Corner

by Ron Riggins

Setting: *Easter Vigil*

Church: *Dark, except ...*

Paschal Candle: *Lit with Easter fire, shining in the darkness, giving hope*

It seems dark, hopeless. Scandals, alleged cover-ups, pointing fingers. The devil is prowling about like a lion looking for someone to devour. The Church in crisis. Some speculate it will get worse, and some ponder: "Have the gates of hell prevailed against the Church?" Some are leaving in anger, feeling betrayed. The enemy's tactics seem overpowering – deception, division, diversion and discouragement.

Jesus asks "Do you also want to leave?" Peter answers. "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God."

Again Jesus speaks: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not

walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

The Light shines brightly in the darkness. Jesus' life is the light of the human race, and darkness cannot overcome it. We turn to Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, embracing his words: "the gates of hell will not prevail against the Church."

John the Baptist came to testify to the light so that all might believe through him that the true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

Now is the time for the Renewal ... we have been preparing for this time ... and this is the time for fulfillment. Peter exhorts us to always be ready to give the reason for our hope. Remain humble, and be docile to the Holy Spirit. Testify to the light – evangelize, heal, preach, teach, reconcile in the spirit of unity.

Thank you Lord for the power of your Holy Spirit to be your witnesses to the ends of the earth at this time! ♦



Editor's Desk

by Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner, SSND

As Ron Riggins writes, the Paschal Candle shines in the darkness, giving hope (p 2). The Easter Candle (cover) shining in the darkness, yet subtly reflecting the cross in the background, encourages us to live with and for Christ, following him no matter what is going on around us. Our faith is in Jesus.

God calls us to love and love includes true and deep repentance (p 10). For People of Praise, their covenant is a promise of lifelong love and service to fellow community members and to God (p 3). Love includes maintaining healthy relationships and preserving them from the poison of anger and resentment (pp 4-5).

We are called to be saints and our growth in spiritual gifts requires us to step out in faith: this includes the call to evangelize in the power of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ (p 15). God wants to give us holy boldness (p 6). What can lead us to the powerful desire to witness to the transforming love of the Holy Spirit? The realization that we are beloved of God (p 13).

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is very alive in Latin America (p 9).

When we speak of and live the Renewal, what is it that young adults are seeking (p 12)?

God is calling us now, more than ever, to work alongside each other, to labor to build the Church, the Body of Christ. We must all be involved (p 7-8).

Finally, on page 11, you will find an update on CHARIS.

Let us follow the Risen Christ! Let us be grateful! (p 14). ♦

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Executive Director

Walter Matthews

Editorial Board

Jimmy Archer

Matthew Bourgeois

Tom Mangan

Editor

Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner, SSND

Production Manager

Sharon Fox

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The Witness of the People of Praise Community

by Dorothy Garrity Ranaghan

**“Our covenant is a
promise of lifelong love
and service to fellow
community members
and to God.”**

In the heyday of the charismatic renewal our local prayer meeting in South Bend had upwards of 400 people each week. It was amazing, yet we began to notice that about fifty of us were regularly in attendance, but the rest of the crowd was always changing. We called it the revolving door. People came in and out again. No doubt people were changed and changed for the better and went on to serve the Lord in many ways. But others of us longed for a greater unity, a deeper knowledge of one another, and a more permanent commitment to growing in Christ together. We longed for a true community.

Paul DeCelles and Kevin Ranaghan then sent a letter to all the regular attendees, and set up a separate weekly meeting to discuss becoming a community. Everyone had a different idea of what that would look like of course, but after many weeks of discussion and prayer and prophecy we agreed that we were being called to be a charismatic, ecumenical, covenant community. Twenty-nine people made the first covenant. That was 47 years ago. The People of Praise now has 21 branches in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean, numbering about 1700 adults and about 600 children.

Our covenant is a promise of lifelong love and service to fellow community members and to God. It has enabled the unity and permanency of our life together in Christ. Many people in the Renewal in the early days of the Renewal were being called to form communities. Some were all Catholic or Lutheran, etc. in membership, but not many were ecumenical. In our case, both the prayer meeting and the community that grew out of it were ecumenical. That was controversial to some. But the witness of our call to unity seems now to be

affirmed by the approach Pope Francis is taking to the fact that the essential nature of the Pentecostal /charismatic renewal is ecumenical. Living this vocation to ecumenical relationships for many years has been both challenging and a joy.

For many years our primary witness was simply to “be” community. It was a time of growing in numbers and maturity as that witness became attractive. Our service then was to the Renewal itself and its thousands of prayer groups through selling books and tapes, running conferences, and promoting the spread of baptism in the Spirit in the whole world. But around 1980, we were called to something new in the world of Christian education. Trinity Schools offer students a Christian education in truth, beauty and goodness as members of a community of learners that includes both students and faculty. Grades 6-12 now exist in St. Paul/Minneapolis, Minnesota, in South Bend, Indiana and in Northern Virginia. All have won numerous awards for excellence. Several schools looking for similar education are now affiliated with Trinity Schools in several locations. And its curriculum has been adopted by a charter

school in Colorado. Most recently we have opened an elementary school. Praise Academy at Lakeside, located in the poorest neighborhood in Shreveport, Louisiana, is an elementary school built on the premise of providing an education that will foster a child’s ability to become a productive, employable and active member of their family and community through a Christian and classical education. Children in the neighborhood can attend, regardless of their family’s financial needs.

The expansion of our service area grew even more when, in the 90’s, the youth in our community let it be known that they wanted to claim some ownership in our charismatic, ecumenical, covenant life and to reach out in service. As a result, our outreach has focused on serving people in poor and marginalized areas, “missionary outposts” in the Allendale section of Shreveport, on the near south side of Indianapolis, and in Evansville, Indiana. In these “forgotten corners” of America, community members now live, build and renovate homes, plant neighborhood vegetable gardens, and run summer camps for thousands. Christian culture has begun to take root in places formerly known for drugs and violence. Our witness as an ecumenical, covenant, Christian community is that love multiplies, charisms increase, and the kingdom is being built day by day. ♦



Dorothy Garrity Ranaghan is a founding member of the People of Praise, a charismatic, ecumenical covenant community. She has authored articles and books, including her recently released updated book, Blind Spot: War and Christian Identity.

Forgiveness:

*Preserves Unity and Resolves
Everything in Harmony*

by Fr. Richard McAlear, OMI

I have been involved in the Renewal for almost 50 years. Looking back, I can see two starkly different experiences that can illustrate the blessings and the lessons of the Renewal. I am sure that there are many who can share the same insights.

One positive element is the gift of community. The major fruit of the Spirit's moving in Renewal is the experience of community. Community is a gift of God, working through the Spirit. It was a natural outgrowth of the prayer meeting. At the outset people meeting regularly for prayer are mostly strangers. Worship, praise and adoration, combined with prophetic utterance, witnessing to God's work and personal sharing were the basic actions of every prayer meeting. Through the shared experience of faith and prayer, a bond was forged and strangers became a community of faith and love. Rich and poor, educated or not, from varied political parties, different ethnic backgrounds...it did not matter. Deep friendships, personal bonds and obvious love—all developed naturally and community was born. This was a common experience in the Renewal from the outset. Some groups would develop into structured and formal communities. Others were satisfied with the more loose and unstructured prayer group friendships and spiritual rela-

tionships. Whatever the style, there has been a very impressive and consistent experience of community where it could honestly be said that "they love one another." It is an authentic experience of Church at its best.

At the same time, I can honestly say that I have experienced the negative and dark side of relationships and community. Because we are all frail and sinful humans, it sometimes happened that there were broken relationships, hurt feelings, misunderstandings, and even animosity that grew in the midst of such a positive atmosphere. It is sad to say, but true, that communities imploded, leadership divided, and prayer groups fractured over time. There are many prayer groups, ministries and communities that once thrived but are no longer standing today. There are several factors that played a part, but a common thread to be found is the sad and tragic occurrence of resentment. Resentment, once born, brings the inevitable consequence of division and ultimately death.

Something will always die because of resentment. Love, of course, but relationships also die as well.

It is essential for the Church to have faith communities and thriving community life as a concrete expression of the faith. It is not enough to have theology and theories about the Body of Christ; there needs to be real expressions and examples of the life of the Body enfleshed in community. The Church is essentially a community and the life of the Spirit, the use of the charisms, and all ministry operate in and through community. The life of the Church is never meant to be lived in isolation, but rather shared in together in relationship. There are many expressions of community; some will be formal and structured as we find in a covenant community, others will be more loosely configured as we might find in a prayer group or parish setting.

The point is clear and unambiguous. The Church, is the Body of Christ, is a community of believers and is therefore, a shared enterprise.

That we all might be one "so that the world will come to believe". This is the prayer of Jesus himself. There needs to be a fellowship of believers to make the Church complete and effective in its work and ministry.

If community and relationships are the fruit of the Spirit and essential to a healthy Christian spirituality, then it is therefore important to maintain strong relationships and preserve them from the poison of anger and resentment. Divisions in the Church have far reaching consequences and a lasting negative impact on many.

St Paul was very strong in all his letters about maintaining the unity of the Body of Christ and preserving the Church as a credible witness to Jesus. Do everything to maintain the unity of the Body, Paul tells us. Do not destroy the Body, lest you yourself be destroyed. Forgive each other, as soon as a quarrel begins.

My feeling is that Paul experienced the tensions of community life, saw the damage that broken relationships cause, was the victim himself of attempts to undermine him and suffered from the divisions, competition, rivalries and downright opposition to the work of Christ.

He pleads for unity and tells us that forgiveness is the only key to unity and peace in the Church.

Forgive each other “from the heart” as soon as a quarrel begins. Paul can be a very speculative theologian with soaring spiritual teachings, but he becomes a practical teacher when it comes to unity in the Church.

Some thoughts on forgiveness and unity.

The unity of the Body and sound relations are essential, not optional,

qualities to be sought after. We need to see them as primary positive goods to be preserved and protected. In other words, a priority for every Christian is to maintain unity in the Church.

The idea of forgiveness and unity are rooted in the teachings of Jesus, not a later practical addition to his message. It is common to hear that love is the essence of the teaching of Jesus. To love, it is said, summarizes his whole message. In fact, as true as that might be, the idea of love being the summary of the whole Gospel comes from the writings of John. If we look to the Synoptics, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, we find that Jesus teaches and speaks of forgiveness more than love as the essential quality of a disciple. He himself forgives sinners and exhorts his followers to be forgiving as well. Forgive as you yourself have been forgiven. If you have unforgiveness in your heart, leave your gift at the altar and seek reconciliation first as the more important work. Be as merciful and compassionate with others as the Father is with you. If you do not forgive, neither will the heavenly Father forgive you.

He speaks of forgiveness so much that Peter is led to exclaim, “Lord, how many times am I supposed to forgive?” He heard Jesus speak of it so many times that he seems exasperated. Surely there must be a limit to forgiveness. Jesus tells him the limit – seventy times seven! For the Jewish mind, that signifies an infinite number of times. It is a revolutionary teaching.

Forgiveness is, first of all, a gift. It is a grace. Jesus’ whole life and death is to bring forgiveness and mercy to sinners. The Cross and the shedding of his blood had the one purpose of winning the forgiveness of sins. Forgiveness is not earned, it is received. It is grace and gift—simply and only because the Father is rich in mercy.

When hearing of the need to forgive even enemies the response is often something like, “They don’t deserve to be forgiven.” True enough in many cases, which is why forgiveness is a gift, not something deserved. Jesus teaches that what we receive as a gift, we are to give as a gift. A gift is not earned or deserved or required, it is freely given. Freely do we receive, freely we must give.

Love is the key to community, to ministry, to sound spirituality. If love is the key, forgiveness protects and preserves the love. We love and we forgive because we love. Without both, the community of the church will be crippled and ineffective. With them both strongly present the Church community is powerful and strong. ♦



Fr. Richard McAlear, OMI was born in Boston and ordained in 1970. He is a member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary. He has traveled extensively worldwide, preaching,

teaching, and praying for healing. Fr. McAlear has written several books, including one entitled Forgiveness and the latest from Our Sunday Visitor entitled, The Power of Healing Prayer.

Charisms for the New Evangelization

by Alan Schreck

"Evangélizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize..." (Pope St. Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 14, Dec 8, 1975). Since that landmark document, Church leaders have continued to declare evangelization a top priority. Why? The urgency of his call comes from the effects of secularization. In cultures historically Christian, Christianity's influence on all spheres of human life is waning, and an increasing number of people (especially young people) no longer profess or practice Christian faith. So, who is called to witness to their faith in this circumstance? Everybody! Everyone who is a Christian... and yes, that means all Catholics who profess and practice their faith!

We expect professed religious and clergy to be 'public witnesses' to Catholic faith, but since the Second Vatican Council the call to evangelize has gone out to lay people as well. We are, as the Council taught, a kingly, priestly, and prophetic people—and prophetic means proclaiming the Gospel, through our words and our lives. Jesus' "Great Commission" to "make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:19) was not just directed to the apostles, but to all his followers. St. Peter urged: "Always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you have..." (1 Pt 3:15). This evangelization must go on in every profession and place where lay people live, work, and recreate, no matter how 'secular' (EN, 70).

So, how is the Church, including its laity, equipped to evangelize? Is there a "charism" of evangelization? St. Paul names gifts that involve speaking the truth through words (words of knowledge and wisdom, prophecy in 1 Cor 12:8,10; apostles, prophets, teachers in 1 Cor 12:28 and Rom 12:6,7). Ephesians 4:11 adds "evangelists" to this list of charisms. Romans 12:8 mentions "exhortation" and St. Peter exhorts "whoever speaks, as one who utters oracles of God" (1 Pt 4:10,11). These gifts are important in evangelizing others: asking God (often right on the spot, in the middle of a conversation) for a word of knowledge or wisdom that would help open up a person to the Lord, or exhorting them on a path that will lead them to Christ. Some people might seem to have more of a "gift" for this, but if we are all called to evangelize, we should expect that the Holy Spirit will provide the words we need, especially if we ask him! Growth in any spiritual gift involves stepping out in faith. Many Catholics need to begin by praying for the desire to evangelize and the courage to speak about God, which in our secular age is not 'politically correct.' I think one of the Lord's central reasons for the "New Pentecost" in our times is to give us the boldness to witness what we see at the first Pentecost. (This is an essential, precious fruit of "baptism in the Holy Spirit.") Why don't most Catholics evangelize despite decades of Church teaching and bishops' synods? It appears

that they haven't been touched by the 'fire' that changed the first disciples from fearful people to bold witnesses, ready even to die for their faith! More than any particular charisms, we need this gift of boldness. If we have the burning desire to evangelize, we will!

You've probably heard, "I witness to God by my life." Yes, deeds speak more powerfully than mere words, especially in our day. Some of the charisms are 'service' charisms (see 1 Cor 12:28; Rom 12:7,8; 1 Pt 4:11), which include healing and miracles, as well as service and administration. They certainly testify to the Lord, but in a famous section of Pope St. Paul VI's letter *On Evangelization in the Modern World* he writes:

...even the finest witness will prove ineffective in the long run if it is not explained, justified...and made explicit by a clear and unequivocal proclamation of the Lord Jesus. The Good News proclaimed by the witness of life sooner or later has to be proclaimed by the word of life. There is no true evangelization if the name, the teaching, the life, the promises, the kingdom and the mystery of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, are not proclaimed. (EN,22)

No, we don't need to explain all of this at once. For the 'seed' of faith to grow, it first has to be sown. That's the first step of evangelization. If we plant the seed, we trust that God will give the growth (1 Cor 3:6,7). ♦



Alan Schreck is a professor of theology at Franciscan University and a member of the Community of God's Love charismatic community in Steubenville, Ohio

Called to be a Shining Light in a Time of Darkness

by Sr. Mary Anne Schaenzer, SSND



For as widespread as Catholic Charismatic Renewal is in 2018, we might ask the question, “Why is it that this Renewal initially sprang up among lay people?” “And why is it that in so many areas of the world the leadership has come from among lay people?” Most of the leadership would have been considered to be young adults if we had used that terminology in those days, those days that many of us recall as being 50 years ago – more or less.

I have often wondered why so few priests and religious are interested.

Maybe it is not for a negative reason as much as it is that they have their spiritual lives pretty much anchored and they don’t see a need for something more. Maybe they are not attracted to what appears to be a culture of prayer that is sometimes loud and to an outsider may appear to be a little boisterous.

The Renewal has always consisted of a mix of people, a mix of temperaments,

a mix of religious backgrounds. The Holy Spirit will fall on, come to, hover over, baptize, completely saturate, anyone who is open. For many this is an experience of the Holy Spirit, the

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third person of the Trinity, like they have never had before. In fact, in the early days we were so buoyed up by the Spirit that in a sense we sometimes had to hold one another down a bit, like a helium balloon on a string. There was so much joy. We felt like we knew each other when we found that another was baptized in the Spirit, when we knew that yet another person was praying in

tongues, praising God with a full heart.

Gradually the Spirit deepened this Renewal within us. Sometimes our prayer, even in a group, became very contemplative. People were willing to testify to the intimacy that they were experiencing with God.

People in the Renewal came from a wide variety of educational backgrounds. In this way lay people, priests,

Prayer Card

“The Spirit of the Lord
is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news
to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim
release to the captives
and recovering of sight
to the blind,
to set at liberty those
who are oppressed,
to proclaim the acceptable
year of the Lord.”

-Luke 4:18-19 (RSV)

and religious were able to verbalize and write about this experience of the Holy Spirit. If it previously seemed that people did not know the Holy Spirit, now they could not stop talking about the Holy Spirit.

There have been instances where priests did not want a charismatic prayer group in their parish. However, there were also many where the prayer group was not in a parish but in a city and anyone could attend. The people chipped in to pay the rent for the hall that they were using. The Holy Spirit was drawing people to come together, to praise and worship together.

The Spirit is working in additional and new ways through today’s young adults to continue to draw them, and

**Please pray with the NSC
for the following intentions:**

Let us pray together...

- ✠ For an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Church leaders and every baptized Christian
- ✠ For a renewed zeal and humility in preaching the Good News to the poor
- ✠ For the lost, spiritually blind, and oppressed to come to know Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life
- ✠ For the thoughts, words and actions of each member of the Body of Christ to proclaim Jesus Christ is Lord!
- ✠ For the current crisis in the Church, for the victims and the perpetrators, and for renewed commitment by all to walk in holiness.

all of us, together in prayer and worship. God wants to teach us – through the Scriptures, through our times of prayer, through those gifted to highlight some facet of Christian living and to challenge us to speak forth the Word of God.

We need to be exhorted now no less than then – and maybe even more than then. God has been preparing us to be leaders in the Church, preparing us to work alongside each other to build the kingdom of God, preparing us to work alongside priests and religious who are all in for God. God is preparing us for outreach ministry that has taken on and will take on many forms. God has prepared us, through the Renewal and baptism in

the Holy Spirit to be a shining light in this time of darkness and scandal in the Church.

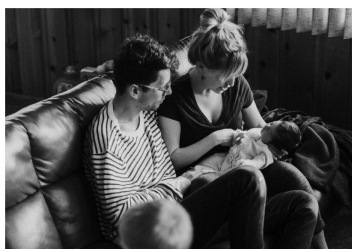
There is a difference between being people who keep all the rules but do not exhibit the life and love of God

in their actions, and being open to being those whose abundance of love and compassion ooze from their presence. This is not an emotional gushing of emp-

teness, but genuine love of God and God's people. These are people who have spent time in prayer, however and with whatever prayer they are drawn to by the Spirit, and then letting what they have received overflow because they have been baptized in God's Holy Spirit.

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Whatever the vocation to which we have been called may be, priest, religious, single, married, we are called now, more than ever, to labor together to build the Church, the Body of Christ, the kingdom of God. We must all be involved.

Let's do it! Let's pray! Let's go forth to draw all into the unity God requires! ♦

Sr. Mary Anne Schaezger, SSND is the editor of Pentecost Today.

ECCLA 2018

by Msgr. Joseph Malagrega

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is very alive in Latin America. In order to pastor the Renewal and seek the Lord's vision for all of Latin America, the Renewal of all Latin America has formed a Council called CONCCLAT. This is a Spanish acronym for Catholic Charismatic Council of Latin America. All 23 countries are represented in this Council by a National Coordinator and the National Spiritual Director. The Hispanic Renewal in the United States has been a member for over twenty years.

CONCCLAT has various sub-committees and outreaches. CONCCLAT has an on-line School of Formation in both Spanish and Portuguese. It has a Youth Secretariat which does formation among young charismatic leaders. And every two years, CONCCLAT organizes an ECCLA, a Catholic Charismatic Latin American Encounter, to which delegates from all 23 countries are invited. This year's ECCLA was held in Panama City, Panamá, October 11-13, 2018.

About 800 people attended the ECCLA - 650 from other countries, and 150 from Panamá. The gathering of all these national delegations always evokes a great sense of unity in the Holy Spirit, communion in the Lord Jesus, and powerful praise.

The theme for this year's ECCLA was: *"Lift up your eyes, the harvest is ready!"* CONCCLAT chose this theme because it was the heart of the prophetic message delivered by Patti Mansfield at the Circus Maximus in Rome, on the Vigil of Pentecost 2017, at the Jubilee Gathering

of 55,000 people with Pope Francis. In order to go deeply into this message, Patti Mansfield herself came as a speaker to the ECCLA. Jim Murphy, the President of ICCRS, was also an invited speaker as well as Fr. Marcelo Rossi from Brazil.

All of Latin America is under one Episcopal Conference, called CELAM. CELAM's last Document was issued at Aparecida in Brazil in 2007. Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, our present Holy Father, was the architect of the Aparecida document, which calls all of Latin America to a *Continental Mission of missionary disciples*. The Latin American Charismatic Renewal seeks to cooperate with the Church in mission, and the theme of this year's ECCLA strengthens that desire.

Patti Mansfield gave her testimony. Although she has traveled often to Brazil, this was her first time speaking to the ECCLA. In a second talk, she called the Renewal to holiness, and a protection from the evil one.

Jim Murphy spoke about the future directions of the Renewal, especially in regards to the Holy Father's CHARIS initiative. His talk was a plea for unity, and a need to be submissive to the moves of the Spirit.

Panamá is, of course, the seat of World Youth Day in January 2019. It would have been impossible to celebrate the ECCLA in Panamá without feeling the vibrancy

of the preparations for thousands of Youth who will come to meet the Holy Father. Many youth and young adults in Latin America have received baptism in the Holy Spirit. Omar Guzmán, who is the coordinator of CONCCLAT's Youth Secretariat, inspired the ECCLA with the launching of a new Youth initiative for the Latin American Renewal.

Future plans are an International Priests' Retreat to be held in Aparecida, Brazil, August 19-22, 2019. The next ECCLA will be in San Salvador, El Salvador, October 2020.

From the United States, Kathia Arango, from New Jersey, the coordinator of the *Comité Nacional de Servicio* and myself as Spiritual Director, serve as representatives. Andrés Arango, Kathia's husband, was just elected as the Coordinator of CONCCLAT for a three-year period. Manual Jaime, from California, serves as the representative of North America on the Youth Secretariat. 61 delegates from the United States participated in this past ECCLA. Our involvement in CONCCLAT and ECCLA allows us to participate in the Lord's great vision of unity in this current of grace. *"Lift up your eyes: the harvest is ready!"*



Msgr. Joseph Malagrega serves as a representative to the CONCCLAT from the United States. He is Spiritual Director for the Hispanic and Haitian National Committees and a parish pastor in Brooklyn, New York.

FREEMAN-ACES.com/Julia Freeman-Woodport

by Casey Sprehe

When I am heading home after a long day I normally travel down River Road in New Orleans. On one side of the street are houses and on the other side is the levee (read: man-made hill that seems high to us Southerners), with the Mississippi River on the other side of it. The speed limit is 35 mph, however, once it becomes residential, it changes to 20 mph. The flow of traffic reminds me to slow down as I come home, to turn off external distractions and relax as I enter my abode. It's the gateway to my neighborhood.

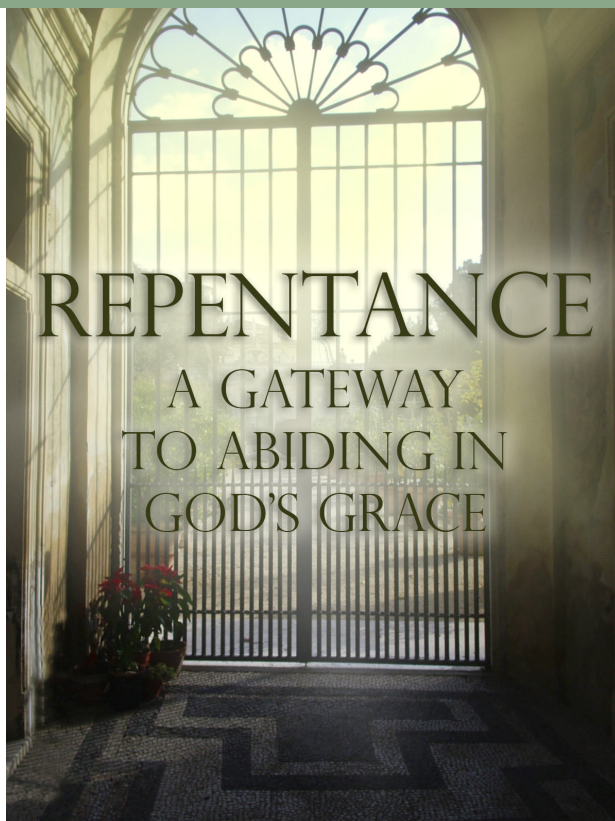
That's how it is with repentance: it is the gateway by which we can abide in Christ.

Sin holds us back from abiding. It's not that God can't draw near to us; it's that we have too much sin getting in the way of us drawing near him. Repentance allows us to abide in Christ. This is an elementary concept, but it lays the foundation for the reason we need to repent.

John 16:13 tells us, "He will convict the world regarding sin." The world today is in a crisis of truth. Christ sent his Holy Spirit to convict us of our sin and show us the way of truth.

Oftentimes we need the Spirit stirred up within us. Not because the sacraments and the Spirit didn't do their job; they did, and they do! But sometimes we take for granted the sacramental rubric within which we live. Many Catholics live in the false assumption that by checking items off a to-do list, they are set. What most don't understand is that what the Church puts forth is the minimum.

When I had my conversion, the "rules" of the faith were put into the context of a relationship with the all-important person



of Jesus Christ. I had an overwhelming urge to get to confession. He convicted me regarding sin. It was his kindness and a deeper relationship with him that led me to repentance (Rom 2:4). Sadly, too often, Catholics aren't invited into this dynamic relationship with Christ. By God's grace, my story is different. Someone shared Christ with me in a way that was personal and relatable. He was no longer simply a historical figure but an active person in my life, a person with whom I wanted to be in a close relationship. Confession was the logical next step.

Confession is the key which opens the door to Christ's heart so that we may remain with him. It isn't meant to be a stumbling block. The very thing Christ institutes to bring us back to him is the very thing the devil targets. The enemy tries to turn it into a stumbling block in several ways. Firstly, through man's pride. In general, it is hard to admit one's faults. Fulton Sheen says, "It is hard to admit that one is a sinner. It is so hard to climb the hill of Calvary and kneel beneath the cross and ask for pardon, forgiveness. Certainly, it is

hard. But it is far harder to hang there." Confession is an easier option than crucifixion, so suck it up buttercup! Or, as St. Paul says, "This momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison" (2 Cor 4:17).

Secondly, if the world is in a crisis of truth, it is simultaneously in a crisis of sin. There is a loss of the sense of sin in our culture. Many government and church leaders have convinced our society that what we have historically and biblically called sin is simply a mistake. I'd like to call a bluff on that. Mistake is dropping my smoothie. Sin is the willful act of choosing evil. Mistake implies an accident. Sin is anything but accidental. This very notion has led to an uncertainty in

what actually comprises sin. But once the blocks are removed, repentance brings us back to abiding with Christ.

What happens when we don't choose repentance and frequent the sacrament of Confession? Well, this isn't the health, wealth and prosperity gospel. The gospel of John makes it clear what awaits us when we don't abide. Hellfire awaits every branch that withers away from Christ and becomes worthless. If we don't abide in him, we are dead branches, perfect for kindling.

But thankfully, it is the gospel of redemptive suffering. "God asks everything of us, yet at the same time he offers everything to us" (Evangelli Gaudium 12). Baring our souls in repentance in exchange for the gift of abiding in Christ is worth it. ♦



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.

Photo by Sharon Fox

CHARIS: A Single Service for All Expressions of Catholic Charismatic Renewal



As you may recall, there have been articles in recent issues of *Pentecost Today* regarding CHARIS. Pope Francis requested that there be “one new international service...to enable the Renewal worldwide to continue to be faithful to its mission in the Church and in the world” (Michelle Moran in *PT Winter*, 2018). Statutes have already been formed. “As a body in the service of all the realities of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, CHARIS

will not exercise any authority over these realities. Each single charismatic reality will remain as it is...each of these realities will be able to benefit freely from the many services CHARIS will provide” (*Press release, October 31, 2018*).

The following people have been appointed by the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, as CHARIS’ International Service of Communion, for a period of three years. They will

assume their functions at the Solemnity of Pentecost 2019.

On that day CHARIS’ statutes will come into effect. On that same date, the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services and the Catholic Fraternity of Charismatic Covenant Communities and Fellowships will cease to exist.

Let us widen our tents! ♦

Members of the International Service of Communion:

Moderator:

Dr. Jean-Luc Moens
(Belgium)

1. North America and the Caribbean (English or French speaking):

Most. Rev. Bishop Peter Leslie Smith
(United States)

2. North America and the Caribbean (Spanish speaking):

Mr. Andrés Arango
(United States)

3. Central America (Spanish speaking):

Mrs. María Eugenia de Góngora
(Guatemala)

4. South America (Spanish speaking):

Mr. Pino Scafuro
(Argentina)

5. South America (Portuguese speaking):

Mrs. Gabriella Marcia da Rocha Días
(Brazil)

6. Asia:

Mr. Cyril John
(India)

7. Asia:

Rev. Br. James Shin San-Hyun
(South Korea)

8. Africa (French speaking):

Mr. Jean-Christophe Sakiti
(Togo)

9. Africa (English speaking):

Mr. Fred Mawanda
(Uganda)

10. Europe:

Mr. Paolo Maino
(Italy)

11. Europe:

Rev. Deacon Etienne Mellot
(France)

12. Oceania:

Mr. Shayne Bennett
(Australia)

13. Diverse Catholic Charismatic Renewal ministries:

Mr. José Prado Flores
(Mexico)

14. Charismatic priest or religious:

Rev. Fr. Etienne Vetö
(United States)

15. Communities:

Mr. Jean Barbara
(Lebanon)

16. Communities:

Rev. Deacon Johannes Fichtenbauer
(Austria)

17. Associations with Holy See recognition:

Mr. François Prouteau
(France)

18. Young Catholic under 30 years old:

Ms. Giulia Rancan
(Italy)

Ecclesiastical Assistant:

Rev. Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, O.F.M. Cap.
(Italy)

WHAT CAN WE OFFER YOUNG ADULTS INTERESTED IN CHARISMATIC RENEWAL?

by Annie Sarlo

A Radical Lifestyle

In imitation of the saints and with the Gospel as our guide, we share with young adults a radical lifestyle. Many young disciples seek to learn from the Charismatic Renewal what it means to live in the Holy Spirit. We can witness for them a radical simplicity that runs deeper than “minimalism,” the disciplines of a disciple that are more challenging than mud runs, and intimacy in prayer that will transform their lives.

Lived in Community

Although over-connected through social media, young adults often express how they feel lonely and isolated. They desire community, authentic friendships and mentorship. They want to be heard and understood. As a support with the radical lifestyle, we can introduce them to faith-filled communities and discipleship groups in their parishes and offer them a taste of what life was like in the early Church when the disciples came together for fellowship and the breaking of the bread.

Resting in the Father's Heart

Growing up with broken families and a hyper-sexualized culture, young adults are in need of deep personal healing. As we offer them healing ministry (like Unbound), their lives are changed and young hearts set ablaze and set free. These young hearts then learn to simply rest in the Father's Heart knowing that they are beloved sons and

daughters. From this secure place they can then engage valiantly in the struggle against the world, the flesh and the devil.

Ignited by the Fire of Love

Desiring to bear fruit with their lives, but knowing they can't do it alone, young adults often ask how they can “receive more,” how they can be set on fire with love and share the gifts and charisms with others. For many young adults it isn't necessarily a “charismatic” thing, but an authentically Catholic thing.

In Continuous Worship

I've heard a few young adults express how they want their entire lives with their every breath and every heartbeat to be an act of worship. Once they have surrendered to the Spirit, they go “all in.”

Flowing out into the World

As radical disciples living and worshiping in communion with other believers, their fire and joy become contagious. What they have received will flow out into the world building the kingdom and glorifying our King! ♦



Annie Sarlo is currently serving as Director of Youth Ministry for the Diocese of Allentown. She is a member of the NSC Council. She has a passion for evangelization, ecumenism and supporting youth and young adults on their journey of faith.

To Be or Not To Be Loved

by Br. Ruben Garza, BBD

To be loved by Jesus and receive his Mother and the Holy Spirit is in essence what it means to be a Brother of the Beloved Disciple. These words we believe were written by St. John, hence why he is known as not only an apostle of the Lord but also an evangelist. John never names himself in this Gospel account. He refers to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved or the beloved disciple. At first hearing, St. John seems pretty presumptuous to call himself the beloved disciple. Yet, this is not so. Fr. George Montague, well-known biblical scholar and one of our founders, explains that John never identifies himself by name as an invitation to each one of us to be the beloved disciple of Jesus.

As a member of this community since 2013, the knowledge of being loved by God has transformed my life. Before joining the Brothers of the Beloved Disciple, I spent many years battling our three enemies: the devil, the world, and my own flesh. Of all three, my flesh

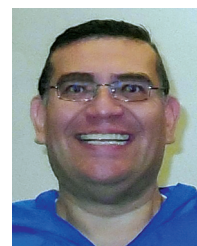
“When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, ‘Woman, behold, your son.’ Then he said to the disciple, ‘Behold, your mother.’ And from that hour the disciple took her into his home...And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit.”

Jn 19:26-27,30

is the one which most wounded me to the point of thinking that God could not possibly love me because of my many sins and weaknesses. Yet, thanks to the Holy Spirit who renewed my whole being through many pray-overs and deliverance sessions, I was finally able

to come to believe that I was beloved by God. I learned that sin with its enslavements had convinced me of the lie that God did not love me. It was the charisms of the Holy Spirit which permitted me to at long last open my heart to the truth of his deep love for me.

In gratitude to the Holy Spirit, I am now obliged to witness to this powerful and transforming love. The Holy Spirit was sent by our Lord Jesus from the Cross in the presence of our Blessed Mother Mary and the Beloved Disciple John for the sake of each and every sinner as proof that each is beloved. ♦



Brother Ruben Garza, BBD is originally from Laredo, Texas. His current ministry is working with Fr. Bob Hogan (pastor) as the Associate Pastor of two inner city San Antonio Churches (St. Henry and St. Philip of Jesus) where the Brothers of the Beloved Disciple minister.

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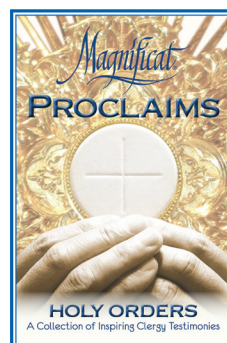
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From the Executive Director

by Walter Matthews

Gratitude

As I read the articles in this issue. I recalled something we wrote in *Fanning the Flame* nearly 30 years ago: “A life of converted Christian discipleship makes stringent demands. It requires a trust in God’s personal providence over us that claims us totally and frees us to share our possessions with the poor and needy (Mark 10:17-31; Matt 19:16-22; Luke 12:13-34, 16:19-31, 18:18-30). It commits us to a preferential option for the poor. It demands mutual forgiveness as the authenticating test of Christian prayer (Matt 6:12; Luke 11:4). It consecrates us to the life of the beatitudes (Matt 5:3-12), (p12).

Along with repentance and forgiveness written about so well in this issue, I would add gratitude to the list of characteristics of “converted Christian discipleship.” Gratitude, of course, for Jesus’ dying on the cross, for his resurrection, and for the gift of the Holy Spirit, but also, as St. Paul exhorted us, “In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus” (1Thes 5:18).

It has been challenging to apply this in recent months in light of the revelations of misconduct (dare I say, sin) in our Church at the highest levels. I took solace, encouragement, and gave thanks for the words of Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, President of the USCCB, “The more she is buffeted by storms, the more I am reminded that

the Church’s firm foundation is Jesus Christ. The failures of men cannot diminish the light of the Gospel. Lord, by the help of your mercy, show us the way of salvation.” I hope you will too.

A few personal notes: It has been two years since Claire’s accident. She continues to recover and for that, and your prayers, we give thanks. On October 7, our fourth grandchild was born, and soon after you read this, our fifth will be born. The birth of grandchildren reminds me of these words of St. Paul addressed to St. Timothy: “I recall your sincere faith first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and that I am confident lives also in you” (2 Tim 1:5).

And, his direction to Timothy and us, “And what you heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will have the ability to teach others as well” (2 Tim 2:2). The word “entrust” here is the word (in Latin) “tradition” – to pass on.

Let us, in this moment in the Church, give thanks for our children, grandchildren, and, for some, great-grandchildren, and let us pray fervently for them, share lovingly with them and pass on our faith so the Church going forward will shine brighter and walk in holiness.

This is certainly what we the NSC wants to do as we in the Renewal, go forward in this new season, setting the Church and the world ablaze! ♦

FRIENDS OF THE NSC

Thank you to our seasoned and new donors who since our last Report gave over 700 gifts in support of the Vision and Mission of the National Service Committee. We especially thank our many pledge donors and the 260 donors who responded to our September Appeal concerning *Pentecost Today*, the Renewal Centers in Green Bay and Cleveland that sent their annual gifts, and the Renewal Centers in Albuquerque and Brooklyn who are faithful monthly donors.

We are grateful for the California couple who send \$600 gifts regularly and the annual givers who sent a \$2,000 gift and a \$500 one—and the many who sent \$10, \$25 and \$50!

We also thank the donor couple who gave us stock totaling nearly \$2,400 and The Word Among Us whose generous gift this year totaled \$6,000.

Without each of our donors, we would not be here to serve this great Renewal.

By the time you read this we will have held the National Leaders’ and Ministries’ Conference in Dallas. We pray for the generosity of the attendees. Next to our Christmas/Year End Appeal, it is our second largest fundraiser each year.

As a reminder: If you are 70½ and older, you can make a gift transfer of some or all of your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) directly to the National Service Committee.

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 this service to the Renewal. ♦



Called to be saints, Missioned to evangelize

by Johnny Bertucci

"Look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded. For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if you were told."
Habakkuk 1:5 (RSVCE)

The call of every Christian is the same: to be saints. The mission of every Christian is the same: to evangelize.

- ◆ We evangelize in the power of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- ◆ We evangelize in the power of the Holy Spirit, experiencing signs, wonders, and miracles, giving witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Many prophetic words are coming forth around the world declaring that we are entering a new season. As we begin the next 50 years of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, there is a sense that God is on the move again.

Part of God's gift to the Renewal was allowing for the purchase of The Ark and The Dove, site of the "Duquesne Weekend." Since the purchase, this historic site has seen a steady stream of international visitors, hosting events centered around worship, healing and

evangelization. One of the best attended events is an ongoing Holy Spirit Bootcamp, an expanded Life in the Spirit Seminar teaching participants to go deeper with the supernatural gifts equipping them for evangelization to be missionary disciples. "Bethany School of Healing" and "Melchizedek School of Worship" are two more monthly events held at The Ark and The Dove.

Another of God's generous gifts to the Renewal is Pope Francis' directive that the Renewal unite under the banner of CHARIS. Around the world, the Renewal is uniting to proclaim the Lordship of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit in the love of God the Father. Together, our light will shine brighter, our salt will be more seasoned, and we will bring conversion and healing to a dying world.

The world will know that Jesus is Lord through the love shown by his disciples.

As we enter this new season of anointed worship, miracles and healings, may we claim Jesus as our Savior and Lord by our service and our love. ◆

Johnny Bertucci is Chairman of The Ark and The Dove, Inc. and past Chairman of the NSC.



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Your planned gift to the NSC will bless others and extend the legacy of your baptism in the Holy Spirit for generations to come. We ask you to please consider a gift to the National Service Committee when you make your will or update it. Making a gift to the NSC can be as simple as adding a codicil to your existing will or estate plan.

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

Please let us know if you have included us in your will so that we can properly thank you.

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Please mail to:
National Service Committee
Chariscenter USA
PO Box 628
Locust Grove, VA 22508-0628
Tel. (540) 972-0225
www.nsc-chariscenter.org

National Service Committee members:

Ron Riggins (Chairman)
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Catholic Charismatic Renewal invites all people to experience the Holy Spirit who opens us to a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ and the love of the Father.

The Holy Spirit empowers us for personal holiness, renewed Catholic life, and evangelization.

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