



# PENTECOST *Today*

Fall 2019

Publication of the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Young Adult Edition

**Timmy McCaffery Alicia Hartle**

*Annie Sarlo* **Caroline Gambale-Dirkes**

**Casey Sprehe Bill Snyder**

*Jim Beckman Leslie Bertucci Jim Murphy*

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



## Chairman's Corner

by Ron Riggins

### Calling all young adults—it's your time!

One clear message from last year's synod on "Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment," was that young Catholics desire an authentic, welcoming Church in which they can be empowered. Absent this, there is concern that they may seek fulfillment in other faith traditions or in the world. It was noted, however, that "Movements and new communities in the Church have developed fruitful ways to not only evangelize young people, but also to empower them to be the primary ambassadors of the faith to their peers."

One of the NSC's priorities is raising up young leaders in the Renewal, a goal exalted by Pope Francis. *Evangelii Gaudium* (70), emphasizes the breakdown in passing on the Catholic faith to the young. Indeed, according to

Pew Research, only 26% of Catholic millennials attend Mass weekly, and over half attend only a few times a year. But here's a more sobering statistic: For every one person joining the Catholic Church today, 6.45 are leaving—and most leave before age 23.

Young adults are more likely to listen to their peers, as there is greater appreciation of their concerns in language they understand. Thus, the NSC is zealously pursuing this transformational mission so that young adults can be fruitful evangelizers for the salvation of many.

Here are five steps for Renewal elders to empower young adults: (1) Listen to them; (2) Provide the mentoring they seek; (3) Pass the torch (meaning, we must let go); (4) Exercise humility (elders cannot always insist their way is right); and (5) Do it—give them a seat at the table.

**Young adults**—we pray that you will accept our invitation to serve as ambassadors in fulfilling our CHARIS mission to bring baptism in the Holy Spirit to the whole Church.

*Come, Holy Spirit!* ♦



## Editor's Desk

by Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner, SSND

In order to ensure this grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit continues for generations to come, the National Service Committee is committed to engaging young adults (NSC's Strategic Priority regarding Young Adults).

Ron Riggins (NSC Chairman, p 2) suggests five steps for Renewal elders to empower young adults.

Casey Sprehe (pp 4-5) emphasizes how we all have to die to ourselves in order for the Holy Spirit to move in us and to flow out from us. Listening to one another is an intergenerational quality.

Leslie Bertucci (p 12) describes the First NSC Family Retreat, intergenerational—parents and children together, led by a team of young adults.

Caroline Gambale-Dirkes (p 7) writes concerning the importance of encounter with one another, and how Jesus gives us a Shepherd's heart.

Jim Beckman (Theological Corner, p. 11), writes of baptism in the Spirit as an authentic Catholic expression and how Pope Francis emphasizes that it is a "current of grace" for all. Timmy McCaffery (p 3) shares the difference that baptism in the Holy Spirit and immersing himself in God's Word and the Sacraments makes in his ministry to youth.

Bill Snyder (p 6) challenges readers to control rather than be controlled by the technology at our fingertips.

Alicia Hartle (p 8) invites us to be humble and to believe, allowing ourselves to be transformed, whether we are the ones praying for others or the ones receiving prayer: and Annie Sarlo (p 15) to dive deeply into the heart of Christ.

Enlarging the tent is the task of CHARIS as it seeks to find ways to bring about greater unity in the Renewal (p 10, Jim Murphy). ♦

# 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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# I had no idea what I was missing!

by Timmy McCaffery



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I have been in youth ministry, in one way or another, for about twenty years. And as any youth minister will tell you, it's incredible. It's crazy, exhausting even, but incredible. It is truly incredible witnessing what our Lord is able to do in the life of a young person. I've come to realize that, even though we don't always say it like this, young people have a particular ability to radically open themselves to the power and mercy of God. When we hear that we are supposed to be praying daily for the heart of a child, I think we too often imagine a baby or a toddler, and their quick and innocent submission to a parent, their complete dependence upon the loving care of their mother, or the simplicity of their love. Teenagers though, as most teachers and youth ministers will tell you, have a unique way of radically and willfully giving themselves over to just about anything. And they can do so with a seemingly unrivaled passion and intensity.

All too often we see the negative, if not sinful, side of young people pictured as giving themselves over in this way. One of the greatest graces our Lord has given me over these years is the ability to witness the effect of his transformative power in the lives of our youth. I did not always see ministry from this angle, or perhaps, I didn't have the eyes to see it. When I first began in youth ministry, I must say it was all about the fun. Not too distant from the reasons I joined a youth group as a seventh grader (sports and

girls), were the reasons I ended up in ministry. We were doing good things, having a good time, and helping out a few people along the way. Every now and then prayer was involved, which included the occasional encounter with Jesus, however indirect it may have been.

As St. John Paul II stated at Fatima the year after he was shot, "In the designs of Providence, there are no mere coincidences." I'll give a hearty "Amen!" to that. Having been in leadership in my church parish for a few years, my pastor asked me to go to World Youth Day (WYD) in Toronto in 2002. This would ultimately be John Paul II's final WYD, though the first of many for me. The primary group going from our Archdiocese was the Renewal, so that's who I went with. The short version of this story has me baptized in the Holy Spirit less than six months later.

I will say it this way: *most* things changed upon my return from World Youth Day, but *everything* changed the following January after I was baptized in the Holy Spirit. In ministry, the first problem I noticed was just how frequently I got in the Lord's way. Logistics and permission slips, schedules and calendars, practicalities and what's "possible." This was a great driving force in my previous mode of thinking and leadership. Don't get me wrong, these are necessary elements of ministry, especially *youth* ministry. However, too often we allow

them to be the reasons and goals of our ministry. I began putting ministry in the hands of the Holy Spirit, really entrusting to him my teens, and my students and their families.

The real game-changer, however, was in noticing that my own sin, and my own self-centeredness, were true impediments to allowing the Lord to use me for his glory. Our Lord works every moment of every day through broken vessels, undoubtedly. That said, baptism in the Holy Spirit was, for me, a great wake-up call to the intense power that results when I as his minister immerse myself in his Word and Sacraments. I *must* be a channel and pipeline of his mercy, love, and grace. To be this, at least to the extent that his glory calls, I must also be living *in* his Word, *in* the very Heart of Christ.

Ministry to and with our young people has always brought me great joy. It has always been fulfilling in some way. But until ministering to the young Church involved allowing myself to be swept up in the *current of grace*, I had no idea what I was missing! All I can say at this point in the journey is that, other than to give him glory, there's no looking back. *Come Holy Spirit!* ♦



Timmy McCaffery is the Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Archdiocese of New Orleans. He and his wife, Jonee, have five children.

# Unity in the Body Brings Power to the Renewal

by Casey Sprehe

I was blessed to attend World Youth Day in Cologne, Germany in 2005, a few months after Benedict XVI began his reign as Pope. It was a wonderful, faith-filled experience that I'll never forget. Seeing the young adult church come out in such force to live our faith together was inspiring. Seeing our new Pope, in his homeland, preaching to us, truly changed my view of the universal church and the Pope's role in my life.

Part of our pilgrimage included stops at holy places in Europe. One day while in Assisi, I realized I had left my purse on the bus, which had departed several hours earlier. Panicked, I ran downstairs and relayed all my woes to the hotel clerk, the only staff member who spoke English. He told me to SLOW DOWN! When I finished my long rant, he looked at me kindly and said, "Please speak English." To which I replied not so kindly, "I am speaking English," and continued some variation of my story all over again. At some point, I came up for air, and he said again, "Please speak English." Now, I was getting hot about the situation, and I repeated, "I am speaking English!"

He replied, "No, I speak English. You speak American." Very quickly I realized that, because of my hype, emotion and youthfulness, I had thrown in too many colloquialisms and modern jargon for a man whose first language was not English. However, he and I had the same goal: to find my purse. We were coming at it from different angles and languages, but we were ultimately striving for the same purpose.

In the Renewal, we are all striving to advance the Kingdom, to get souls baptized in the Holy Spirit. However, we go about it in different ways. So often, we get frustrated as we see generational differences and preferences come to light, for instance, when planning an event. We would have chosen different music, speakers or emcees, we think. Our preferences, methodology and pride get in the way of our common goal.

*"However, he and I had the same goal... We were coming at it from different angles and languages, but we were ultimately striving for the same purpose."*

The hotel clerk wanted to help me, and I wanted him to help me. However, we were approaching it in different ways. If I would have laid down my pride, slowed down and spoken calmly, we could have achieved the goal faster.

Being unified fortifies us for a common goal. How can true renewal come about if there isn't first unity—in the body? Until we are on the same page, acting as one united movement in the Lord, we remain a divided body, unable to affect real change.

Oftentimes, the younger generation thinks the older generation needs to "get with the times." The older generation thinks the younger generation needs to slow down and learn from past mistakes. The reality is, it's a little bit of both.

I would suggest that, for true renewal to come about, we need to move forward as one body and one spirit. The younger generations need the wisdom of the older generations. With gracious hearts for the foundation laid, young adults can learn from the growing pains of the Renewal over the years. The older generations need the new-

ness and freshness that young adults can offer, reflecting a God whose mercies are new every morning. The energy and vigor of the next generation can help relight a fire that may be starting to dwindle. God fanned into flame this movement many years ago. It is up to us, in unity with each other and God, to keep the fire blazing. We need each other.



**Young Adult NSC Members and Friends**

There are several obstacles to this way of living, specifically division, entitlement and pride. Several years ago, former NSC Chairman Johnny Bertucci wrote an article for this publication in which he said, "Division raises its diabolical head." Diabolical is right! Styles of music and ways of preaching are vessels which are to bring us together toward Christ. Yet oftentimes, they drive us apart due to stylistic preferences. Not only are we divided by how we do a Life in the Spirit Seminar, we are also divided on what we call it! The same Spirit who fell at Pentecost wants to come in power at our events, yet our different views of how the Spirit will move, inhibit the Spirit from actually moving. If we are One Body, One Spirit can flow out from us. If we are multiple bodies, multiple wills, One Spirit does not flow out from us.

Entitlement mentality often inhibits the freshness of God to flourish. "This is how we've always done it." "This group always does music, ushering, emceeing (fill in the blank)." If we view our role as our post which we are to guide and protect, we miss the point. We are servants, not owners.

Pride keeps us apart. Can we sit in a meeting, bring an idea to the table, and let it get shot down without our pride being hurt? This is a tough one for me! Can we let ourselves die so Christ can live in us, as St. Paul says in Galatians 2:20.

The obstacles are surmountable. Thankfully, many in the Renewal are aware of the struggle to meld the generations together and are praying and working to overcome it. In the seven years that I've been involved with the NSC, I've seen an in-

creasing openness to young adult involvement. The NSC and NSC Council have widened their tent pegs to include more young people. One can look back at the past six years of conferences and see a younger generation speaking, leading worship, and sharing prophetic words. In turn, a generation is being mentored by an older generation. I've learned several life lessons by being in relationship with those older than me in the Renewal.

More evidence of this was recently seen at the first ever NSC Family Retreat, held outside New Orleans in August. This was a tangible living out of the NSC vision of ensuring the grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit is available for generations to come. The retreat was a huge success, with 14 families coming together with a team for a total of 90 people.

Entire families were touched by the Holy Spirit that weekend. God is not waiting until the families are domesticated, grown up or well behaved. He wants young families, just as they are, in the trenches, to come to him. This event provided that opportunity. While it was a success, it was also messy. The melding together of families and generations wasn't easy. But it was worth it. We said yes, and God blessed the mess. It became a holy experience for all involved.

The Italian clerk and I were very different. Once we realized our common goal and I heeded his advice, we were able to come together to get my purse back. We were able to overcome our differences and work together to accomplish the goal. If we will but ask for and cooperate with God's grace, he will help us do the same in the Renewal. ♦



*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.*

# Growing Together Through Technology

by Bill Snyder

BUILDING COMMUNITY

The rapid pace in which various technologies are being developed can no longer be ignored. From smartphones to smart home devices technology is quickly and constantly changing the way we interact with the world and others. I both marvel and find it challenging as an aging millennial to keep my finger on the pulse. It seems that as soon as I've asked my Amazon Echo Dot to turn off the lights at night, I'm awakened by my robot vacuum cleaning the carpet in the morning.

I also ponder about what is coming next. It's quite probable that, autonomous vehicles, artificial intelligence and smart eyewear will be perfected by corporations and coveted by consumers within the next decade. Simply, it's evident that technology can augment our reality, making our lives more convenient and comfortable.

There have been many research studies and articles written about the effects of this technological boom on human interaction and about whether convenience and comfort are good or bad. Ironically, to read them all you need is an internet connection, a quick Google search and in seven-tenths of a second you'll have over fifteen billion search results to inform and entertain you. But before you reach for your smartphone, I have a question for you to think about.

How do you use the technology you have in your life? It is my

belief that we all need to spend some serious time answering that question for ourselves. It is important to first be introspective in regards to our use of technology and how we leverage it because it has consumed and oversaturated the culture in which we live. By understanding and using the technological gifts God has blessed us with we then can use them in service of the Kingdom of God and avoid the pitfalls of greed and envy.

Technology is like a magnet, in that its force can both attract and repel. It can bring us closer together or push us farther away from one another. When it is properly oriented it serves as a tool to unite families separated by distance, aid in commerce and spread the message of the Gospel. However, these same mediums can be used to isolate oneself, facilitate crime, and slander.

In these modern times, God is calling his disciples to use this powerful, ever-expanding gift of technology as a tool to build the Kingdom of Heaven. Although the enemy whispers in our ears that this is impossible, it is not beyond our grasp. Why? Because technology is at your service, in your control, and its growth and development is dependant on whether or not you embrace and use it. Sure, it is true that you might not have much use or space for a state of the art echocardiography machine in your living room, but if doctors and technicians abandoned the prac-

tice of using it to treat those with complex heart conditions it would be quickly obsolete.

Simply, you are the reason new technology succeeds or fails. This is often something we overlook due to the pace at which it seemingly changes. Society and Satan would like us to believe that we are controlled rather than being the controllers of technology, but that is false. We are in control and therefore have the power to change the direction of the magnetic force. Every choice we make spins the magnet in our moral compass, either pulling us closer or pushing us further away from our Creator.

You need not be a lead software developer, or the producer of a television show. Setting an example for your children, showing temperance and prudence when posting to social media sites or even buying a ticket to the latest Christian film in theaters and taking a struggling friend all makes a difference.

So once again, How do you use the technology you have in your life? The future depends on your response. ♦



*Bill Snyder is the founder of Patchwork Heart Ministry, a nonprofit Catholic young adult ministry that sews hope into broken hearts through storytelling and media initiatives. He is a member of the NSC Council. He lives in Milwaukee with his wife Agnes.*

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A youth minister known for reaching hundreds of teens in his town for Christ was being interviewed by his local newspaper. When the reporter inquired about the secret of his success, the youth minister became pensive and replied, "I actually don't have the largest youth group in town." The reporter was perplexed and the young man continued, "Satan has the largest youth group in town and I am not going to stop until I reach every single person for Jesus." This young man had the heart of the Good Shepherd that wanted 100% of his flock and wasn't satisfied with only having 99 percent.

Do you have the Shepherd's heart? When you have the Shepherd's heart you will do everything in your power to reach ALL of the sheep. Like Jesus, when you encounter the lost, rejected and hurting, your heart is moved to action (Mk 9:36). You desire for people to experience God's love, healing, and freedom. This is what compels me to share my faith with my hairdresser or pray with the person sitting next to me on an airplane. It's what drives me to have an uncomfortable conversation with a family member about God and it's what drove me to develop a dynamic parish mission for ALL ages in order to reach families barely coming to Church. Don't get me wrong—it's not easy. In all these situations I needed to get out of my comfort zone and have the Shepherd's heart.

So how do we reach these sheep? Whether we are evangelizing one-on-one or overseeing a ministry event, we need to follow three simple steps: be Jesus to those that need to experience his love, share who Jesus is, and help people encounter Jesus.

### Being Jesus

The other day I ran inside a convenience store to pick up some milk. Behind the register was a purple-haired 19-year-old girl who was in the process of transitioning to being a boy. What

## A HEART FOR THE LOST

by Caroline Gambale-Dirkes

started as small talk moved into an honest, heartfelt sharing of how her life had been filled with loss, drugs, abandonment and pain. My heart was moved. This young woman was desperate for love and it was very clear that she was encountering Christ's love, mercy and compassion through me. Being Christ to her led to an opportunity to share who Jesus was and to pray with her to encounter his love.

### Sharing Jesus

Being Jesus to someone can be life-changing in and of itself, but it's also important for people to know who Jesus is. Today, we can no longer assume people know anything about Jesus. I frequently encounter young adults who weren't raised with any religion. The good news is that they are very open; the challenge is that they have absolutely no foundation. The best way to articulate the Gospel in a way that makes sense to this culture is to be direct. Personal testimony of how God has touched your own life is a powerful tool. You can also find simple and effective online training tools to help you share Christ from ministries such as *Jesus.AtTheDoor.com*. However you approach it, it's important that you know how to effectively testify to who Jesus is and how he has demonstrated his love for you.

### Helping Others Encounter Jesus

Finally, we must be prepared to help people encounter Jesus. Honestly, this is the most important step. I have seen incredible transformation occur when I have led people to Confession, Eucharistic Adoration or prayed one-on-one with them. Several years ago, I prayed with a nominally Christian young woman

for healing from a deep childhood trauma. During prayer, she experienced a vision of God's love that filled her with joy and radically changed her life. She began to attend daily Mass, yearned to learn more about the Catholic faith, sought an annulment and was married in the Church. This all happened because of one encounter with the Living God. God can work miracles and transformation when we get out of the way and call upon him to touch someone's life.

Take a moment right now and ask Jesus to give you his Shepherd's heart. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you opportunities to be, share and help others encounter Jesus. You'll be amazed at what happens! ♦



Caroline Gambale-Dirkes co-founded 2Tim4 Ministries and works at Christ the King in Ann Arbor, Michigan. She is a member of the NSC Council.

Prayer Card

O Holy Spirit,  
beloved of my soul,  
I adore you. Enlighten me,  
guide me, strengthen me,  
console me. Tell me what I  
should do; give me your  
orders. I promise to  
submit myself to all  
that you desire of me  
and to accept all that  
you permit to happen  
to me. Let me only  
know your will.

- Cardinal Mercier



# Transformation

## through Prayer Ministry

by Alicia Hartle

“My child, get up” (Lk 8:40-56). These words pierced my heart as I read about Jesus raising the synagogue leader’s daughter from the dead even though everyone laughed at him, saying it was too late for him to heal her. It can be tempting to believe we are beyond hope or that even Jesus is too late to heal us, but Jesus continues to invite you and me to be transformed and healed in ways that are miraculous. Prayer Ministry invites us to this transformation and healing as we: firstly, make an act of humility and faith like the synagogue leader who falls at Jesus’ feet and pleads for him to

touch and heal his daughter and secondly, receive and respond to Jesus’ healing words and touch and get up like the girl who was raised from the dead.

### An Act of Humility and Faith

Having the courage to go to a prayer team with a specific need is in itself an act of humility, but is Jesus calling us to a greater depth of humility and faith that he will touch and heal and transform in ways that are astounding? I believe he is. For six years I struggled with severe chronic pain and though I asked for prayer many times, it was not until my posture changed from fear and despair to humility and faith that I received the fullness of the answers to all of my and others’ prayers. What moved me to deeper humility and faith was God speaking to my heart through Isaiah 59 and 60, especially these verses:

“No, the hand of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear” (Is 59:1).

“We grope along the wall like blind men...we stumble at mid-day as in the twilight” (Is 59:10).

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you” (Is 60:1).

Though I had witnessed many miracles, with this particular need I had been approaching God and Prayer Ministry as though I was beyond hope. I had been closing my eyes to the reality that Jesus won the victory over sin and death and suffering—including my own. As I read Isaiah 60:1, I knew I was being asked to walk in this victorious reality even if I never saw physical

healing. By God’s amazing grace in the seventh year, which was the Year of Mercy, I was completely healed of the physical pain. This lesson is for each person participating in Prayer Ministry, whether receiving prayer or as a member of the prayer team—will we stop to examine our current posture and choose an ever-deeper posture of humility and faith? When we face the darkest and most hopeless of situations, will we choose not to fear? Will we believe?

While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” he said. “Don’t bother the teacher anymore.” Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, “Don’t be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed” (Lk 8:49-50).

### Receive and Respond to Jesus’ Healing Touch

Since the day of Pentecost, Jesus has animated the Body of Christ to continue his healing and life-giving ministry through the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus continues to touch the deepest wounds and completely heal through Prayer Ministry at conferences, prayer groups, Unbound sessions, and in less formal settings with family, friends and strangers. The fire of God’s Love dynamically melts and molds hearts, minds, souls and even bodies. May we receive and respond in ways that are shockingly miraculous to the world around us when Jesus takes us by the hand and says: “My child, get up” (Lk 8:54). ♦



*Alicia Hartle works with the Oakland Prayer Group, Unbound Pittsburgh-Greensburg and in Marketing for a Christian medical device company, HTK (Honor the King) Enterprises. She is a member of the NSC Council.*

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

- ▶ **For the National Leaders’ & Ministries’ Conference to bear great fruit for the Church in her mission of evangelization.**
- ▶ **For the people in our parishes, workplaces, schools and neighborhoods to have a personal and profound experience of God.**
- ▶ **For the raising up of a new generation of young apostles in the Church who will follow Christ in radical Gospel living, in bold proclamation of Gospel truth and in fierce expression of Gospel love and mercy.**
- ▶ **For all of us to say yes to Jesus in every moment, everyday no matter what he may desire us to do or where he may ask us to go.**

## KAIROS 2019 - Continued Steps Towards

With the inauguration of CHARIS earlier this year, Pope Francis set forth expectations for the Renewal to take significant steps towards building unity in the Body of Christ. Related to this, and in the spirit of John 17:23—"I in them, and You in Me... so that they may be brought to complete unity"—United in Christ International, under the leadership of Professor Matteo Calisi, has been organizing ecumenical leadership conferences worldwide. Leaders from the Catholic Church, Anglican Church, new Charismatic churches, mainline and nondenominational Protestant churches, and Messianic Jews have participated in these conferences.

The KAIROS 2019 conference was held in early October in Dallas, Texas, with the theme "So the world may believe" (Jn 17:21). The NSC was again invited to participate given the Renewal's ecumenical roots and CHARIS

# Christian Unity

commission. Walter Matthews, NSC Executive Director, a panelist in the "Unity in Diversity" session, addressed the roots of ecumenism in the Renewal and the focus on unity using the varied gifts of the Holy Spirit. He addressed ways the NSC has worked towards Christian unity with other cultural groups, Diocesan liaisons and covenant communities, as well as with Catholic and other Christian churches.

Ron Riggins, NSC Chairman, in speaking on "Unity and Transformation of Society," emphasized the Renewal's historical and commissioned role for Christian unity, the NSC as "boots on the ground" in ecumenism and how Christian unity can more effectively transform society in a divided world. Ron gave an overview of the Catholic Church's commitment to

restoring Christian unity following the Second Vatican Council and the unique role of the Renewal. He noted that Christian unity was the "compelling motive" for Pope John XXIII calling Vatican II, and that the Pope invoked the power of the Holy Spirit for a new Pentecost. With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Duquesne University students in 1967, the grace of unity envisioned in Vatican II began to be fulfilled. As the ecumenical outreach subsided over time, Pope Francis has now called for the Renewal to reinvigorate efforts for Christian unity.

KAIROS 2019 was held at Christ for the Nations Institute, and all the leaders were blessed by the presence of the college students in attendance. Perhaps the greatest reward was the one-on-one communion time of leaders during meals and breaks as they renewed their intentions for Christian unity, giving great hope for the entire Body of Christ. ♦

## Tending the Sacred Fire

*Keeping the Flame of the Holy Spirit Alive*

by

Thomas W. Mangan



"Tom has a unique ability to present difficult concepts in a way that touches the heart of his readers. He succeeds in this because he is speaking from the depths of his own heart. Thus, he becomes very real to his readers."

-DAVID MANGAN



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# Raising a Bigger Tent

by Jim Murphy

***“Enlarge the space for your tent, spread out your tent cloths unsparingly; lengthen your ropes and make firm your stakes. For you shall spread abroad to the right and to the left; Your descendants shall dispossess the nations and shall people the desolate cities (Is 52:2-3).”***

Pope Francis has recognized that Catholic Charismatic Renewal is a very widespread “current of grace” working within the Church. The Renewal is so immense it literally touches almost every corner of the world, even in places where theoretically, Christianity isn’t thought to exist.

A body of people from such a large expanse would obviously have different perspectives, different languages and cultures and even different ways to describe their human and faith experiences.

Of course, there are differences.

While it is true that we have our unique qualities, the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit has given us many things in common;

- ▶ A personal relationship with God
- ▶ An ongoing transformation of conversion and holiness
- ▶ The exciting discovery and use of charisms
- ▶ A new motivation for mission

We are different and also, we are one.

It is precisely because of this reality that our Holy Father has called us to a new and deeper unity. At the same time, he makes a distinction between unity and uniformity.

How do we honor the differences and at the same time, celebrate and strengthen what we have in common?

## Raise a bigger tent!

Pope Francis has commissioned CHARIS to find ways to help bring a greater unity within the Renewal, while at the same time recognizing, and indeed encouraging, a variety of services, ministries, and groups within this one great Charismatic family! He wants one tent...but one big enough to hold many, many people.

People are responding to the Holy Father’s request and many groups throughout the world are trying to find ways to be more inclusive and collaborative with many diverse Catholic Charismatic organizations.

It will be the work of the International Service of Communion to help provide leadership and guidance in this daunting task. Many groups are willing to move in a new direction... but don’t know exactly how. CHARIS certainly has its work ahead of it!

The imagery of setting up a bigger tent may itself contain some clues to how CHARIS, and indeed anyone committed to this vision, might proceed.

A tent, by its very nature (both structurally and its use) needs to be flexible. Tents speak of a certain mobility (the people of God moved their tents a lot during their 40-year sojourn in the desert.)

Structurally, a tent has to have a certain amount of “give” in it, in order to move a little with the wind.

At the same time, the “builders of the tent” are instructed to use ropes and stakes as a way to anchor the tent and give it stability.

Flexibility *and* stability; two essential qualities for any organization, but especially for the people of God, as they try to journey together into the future.

Any fair-minded person will understand that changes at the level Pope Francis is hoping for are not going to come immediately. Many structures within the Catholic Charismatic Renewal have existed and functioned for decades. Transition takes time. It may even take a few years for some of the changes expected to take full effect.

Still, there seems to be a new excitement about what the Lord might be doing in this new initiative, and there is a moment of opportunity for CHARIS to share its vision and mobilize individuals and groups to “get on board.”

Just as the people of the Old Testament journeyed with God as “a vast multitude,” the people of today must be ready for surprises, setbacks, and divine interventions, as they seek to follow the Lord. There is a wind of the Holy Spirit blowing on our desert journey. Let us be both flexible and stable as we go forward.

May God grant CHARIS leadership the discernment to lead the people. May God grant them help in raising a bigger tent. ♦



*Jim Murphy is the former President of ICCRS. He travels around the world, helping to form leaders of the CCR.*

Drawing: Sharon Fox

# Baptism in the Holy Spirit is for Everyone: An Authentic Catholic Expression

by Jim Beckman

## Receptivity

My former spiritual director had a talk he frequently gave about the gifts and charisms of the Holy Spirit. The call to action at the end was a fourfold response that he encouraged every listener to consider: when it comes to the gifts and charisms of the Holy Spirit one should 1) learn what they are, 2) ask for them, 3) recognize them when they are given, and 4) put them to use!

It was a great exhortation, and very good advice I believe. Yet I have been surprised at the various resistances to this that I have experienced. Everything from “the charisms of the Holy Spirit were limited to the Apostolic times” to “that’s not really my spirituality.” Over time I have found myself in many conversations, sometimes even heated debate, about these perspectives. (I am usually not the heated one.) I typically find myself gravitating to the wisdom of my old spiritual director. There is a certain logic to his thinking. If God is offering us these gifts and charisms, and they are given with the aim of mission, then who are we to decide that they are not for us, regardless of the reason? Whether it is a lack of comfortability, a personal preference, or even a theological concern, who am I to say “no thanks” to the gift being offered, especially when the gift-giver is God himself?

## The “Gift” of Charismatic Renewal

One common misunderstanding is a skepticism of these gifts, mostly

because someone believes they have already received the Holy Spirit through their sacraments of initiation. Very true, but for most this is like getting a gift delivered to your home that you quickly place in the hall closet, wrapping paper and all. Receiving a gift and opening it up are two very different things. In order to fully receive a gift, you need to unwrap it, take it out of the box, and use the gift for its intended purpose.

Catholic author Ralph Martin teaches that one of the predominant theological interpretations about baptism in the Holy Spirit is that it unleashes the Holy Spirit that is already present within us, by revitalizing the graces we received in the sacrament of Baptism. You could say that baptism in the Holy Spirit helps secure our personal response to the graces of the sacraments within us. It awakens something within us. This has been my personal experience. Despite the fact that I was baptized in the Holy Spirit over four decades ago, I continue to experience the wealth of its graces. It has led me to discover the beauty and richness of my Catholic faith in a powerful way and has ignited an ever-growing passion deep within me to serve God. My faith has come alive in me in a way that you don’t find with most Catholics, and therefore has become something I constantly want to share with others.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the foundation of the Catholic Charis-

matic Renewal. In the 50 years of its existence, the Renewal has touched the lives of over 120 million Catholics in more than 200 countries. Pope John Paul II said, “Thanks to the Charismatic Movement, a multitude of Christians, men and women, young people and adults have rediscovered Pentecost as a living reality in their daily lives.” This grace is offering hope in many parts of the world, particularly in places where the Church has been declining. In my experience, it is also drawing many young people back to the Church and is giving them a zeal for the pursuit of holiness.

## Something Meant for All

Despite the growth of Charismatic renewal in many parts of the world, and even in pockets here in the US, the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit seems to have been marginalized. But this is just the opposite of what is intended. This is a grace that is meant for all. Pope Francis recently has emphasized that the Renewal is meant to be a “current of grace” for the whole Church, not just those involved in the “movement”. ♦



*Jim Beckman is the Executive Director of Evangelization and Catechesis for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. He also is the Director of ImpactCenter,*

*a Ministry dedicated to leadership development in the Catholic Church. He is a member of the NSC. He and his wife Meg have 5 children and live in Oklahoma City.*

by Leslie Bertucci

“Beautiful, holy chaos.” This phrase succinctly describes the first ever Family Retreat hosted by the NSC, which took place in August near New Orleans. It was a glorious cacophony of singing, dancing, praying and playing before the Lord, involving a group of nearly 40 children--most under the age of ten--and their parents, plus a dedicated team of charismatic young adults, for a total of 90 people, all very loudly in love with the Lord.

The retreat theme was “As for Me and My House,” taken from Joshua 24:15. The schedule included times of family worship and recreation, as well as separate sessions for adults and children. Fr. Bill Henry from St. Joseph Church in Greenville, MS was present all weekend to celebrate

Mass, hear confessions, and witness to a life of joyful holiness.

“This is what I want my children to experience all through their lives: that the faith is important and central. But it is also important to seek other Catholic families to help us live it out in community,” said participant Laine Dessauer.

“I walked away from the weekend with the conviction that God wants my family right now, in this phase of life, messy and not yet domesticated,” said NSC member Casey Sprehe, who attended the retreat with her husband Kevin and four children. “God wants us as we are, and he’s willing to meet us where we are.”

During the weekend the adults heard talks from veteran charismatic parents on topics such as the importance of praying

together as a couple and a family, praising God through times of crisis, and how to become a Spirit-filled husband or wife.

Janice Charbonnet, mother of five who serves on the women’s ministry team for Catholic Charismatic Renewal New Orleans, talked about “Joy in the Trenches.” She reminded us that “we do our best parenting on our knees,” and “comparison is the thief of joy.”

“We want to see the fruits of the Spirit in our lives, but we must plant the tree in order to get the fruit. The tree is the Holy Spirit,” said Charbonnet.

“This retreat fully restored my faith in Catholicism and family life,” said participant Peggy Rowe-Linn. “Looking around at all these young families with a full quiver of children sent my heart soaring in anticipation for the next generation of Catholics.” ♦



Leslie Bertucci and her husband Johnny live in New Orleans and minister together regionally and nationally. They helped lead the NSC Family Retreat along with several of their young adult children.



# Beautiful Chaos

## at First NSC Family Retreat



# Zeal to Proclaim the Gospel

by Sr. Ana Chiara, DLJC

The Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ is a Franciscan, Charismatic Community of women Religious. Our Mother House is located in Prayer Town, Texas and we also serve in five other locations: Amarillo, TX; Santa Fe and Albuquerque, NM; Pittsburgh, PA and Monterrey, Mexico. God has called us to witness to the Gospel; to witness to the fact that Jesus lives, that he loves and cares about his children and that he is calling each of us to the fullness of life in

him. We seek to draw all people into a personal relationship with Jesus through the transforming power and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

We are a Contemplative/Active community whose charism is Prayer, Praise and Evangelization. With two hours of personal prayer scheduled into each day, we find the grace and the strength we need to do whatever he asks of us. Typically, this involves Life in the Spirit Seminars, Pre-Confirmation and other

youth retreats, Lenten, Advent or other Parish Missions, Praise and Worship, Healing Prayer, Prayer Ministry, short-term International Missions, Conference Presentations, College Ministry, Charismatic Prayer Groups and any other ministry of evangelization. In short—we will go wherever he sends us!

What does it take to become a Disciple? The first thing is a generous response to the call of God. Every vocation is a gift and God's divine prerogative is a mystery. We Disciples come from all over the world: we have varying gifts and life experiences. Some of us have multiple scholastic degrees while others of us have only a High School diploma. We are the daughters of farmers and carpenters, teachers and small-business owners. But we are all daughters of the Church, faithful to her teaching and open to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We desire a deep life of prayer and share a zeal to proclaim the Gospel. We have been called to embrace a life of simplicity and on-going conversion in the spirit of St. Francis. As the Vocation Directress, it is my joy to journey with any young woman who feels they may be called to be his Disciple.

“If any man wishes to come after me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross, and follow after Me” (Mt 16:24). ♦

*Sr. Ana Chiara is the Vocations Directress for the Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. She joined the Community in August of 2009 and made her perpetual profession of vows in 2016.*



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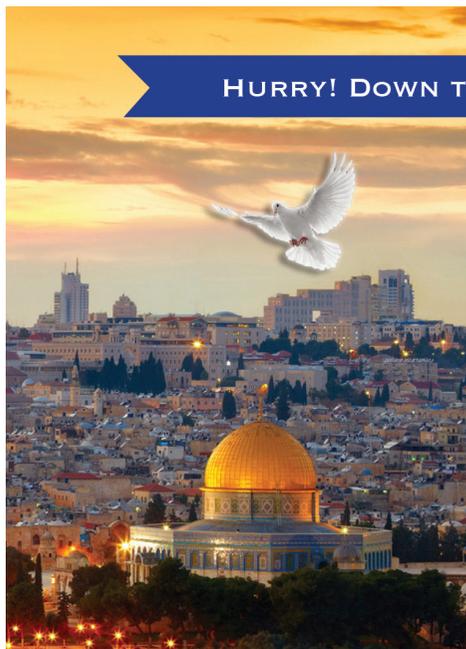
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## From the Executive Director

by Walter Matthews

### Passing On the Torch

In 1990, the Congress on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelization held in Indianapolis opened with a dramatic passing of the torch from Fr. Tom Forrest to Tom Curran. The Congress closed with the torch being carried back into the world, symbolic of spreading the Gospel to all nations.

As announced in the last issue of *Pentecost Today*, at the end of 2020 I will retire from my role as Executive Director for the National Service Committee and the "torch" of this work of Renewal will pass to an Administrator who will work with the Service Committee to fulfill the call of the Lord to this Renewal, "bring baptism in the Holy Spirit to the whole Church" and serve the CHARIS objectives here in the US by being "boots on the ground." I ask you to

pray for the Search Committee and the person the Lord will raise up to take on this role.

For my part I was influenced to make the decision by a number of factors:

▶ I was meeting with a donor couple several years ago who out-of-the-blue, it seemed to me, asked, "Who will replace you when it is time for you to retire?" In that moment I recalled that I had started at the NSC when I was 33. I was already several years over 60 at the time.

▶ A few years later, Pope Francis spoke to the Renewal in 2016 about "those who guide." "There must be a limited time to posts, which in reality are services. An important service of leaders, of lay leaders, is to make those who will take their place at the end of their service grow and mature spiritually and in a pastoral way. It is appropriate that all service in the Church have an expiry date; there are no lifelong leaders in the Church."

▶ Later that year my wife, Claire, as many of you know, was in a serious

auto accident. She survived and is doing well, but it was another "sign."

▶ Finally, for the NSC to become more effective in this "new season of CHARIS" it needs freshness and more energy than I can provide.

Will I sit around eating "bon bons"? I hope not! I am rather most intrigued by what Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa said in Rome at the CHARIS 1st International Conference,

*If the CCR is a current of grace for the whole Church, we have a duty to ourselves and to the Church to explain what this current of grace consists of and why it is intended for and necessary for the whole Church. In brief, we need to explain who we are and what we offer—or better, what God offers—to the Church through this current of grace.*

I really do not know where this will lead, and I don't really expect to learn what path the Lord has for Claire and me as we go forward until closer to the transition or even after, but I know it will be exciting. As Fr. Cantalamessa ended in June, I take courage for the Lord is with us. ♦

## FRIENDS OF THE NSC

*Why do we give to charity?* The Lord has given to us, so we are generous.

*Why do we give to the National Service Committee?* Because being baptized in the Holy Spirit changed our lives. Therefore, we want others to have the same experience and enter into a similar relationship with Jesus as Lord and Savior, with God as Father, and with the Person, Presence and Power of the Holy Spirit! OR because we share in the Vision and Mission of the NSC (see the back cover and our website). In short, we want to see the NSC and the Renewal go forward well. OR because we are aware of the needs of the NSC and have been asked.

Whatever has motivated you to give—*thank you.*

If you have not, consider becoming a **Sustaining Partner Pledger** (information on our website). Don't forget our **Legacy of Fire Planned Giving** by naming the NSC in your will and in other ways.

For those 70 ½ and older, you can make a Qualified Charitable Donation to meet all or part of your IRA's Required Minimum Distribution for this year. It must be a direct transfer. We must receive your donation by December 31 to apply it to this year's return. Even if you do not itemize because of the new tax law you reduce your taxable income.

Finally, thank you to the couple who sent in a gift in Memory of Beverly Burregi, may she rest in peace. ♦



## Dive Deeply into the Heart of Christ

by Annie Sarlo

**T**he Holy Spirit is sending out an army, and the faces of those who wield Its sword are the young people of the next generation.

The young adults of today have a hunger for belonging and community, and once they come to know Jesus Christ, they desire to live a radical lifestyle in imitation of Jesus Christ. I see the Holy Spirit awakening this generation to a new way of life in a very organic yet bold way.

This generation of young adults is among the most educated ever, so they know the truth when they hear it and have a great potential for impact. However, this generation has also suffered greatly through broken families and increases of anxiety and depression.

They have experienced the cross. They know the cross. They know the pain of loneliness because they have experienced it so deeply and understand the need for community. Bold proclamation of the Gospel and living their faith will be so counter-cultural that small communities will be drawn together. From these small communities built on prayer, intercession and nourishment by Word and Sacrament, warriors will arise.

This army is rising from the ground up, and the Holy Spirit will send them forth to proclaim the Gospel, to teach, and to heal. I see a new wave of the signs and wonders that will show God's glory through the newest generation of radical saints.

I see inklings already. These young people want to dive deeply into the heart of Christ and let go of every earthly attachment to live in union with him and introduce

him to others. Once a person gets a taste of that sweet union, they want nothing else to do with the bitterness of what the world offers.

Through intercessory prayer, a large mass will go to battle for souls and will share the Gospel with valor. They wield a two-edged sword of truth and charity and use it to battle modern-day heresies. They also live a discipline of life in imitation of Jesus—a poor, chaste, and obedient one. Their trained bodies and hearts are used to engage in battle and live a discipline of life to conform their lives to Jesus Christ, to make reparation for souls, and to sacrifice for others. This is the call of the younger generation.

The renewal of the Church will come from this army because they live out their identity as sons and daughters of God. Everything else flows from this posture, and from it and their union with God, can take on the world and proclaim the Gospel to its ends. ♦

*Annie Sarlo is currently serving as Secretary for Catholic Life and Evangelization in the Diocese of Allentown. She is a member of the NSC Council.*

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