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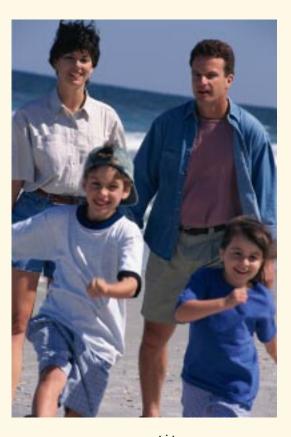
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Chairman's Corner

by Fr. Patsy laquinta



The Jubilee and Christian Community

As we continue our celebration of the Jubilee Year, we may have the tendency to overlook the obvious: the constancy of God's love and presence. Jesus assures us: "I will ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always...I will not leave you orphans" (Jn. 14:18). Matthew's last recorded words have Jesus ending the divine commission with "I am with you always, until the end of the age."

Certainly the Jubilee Year and the preparatory years which preceded it put special focus on Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the Father. Yet the Holy Trinity is constantly present. We are to draw more intimately into the mystery of the Incarnation, God taking up dwelling in the human person. Jesus is the firstborn of many brothers and sisters. What a miracle in us: new life, new creation, communion, unity of creation, Eucharist. All is accomplished in Jesus, through Jesus, and with Jesus. What implications this mystery has for our lives!

Our life is a call to ministry in the context of Christian community. We have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, in the life and mission of Jesus. We accept and distribute God's grace. Our baptismal call bonds us to the body of Jesus. Do we not realize we are not our own? Therefore as parents, grandparents, godparents, uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters, etc., we are to form one another and our children in the ways of faith. Parents are the primary educators in the ways of faith, but the Christian community cannot abdicate its responsibility, for we are born into the body of Christ.

The Lord, and not ourselves, is the standard. Paul tells us to "be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1). He does not say he is the model, for he is the greatest of sin-

ners. Yet, just as he imitates Jesus, we are to do the same. When we sin and fall short, the standard, Jesus, does not change. It is we who are called to be reconciled with the love of Jesus. We are to imitate the love of Jesus found in the uniqueness of each person. We are to correct and encourage one another as we journey together in faith, celebrating as we grow. We truly are a family in faith as the life-blood of Jesus surges through our body giving us life and health, strength and wholeness, joy and peace.

rothers and sisters of other denominations are an intrinsic part of the body. Christian unity is not an optional extra but an absolute call coming from the heart of Jesus. "This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn. 13:35). This is our witness to the world at large. But even more important is our understanding and self-image of church. Do we truly see other Catholic rites and Christians as a part of who we are? Many of us are so parochial that we do not think beyond our own parish membership. How inclusive are we with other Christian believers? Do we extend ourselves and open our lives to others? If I were in a country that was only 1 or 2% Christian, how would I see Christians of various denominations relating? Would we join together in our common profession of faith rather than separate because of our differences? Is there a universal spiritual truth that we are missing because of our comfort level in this country? More and more we are to encourage other Christian brothers and sisters to be faithful to the gospel.

In light of this, we have been commissioned and empowered to reach out to the basic needs of all peoples. But that can be a topic for another time.

Fr. Patsy Iaquinta is chairman of the National Service Committee. He is pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Bluefield, West Virginia.

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God anoints us as parents to proclaim good news to our children, the liberating truth which is found only in Jesus Christ, the truth which will set them free.

A Year of Grace for Families

Manifesting the Jubilee at home

by Gregory Floyd

o Scripture sums up the themes of the Jubilee Year better than the scene in Luke's gospel where Jesus returns to the synagogue in his home town: "He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.' Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them: 'Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk. 4:16-21).

This line from Isaiah, spoken by Jesus two thousand years ago, is spoken once again to us, his followers today. Jesus Christ, "the same yesterday, today and forever" (Heb. 13:8), speaks this word in a particular way to parents whose vocation it is to bear, raise and educate our children in this time of singular grace and challenge. It is a grace be-

cause he is with us and he is the answer to all our deepest hopes and longings for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren. It is a challenge because so many of the supports of the past no longer exist. How can families celebrate the Jubilee Year? How can we live this year differently from the years that preceded it?

The first important recognition is that the Jubilee is God's initiative, not ours. As our Holy Father wrote: "In Jesus Christ, God not only speaks to man but also seeks him out. The incarnation of the Son of God attests that God goes in search of man" (*Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, n. 7). Because God loves us he goes in search of us. I can think of no more beautiful Jubilee activity for parents than to go in search of our children. They are the poor to whom we are to bring the glad tidings found only in Jesus Christ.

Seeking out our children: what does it mean but meeting them anew, searching for ways to let them experience our unconditional love, finding out what is on their minds and hearts? It means talking to them and listening to them. It means discovering their hopes and dreams as well as their fears and insecurities. It means praying over them daily if possible, blessing them, interceding for them. If they are far from God, it means praying without ceasing like the importunate widow.

It means spending time with them, an alltoo-rare gift. Our children are designed by God to need and to love time with us, and the responsibility of finding it rests squarely with us. If we're too busy for God's children then we're too busy. We have the oppressed, the needy, the downtrodden, the blind right in our homes. God anoints us as parents to proclaim good news to our children, the liberating truth which is found only in Jesus Christ, the truth which will set them free (Jn. 8:32). If they are oppressed by the devil, we are called to use our authority and free them by praying over them and casting evil far from them in the name of Jesus. If they are oppressed by sin, we bring them to the throne of grace in the sacrament of Penance. As parents we are called to give them sight, showing them the way when they lose sight



of the path or the goal. And more than just sight, we are called to give them vision. As Proverbs says, "Without a vision the people get demoralized" (Prov. 29:18).

God intends the Jubilee Year to be a time for us as families to regain our spiritual balance. But to do so, we need to ask his help. Only a worshipping and praying parent can develop a worshipping and praying family. Only a parent committed to reading and meditating on the Word can provide the model for a child to learn the Scriptures. And here we find a cardinal rule for family relationships: we are always modeling for our children. What we watch, read, buy and talk about is teaching our children more than anything they learn in school.

What, then, should we as parents model in the Jubilee Year? Let me share a story.

We have nine children. Mealtimes in our family tend to be noisy, even when everyone is behaving. One night as the noise level was reaching the kind of crescendo that makes an adult want to leave the room, I said to David, our thirteen-year old: "I'm warning you, because I love you. Stop fooling around at the table or you will not play your basketball game on Saturday." Despite my warning, the fooling around continued. "All right, that's it. No game on Saturday." David accepted his punishment without complaint because he knew he had crossed the line.

A day or two passed when my wife, Maureen, and I were having coffee after dinner. "I don't want to tell you what to do," Maureen began, "but the thought keeps coming to me that it is the Jubilee Year and that the hallmark of the Jubilee is reconciliation. I'd ask you to prayerfully consider whether David will experience more of God's love through your justice or your mercy."

I began my protest about how I had warned him, about how actions have consequences, about the importance of maintaining order and standards, etc. "I agree with all that. My question remains: what does Jesus want you to do in this situation at the beginning of the Jubilee Year?" You can probably finish the story. I prayed and later that night I drew David aside. "Son, you know you crossed

over the line." "Yes, Dad." "You know I warned you so you wouldn't have to forfeit your game." "Yes, Dad." "You know it's the the Jubilee Year, don't you?" "Yes, Dad." "And do you know what the Jubilee Year is all about?" "I know it's about forgiveness and reconciliation." "Well son, I've changed my mind and in honor of the Jubilee, I'm going to allow you to play in your game."

live the grace of forgiveness beginning with those closest to home or those who have left?

As parents we frequently sin against our children. Asking their forgiveness when we have hurt them is as important as going to confession. We need to not make excuses about our tiredness and the pressures which led us to sin. We need to simply say: "I'm sorry I

Only a worshipping and praying parent can develop a worshipping and praying family...What we watch, read, buy and talk about is teaching our children more than anything they learn in school.

Jubilee is about joy. David let out a shout that was pure jubilation, jumped several feet in the air, then jumped on top of me and started hugging and kissing me. "Oh Dad, thank you so much! I will never forget this. Praise God! Hallelujah! I've got to go call Mike (his basketball buddy)!" I felt so much joy at being able to bring so much joy to one young heart. And it was so easy. I hope this is the kind of picture he will remember when he thinks of the word "God" or "father."

One thing Maureen and I are committed to as parents is to avoid the "layering-on" effect. We do not have enough time or energy to keep adding to our already overflowing "to-do" lists. To live the Jubilee Year does not mean we need to begin all sorts of new initiatives as much as it means to live the commitments we have made in the spirit of the Jubilee. Here are some ideas based on the day-to-day reality of our life as a family.

Reconciliation: Spouses need to model a reconciled life for their children. This means frequently asking forgiveness of one another and offering it to one another. It also means letting our children see us on our knees outside the confessional. All other acts of reconciliation flow from that primordial one which God the Father offers in and through his Son Jesus Christ. Do I live the joy of forgiveness? Do I look redeemed? I have never seen a sad evangelist, and we are called to be the first evangelizers of our children. Do we

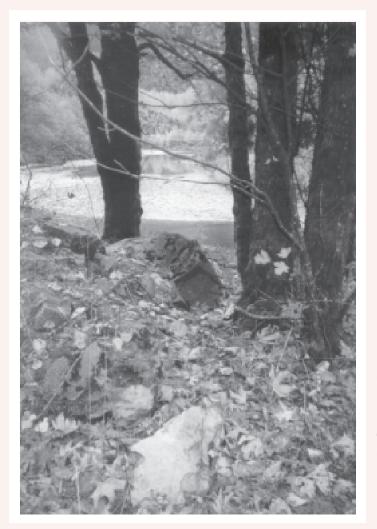
was rude (or curt, or cutting, or loud or abusive, etc.) Will you please forgive me?" Children are models of generosity when it comes to forgiving their parents.

Prayer. We try to pray after dinner for about twenty minutes. I admit, it often looks more like family circus than family prayer, but that is where we are at this stage. We try to teach the children worship and praise, how to use spiritual gifts and how to read the Bible. We go through the readings of the day and comment on them. We sing songs they like, and the older children have to put up with the little ditties that the smaller ones love. We have encouraged them to take up a musical instrument because family prayer is much easier with a lot of music. We end with one "thank" and one "ask."

Family prayer is work. I admit, I sometimes tell Maureen that I am not sure whether it is an occasion of grace or a near occasion of sin, but when I glance at one of the children and he is facing the crucifix with hands raised or she has her eyes closed and her heart focused, then I know it is worth every ounce of effort we put into it.

Celebrations. Families need to celebrate to keep joy alive in the home. But we need reasons to celebrate. As Christians, the greatest reason we have to celebrate is that Jesus has

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St. Paul tells us in his letter to the Romans that creation reveals the invisible realities of God.

Supernaturally Natural

Deepening our understanding of the Christian attitude towards the natural world

John Michael Talbot

n his book, Pollution, Ecology, and the Death of Man, the late Evangelical scholar, Francis Schaefer, stated that St. Francis of Assisi was a pantheist—one who believes that God is in, and actually is, nature. This view represents a mistaken reading of St. Francis of Assisi that betrays a fear that any recognition of God in and through creation is a step towards what we now call the New Age movement. St. Francis of Assisi was most certainly not a pantheist; but he did have a deep appreciation of God working in and through creation. This appreciation found its origins in the incarnation of the Word. Jesus Christ.

The view expressed by Francis Schaefer also represents, more or less, the view of many Catholics involved in Charismatic Renewal, who sometimes follow their non-Catholic counterparts more than they realize. Anything that speaks of a mystical understanding of nature is often rejected out of hand due to fear of the New Age movement and Eastern religions. While a desire to retain orthodox Catholic Christian teaching is worthy of praise, this approach unfortunately also rejects much of the orthodox Catholic mystical tradition of our own saints.

A good look at Scripture reveals that Jesus himself often cited nature as readily as he quoted Scripture. The birds of the air, the lilies of the field and the workers of the vine-yard are used as sources for his teaching as often, or even more often, than the direct quotation of Scripture, though he did the latter as well. Likewise, St. Paul tells us in his letter to the Romans that creation reveals the invisible realities of God to people who did not have Scripture as readily as to the chosen people who did. Creation itself waits for the revelation of the sons and daughters of God in Christ to be released from its bondage through human sin (Rom. 8:21).

In one of the first official biographies of the 13th century saint, Francis of Assisi, Thomas of Celano said that, for Francis, all creation formed a ladder upon which he could climb to the very throne of God. He says that through the art of creation he could see the divine artist, and that if we look with the eyes of faith we can see the Savior's footprints embedded in all created things. Because of his deep respect for creation as a reflection of the creator, St. Francis would lovingly remove worms from the road after the rain to keep them from being destroyed by passing traffic. Through the well-known Canticle of the Creatures, or the Canticle of Brother Sun, this attitude of St. Francis became the foundation of the whole Franciscan nature movement, which endures even to this day within Roman Catholicism and throughout the other religions and philosophies of the world.

St. Bonaventure expressed this Franciscan spirituality for all ages in theological terms—borrowed from St. Augustine of Hippo—in his *Journey of the Mind to God.* He said that

It is a good thing to be concerned about the preservation of orthodox Catholic doctrine.

It is a dangerous thing to become so reactionary against abuses that we end up doing violence to the very orthodoxy we are trying to protect.

all creation, animate and inanimate, bears God's traces. In a most special way among all creation, humanity bears God's image, though obscured by sin, as dirt obscures the reflected image in a mirror. This attitude and theology gave birth to a spiritual mysticism and environmental action that radically effects anyone who takes it seriously.

The monastic mystics of Eastern Christianity also speak of this in very developed terms. They would agree with St. Francis and St. Bonaventure in saying that we can find the Creator by meditating on creation. However, they would distinguish between "energies," and "essences" of both creation and the Creator. Energies are things that can be known with some objectivity. Essences can only be spiritually intuited; they represent the deepest kind of knowing, or contemplation.

Creation can be known in its energies, such as the wonders of science. It can also be known in its essences, which in pure intuition manifest the realities of the spiritual essence of the Creator. A little later in western Christianity, the writer of *The Imitation of Christ* says, in a most Franciscan fashion, that, if we are truly spiritual within, all of creation becomes for us a book of holy doctrine. So Franciscan was *The Imitation of Christ* that for many years scholars believed it was written by St. Bonaventure! Only recently have we come to know more certainly that Thomas a' Kempis wrote it.

In recent times the four Franciscan General Ministers have spoken out about environmental issues, such as pollution of the world's resources through an overly utilitarian approach to the earth. Ironically, the abovementioned Francis Schaefer lays much of the blame on the Industrial Revolution, which, he says, blossomed from an erroneous understanding of the Christian theology of the impermanence of this present world and our stewardship of it. Shortly after the statement of the four Franciscan General Ministers, the bishops and the pope began to address the issue of the environment from a fully Christian perspective. The Eastern Orthodox churches have, likewise, come out with beautiful teachings concerning the correct Christian approach to the environment and all of nature.

So what about us? It is a good thing to be concerned about the preservation of orthodox Catholic doctrine and teaching. It is a dangerous thing to become so reactionary against abuses that we end up doing violence to the very orthodoxy we are trying to protect. In many cases we have already made this mistake, and appear more like Christian fundamentalists than truly orthodox Roman Catholics.

Let me suggest that, after getting our theology generally corrected, we make a walk through the woods or a park as much a part of our daily prayer time as reading the word of God. Learn how to see, as Eastern monastic mystics say, not only the outer energies of creation, but the inner essence as well. Learn to perceive not only with the mind, but also with spiritual intuition. Learn how to find eternity and the infinite in the beauties of nature found in space and time. This is the way of the saints of both Christian East and West. It was the way of the apostles like St Paul. Most importantly, it was the way of Jesus himself. May this also be the way of those who claim to be filled with the Holy Spirit today!◆

Christian artist John Michael Talbot is founder of the Brothers and Sisters of Charity. He resides at the Little Portion Hermitage in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. John Michael Talbot's book, The Music of Creation: Foundations of a Christian Life, is published by Torcher/Putnam Books.



Ecumenism and Christian Unity

by Fr. Michael Manning, SVD

ost of my thirty years as a Catholic Vipriest have been integrally connected with Protestant Evangelicals. Back in 1972 I heard the Lord call me to work in television to share my love for him. I soon realized that I was going to have to rely on my Evangelical brothers and sisters to be seen and heard.

Through the years I have had the joy and privilege of working with many outstanding television Evangelicals: Morris Cerrillo at NBC in Burbank; Pastor Jerry Bernard at the nation's first large cable system in San Diego; Robert Schuler; and Oral Roberts. Benny Hinn even invited me to conduct a healing service at his church in Orlando. Paul Crouch produced programs for me and gave me access to the people on his Trinity Broadcasting Network starting back in 1979. Trinity is the main network I air my weekly biblical programs today, along with half a dozen Catholic diocesan cable systems. I am convinced that ecumenical dialogue is a vital part of our lives as Christians. If we desire to bring Jesus to the world, how can we convince non-Christians to follow our Savior if we Christians can't talk with one another?

Dialogue cannot be a surrender of basic Catholic beliefs. Dialogue needs to be a respectful searching of the beliefs of others to enrich my beliefs.

This work of a Catholic priest with Evangelicals has put me in the middle of their questions, doubts, awe, anger and sometimes contempt for the Catholic Church. Many are convinced that we worship Mary and hold the pope in a place close to God. I talk with them and show that although I love and respect Mary and consider her as an intercessor, she is nothing without Jesus. And although I honor the Bishop of Rome as a key to Christian unity, I still love Jesus deeply as my Savior. What have I learned about ecumenism through the years with my close contact with Evangelicals? How can we have a meaningful dialogue?

One of the fears we have of entering into ecumenical dialogue is that we will have to water down our beliefs. I strongly oppose watering down my beliefs in the church. I respect them deeply and believe that they are my way of living in God's will. But then how can I enter into meaningful dialogue with a Protestant Evangelical?

Dialogue cannot be a surrender of basic Catholic beliefs. Dialogue needs to be a respectful searching of the beliefs of others to enrich my beliefs. For example, as I enter into dialogue with some Evangelicals, I see how I can be a better Catholic through their active evangelization, their missionary outreaches at home and abroad, and their presence on radio and television stations. They also set a fine example in their dedication to the study of the Bible.

The most practical way to have effective dialogue is not to start with arguments proving how wrong others are. The best way to enter the dialogue is to come needing what the other has in order to enrich my expression of loving God. Needing a person who is dif-

LEADERS FOCUS

ferent from me is an excellent way of breaking down barriers. Think of someone from whom you have been estranged for a long time. How do you make a bridge? How do you open communication? A simple way is to be vulnerable enough to admit that the other person has something you need. The vulnerable act encourages openness on the part of the other.

Along with admitting that we need others of differing denominations, I think that we must also make certain that we eliminate the attitude, "I'm better than you." Such an attitude causes racial riots, political slaughters and religious wars. Only by eliminating this attitude will we ever be able to attain ecumenical unity.

How do you open communication?
A simple way is to be vulnerable enough to admit that the other person has something you need.

There is something in us that does not want to let go of that attitude of superiority. If we are not better than others, then that means that we are not as good as others and so we are going to have to change. "No way, baby!" Our basic insecurity is threatened. We entrench in a defensive mode and try to climb to the top of the heap, regardless of whom we have to step on. And so I'm a Catholic who is better than you, a Baptist. I'm a European-American who is better than you, a Latin-American. I'm a male who is better than you, a female. I'm a rich person who is better than you, a person who is poor. I'm a college graduate who is better than you who has only a high school diploma.

The examples could go on and on. And where do they lead us, whether we believe them consciously or unconsciously? They lead to division, violence and hatred. How can we think otherwise? Well, do we really believe that we are loved by the Lord, despite our sins and failures? Does he love us

Diocesan Liaisons meet in San Francisco

The Association of Diocesan Liaisons met in San Francisco in early May for their Annual Conference. This year's theme focused on issues related to moving beyond the Jubilee Year 2000. The fifty-one liaisons present discussed elaborations of papers presented last fall at the liaisonsponsored Theological Symposium.

George Curran was present to lead discussion on the characteristics of leaders and leadership. Sue Blum Gerding worked with the liaisons on moving away from a pedagogical approach to teaching adults to an approach more suited to adult learning. Fr. Bruce Nieli reflected on the influence of culture and a need within the Charismatic Renewal for deepening a Catholic spirituality that focuses on the positive.

In the business segment of the Conference, the liaisons present reelected Fr. Oris

Broussard of Louisiana to a second term and Joe Bessler of Kentucky to a first term on the Steering Committee. Fr. Richard Loch was subsequently reelected Chairperson by the Steering Committee.

In a gracious gesture in line with the Jubilee Year theme of forgiveness and reconciliation, the Association of Diocesan Liaisons forgave the National Service Committee \$10,000 that had been borrowed last Fall. The vote in favor was unanimous.

The next Association of Diocesan Liaisons Theological Symposium will be held in Toledo, Ohio, September 29-October 1, 2000. The next Conference will be in Orlando, Florida April 30-May 4, 2001. For more information, contact Fr. Richard Loch, 430 Pittston Avenue, Scranton, PA 18505: 570-961-2297.◆

so much that he forgives us, lives in us and wants to spend all eternity in our company? If we really believe this then we do not have to feel so insecure that we have to prove that we are better than others. If we surrender to God's love for us, the question of whether I am better than you is irrelevant. I am secure in God's love. I can relax.

This confidence in God's love spawns even more freedoms. In line with the Holy Father's example, we can start saying, "I am sorry" to the people we have hurt in the past as a church and who are hurt in the present by the evils that our prejudice has bred.

Next I can learn not to choke on the statement that God loves all the people he has created. He wants to be with them for all eternity. He's expressing his love for them in rich, unimaginable ways. I can be enriched by searching out those blessings.

How can members of a prayer group become effectively involved in true ecumenical or inter-religious dialogue? Are you willing to enter the dialogue with an attitude of needing others? Can you eliminate feelings of superiority? With this foundation and with a commitment to common prayer, God's kingdom will be ushered in—in a mighty way!

Fr. Mike Manning is a Divine Word Missionary priest who has been involved in Catholic



Charismatic Renewal for thirty years and in television ministry for over twenty-five years. Information on Fr. Manning's ministry and where his program can be seen can be found at his web site: www.frmanning.com.

Fostering faith in our **families**

Basic principles for handing on our faith to our children

by Dave Mangan

anding on the faith to our children appears to be a daunting task. Parents and youth workers seem to spend a lot of time wringing their hands and worrying to the point of perspiration about the decisions their children will be making. I think this is the scariest part of parenting letting go. And it is not like we have any choice in the matter! We raise and teach our kids and then sooner or later (usually sooner) they are alone with a choice. What will they do? The part we like the least about this is that we are not in control.

While there is much that can be said about this critical topic, I am going to focus on three basic principles. The first principle is this. God is not in the business of frustrating people. He does not ask us to do things that we cannot do. If he has called us to hand on the faith to our children then we must be capable of doing it. So the good news is God is faithful! He is in this situation with us and his grace is plentiful.

This should give us a certain amount of confidence, although I hasten to add, I know of no parents who are fully confident. What most successful parents do is try to figure out what the Lord wants them to do and then they give it their best shot. They are not always sure they are doing the wise thing but it's the best they've got. And then they leave the rest to God. Simply put—they do their part and God does his part.



Have you ever told them what happened in your life that made Jesus Christ so central to you?

That brings me to my second principle. You don't have to do everything. Indeed, you cannot do everything; no one can. But there are certain things we do that are very important. In some sectors of the business world there is a principle called the 80-20 principle. This principle says that 80% of the results you achieve come from 20% of the things you do. The 20% that brings these results are called high payoff activities. I think this has some application to family life.

What we need to do is try to discover what the high payoff activities are for our family and do them. What are your high payoff activities? Although these may vary a lot from situation to situation, there are some that are common. I will share a few.

I think the kingpin of high payoff activities is prayer. Everything we do needs to be supported in prayer. We are not always able to see it but the connection is very powerful.

Another important activity is "show and tell." We Catholics have always valued the importance of a good example—of "showing;" but we have often avoided the telling part. Many people regard their faith as a personal matter and are reluctant to talk about it. Our children (of all ages) need both show and tell. The young people in your life already know that you believe and in most cases they also know what you believe. But do they know why you believe? Have you ever told them your story? What happened in your life that made Jesus Christ so central to you? A real flesh and blood story of our faith walk is a very powerful thing for our young people to hear.

y third principle is also a critical high payoff activity. "Love covers a multitude of sins" (1 Pt. 4:8). If someone knows you love them they will tolerate a lot of mistakes. We want to act in a way that our kids know they are greatly loved. Mother Teresa used to say that we do not need to do great things but we need to do small things with great love. A simple hug and an "I love you" go a long way. This should be a daily experience for our children. Remember we want to both show and tell love.

There is so much more to be said about this topic but time and space do not permit. You are very capable of filling in the blanks because God is with you in this endeavor. Also, remember that you do not stand alone. Your parish, your brothers and sisters in Christ and many other things are great resources to assist you. May we serve our children well. May the next generation of the church be more powerful than ours.

A former member of the NSC, Dave Mangan is a high school teacher. Dave and his wife, Barbara, have been active in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal since 1967. They have



five children and three grandchildren. For information on Dave's Keeping Your Kids Catholic and Bringing Youth into Life in the Spirit workshops, contact him at dmangan@rc.net.



New Life in the Spirit Seminars Catholic Edition 2000

Power and the New Life in the Spirit Seminars

When a prayer meeting or conference is especially good, many people describe the gathering as "powerful." We are very interested in vital encounters with the presence of God. We are even eager to touch the transforming fire of the Spirit. So it is no surprise that the *New Life in the Spirit Seminars Team Manual: Catholic Edition 2000* continues this vision of the power of God in our midst. A passage from Acts of the Apostles remains as an important statement. "When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power and you will be witnesses for me" (Acts 1:8). The word "power" and its derivatives appear seventy-five times in the new manual.

The power of God has been with us all along, like an underground spring of living water right in our own backyards.

An interesting change in the new manual is the addition of a quote from the Catechism of the Catholic Church that can broaden our understanding of the power of God. "Sacraments are 'powers that comes forth' from the body of Christ, which is ever-living and life-giving. They are actions of the Holy Spirit at work in his body, the church. They are 'the masterworks of God' in the new and everlasting covenant" (n. 1116). To accept this statement means realizing that Jesus pours forth his transforming Spirit on our whole lives. It means realizing that the life of Father, Son and Spirit was first given when most of us were infants. The power of God has been with us all along, like an underground spring of living water right in our own backyards. So one of the roles of the team is to send people on a treasure hunt in order to discover, or rediscover, the power of the Spirit. Our prayer for participants becomes:

"I ask God from the wealth of his glory to give you power through his Spirit to be strong in your inner selves, and I pray that Christ will make his home in your hearts, through faith. I pray that you may have your roots and foundation in love, so that you, together with all God's people may have the power to understand how broad and long, how high and deep is Christ's love" (Eph. 3:16-20).

Discovering and rediscovering this power means looking backwards and marveling at the sometimes hidden presence of God. Realizing this power means a release of power from within, not a descending from outside of us. Saying 'yes' to this power which is both

sacramental and charismatic means the transformation of our spiritual identities. The seminar becomes an opportunity to affirm baptismal vows that are now rooted in a deep and personal appreciation of the power of the Spirit.

elping Catholics experience the power of God is also directly related to one of the goals of the United States Bishops in the area of evangelization. In *Go and Make Disciples*, we are urged to proclaim Jesus in such a way that Catholics come to a new enthusiasm in faith. The use of the word power does a lot to help people realize that faith can be a vital experience, a source of transformation. Teaching about the sacraments as "powers" helps people experience them as never-ending fountains of God's life that blossom over and over again in the gifts, fruits and charisms of the Spirit.

Let us embrace a dynamic vision of the sacraments of initiation in which the Lord moves in power. "Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit... 'Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word'" (CCC n. 1213). "Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace... It gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit" (n. 1303). Let us grow in appreciation of the ongoing reality of these sacramental powers. Let us ask God for an ever-increasing hunger for life in the Spirit, overflowing in ways we can only begin to imagine.

Let us repeat the prayer of our bishops in *Go and Make Disciples*. "We pray that [we as] Catholic people will be set ablaze with a desire to live [our] faith fully and share it freely with others. May [our] eagerness to share faith bring a transformation to our nation...We pray that the fire of Jesus enkindled in us by God's Spirit may lead more and more people in our land to become disciples formed in the image of Christ our Savior."

The New Life in the Spirit Seminars Team Manual: Catholic Edition 2000 sells at \$9.95. A bulk discount of 30% is available for purchase of five copies or more (shipping and handling extra). For more information, call the Chariscenter USA office at 1-800-338-2445.

by Lois Doyle

uring his Jubilee pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Pope John Paul II asks forgiveness for past sins which deeply impact the lives of those who live in that troubled land. At each historically significant site, his prayer focuses on repentance, reconciliation and restoration.

Halfway around the world, a small group of friends begin a journey across Indian country in South Dakota. They, too, pray about the sins of the past. Wherever they stop, they focus upon repentance, reconciliation and restoration. There are no crowds and no publicity, but the work is the same—praying for the healing of the land. Everywhere, in crowded cities and remote rural areas, this scenario is being repeated in countless ways.

In Tertio Millennio Adveniente, the Holy Father wrote: "Acknowledging the weaknesses of the past is an act of honesty and courage which helps us to strengthen our faith, alerts us to face today's temptations and challenges, and prepares us to meet them...Christians need to place themselves humbly before the Lord and examine themselves on the responsibility which they, too, have for the evils of our day" (n. 33, 36).

A quick glance at a newspaper or television tells us more than we want to know about "the evils of our day." Modern technology threatens to suck us into a whirlpool of excess, consuming enormous amounts of our resources. In a society which has made gods of prestige, power and pleasure, the need for healing is overwhelming.

God says: "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the soil!" (Gn. 4:10). "The wages you withheld from the workers who harvested your fields are crying aloud, and the cries of the harvesters



have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts" (Jas. 5:4). How much blood has been shed over the ownership of land and resources? How many people are kept in economic slavery so that others can reap huge profits?

"But, Lord, we aren't guilty. Some of these things happened before we were even born. The task is so great, and we are so small! We feel overwhelmed. Where do we start? What can we do?"

We are reassured by these words from *Incarnationis Mysterium*: "The journey of believers towards the Third Millennium is in no way weighed down by the weariness which the burden of two thousand years of history could bring. Rather, Christians feel invigorated, in the knowledge that they bring to the world the true light, Christ the Lord" (n. 2).

How we need the sense of assurance and invigoration! Now we are ready to begin, and we begin with repentance. We ask the Holy Spirit to shine the light of truth into our hearts, to uncover ways in which we may have contributed to this or to a similar situation. We ask forgiveness for ourselves and for others. Some may not have realized the harm they were doing or were unwilling to repent. We ask God to forgive their sin as well as our own. Like Moses, we are willing to intercede on the side of these others, rather than from positions of superiority or selfrighteousness.

We are often alerted to the need for healing by on-going problems, a series of accidents, unexplained illnesses, even a sense of unrest or foreboding as experienced in the discernment of spirits. Prophecy, visions and the word of knowledge can lead to important insights. We pray, in tongues and as well as with our understanding, for intervening generations to be healed, for curses to be broken and for the oppressed to be set free.

Our focus is not so much on results as it is on listening and obeying. It is the work of God to renew the whole of creation, and we are privileged to be able to enter into this work. We may pray as individuals or gather with others. It could be a one-time prayer, or it could involve an extended period of intercession, fasting and repentance.

We say, "Yes, Lord, we come to do your will!" And we find comfort in the words spoken long ago to Solomon, which echo in our hearts today: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray, and seek my presence and turn from their evil ways, I will hear them from heaven and pardon their sins and heal their land" (2 Chr. 7:14).



A member of the National Service Committee, Lois Doyle is Liaison for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Diocese of Sioux Falls. She lives in Vermillion, South Dakota.



Join the club! An appeal for Christians to work and pray for unity

by Fr. Fio Mascarenhas, SJ

was introduced to the Jn.17:21 club several years ago when I met someone at a World Evangelization Conference in Singapore. He was wearing a badge on his coat pocket with the words "Jn.17:21" on it. This badge, I was told, was worn by members of a "club" who were all committed to praying and working for Christian unity, in response to Jesus' final prayer before his death on the cross:

"Father, may they all be one; even as you are in me, and I am in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me!" (Jn.17:21).

I suppose all readers will agree that this should not be the concern and interest of

just a few thousand members of a club but that every Christian should be wearing such a badge to call attention to what is perhaps the most pressing need of the world and of the body of Christ.

Why of the world? Because the world is sorely in need of good news, of a Savior, of new life in the Spirit. According to Jesus himself, this good news will truly convince the world only if it is backed up by the witness of Christian unity!

Why of the body of Christ? Because Christians, who are its members, cannot be strong in evangelizing if they are disunited. Nor can they truly give glory to their head, Jesus Christ, if they have dismembered his body!

f the Year 2000 is a Jubilee Year, a special "year of the Lord's favor", then this is a grace that God is certainly offering his people! Many well-known Christian leaders including Pope John Paul II, Billy Graham, the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, Brother Roger of Taizé, the Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople, the leader of the World Lutheran Federation, and others, have gone on record as saying that they have great hopes for Christian unity in the coming millennium. Just as the First Millennium of Christianity saw all Christians united in one, holy, catholic (universal), and apostolic church, and whereas the Second Millennium from 1054 till today saw the disciples of Jesus breaking up into innumerable confessions and denominations, so we see signs of the Spirit's action amongst us giving hope of the healing of all divisions and the formation again of a united body of Christ in the Third Millennium!

Obviously, the Spirit will not work this singlehandedly or with violence, but as always, will seek our human goodwill and cooperation. As Jesus put it, it is the devil, the murderer, the deceiver, who acts like a robber in using subterfuge and force (see Jn.8:44; 10:8-11). The Spirit of Jesus, and Jesus himself, "stand at the door and knock," respecting our human freedom, and waiting patiently and lovingly for our invitation to enter. On our part, therefore, our cooperation with grace must consist of an ardent desire and thirst for Christian unity, a decision to be used by the Lord as an instrument of unity, a change of heart away from prejudice and bias against this or that group of believers, and a commitment to daily intercession for Jn.17:21 to be fulfilled soon!

We cannot also forget that this kind of orientation will entail the cross! Jesus calls each disciple to deny himself/herself and carry the cross daily. It is not easy to die to one's ageold prejudices, some of which we have perhaps imbibed already as infants with our mother's milk! As a matter of habit, then, or spontaneously, we may be tempted to judge this or that church or denomination as "un-Christian", this or that practice as un-scriptural, this or that believer as unwelcome until he/she accepts all the beliefs and practices of our own church! Rather, let us be open to

what the Spirit is doing amongst us all, let us rejoice in our common and fundamental grace of baptism by which we have been "delivered from the dominion of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of his beloved Son" (Col. 1:13), and with this starting point, enter into fellowship and dialogue (not argument!) with each other in this Year 2000.

But whereas working for unity of the mind (doctrinal unity) is the responsibility of church elders and bishops, working for unity of the heart (fellowship and service) is the responsibility of every Christian!

"I therefore, a prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:1-6). This plea by St. Paul echoes throughout the centuries, and is perhaps loudest in our own times. Are we ready to listen?

raise God that many churches are listening and responding. On an official level, there has been in recent years much dialogue between the four major streams of Christianity, the Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox and Pentecostals. Recent breakthroughs in theological and doctrinal agreements have been achieved regarding justification, Eucharist, the petrine ministry, etc., and such dialogs will continue in the coming years since the churches are determined, under the anointing of the Spirit, to seek unity. But whereas working for unity of the mind (doctrinal unity) is the responsibility of church elders and bishops, working for unity of the heart (fellowship and service) is the responsibility of every Christian! We too must join the Jn.17:21 club! Even if we do not go about wearing such badges, let us more importantly show by our attitude and our coming together for Christian works of mercy that unity is our sincere concern and Spirit-given "burden."

In India, particularly, the need for Christian unity is even more acute today, because of the anti-Christian atmosphere which vested interests are seeking to create in our traditionally tolerant society. A hostility and prejudice against Christians and Christianity is being generated by a well-orchestrated campaign of lies and false propaganda. We must face this as a united body of Christ, against which the powers of hell will never prevail. As people learn the truth, that there is nothing to be feared in Christ, who loves all of humanity as its teacher, healer, brother, savior and Lord, and that Christians are not a threat but friends and servants of love who are following in the footsteps of their Guru, they will be opened to the good news in new and mysterious ways by the Spirit. But our witnessing about Jesus must be a united one! If we are divided, each with his or her own interpretation of the Bible, and attacking one another about this or that practice of our faith, then we will be giving a counter-witness to the power of the Gospel to unite and bring new life to those who accept it.

May the world of our time which is searching, now in anguish, now in hope, receive the Gospel not from evangelizers who are dejected or dispirited, or from those who are divided and bicker amongst themselves. Let them hear it from ministers of the Gospel whose lives are aglow with charity for one another, from those who have received the joy of Christ into their lives and show it in the unity of their fellowship with one another. In short, let them hear it from those who have responded to God's invitation and joined (in spirit) the Jn.17:21 club. Amen!◆

Former Director of the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (ICCRS), Fr. Fio Mascarenhas is Chairman of the National Service Team of India.

Families from page 4

overcome death and opened for us the door to heaven. We take time out on each Saturday night to have a special, festive meal, often with another family. We call it the Lord's Day Meal. It's patterned on the Jewish Sabbath. It's a time to stop and savor the goodness of God and to remember the blessings of the past week-and sometimes the situations from which God delivered us. We make it the nicest meal of the week as a way of ushering in the Lord's Day. The sharing of prayers, food, song, conversation and afterdinner fun is a powerful reminder that there's more to life than the 9-to-5 (or the 7-to-7 as it exists in many places).

When we celebrate birthdays, the children take the opportunity to honor their parents, especially to say "thank you" for the gift of life. On baptismal days, we have an even bigger celebration at which each member of the family has the privilege of honoring the person whose special day it is. We take time to tell the particular child where we see the life of God alive in him or her during the past year. We then give them gifts and we pray over them.

The challenge of the Jubilee is to deepen our life of repentance, reconciliation and renewal, whatever the particular circumstances of our lives. As parents, let us turn our hearts once again to Christ who is our joy and our strength and confidently ask him for the help we need to become what we are-aware of our sin and limitations to be sure—but much more aware of his mercy and love.

Gregory Floyd is a leader in the People of Hope, an ecumenical charismatic covenant community of seven hundred people in northern New Jersey. He is the author of A Grief Unveiled: One Father's Journey Through the Death of a Child (Paraclete Press) and the composer of



an album entitled Angel in Disguise, available from Gabriel Communications, Box 184, Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922.

From the **Director**

by Walter Matthews



Prepared to Go Forward

s the National Service Committee approached the Jubilee Year it began an extended prayerful discussion with its Advisory Committee about how we might prepare ourselves to better serve the Lord, the church and the Catholic Charismatic Renewal as we celebrate the Jubilee and enter the Third Millennium. As I noted at the end of my column in the inaugural issue of Pentecost Today (January/February/March 2000, p. 14), "the forms and structures (of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal) may be changing." How is the National Service Committee itself changing?

First, the NSC has participated in several meetings over recent years to "bring the various streams of this Renewal into cooperative unity" as encouraged to do so by the US Bishops in their statement, *Grace for the New* Springtime. These meetings have involved members of the various ethnic national committees (Filipino, Haitian, Hispanic, and Korean), the Steering Committee of the Association of Diocesan Liaisons, representatives of the Fraternity of Catholic Charismatic Communities and Fellowships as well as other covenant community leaders, and bishops from the Ad Hoc Committee on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. These meetings have been important in strengthening and, in some cases, reestablishing lines of communication between these various "streams" of the Renewal.

Second, the NSC examined its internal life and decided to more clearly define its identity and role as "a body of leaders in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal who work together as discerners of the Spirit to serve the Lord in renewing the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church...(which) shares pastoral responsibility for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal with a number of other leadership bodies in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal with whom it seeks to be in a good relationship...The Committee meets to pray, discuss and discern: the Lord's work in and through the Renewal and the services the Committee provides."

At the same time the Committee clarified the role of its Director: "The Service Committee's primary means of implementing its vision and mission is through its Director whom the Service Committee hires...While corporately reporting to and responsible to the National Service Committee, the Director is a full partner with the Service Committee. Indeed, they are brothers and sisters becoming one for the sake of the common work."

Third, conscious of concerns raised over the years about who gets elected to the Service Committee, the NSC, building upon decisions made in 1987 to establish three-year terms for members, has more recently decided to limit the number of consecutive terms for its members to three. This will mean that in the next two years four of its current members will complete their terms and not be eligible for reelection, at least for a year. Over the thirty years since the NSC's inception, forty-eight men and women have served on the Committee with distinction. The Committee hopes that in establishing term limits many other men and women will similarly be given the opportunity to serve.

Further, in order to expand the pool of those considered for election, the NSC changed what was a canvas of key leaders (liaisons, renewal center directors, Advisory Committee members, etc.) to an actual ballot. The nomination ballot has been mailed the last two Falls to over six hundred leaders. The top nominees are asked if they are willing and able to leave their name in for consideration. The Service Committee hopes that this change will expand the list of those considered for election and will continue to surface men and women of "pastoral and visionary gifts" for NSC election.

Finally, and most recently, the NSC has redefined the identity and role of that body of leaders the Service Committee gathers once or twice a year and consults throughout the year. This circle of leaders from throughout the country has existed since 1971 to gather to pray and seek the Lord's word for the Renewal and to advise the NSC on its service.

The new name of what was called its Advisory Committee is the NSC Council.

The purpose of the NSC Council is to actively support the mission of the National Service Committee through prayer and counsel, and consequently through service. The membership is composed of men and women involved in the Renewal who are selected because of their commitment to the vision of the NSC; gifts and/or expertise; or local, state, regional or national leadership. Each Council member will have a limit of two consecutive terms of three years each. The members of the Advisory Committee at the time of the adoption were invited to join the Council for a variety of term lengths based upon their time on the Advisory Committee. The Council will have at least one inperson meeting per year. The first meeting will have taken place after the Celebrate Jesus 2000 Congress in St. Louis.

he Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 is upon us. The Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the United States has been called and gifted to be with the church as it celebrates the Great Jubilee and moves into the Third Millennium. Baptism in the Holy Spirit rightly understood releases in the baptized/ confirmed the Spirit's presence and power and is greatly needed in the lives of every individual, and in all the institutions of the church. Without the Holy Spirit's power, the church will not be able to truly celebrate the Jubilee and prepare for the New Millennium. If we who profess to be "filled with the Spirit" fail to listen to what the Spirit is saying, if we are not docile to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit seeks to prune us for the New Millennium, then the new springtime of Christianity may well be hindered.

The National Service Committee believes it is ready. It has examined itself, purified its memory (cf. Incarnationis Mysterium, n. 11) and responded to the changes the Spirit has prompted. It is ready to go forward through the door of opportunity and "to embrace new horizons in proclaiming the kingdom of God" (Incarnationis Mysterium, n. 2).

The Jubilee continues; let us celebrate with great joy!◆

Friends

by Bob Brown







Pentecost Campaign

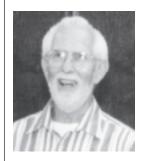
It is not too late to respond to the Pentecost Campaign, our annual appeal to support the work of "renewing the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church." This campaign is our effort to raise the funds through ongoing pledged support in order to level out our income flow. Your gifts to the campaign help us plan ahead and better expend our time and energy on the work that is at the center of what we are about. If you have not responded to the Pentecost Campaign and would like additional information, give us a call at 1-800-338-2445.

New Life in the Spirit Seminars Team Manual

In the last issue of Pentecost Todav I mentioned how the orders were coming in even before we had received the books from the printer! The response has been fantastic. We have already had to go back to the printer for a second printing! In addition to the pace of sales, the feedback has been tremendous. Many seminar teams are already using the new Catholic Edition Manual and lives are being changed, and hearts are being renewed. The excitement about this new tool published by the National Service Committee is very rewarding. It is a great blessing to see the effect of our work.

Financial Support for the Mission

There are many ways to support the work we share in this special moment at the edge of the New Millennium and the New Springtime of evangelization. One way, of course, is to use the envelope attached at the center of this publication. Or you may choose to make a donation of stock (which may be highly appreciated in value since you purchased it) or life insurance policies. Your will is also a good place to remember the work we are doing. Please consider giving through revocable living trusts.◆



DEACON RON OCHNER spends part of his year in his home base of Patterson, New Jersey, and the other in Bradenton, Florida. He says the warmer Florida weather makes it perfect for tennis anytime! While Ron is retired in one phase of his life, he certainly is still working full time for the Lord. He serves in a pastoral and shared leadership capacity for the Servants of the Holy Cross Covenant Community, which in 1996 was erected under cannon law by the bishop of the Diocese of Patterson. Ron has been in the Charismatic Renewal since 1971 and was ordained a deacon in 1974. While in Florida, he has been visiting prayer groups in the area on behalf of the National Service Committee, as well as for his own enrichment. "They have been very welcoming," he says. In addition to other subcommittees, Ron serves as chairman of the Regional Leaders' Gatherings for the NSC and last year was at Augusta and Toledo representing the NSC at these gatherings. Ron also served as session leader for the men's session at the 1999 National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference at Notre Dame and chaired the word gift unit for that Conference.

Reflection

"I'm excited about the Jubilee Year. Good things are happening and even better things will happen. The continuation of regional meetings and the New Life in the Spirit Seminars manual have elicited in me a joyful expectancy about what God is doing with his people. I am grateful that I am a part of it!"



A Sister of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary of Monroe, Michigan, SR. MARTHA JEAN MCGARRY serves as Director of the Catholic Charismatic Center for the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Center has been sponsoring days of renewal throughout the archdiocese as well as a renewal retreat in March. Sr. Martha Jean says the focus of their outreach has been on praise and worship. They have looked at the different aspects of praise and worship, and the important role they play in our lives. In addition to these activities she pointed out that there is a healing Mass once a month sponsored by the Center, and they also conducted a mini-conference in January. Recently more than fifty leaders met with the archbishop for lunch. "We have been blessed powerfully by the Lord." she says. This past March Sr. Martha Jean and Fr. Patsy Iaquinta, Chairman of the NSC, were speakers at a conference in the Diocese of Owensboro, Kentucky, Sr. Martha Jean serves on the Executive Committee of the NSC, chairs the Pentecost Today Editorial Board, and serves on other subcommittees.

Reflection

"This is the Year of Jubilee—a year of favor from the Lord. We should not be hesitant in asking big—even for those things that may seem impossible. I pray believing that there will be prayer groups evangelizing, alive with the Spirit, doing New Life in the Spirit Seminars. I pray believing there will be youth afire with the Spirit of God, and great numbers at conferences. Things that have never happened before have been happening. God has been so good and will not cease to favor and bless us in many ways this year."

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