



Suggested prayer intentions:

Please pray for the following initiatives, activities and concerns of the National Service Committee:

- ◆ For an expectant celebration of Pentecost throughout the Church, and for a fruitful gathering on Pentecost weekend for the Cenacle of Prayer for America in Miami.
- ◆ For all efforts at evangelization to be empowered by the charisms of the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ For Regional Leaders' Gatherings in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Portland, Oregon and Beaumont, Texas.
- ◆ For the Charismatic Renewal throughout the U.S. to be effective in promoting and nurturing baptism in the Holy Spirit through Holy Spirit Seminars and by reaching out to those who received the Sacraments of Initiation at Easter.
- ◆ For *Pentecost Today* to become an even more effective instrument of encouragement and information both within and beyond Charismatic Renewal.

FAITH STORIES

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by Fr. Francis Karwacki, M.Ed. M. Div.,
Diocesan Liaison for Charismatic Renewal

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- Each story is followed by a brief meditation.
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More Power through the Charisms

by Sr. Nancy Kellar, S.C.

(This is a summary of the chapter by the same title in Sr. Nancy's book, *There's Always More: Expecting New Fire - A Growth Seminar*).

"Make love your aim; but be eager, too, for spiritual gifts" (1 Cor. 14:1). Love motivates the charisms, it ignites our desire for the gifts. Why? Because the more we love Jesus, the more we desire to let him use us to bring others to know and love him. And the more we desire to be used, the more we recognize our need to be equipped with the gifts of the Spirit. We cannot do it without the empowerment of the Spirit.

Unless we know our need we will not desire. Unless we desire, we will not ask. And unless we ask, we will not receive! The charisms do not come automatically. Four times in chapters 12-14 of 1 Corinthians, Paul uses a Greek word, *zealote*, which suggests a passionate desire and an active seeking of gifts. It implies that the charisms must be yearned for and prayed for.

The charisms are the means the Spirit gives us to express the love of Christ in concrete and practical ways. "They [charisms] are a wonderfully rich grace for the apostolic vitality and for the holiness of the entire Body of Christ, provided they really are...in keeping with charity, the true measure of all charisms" (CCC,800).

The charisms are an integral part of the mission of evangelization. Paul uses three words for the charisms; gifts, services and workings of power. They stress that the gifts are for the work of building up the Church. Without the charisms there is no power in evangelization.

The gift of tongues is a gift for evangelization. When we do not know how to pray for someone, the Spirit prays within us. The gifts of prophecy, teaching, wisdom, understanding and counsel are gifts for evangelization because the Spirit enables us to speak words that go beyond human wisdom. The healing gifts are gifts for evangelization because the Lord uses signs and wonders to get the people's attention so he can speak to their hearts.

We need to pray for a fresh outpouring of all the gifts of the Spirit in their great variety. Don't limit God's activity to only those things that seem supernatural. Charisms are concrete manifestations of the action of the Holy Spirit that are oriented towards service and the building up of the community. This includes the more "ordinary" gifts such as teaching, preaching, hospitality, intercession, administration, giving and helping.

Charisms are for our ongoing growth and they should not diminish as we mature but become stronger. However, there is a change in the way we experience and use them as we mature. Often, the manifestations the Lord used in the beginning to get our attention stop. Each use of a spiritual gift becomes an act of faith, a kind of "walking on water." This stepping out in faith is easy when we are still close to our initial experience of the Holy Spirit. Then God purifies us of our attachment to "good feelings" lest we value the gifts more than the Giver.

Our job is to learn how to use the charism with a discipline that can release their fullest power, and at the same time, fulfill their true purpose. If the charisms are disciplined according to God's own mind, and used for the one purpose of revealing and glorifying him, we will experience them as vital keys to building the kingdom. ◆

Shout it from the rooftops!

by Deacon Michael Wesley

Every Christian, hence, every prayer group, has been commissioned to share the Good News of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15). Indeed, the new life that Jesus has brought to most Spirit-filled Christians should cause us to shout it from the rooftops! And yet, many of our prayer groups aren't involved with evangelization at all. The reason for this, quite often, is not so much that prayer groups don't want to evangelize, as that they don't know how to do it. Here are several very simple ways to enable our efforts to proclaim the good news and spread the kingdom of God.

The first of these is through the use of advertisements. Frequently, people aren't even aware that our prayer groups exists, let alone the occurrence of a Life in the Spirit Seminar, an anointed guest teacher, a Day of Renewal, or other activity. Most prayer groups have available to them the parish bulletin, bulletin inserts, diocesan newspaper, and announcements at Mass to advertise. Some radio and television stations will promote an event as a public service announcement (PSA). Many newspapers have a community events or religion section that will cover upcoming prayer group activities. Our prayer group has made fliers, business cards, and built a web site to make our ministry known to the general public. Whatever resources are available the important thing is to get the word out. People are hungering for the truth, and if we invite them they will come.

Another effective means for prayer group evangelization is the Life in the Spirit Seminar. This is one of the best means for ministering the baptism in the

People are hungering for the truth, and if we invite them they will come.

Holy Spirit, and a lack of resources should not impede a prayer group from having one. If there is a shortage of people-power then work together with another prayer group. Prayer groups need to start working together rather than competing with each other. Several small prayer groups, for instance, can have a large, community-wide Life in the Spirit Seminar. They can also work together to hold smaller Seminars at different parishes. There's always an anointing of the Lord when people work together. In some places Seminars are given to high school students as a retreat before Confirmation. This is doubly effective when the parents are invited, or even required to participate in the retreat.

A prayer group can also evangelize by offering special teachings, or other events in the parish. One of our prayer groups has a ministry of praying over people in front of the Blessed Sacrament. This has attracted a number of parishioners. Another local prayer group serves coffee and doughnuts after each of the Sunday Masses for one month every year. They play inspirational music, pass out tracts on the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and have a basket for prayer requests. One year our prayer group held a Lenten mission called, *Experiencing the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*. There's always a way of sharing the Good News, but we have to be willing to do it.

The temptation in these times of spiritual leanness is to close in on ourselves

with a false sense of humble acceptance. The truth of the matter is that God, through the Church, is calling us to action. He's calling us to shout from the rooftops the Good News that has transformed our lives. The Good News that we have to share is that Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, can transform their lives too. But they will only hear it if we make evangelization a missionary goal of our prayer groups. ♦



Michael Wesley is a deacon in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, a prayer group leader, and a member of the Board of Directors for the Catholic Charismatic Center in Albuquerque, NM.

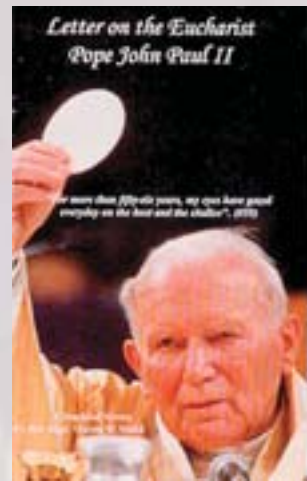
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Letter on the Eucharist *A Simplified Version*

Looking for a way to enrich your understanding and love of the Eucharist during this Eucharistic year? The following excerpts have been taken from *A Simplified Version* of Pope John Paul II's *Letter on the Eucharist, Ecclesia De Eucharistia*. In this version Msgr. Vincent M. Walsh tries to express every major thought that is in the original document. He uses the Pope's own words but simplifies the text by eliminating many of the Pope's explanatory phrases. It is hoped that the Simplified Version will open up to readers the spiritual riches contained in this excellent encyclical.

#6. I wrote this encyclical in continuity with my writings on the New Millennium and on the Rosary to enkindle a Eucharistic "amazement." I want the Church to contemplate the face of Christ with Mary. This means to recognize Christ in events and in His many forms of presence, especially in the Eucharist where the faithful relive the experience of the two disciples who "recognized him in the breaking of the bread" (Lk. 24:21).

#7. I want to involve the whole Church more fully in this Eucharistic reflection. Halting before the "Eucharistic face" of Christ, I want to highlight the centrality

of the Eucharist and urge everyone to experience anew the "living bread," the Church's nourishment.

#8. I have celebrated mass at my parish assignments, at the Cathedral in Krakow, at St. Peter's and at the other basilicas in Rome. I remember altars on mountain paths, at lakeshores; altars in stadiums and in city squares. Even when celebrated in a humble church, the Eucharist is still celebrated at the altars of the world, because the Eucharist is a cosmic act, uniting heaven with earth and permeating all creation. This one act of praise restores all creation to the One who created it, giving back to the Father a redeemed creation.

#17. Concerning the Eucharist, St. Ephrem wrote that Jesus "filled it with His Spirit. He who eats it with faith, eats fire and Spirit." At mass the Church prays, "Grant that we who are nourished by His body and blood may be filled with His Holy Spirit." Eucharist increases the Spirit Who has already been given in Baptism and Confirmation.

#25. The worship of the Eucharist outside of mass is strictly linked to the celebration. Christ's presence perdures in the species of bread and wine and is directed toward communion, sacramental

and spiritual. To foster this worship, pastors must encourage exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

Believers must learn the "art of prayer," practiced so well by the Beloved Disciple who was at Jesus' heart (Jn. 13:25). Personally, I have experienced a need for silent adoration which gives me strength, consolation and support. This Eucharistic practice is the devotion of the saints. "Of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the greatest after the sacraments" (St. Alphonsus of Liguori).

We must contemplate the face of Christ (confer my Apostolic Letters on the Third Millennium and on the Rosary). This is best accomplished by Eucharistic worship which prolongs and increases the fruits of Holy Communion. As a sign of gratitude and acknowledgement of Christ's presence, the faithful should visit the Blessed Sacrament which must be reserved in a prominent place in all Catholic Churches. ♦

Copies of the complete Simplified Version can be purchased through Key of David Publications for \$1.50 each or \$35 per 100, P.O. Box 153, Merion, PA 19066. Email: presbvm@voicenet.com Phone: 610-896-1970.

NEWSBRIEFS

Leaders Gather

The National Service Committee met in January in Louisiana for prayer and discussion about the Renewal with members of the leadership groups among Haitians, Hispanics, Filipinos and Koreans, as well as members of the Diocesan Liaison Steering Committee, representatives of covenant communities and Bishop Sam Jacobs, representing the U.S. Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. A number of young adult leaders engaged in ministry to and with youth and college age young adults were also present and made valuable contributions.

The Gathering of National Leadership Groups of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal has its roots in a gathering convened in St. Louis in 1995. The current configuration began in 1999 and this was the seventh gathering.

There were several possible initiatives discussed as the participants first shared what each group (e.g. *Comité Nacional de Servicio Hispano*) brings to the Renewal and then together we sought to hear the Lord about what can be done collaboratively.

One initiative involves greater emphasis on developing/coordinating ministry to youth; a

NSC Announces National Leaders' Conference

The National Service Committee announces that flowing from its successful National Leaders' Conference in Nashville in November 2003 where 700 leaders gathered from all over the country for a weekend of prayer and teaching, it will, again in collaboration with the Association of Diocesan Liaisons, convene a National Leaders'

second involves collaboration in a conference in 2007 for the 40th anniversary of the Renewal; and Charismatic Renewal presence at the next U.S. Bishops' meeting.

Conference this November 11–13 in Chicago.

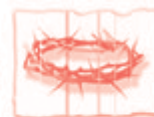
Invitations will be distributed principally through diocesan liaisons and Renewal Centers. All those involved in leadership in prayer groups, communities, and ministries of all types will be invited. More information will be available soon.

Speakers to date include Bishop Sam Jacobs, Bishop Tom Flanagan, Mark Nimo and Alex Jones with others to be added.

The next meeting will also be held in Louisiana in January 2006 under the leadership of Bishop Tom Flanagan, the new Chairman of the U.S. Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee. Bishop Jacobs will also attend. ♦



Alliance of Filipino Catholic Charismatic Prayer Communities



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Jeremiah 30:22

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Archbishop John Myers



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Bishop Sam Jacobs



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Father Bill Halbing



Bob Canton



Photos: Teresa with Guatemalan friends

Update on the Hispanic Charismatic Renewal

by Teresa Rosero

The Charismatic movement among Hispanics is vibrant and energizing. There are prayer groups and people throughout the country that give testimonies of what the Lord is doing in their lives and in their communities. According to Msgr. Joseph Malagrecia, the spiritual Director of our National Committee, there are about 200,000 people participating in roughly 5,000 prayer groups in the United States. The largest number of prayer groups are in New York, California, Texas, Chicago, and Florida. Our brothers and sisters from eastern Canada also form a part of our national structure. Cities such as Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa have a large concentration of Hispanics, who also have vibrant prayer groups. They join us at regional and national events.

Our preachers who travel the country testify of the marvelous wonders the Lord is doing in our midst. Pablo Bayona, a young man who has devoted his life to exercising his preaching and healing ministry, has a great deal to witness. He says that prayer groups continue to flourish. He was in the state of Minnesota a few years ago and there were hardly any Hispanic prayer groups at that time. A year ago, he was invited back to preach in sev-

eral towns and was surprised by the number of Hispanics he found and the number of prayer groups that had been formed. Hispanic prayer groups are holding events that not even storms prevent them from attending. Pablo remembers with joy how last year, March of 2004, in Virginia, 500 people came to a Conference when even the Masses were cancelled due to a heavy snow storm.

Lately, there appears a new trend. Hispanics from large cities, looking for a more affordable way of living, are moving to places where there is nothing in Spanish—until they get there. Bayona tells us the story of Miguel Galacia, a Mexican man, a member of the prayer group and parishioner of St. Leo's Church in Queens, NY. Miguel moved to a town in Georgia, where the Church was about to close because of the lack of attendees. The Bishop spoke to the parishioners about the situation. Miguel and others started to visit homes and recruit people every Sunday morning. Today, not only do they have a vibrant liturgy every Sunday, but they also have charismatic prayer groups.

Luis Pares, a member of St. Agatha Parish in Brooklyn, NY who has a ministry

in preaching and music, also travels to minister throughout the country. He has had experiences similar to Pablo Bayona. One of his stories has to do with a former member of his prayer group, Simeon Abarca, who moved to Wickes, Arkansas with his large family. This new place was a shock to this Mexican man who felt very isolated and lonely, especially because he was used to a warm parish and to a vibrant prayer group. Following a call from God, Simeon and a friend started a campaign selling tacos. With the funds they bought a place, recruited people, set up an altar and called their Bishop. They told him: "This is yours, please send us a priest." In addition, they started a prayer group which continues to grow. In October of 2004 they held a Charismatic Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas. They invited Fr. Elias Arándula from Mexico and some lay charismatic leaders to minister. Among these preachers was Luis Pares. The Conference brought Hispanics from all the neighboring areas.

The Comité Nacional de Servicio Hispano has held three National Conferences. The last one was in 2003 in Anaheim, CA. At present another one is being planned for September 23rd in Miami. This Committee also holds annual gatherings for leaders. In April 2004 we gathered in Malverne, PA. This year we plan to gather in San Francisco.

We are also in touch with the Charismatic Renewal in Latin America. Just last October we traveled to Guatemala to take part in the ECCLA (Encuentro Católico Carismático Latinoamericano) which was attended by 700 leaders from different countries. It was uplifting to be witnesses of the marvelous things the

Lord is doing with brothers and sisters from various places.

We also feel very blessed because we are witnessing a youth explosion. We already have a National Hispanic Youth Committee which plans their own activities, and energizes our activities.

There is a close interaction between the Charismatic Renewal as a movement and Hispanics as an ethnic group. On one hand, we offer our strengths to the Charismatic Renewal and to the Church. Upon arrival in this country we try to reestablish what we left behind. We are a family and a community-oriented people. We have a deep faith and we are a strongly Marian people. We love to celebrate and bring the "fiesta" spirit wherever we go and in whatever we do. On the other hand, we are thankful to God because throughout the Charismatic Renewal we have found a new spiritual life which has been the safest ground to re-establish ourselves.

The Lord has created new pastures for all of us, and keeps creating new ones. We feel a strong call to evangelize and bring new sheep to his pastures. Here we are Lord. Help us to remain faithful and follow your call! ♦

Teresa Rosero is a public high school teacher in New York City. She serves as the Coordinator of the Religion Program for children at SS Joachim and Anne Church in Queens, NY. Teresa is part of the Spanish Charismatic Pastoral Team in her Diocese and is a member of the Comité Nacional de Servicio Hispano



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From the
Director

by Walter Matthews

Awaken dormant lives

At its retreat meeting in 2003 the National Service Committee heard the Lord call us to a renewed emphasis on proclaiming the kingdom of God with signs following. As St. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: “Our gospel came to you not only in words, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with great effect” (1 Thes 1:5).

Recently I had the opportunity to give a retreat to leaders in a particular diocese. The liaison had asked me to prepare five talks on the theme “Putting Out Into the Deep.” I heard the Lord lead me to Pope John Paul II’s words at Pentecost eve last year: “I hope that the *spirituality of Pentecost* will be spread in the church as a *renewed incentive to prayer, holiness, communion and proclamation*.” Four talks presented themselves, but what about the fifth?

As we went through Friday night to Saturday evening the Lord was working on me in a way that caused some discomfort. I see my gifts as more “teaching” than proclaiming/ministering but that was what the Lord asked me to do. He gave me two texts: the story of the paralytic (Mk 2:1-12) and the verses in Romans about our identity in Christ and prayer in the Spirit (Rom 8:14-17 and 26-27). With these the Lord asked me to put out into the deep and to trust.

From all reports the session went well, words of healing and empowerment were spoken and received. Everyone experi-

enced some touch of the Lord’s presence, including me as they gathered to pray over me at the end. There were, of course, many lessons in this for me to be re-learned and to learn.

Perhaps my experience is not atypical as the Lord calls this Renewal back to more of our roots in demonstrating the power of God.

Possibly this is what Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa meant when he wrote several years ago that “our vocation is to proclaim the present, living Lordship of Jesus, through His Spirit in the Church... We must begin again to use this gift better, to run good seminars with effective baptism in the Spirit. We must awaken Christian lives which are dormant and spent.”

In this Year of the Eucharist we are both personally and as a Renewal encouraged to deepen our understanding and experience of Eucharist and to see that “the encounter with Christ, constantly intensified and deepened in the Eucharist, issues in the Church and in every Christian an urgent summons to testimony and evangelization” (*Mane Nobiscum Domine*, 24).

We need to stand up and once again proclaim in and with the power of the Holy Spirit: Jesus Christ is Lord! “You will receive the power of the Holy Spirit... and then you will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8).

The Holy Father, speaking to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal last fall asked us “to be committed in this Eucharistic Year to take initiatives so that the Eucharist will become increasingly a factor of union and cohesion in the People of God, in this world marked by violence and division.”

The Cenacle of Prayer for America, May 13–15 in Miami, will be one such initiative as we gather for 40 hours of prayer and Eucharistic Adoration for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit on America (one land from the tip of South America to northern Canada) and by our prayers overcome divisions and walls and build the civilization of love by the spirituality and culture of Pentecost.

I look forward to praying with you in Miami, but if you are not able to come please join us in the Spirit. Perhaps your prayer group or diocese can organize some type of 40 hours at the same time. While the more of us together in Miami the better, more important is that we pray for America.

Finally, supporting and strengthening leadership is a primary goal of the NSC and in this year we will convene Regional Leaders’ Gatherings in Pittsburgh, PA (April 29–May 1), Portland, OR (June 10–12), and Beaumont, TX (July 22–24). In addition, as announced elsewhere in this issue, the Service Committee will convene a National Leaders’ Conference in Chicago November 11–13. The Leaders’ Conference in Nashville in 2003 was so powerful and anointed many have asked us to “do it again.” A Planning Committee is at work and more details will be forthcoming. Leaders should mark it on your calendar.

In this Year of the Eucharist let us come together and then renewed and empowered let us go forth to proclaim with signs and wonders that the kingdom of God (the Lordship of Jesus Christ) is a living reality. Through the power of the Holy Spirit let us awaken dormant and spent lives! ♦

Friends of the NSC

Thank you for your continued support last year.

The National Service Committee's Income from all sources totaled \$432,921 and exceeded Expenses of \$413,511 by \$19,410. Praise God! These excess monies were used to pay down the Service Committee's long term liabilities.

Fund Raising and Donor Development Income exceeded the budget projection by \$11,779 or 4%. These monies offset the shortfall in Conference net income.

Thanks to your generosity in 2004 the Service Committee was able to:

- ✓ **Serve as a link** between the Renewal and the Church in the United States, and the Renewal worldwide;
- ✓ **Staff Chariscenter USA** which serves in many ways as a national office for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal;
- ✓ **Publish Pentecost Today** three times and reach over ten thousand readers;
- ✓ **Convene the National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference** in Lowell, Massachusetts and touch 2,000 participants with the message of "Lord, We Long to See Your Face."
- ✓ **Gather nearly 200 leaders in Regional Leaders' Gatherings** in Denver and Chicago;
- ✓ **Re-design our Website** (www.nsc-chariscenter.org) with new additions to be added in 2005;
- ✓ **Participate in the Gathering of National Leadership Groups** of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal last January in Miami to pray, listen for the Lord's direction, and network with leaders from around the country;

Let us recall the words of our Holy Father given to us in 2004: "I hope that the *spirituality of Pentecost* will spread in the Church as a renewed incentive to prayer, holiness, communion and proclamation." We have only just begun!

View our "Statement of Accountability" on our website at www.nsc-chariscenter.org.

In January the National Service Committee conducted its annual election process after inviting nominations from leaders throughout the United States. Three members were re-elected for a three-year term. They are Aggie Neck, also re-elected as Chairperson of the NSC, and Fr. Richard Loch and Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner.

Two new members were elected to serve a three-year term. They are Judith Hughes and Gerry Mader.



Judith Hughes is a Liaison and Co-Director of Spiritual Renewal Services of the Diocese of Norwich, Connecticut. She has been involved in charismatic renewal for the last 28 years. Over the past 22 years she has conducted days of prayer and renewal, weekend retreats and one-day retreats for Confirmation classes. Judith co-founded the Heart of God House of Prayer in Old Saybrook. She is an active member of Isaiah Ministries, a member of the Association of Christian Therapists, and a member of the Association of Diocesan Liaisons of which she was the chairperson for three years. She is on the Board of Directors of the Connecticut Bible Society. Judith conducts Life in the Spirit Seminars in parishes and is involved in programs at State Prisons. Judith is a widow, the mother of three children and grandmother of five.



Gerry Mader writes: "Two and one half years ago, Lois [Gerry's wife] and I left our Wisconsin roots and moved permanently to Fort Meyers, Florida. We have five children and five grandchildren. Since moving to Florida, I have become a part time fundraiser for the National Service Committee. I serve as central area

Ministry Update

by Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner



coordinator for the prayer groups and with Lois have helped develop days of renewal and other activities to build up the prayer group leaders and prayer groups in the diocese. I have helped organize bilingual (English-Spanish) area prayer meetings and am involved in retreats with all ages. Renewing the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the Church means I must share baptism in the Spirit in whatever capacity I am serving."

National Service Committee members are elected for a three-year term and may be re-elected two times. With this election there are now eleven members. The others are Josephine Cachia, Fr. John Gordon, Rosbel Hernandez, Chuck Hornsby, Virginia King and Mark Nehrbas.

We ask you, our readers, to join with us in prayer, that with the grace of God, we will serve together to renew the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the Church.

Attention: Pentecost Today Readers

Each issue of *Pentecost Today* costs the National Service Committee about \$8000 to produce and mail. In order to assure that we can do four issues in 2005, a donor has offered a Matching Grant of up to \$3000. This Grant would only match those donations that are received from *Pentecost Today* readers who are not already active donors to the NSC.

If you are one of the 5,000 recipients of *Pentecost Today* who have not made a donation to the NSC in the last year, we encourage you to send a donation today. The suggested donation is \$15 per year. This is a small amount for such a valuable resource.

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all the believers were gathered
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