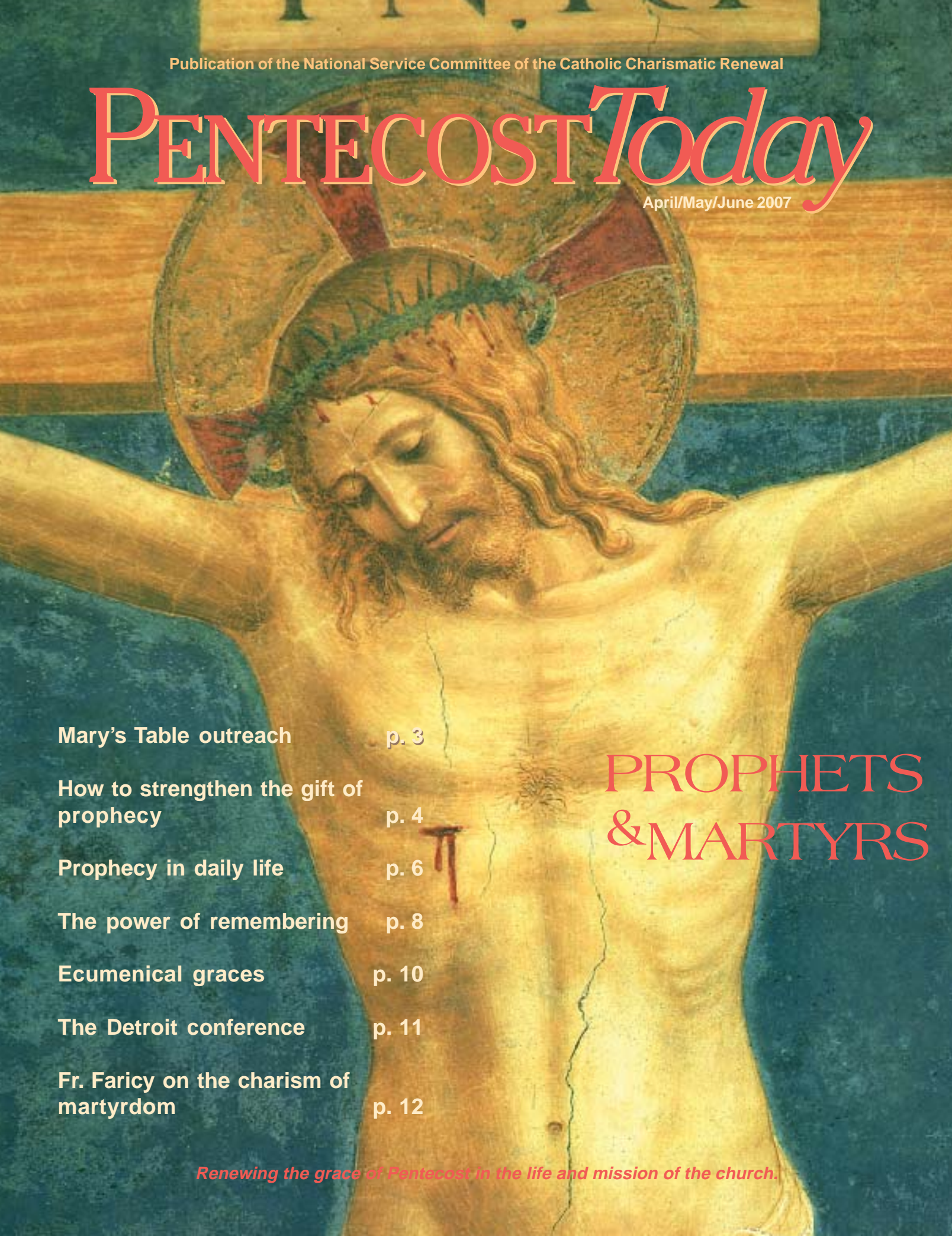


Publication of the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

# PENTECOST *Today*

April/May/June 2007

- 
- Mary's Table outreach p. 3
- How to strengthen the gift of prophecy p. 4
- Prophecy in daily life p. 6
- The power of remembering p. 8
- Ecumenical graces p. 10
- The Detroit conference p. 11
- Fr. Faricy on the charism of martyrdom p. 12

## PROPHETS & MARTYRS

*Renewing the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church.*





## Chairman's Corner

by Aggie Neck

# Our treasured gift

The sovereign outpouring by God of baptism of the Holy Spirit brought many wonderful things to light in our walk of faith. It stretched our understanding of what God would do in and through us. It opened our minds and hearts to know and believe that God was gifting us with gifts that came to us from this indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. As we gathered in prayer meetings it was not only praise and worship, the prayer language of tongues and interpretation and the gift of healing that were manifested. One of the surprising gifts, at least for me, was the gift of prophecy. God was actually speaking to us through people.

The Hebrew word for “to prophesy” means to “flow forth.” It carries the thought “to bubble forth like a fountain.” The Greek word that is translated “prophecy” means to “speak for another.” It means to speak for God or to be his spokesman!

To proclaim what God wants to say is prophecy. Proclaim is to announce officially and publicly, to declare. When we have a message “from God”—my goodness—*it must be proclaimed.*

This gift is a treasure that the charismatic renewal must never lose. It must be given the due honor that it deserves. We must learn how to pastor this gift so that it is not watered down and does not become a “ho-hum” word in our gatherings. We do know that the better the praise and worship the stronger the gift of prophecy flows.

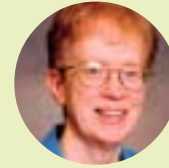
There are no other meetings that I know of, where we can go and hear God speaking to us through the gift of prophecy. It is in our prayer meetings and larger gatherings that we do indeed find people seeking to hear God’s prophetic word or find people open to speaking the prophetic word. We should keep this gift at the forefront of our gatherings and discern carefully what the Lord is saying to us and begin to take the steps and actions necessary to fulfill what God is saying, and asking of us.

“Prophecy has never been put forward by man’s willing it. It is rather that men impelled by the Holy Spirit have spoken under God’s influence” (2 Peter 1:20-21-NAB). “Do not stifle the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test everything; retain what is good.” (1 Thes. 5:18-19)

We are told that prophecy is sent: to edify, exhort, comfort, guide and inspire. If we look at our gatherings there are people in each setting that need to hear words that are doing that. When we know that these words are God-given it strengthens us in ways that we do experience being edified, exhorted, comforted, guided and inspired. I find that there are some words of prophecy that speak to us so personally that we feel that God sent this word just for us.

If prophecy is not happening in your prayer group, then pray for it to come. Read about it, study the things written, and lead each other in the ways to be open to hear God speaking a prophetic word. After forty years this is a gift we should seek with diligence. Check out the NSC’s new leaflet “Understanding and Exercising the Gift of Prophecy” (see ad on page 13). ♦

*Aggie Neck is Chairman of the National Service Committee.*



## Editor's Desk

by Sr. Martha Jean McGarry

*There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone (1 Cor. 12:4-6).*

In this issue we explore the prophetic dimensions of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and seek ways in which we might strengthen this aspect of the renewal through gifts, service, and the workings of God present among us.

Ralph Martin and Dr. Mary Healy attempt to broaden our understanding of the prophetic gift as seen through both the charismatic and contemplative spiritualities and our response to God’s word in our everyday life.

Our *prophetic witness* through martyrdom, ecumenical relations, and love for the poor is challenged by the articles written by Fr. Robert Faricy, SJ, and Chuck Hornsby. The story about Mary’s Table prompts us to ask ourselves how attentive are we to God’s word and the direction God gives to us.

As we continue to celebrate 40 years of blessings in charismatic renewal Bill Brennan’s article on *Remembering* should give each of us thought for prayer and proclamation. What return can we make to the Lord for all that he has done for us?

Our cover depicts Jesus the greatest of prophets and martyrs. May the remembering of all that he has done for and in us give us cause to be the prophetic people he has anointed us to be in church and society. ♦

*Editor's Note: Mary's Table is the story of a prophetic witness in our time. In reading this story one cannot help but see the hand of God as the vision develops, more and more people become involved and the poor are lovingly served.*

# The Story of Mary's Table

## A Prophetic Witness

In the latter part of 1985 and all of 1986, we at the Catholic Charismatic Center (San Bernardino, California diocese), began to have an awareness of the poor and how much Jesus talked about the poor in scripture. We also became aware of our own poverty and began to experience the reality of God's divine mercy for all humankind. As a result, our Sixth Annual Catholic Charismatic Conference (1987) was entitled "**Blessed are the Poor.**" It was at this conference that God, through Fr. Rick Thomas, challenged both our words and our hearts. On the morning of the second day of the conference Fr. Rick challenged us through the words of Jesus. We collected \$5000 from the conference participants and then Fr. Rick suggested that we move the entire conference to the parks in a poor section of Riverside. While Fr. Rick was moving the conference and preparing at the parks with prayer, song and evangelization we were at a discount grocery store purchasing \$2500 in groceries to give away. It was tremendous! It was all unplanned! Only God could have orchestrated this turn of events. The other \$2500 was used to pay utility bills for the poor and to fund four other park outreaches before opening Mary's Table soup kitchen. We chose the name Mary's Table because Mary is our heavenly Mother and it was at her breast and table that Jesus was first fed.

We did three other park outreaches and then we knew it was time for the **soup kitchen** to open. Finding a place was almost impossible. Our Lady of Fatima Church in San Bernardino came to our rescue. They were already involved with outreaches to the poor and graciously agreed to let us use Fatima's facility once a week for a very small donation.

We were all set and the big date was Wednesday, September 30, 1987. On the first day we served 67 people. We were delighted! Very soon after that we sent a letter to all churches, Catholic and Protestant, asking for support and for others to join us so that we might open a second day. The Lutheran Church of Our Savior responded. They had been searching for a place to open a soup kitchen also. It was clear that God led us to each other. It was joyously agreed that they would open the second day, beginning the first Tuesday in November. Soon we were thinking about the third day. After much prayer and organization the third day was scheduled to open on May 2, 1988.

Mary's Table grew and grew until we were serving five thousand plates of food per month. The prayer group from Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in San Bernardino joined us and after working at Mary's Table for six months, they were ready to open the fourth day. In May of 1990, the fourth day was opened and

was primarily staffed by volunteers from the Hispanic Community.

With the growing numbers of people being served daily, we began outgrowing the facility at Our Lady of Fatima. Our Lady of Guadalupe in San Bernardino extended an invitation to us whereby we could move Mary's Table to one of their old school buildings at no charge for one year. After some remodeling we moved to Guadalupe in July of 1990. Soon we were open Monday through Thursday and Saturdays. The Filipino Communities volunteer and staff Saturdays. At this time we were serving in excess of six thousand plates of food per month.

Mary's Table has become a haven for some—a place of rest and fellowship. In addition to the hot meals served, we also offered a **clothes closet, a limited referral service, and an emergency food bag program.** The emergency food bag is given on Wednesdays only. Three parishes in San Bernardino help keep this ministry stocked.

Our vision does not stop with Mary's Table, but rather expands to a center, **Mary's Mercy Center.** In March of 1992, Mary's Mercy Center, purchased the building we're in from the diocese and on the advice and recommendation of our Bishop we became incorporated as a non-profit public benefit corporation and organized exclusively for charitable, religious and educational purposes. Through the years the ministry has grown with a free medical clinic, Veronica's Home of Mercy (for women in need), and showers for the use of the homeless. ♦

*Fr. Michael Barry SS.CC., former Director of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the San Bernardino diocese, acts as president of Mary's Mercy Center. For complete information contact Mary's Mercy Center, PO Box 7563, San Bernardino, CA 93411 or [www.marysmercycenter.org](http://www.marysmercycenter.org).*

# PROPHECY

## How do we strengthen the prophetic dimension of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal?

by Ralph Martin

In many ways the charismatic renewal movement has been remarkably well received in the Catholic church. From the very first episcopal statement by the Bishop of Lansing, MI to the repeated affirmations by three Popes, the church on the highest levels has discerned in this renewal “the finger of God” bringing help to a church in need of “more of God.” And the fact that more than 100 million Catholics have experienced the touch of God through the renewal is certainly an indicator that on the grass roots level of the Church there has been wide receptivity as well.

On the other hand, even though episcopal and papal support has been strong, and great numbers of individuals have been touched by the Lord in significant ways, there is a perception that those statements of approbation and those multitudes of individual blessings—as wonderful as they are—have not yet changed the culture of the church into a “culture of Pentecost”—to use the memorable phrase of John Paul II. The culture of the ordinary structures of the church that for most Catholics are their only contact with the church apart from whatever private fidelity and witness they are able to maintain in their daily lives, are still too often characterized by ambiguous or uninspired preaching and teaching, worship that is often correctly characterized as “lukewarm”, and leadership that seeks to just keep the “ship afloat” and “not rock the boat.” Good people, touched by the Spirit, often experience their relationship with the Lord being relegated to the private sphere and not able to influence significantly the ordinary culture of the church structures in which they participate.

But I believe that there is more the Lord wants to do, and that those of us touched by the renewal can continue to make an important contribution if we are willing to go on with God ourselves.

**the reality of  
God made  
present**

**specific  
“prophecies”**

**signs and  
wonders**

I remember back in the early seventies when I first met Kathryn Kuhlman, the great healing evangelist. She told me she was following with great interest what was happening “among the Catholics” and she gave me a book of hers with the inscription: “There’s more. There’s so much more.”

When I think of the “prophetic element” of the renewal I think not simply of specific “prophecies” or certain “signs and wonders” but I think of the “breaking in of God” which makes real his presence, whether by specific prophecy but also, and as importantly by “anointed” preaching and teaching, words of wisdom and knowledge, loving service, tender mercies, wise counsel, obedience to inspirations, the presence of holiness, the reality of God made present, containing within it the call to deeper conversion, to worship, to adoration, to proclamation, to self-denial.

**“anointed”  
preaching  
and teaching**

**words of  
wisdom and  
knowledge**

**loving  
service**

**tender  
mercies**

I think a key to strengthening the prophetic dimension of the renewal—the making God present dimension—is to broaden and deepen our understanding of the culture of Pentecost. When we think of fostering the “culture of Pentecost” within the church we may think first of all of spreading the acceptance of baptism in the Spirit and the charismatic gifts, joyful singing and testimony, and these indeed are important dimensions of the culture of Pentecost. **But I would submit that we would do well to understand the culture of Pentecost as being both contemplative and charismatic.**

Too often the “contemplatives” write off the “charismatics” as superficial, noisy, and not serious about the spiritual life in all its depth, arrogantly fixated on reproducing self-gratifying, “entry level,” experiences. But “charismatics” sometimes write off “contemplatives” as too inward looking, too undynamic, too morose, too closed and fearful of the “break-



ing in” of God, etc. Unfortunately, there can be elements of truth in both characterizations! John Paul II used to say that we needed “both lungs” of the church—East and West—to breathe properly. I think the same can be said of the culture of Pentecost: we need both the contemplative and charismatic dimensions of Pentecost to be embraced, to strengthen the prophetic dimension of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. We need to embrace both the sanctifying work of the Spirit and the “empowering” work of the Spirit. Holiness and evangelization need to be deeply linked together. They are deeply linked in the work of the one Spirit. The more we are rooted in God, transformed in Christ, attentive to the Spirit in a habitual way—the more we are holy—the more power our prophetic witness in all its dimensions, will have.

**W**hen the Holy Spirit fell upon Mary and the disciples at Pentecost he gave them “power to witness” that was rooted in a profound revelation/encounter with the risen Lord and the glory of the Father that let them see, believe, understand with overwhelming conviction that “Jesus is Lord!” Knowing God in a profound, deeply rooted, ongoing way is essential to be witnesses to him in an ongoing way.

The disciples after Pentecost were not only no longer afraid to witness, but they were no longer afraid to live a life of complete consecration, heroic self-denial, single-hearted devotion, continual prayer. The Holy Spirit brought the disciples after Pentecost into an intimate experience of union with the risen Lord himself, enabling them to share in the fervor of Jesus’ love for his Father, and Jesus’ love for the human race. And Pentecost wasn’t the end of the relationship; it was a new phase that was supposed to continually deepen until Peter was ready to be crucified, and Paul beheaded, and Thomas travel to India, and Mary assumed into heaven!

We see this union of holiness and the power of prophetic witness clearly revealed in the lives of the saints. Holiness and evangelization go together. Contemplation and charismatic witness go together. Bernard of Clairvaux lived a life of deep intimacy with the Lord and yet traveled all over Europe, preaching, praying and healing, wrote hundreds

**wise  
counsel**

**obedience to  
inspirations**

**the presence  
of holiness**

of letters to men and women of every rank, and exhorted one of his monks who had become Pope not to get too involved in administration and forget to pray, all the while working on writing a commentary on *The Song of Songs* that is among the greatest the church has seen.

Catherine of Siena underwent a profound and rapid purification by the Lord enabling her at the age of 21 to begin a life of contemplative action that impacted both the church and society in significant ways. As a consecrated lay-woman she traveled widely, negotiated peace treaties, exhorted the Pope to overcome his fear and return to Rome, prayed for many remarkable healings, tended the sick, cast out devils, and wrote some of the deepest words of advice about the spiritual life that the church has ever seen, in her book *The Dialogue*.

**the call to  
deeper  
conversion**

**the call to  
worship**

**the call to  
adoration**

**the call to  
proclamation**

**the call to  
self-denial**

Therese of Lisieux never left her convent until her death at the age of 24 but already in her lifetime saw the contemplative/ missionary fire grow in her heart and knew that her mission as she approached death was just beginning; out of her intimate union with the burning heart of Christ she would join her intercession to his and participate in the salvation of many souls.

How do we strengthen the prophetic dimension of the renewal? We need more of God, much more of God; and the Lord has sent us saints and doctors such as Therese, Bernard and Catherine, to teach, heal and instruct us on our journey to God. ♦

*Ralph Martin continues to serve as President of Renewal Ministries ([www.renewalministries.net](http://www.renewalministries.net)) as well as Director of Graduate Theology Programs in the New Evangelization at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in the Archdiocese of Detroit. His new book, Fulfillment of All Desire: A Guidebook for the Journey to God Based on the Wisdom of the Saints, draws together the teaching of 7 different doctors of the church in the hopes of making their profound wisdom more readily accessible.*



# Our crucial role in the culture battle



by Mary Healy

It is not easy to be a faithful Christian in the times in which we are living. In our time there is a battle raging for the heart and soul, the very survival of Christian civilization—a battle you might call “the Wars of the Ring.” As our late Holy Father John Paul the Great recognized, right at the center of the culture wars, the crisis of Western civilization in our time, is the “ring” of the marital bond: the relationship between man and woman, sex, marriage, human life and the family. Does God have a plan for sex and procreation? Does he have a design that he has built into us—or can we redefine it and do it “our way?”

The Pope often said, “The future of humanity passes through the family.” As goes marriage, so goes the family. As goes the family, so goes the world. The widespread acceptance of promiscuity, abortion, contraception, divorce, human cloning and homosexuality has done great damage to God’s plan for life and love that is stamped in our very being. And we see the effects in many broken lives around us. Every one of God’s people has a crucial part to play in this battle, but in a particular way

those of us who are privileged to be part of the Charismatic Renewal. What is our special role?

## Power

The church’s teaching on human life and love is credible and deeply attractive. It is also very challenging, since it does not compromise on any of the “tough” moral stands that contradict current ideologies—for instance, the prohibition of all contraception and non-marital sex. If it was hard to live the church’s moral teaching in former days, in a Christian society where human life was respected and the family was the primary social unit, how much more is it now, in a post-Christian society where everything opposes this teaching? In fact, for Christian morality to be lived, good teaching is not enough. Something more is needed. That something more is the *experience of the power of Christ’s redemption* that comes to us through the Holy Spirit.

Those of us who have been baptized in the Spirit have experienced the power of the Holy Spirit coming into our lives, resulting in very tangible, perceptible change! We have been

made aware in a unique way of the divine *power* that alone enables us to live according to the gospel, and according to this beautiful vision of the human person in the image of God. When I was baptized in the Spirit, I began to learn how incapable I was of approaching the holiness of God on my own. Rather than leading to despair, this awareness liberated me from the cycle of spiritual self-effort and failure. I came to understand that I have real access to the grace of Christ, so that he works in me his own death to self and life to God.

Fellowship with others in the renewal, and especially in the communities that have grown out of the renewal, teaches people in very concrete and practical ways what it means to repent, to forgive, to die to self and to receive God’s love which enables us to love beyond our human capacity. We have also learned the secret of praising and thanking God in every circumstance, even in our own troubles and failures, thereby deepening our knowledge of God as the infinitely wise and loving Father who arranges every detail in our life for our good. Through this grace we are empowered to live a life pleasing to God.

## Healing

A second area where baptism in the Spirit has great impact is healing. The Book of Kings recounts how one day, the king of Syria sent his officer Namaan to Israel to be healed of leprosy. He had heard through Namaan’s servant girl that the God of Israel was *a God who healed*. But when the king of Israel heard that Namaan was coming, he was afraid. He tore his robes, thinking, “Oh no! He’s just looking for an excuse to pick a fight with me.” The king did not have much confidence in God’s power to heal. But Elisha the prophet heard about this and said to the king, “Why have you torn your

clothes? Let him come now to me, that he may know that there is a prophet in Israel!" (2 Kg. 5:8).

When we as charismatic Catholics encounter people wounded by the culture of death, what is our response? Do we merely rehearse the church's moral directives and tell them "Do the best you can... and don't forget to go to confession?" Or do we believe in a God of power? Do we believe he is able to heal the human heart and restore his children to emotional, spiritual and even physical wholeness?

Most of us in the renewal can attest to powerful healings that have occurred, either through a simple prayer or laying on of hands, or through the more specific methods that have been developed by various ministries. In fact, the renewal is bringing about a paradigm shift in the Catholic church where healing through prayer, once expected only rarely at famous shrines or through great saints, has become widely recognized as a part of the normal Christian life. How significant it is that this is happening now, when it is so desperately needed!

## Wisdom

Living the Christian life in our time demands great wisdom in applying the church's teachings to the extremely complex and delicate situations that sometimes arise. Those who have experienced baptism in the Spirit can bear witness that the Holy Spirit prompts us with supernatural wisdom and guidance as we listen to him in prayer.

"Laurie" is one example. As the single mother of a teenage son, Laurie had come to know the Lord through the charismatic renewal and knew she could hear his voice through prayer and scripture. She also experienced great healing and a restoration of her own

dignity and self-worth as she came to know God's love. One day she came home and turned on the computer, to find the image of a naked woman filling the screen. She called her son, and embarrassed, he admitted looking at pornography. That night she prayed, "Lord, show me what to do! How can I discipline him so that next time he won't just feel he needs to hide it better from me?"

By the next morning she knew what to do. "Mike, I want you to write the life story of this woman. Use your imagination. I want to know about her family, who her parents were, how many brothers and sisters she had, where she lived, what her life was like. I want to know what happened when she went to school and what she did with her friends. And most of all I want to know what experiences she had that caused her to so lose her dignity that she ended up posing for a camera in such a degrading way." Laurie made Mike rework this story until she was satisfied that he had a sense of this unknown female as a *person*. Imagine how that exercise impacted this young man, and how he could never look at a pornographic image in the same way again. This was divine wisdom! This was the Lord speaking personally and directly to a parent in response to her prayer, giving her wisdom beyond her own experience and common sense in guiding her son into godliness. This is the kind of wisdom the Lord is ready to give all his children in our time, if we will listen to him.

By the grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit, we have been empowered to live a radical Christianity, giving our lives over to Jesus without reserve and without compromise. The Lord has given us this gift not just for our own sake, but because he has a plan for us to minister to those who are deeply affected by the lies and distortions of the

## Prayer Card



**For the renewing of the grace of Pentecost in the Church and in the world we pray:**

**Holy Spirit, direct our mind,  
Fill our heart,  
Be words on lips that we open  
to you.**

**You tell the festive bell to ring  
And prompt the singer of  
psalms to sing,**

**Holiest of the holy,  
God of gods,  
Joy, light, healing draught and  
life:**

**Praise be to you, with Father  
and Son,  
Spirit life-giver so kind.  
Amen.**

*By Rupert of Deutz  
(found on p. 338 of "Come, Creator  
Spirit" by Fr. Cantalamessa)*

culture of death. God wants to heal, strengthen, renew and transform the lives of all his children! He will do this as we are attentive and responsive to the divine truths that the Holy Spirit imparts to us. This is what it means to live "the culture of Pentecost!" ♦

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