

Publication of the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

45th ANNIVERSARY

# PENTECOST *Today*

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





## Chairman's Corner

by Fr. Bob Hogan

# Life-giving repentance & reconciliation

You will notice in this issue a theme of repentance and reconciliation as we are beginning the first year of preparation for the Jubilee celebration of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in 2017. I do not want to repeat what you will read in other articles, but I would like to focus on the ideas of reflection and dialogue, which go hand in hand with repentance and reconciliation.

As part of my graduate studies in Marian Theology I wrote a history of the first 25 years of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, reflecting especially on the ways that Marian devotion and reflection developed within the movement. Studying the Renewal closely made me more aware of the great blessing this renewal movement has been (and still needs to be), but also of the struggles, mistakes, sins, misunderstandings, hurt feelings, disunity, and challenges that we have faced in the Renewal.

I am a believer in the importance of reflection on our experience so that we can learn from both our successes and our mistakes. As a high school and college teacher, I was not a good teacher immediately. However, my greatest strength was that I would talk with the Holy Spirit about my weaknesses and mistakes, so that I could learn from them, allow the Holy Spirit to teach me better ways of teaching and handling situations, and allow the Spirit to give me the courage to deal with people and situations in a more open,

I would talk with the Holy Spirit about my weaknesses and mistakes, so that I could learn from them.

honest manner. The Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of Truth, wants to help us to see beyond “appearance and hearsay.” We can rejoice in times of faithfulness, while not being blind to our mistakes and sins.

In our prayer groups and churches we will have disagreements, misunderstandings, and have to deal with the stubborn sinfulness that is a struggle in this life. How can we best deal with this reality?

First, we can learn to see the plank in our own eye, rather than focusing on the speck in other people’s eyes. This takes humble reflection with our Spirit Advocate who searches us and knows us. The Holy Spirit can transform a big mistake, and even a sin, into a major time of grace.

Second, we can learn how to dialogue with one another. Our being “one heart and mind” does not mean that we have to immediately agree on everything. When our groups create an atmosphere where people can respectfully raise issues, talk through concerns, and raise possibilities, we all become stronger and wiser, seeing a broader picture of the ways that God works. So let us “repent and believe in the gospel,” allowing this Time of Life-Giving Repentance to lead us into the Year of Faith toward our Jubilee Year! ♦

Fr. Bob Hogan, BBD is Chairman of the National Service Committee.



## Editor's Desk

by Sr. Martha Jean McGarry

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Ps 51:12

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is preparing for a great Jubilee to be held in 2017! In this issue readers will find several articles which offer us suggestions on how we can join in this preparation as individuals, groups, families, parishes or communities.

On page 3, **Walter Matthews** announces a five year plan in preparation for the Jubilee beginning with a *Time of Life-Giving Repentance*.

**Aggie Neck** addresses prayer group leaders on the importance of the ministry of reconciliation within their groups. The article on pages 8–9 gives keen insights and suggestions that would benefit leadership in any group.

The gift of calling others to repentance is the topic and challenge of **Sister Nancy Kellar's** article on page 10. Reflecting on this charism of pastoring she encourages us to use this gift as needed and guided by the Spirit.

**Kevin Ranaghan**, in his article on pages 4–5, reflects on and celebrates the new document from ICCRS on *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*. Don't miss this long awaited blessing!

The 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference was held in Philadelphia June 1–3. **Jane Guenther's** report on pages 6–7 shares memorable highlights of this Conference.

How good God is! May our hearts be filled with wonder and praise as we contemplate the many expressions of his love. ♦

Cover photo: Tammie Stevens

**Ministry  
empowered  
by Charism**



## The first step on our 5-year journey

by Walter Matthews

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At the Renewal's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference in 2007, Bishop Sam Jacobs challenged us to begin to pray about and plan for the Renewal's Jubilee in 2017. At this year's 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference in Philadelphia, the National Service Committee and a number of other National Leadership Groups announced a 5-Year Journey to the Jubilee, and, as a first step, a Time of Life-Giving Repentance from June 1 to December 31 of this year.

We are calling for this Time of Life-Giving Repentance because the Renewal in the U.S. needs renewal and "no authentic renewal takes place without repentance and prayer" (Dr. Alan Schreck, *Rebuild My Church*). We also do so in imitation of Pope John Paul II's call to repentance and the "purification of memory" in preparation for the Great Jubilee in 2000.

As he observed in his Apostolic Letter *As the Third Millennium Draws Near*: "A jubilee is always an occasion of special grace, 'a day blessed by the Lord.'" (32) It is a time of great joy, "not just an inner joy but a jubilation which is manifested outwardly." (16) This joy, however, "is above all a joy based upon the forgiveness of sins." (32) Thus the Holy Father called us to purify ourselves, "through repentance, of past errors and instances of infidelity, inconsistency and slowness to act." (33) "Among the sins which require a greater commitment to repentance and conversion should certainly be counted those which have been detrimental to

the unity willed by God for his people." (34) While the Holy Father was clearly talking about the divisions in Christianity, the National Leadership Groups are applying this to the fragmentation, divisions and unresolved conflicts that have affected the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in our country.

As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* notes, "Sin is present in human history; any attempt to ignore it or to give this dark reality other names would be futile." (386) Quite frankly, sin has existed in the Renewal and continues to exist and we must repent.

The objection may emerge: how can we repent for sins we did not commit? As Fr. Peter Hocken notes in *Healing the Wounds of History*, "Everyone involved in the ministry of reconciliation accepts that we are only answerable to God for our own behaviour." He then quotes Elie Wiesel who once said, "while no man is responsible for what his ancestors have done, he is responsible for what he does with that memory." The analogy might be the inner healing insights concerning healing the family tree. There is a need to bring to the surface the wounds of the past, bring them into the light, repent and allow the Holy Spirit to bring healing not only to the Renewal in the present but also to those who have been hurt in our forty-five years. As St. Paul wrote to the Ephesians: "When all things are brought out to the light, then their true nature is clearly revealed; for anything that is clearly revealed becomes light" (5:13-14).

This call to a time of life-giving repentance is not firstly or primarily directed at individuals, but to the prayer groups, communities, ministries, diocesan service committees and other groups that exist in the Renewal. We are inviting leaders of the above groups in each (Arch)Diocese to meet, to reflect on both the positive fruits of the Renewal and also to ask who has been alienated or estranged.

This reflection may lead to explicit repentance with everyone seeking the Lord for forgiveness, then taking concrete steps to repair any broken relationships or divisions: within the Renewal, within a prayer group or community, or between the Renewal and the Church leadership or with other movements. The process also involves dialogue to work out disagreements and seek common ground.

This Time of Life-Giving Repentance leads directly to the Year of Faith called for by Pope Benedict XVI which begins in October. As he wrote in *The Door of Faith* (see last issue of *Pentecost Today*, p 3): "The Year of Faith... is a summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the one Saviour of the world." (6) (There will be more on the Year of Faith, Spirit-filled faith, in the next issue.)

At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus said, "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel" (Mk 1:15). This time—a five-year journey to the Renewal's Jubilee—is a time of fulfillment, a time to prepare, a time to act, an "opportunity for live-giving repentance" (see Acts 11:18). Let us enter into it fully so that when we reach our Jubilee, we will be a more effective instrument of the Lord in renewing the Church in our day. ♦

(More information and downloadable materials are available on our website.)



# From ICCRS: A new document on baptism in the Holy Spirit

by Kevin M. Ranaghan

According to *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* newly published by International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services, [ICCRS], there are over 120 million Catholics in 238 countries who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit. While I think that those figures are a bit conservative, nevertheless, it is clear that the Catholic Charismatic Renewal is a huge reality in the modern Catholic Church. ICCRS, whose doctrinal commission authored this new book, has had a major role in fostering this remarkable work of God throughout the entire world.

ICCRS began as an office of the National Service Committee of the United States. In the early 1970's, the National Service Committee established two offices, the National Communications office [NCO] in South Bend, Indiana, and an International Communications office [ICO] in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Both offices were charged with networking among leaders, organizing conferences, and spreading information, teaching and pastoral guidance through newsletters, tape recordings, etc. When Cardinal Suenens became deeply personally involved in the Renewal, he became the patron of the ICO which soon moved to Brussels, and some years later, to Rome. The new task of the ICO [now ICCRS] then became to promote an understanding and acceptance of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Holy See and in the wider church, and to network and draw together leaders of the renewal around the world. Readers might want to look at the present ICCRS website for helpful information on its origins and services. <http://www.iccrs.org/>

Today ICCRS consists of an international council of Renewal leaders from all over the world, and the initiatives of the council are carried out by the ICCRS office located in a Vatican office building in Rome.

ICCRS maintains a formal relationship with the Holy See through its association with the Pontifical Council for the Laity, but does not have a role of governance over the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. It is rather, a ministry of service. As a former and long time member of the ICCRS Council, I

know that ICCRS has done a great deal to foster the acceptance and growth of the Renewal. Let me mention just a few services that seem very important to me.

- ◆ First came the organization of the 1973 Grotta Ferratta conference which networked several hundred Renewal leaders and theologians along with Protestant and Pentecostal guests, and which provided the opportunity for the first meeting between members of the early ICO leadership and Pope Paul VI.
- ◆ Then in 1974, under the aegis of Cardinal Suenens, it facilitated the writing of Theological and Pastoral Orientations on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, generally known as "The First Malines Document" which has had a significant and lasting impact, providing solid formation for renewal leadership on the international level, and providing help to bishops around the world to understand and then to encourage the Renewal.
- ◆ It provided pastoral oversight for the 1975 Rome Conference, which gathered 10,000 participants from all over the world at the Catacombs of San Calisto. The concluding Mass on Pentecost Monday in St. Peter's basilica, was celebrated by Cardinal Suenens. Then, Pope Paul VI entered the basilica and gave resounding public approval to the Renewal.

Other ICCRS events, which mean so much to me, often run together in my memory. I recall travelling to Singapore for an Asian leader's conference, where I was immersed in the same Renewal in a wonderfully different culture. Once there was an international retreat/conference in a tent outside the Cittadella overlooking Assisi, marked by the new participation of many delegates from Eastern Europe. In 1995 ICCRS put on a terrific international retreat on healing, and as I recall, on deliverance, in San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy. I have seen wonderful healings begun in those days. In more recent years there have been summer schools for leadership formation in Rome, healing seminars in Jacksonville, Florida, and many other events around the world detailed on the ICCRS website.



**T**hough the Renewal is well served by many national service committees or their equivalent throughout the world, ICCRS continues to offer a point of unity, and to be an umbrella of fellowship for the one worldwide movement. Especially in the early years, the National Service Committee of the United States was the principal financial supporter of ICCRS' work. Later, financial support for ICCRS has come from other parts of the world. In subsequent years, support from the United States and other nations diminished because of the increasing needs of local and diocesan Renewals placed on their members. I believe those involved in the Renewal are called to support it at all levels: local, national, and international. We need to take our financial responsibility for the Renewal seriously.

It is frankly exciting that after 45 years of reflection and experience, this new document on baptism in the Holy Spirit is being published by ICCRS. I rejoice that decades after its beginnings, we are still writing, reading and studying about the Renewal. It is a promise of even greater things to come that we still have a need for this kind of book.

For me it has been a joy to find here, the reality of baptism in the Holy Spirit and the spiritual gifts (charisms) so well expressed. In fact, I found my first reading of its major sections to be a fresh experience of the fire of Pentecost. Still, a person with no knowledge of the Charismatic Renewal will find here an explanation of baptism in the Spirit and the gifts; of their impact in the life of the individual and their integration within the life and mission of the whole church that is clear, concise and inviting. The relatively brief section on Scriptural and Patristic Foundations is very well done, and a handy teaching tool for Renewal leaders and participants.

The document also deals with a couple of significant issues that have always been a matter of discussion within the Renewal, and it does so in a way that is both conciliatory and unifying. For example, what we in the English speaking world have always called baptism in the Holy Spirit is sometimes called by other names in the French, Spanish and Italian Renewals. The different terminology is explained and evaluated. Also addressed are the two principal theological understandings of baptism in the Holy Spirit among Catholics.

The first and most popular understanding is that baptism in the Spirit is a personal release or actualization of the graces of the sacraments of baptism and confirmation, both in terms of the interior life of union with God, and in terms of the activity of Christian service through charismatic gifts. The other theological understanding is that baptism in the Spirit is a new and different grace quite distinct from the sacraments of initiation. It is seen as a new coming of the

Spirit bestowing new gifts. These two views are seen as legitimate and not mutually exclusive. Each has strengths and drawbacks. The same can be said of calling baptism in the Holy Spirit by different names in different cultures.

Differences in understanding need not cause division, nor be obstacles to our working together to continue to promote the Renewal in our own countries and together throughout the world. Rather, differences provide the opportunity to continue to probe the wonderful complexity of the graces of the Renewal.

The document offers a number of practical pastoral guidelines concerning leading others to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, follow up formation, the value of prayer groups, etc. It is interesting to note that towards the end of the document, there are warnings against problems of sensationalism, elitism and divisiveness, exactly the same warnings that came both from Renewal leaders and from bishops' conferences in the late 1960's and early 1970's. It is significant that 45 years after the beginnings, these problem areas still need to be addressed and corrected.

Of course the guidelines that come to us from ICCRS need to be taken very seriously because they have been prepared with prayerful reflection by this international service group with an excellent track record for pastoral wisdom. But as the document itself says, guidelines always need to be discerned and carefully applied in each local and national situation of the Renewal. Each with its own responsibilities and spheres of activity will need to discern its way forward. Thus, in a Renewal united in its principles, variations in pastoral practice may often be appropriate.

These sovereign graces of God can happen anywhere, and at anytime. But the fostering of these graces of the Renewal has been entrusted to us. Leaders, prayer group members and communities alike share in this entrustment to faithfully promote the graces of Renewal in the particular missions and services we have in the Church. In this context, we are thankful to ICCRS for giving us this document which is timely, refreshing, and has great potential to renew our own commitment to the Renewal, and which provides a fresh and strong foundation for our ongoing work. ♦



*Kevin Ranaghan served for many years as a member and executive director of the NSC and as a member of the ICCRS Council. He is a founding member of the People of Praise Community and currently the chair of its branch relations council.*

Join the Journey



Jane Guenther & Jim Archer in opening procession.

# 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference

## Draw Me Close

by Jane Guenther



Closing Mass celebrant Msgr. Malagrecia.



Gifts carried in vessel representing the Ark of the New Covenant.

The celebration of the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary helped us return to the simplicity of baptism in the Holy Spirit. We enjoyed being drawn into the Upper Room experience praying with Mary with one heart. Friday evening we began with the celebration of the Eucharist after some beautiful praise and worship led by a blended music group of all the different ethnic groups. The Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia, **Bishop John McIntyre** was the main celebrant of the Mass. At the preparation of the gifts, as we sang “Draw Me Close,” the gifts were brought forward in a carrying vessel that represented the Ark of the New Covenant. We are called as the Body of Christ to be members of the New Covenant. The Bishop shared a letter from the Holy Father to the Renewal at the conclusion of Mass that was encouraging to the work of the Charismatic Renewal in the Church.



Bishop McIntyre receives the gifts.



**Mark Nimo**, from Ghana now living and ministering in Chicago, not only the emcee of the general sessions but also the keynote speaker Friday evening challenged us, setting the groundwork of catechesis of Mary as one who exemplified the virtues of obedience, humility and love that each of us are called to in our discipleship.

Saturday morning began with each group in their own track. The youth track motivated and encouraged by the words of

**Fr. Agustino Torres**, a member of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, moved into that close encounter with Jesus as he drew them close through a beautiful Holy Hour. They were drawn into a scriptural dramatization that animated the Word so they might fully live it out.



The English speaking track began with Holy Eucharist celebrated by **Fr. Bob Hogan**, BBD, Chairman of the NSC.



He spoke in his homily of the necessity of being a devoted, united, praying, witnessing and empowered Church. We then heard from **Michelle Moran**, current President of ICCRS, that we could expect a very important “visitation”; contrasting a visit from a visitation, she utilized the story of Mary’s visitation to Elizabeth where the encounter with Jesus was one of active expectancy. It was intensely personal and profoundly communal. She stated we are a people of history but a people of history with a destiny. We are set on fire as we are sealed with the Holy Spirit and we, through our deeper and deeper union with God, are a people of proclamation—proclaiming Jesus is Lord.



**Dorothy Ranaghan** gave us a beautiful historical context of the Renewal since the Duquesne Weekend in 1967. For the fullness of this history contact Resurrection Communications for a copy of her talk or visit our website. As she took us through the 45 years, it led to her final recognition of the fruits of the Renewal that have birthed so many ministries that display the sovereign work of God. She ended with Fr. Jim Ferry’s tag line—“there is always more.” Fr.

Photos: Tammie Stevens



**Listen to these exciting speakers from the 45th Anniversary Conference!**

- Mark Nimo ● Bishop John McIntyre
- Msgr. Malagrecia ● Fr. James Kelly
- Michelle Moran ● Bob Canton
- Dorothy Ranaghan ● Fr. Bob Hogan
- Fr. Agostino Torres ● David Fuente
- Walter Matthews ● Kim DiSanti
- Pere Marc-Arthur Francois

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James Kelly, an Irish missionary priest serving God's people in Venezuela, spoke to us about the cenacle and how these moments of the upper room can happen many places. In his journey from Venezuela he conducted a cenacle at the airport as he waited twelve hours to get on the plane, praying the rosary right there. Do we have that holy boldness to form cenacles of prayer in the most ordinary of places?



After lunch, **Kim DiSanti** gave a beautiful witness of coming into the Catholic faith and healing from cancer and healing for her family. She manifested a charism of singing in tongues and interpretation of those tongues that ministered to those present in a profound way. **Mark Nimo** was the final speaker in our track teaching on charisms. We must smell like



*Saturday evening celebration.*

the aroma of Christ in the world. Using the story of the alabaster jar, we have to break our jar and let the aroma be released for the common good. These charisms given through baptism in the Holy Spirit have to be received, given thanks for, opened fully and used to be efficacious in the Kingdom.

Prayer to receive a fuller outpouring of the charisms ended the track.

The Filipino track was blessed to have **Bob Canton**, a leader of the Alliance of Filipino Catholic Charismatic Prayer Communities, and other speakers. Fr. John Gordon, former member of the NSC, was main celebrant and homilist for Mass. Michelle Moran walked the group through a talk on leadership, expressing the pitfalls of leadership that sometimes lack recognizing and putting into action the charisms of the members. In the healing service there were many manifestations of God's love. Likewise, the Haitian track filled with vibrant praise experienced the wonderful outpouring of the Spirit. More about these tracks will be available on the NSC website.

Saturday evening all were blessed as the ethnic streams came back together to celebrate the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary along with those brothers and sisters in our home communities whom we invited to join us in celebration. We raised the roof praising God and experiencing a real fire of the Holy Spirit descending upon us. Celebratory elements of glow sticks and flags elevated the praise to a real expression of glory.

**Dave de la Fuente** gave witness to his desire to bring his covenant community upbringing into the local parish. He stressed the call to evangelize young adults and youth, and to bring apostolic zeal and unity into the Church. Doing so, we will have the hope to create an unprecedented renewal.

Prayer Card

“Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.’” *Acts 2:38-39*

**Fr. James Kelly** broke open the Word: beginning with the expressions of salvation in the story of Noah and the flood, opportunities for conversion as in the story of Zaccheus, our many persecutions and exiles resulting in the true promise of God setting his people free. Baptism of the Holy Spirit moves us past and out of the persecution and into the opportunity to preach the Word. The evening ended as he led us with prayer for healing in groups of three or four. God visited his people and broke down barriers.



Sunday morning we gathered together to hear from **Michelle Moran** the amazing  
See Anniversary Conference page 12

## Strengthening Leadership

### Prayer Requests:

- ◆ That hearts will be softened and minds opened to the guidance of the Holy Spirit for a renewed spirit of repentance, leading to a renewal and deepening of our baptism in the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ For a project that Archbishop Robert Carlson suggested to the NSC regarding better catechesis about the role of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Baptism.
- ◆ For the preparation and promotion of the 2012 National Leaders' and Ministries' Conference, November 2-4 in San Antonio, Texas.
- ◆ That intercessors will be equipped and mobilized for the Year of Faith which begins on October 11, 2012 and that their intercessions will be fruitful in the years leading up to the Renewal's Jubilee.
- ◆ For the many regional conferences that will occur around the nation during the next few months.
- ◆ For the Lord's provision for the NSC finances and all other temporal and spiritual needs.



### Stories to Share the Faith



A New Book by  
*Fr. Francis J. Karwacki*  
*M.Ed. M.Div.*

Fr. Francis J. Karwacki, Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Mt. Carmel, Pa. has published his second book of twelve short stories entitled, "Stories to Share the Faith." This new book contains some of his original inspirations as well as stories heard from others. He felt inspired to write them to help share the faith and pass it on. His prayer is that this new book encourages others to become active members of the church. Give this book to relatives, friends and neighbors as a way to evangelize. *All profits go to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church.*

Donation per book: \$5 + \$1 postage  
Send checks to: Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, 47 S. Market St.  
Mt. Carmel, PA 17851

# How to have reconciliation among people in prayer groups



by Aggie Neck

**R**econciliation does not only apply to the Sacrament of Confession. The dictionary defines reconcile as: (1) To restore to friendship or harmony, (2) to settle, to resolve differences among people.

It almost seems to be a contradiction to think that this would be necessary among Spirit filled people. But the key word here is among people. As long as we are here on the earth and as long as there is interaction between and among people, there will be times when feelings are hurt, or anger is a result of misunderstandings or differences of opinions. It is so easy to have words you say misinterpreted, misunderstood or taken out of context.

"Let us, then, be children no longer, tossed here and there, carried about by every wind of doctrine that originates in human trickery and skill in proposing error. Rather let us profess the truth in love and grow to the full maturity of Christ the head. Through him the whole body grows, and with the proper functioning of the members joined firmly together by each supporting ligament, builds itself up in love" (Eph 4:14-16).

I read a commentary on this passage a long time ago that pointed out that the muscles and ligaments in a body move in different directions, some up, some down, some to the left and some to the right, thus allowing the body to move,

**Our diversity allows us to move, to function and make progress on a spiritual level.**

up and down, left and right. If all the muscles and ligaments moved the same way, the body would be paralyzed. So, it is with the body of Christ. Our diversity allows us to move, to function and make progress on a spiritual level.

We need to develop skills in our leadership on how to handle times of difficulties or disagreements in a way that does not leave a person wounded, but that they do understand. This is best done at a time that is not in front of everyone and does have some affirming words in the correction. However, statements in a meeting that are spoken and are not in line with Scripture or Church teaching must be corrected. It may be necessary to correct within the meeting to avoid letting members leave thinking this statement was accepted by the leadership as truth. It should not be done in a way that is harsh or condemning. Correction must be made to validate the truth of Scripture and Church teaching. It would still

yang ju Photos.com



be a good idea to meet with the person privately at a later time to find out their thoughts.

It could be that this person has no one or no place else to share spiritual statements that they read or heard. However, allowing statements that are in error, without correcting them, can be disruptive and a hindrance to the flow of the Holy Spirit in our midst. Those in leadership roles must not shove this “under the rug” and pretend it is not happening. A leader must lead and must do so with honesty and love.

I always found it interesting that even the apostles and disciples of Jesus were not always seeing things the same way. But prayer and dialogue helped them to come to solutions that were healing and positive. This is how the Christians were able to spread the Word with power and in ways that others could understand and believe. They were in one accord with the message even if they debated the methods, places and peoples to whom the message was to be preached.

Even today our mission is to proclaim the Word, to be a witness for Christ, and to do so in a convincing way that does not offend. If things are out of order in our gatherings, this tension is felt and seen even by those who do not come to our prayer meetings. Then who could believe the message of hope, and peace that we speak of if we are divided on the mission or do not agree on what is truth or what the Church teaches and what is the Catholic interpretation of Scripture.

All of this being said, this does not mean that the Gospel message should be compromised. We are not called to be people pleasers. There are times we must correct and point out error, there

are also times we must affirm the good and not only speak up when things are out of order.

**Each person, each group has unique charisms. God did not set up each person or group to be clones.**

It would be a good idea to ask the Holy Spirit to teach us how to meet these challenges with his help and guidance; and also to pray before we address problems. Another positive action is to have discernment

as to whether it should be the leader only who meets with a person, or the leader and another person in leadership

“If you bring your gift to the altar and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift at the altar, go first to be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Matt 5:23-24). “This is how all will know you for my disciple; by your love for one another” (John 13:35).

There should be no competition among members in a prayer group. Neither should there be competition among prayer groups. Each person, each group has unique charisms. God did not set up each person or group to be clones. The function of each is according to the will of God. We should rejoice in

our differences. This is what fulfills the truth of the message and the diversity of God’s gifts.

I personally think it is a good thing for prayer groups within a close distance to come together occasionally and experience the giftedness of each group. It is in this way that we all can grow and experience what God is doing in other areas.

“To the elders among you, I a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and sharer in the glory that is to be revealed make this appeal, God’s flock is in your midst; give it a shepherd’s care. Watch over it willingly as God would have you do, not under constraint; and not for shameful profit either, but generously. Be examples to the flock, not lording it over those assigned to you, so that when the chief Shepherd appears you will win for yourselves the unfading crown of glory” (1 Peter 5:1-4). ♦

*Aggie Neck, former chairman of the National Service Committee, serves as a Director of Servant House, a Catholic Charismatic House of Prayer in Marksville, Louisiana. She currently is serving on the Council to the NSC.*



## AFCCPC 2012 REGIONAL CONVENTION – TORONTO

<p style="color: #e91e63; font-weight: bold;">September 7–9</p> <p style="color: #e91e63;">Double Tree-Hilton Toronto</p> <p style="color: #e91e63; font-weight: bold;">Speakers</p> <p>Cardinal Thomas Collins Bishop William McGrattan Bishop Oscar Solis Rev. Fr. Ben Ebcas, Jr. Rev. Mr. Carlos Noguiera Bro. Don Quilao Bro. Bob Canton And many others!</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p style="font-size: small;">Alliance of Filipino Catholic <b>Charismatic Prayer Communities</b></p> </div> <p style="font-style: italic; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">Victory is to the anointed, to the believer, whose faith conquers the world.</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">(Inspired by Psalm 20 &amp; 1 John 5)</p>	<p style="color: #e91e63; font-weight: bold;">Join us for a weekend of healing &amp; ministry!</p> <p style="font-size: small;">Hosted by the Filipino Canadian Catholic Charismatic Prayer Communities (FCCPC)</p>
<p>For information call:</p> <p>Teri Gutierrez 416-456-0381</p> <p>Ernie Guinto 905-848-8528</p> <p>Visit <a href="http://www.fcccpc.com">www.fcccpc.com</a> or <a href="http://www.afcccpc.org">www.afcccpc.org</a></p>		