



# The beans are burning!

by Sr. Martha Jean McGarry, IHM

**W**here I live beans are a staple of life. A pot of beans cooking on the stove warms my heart with both contentment and anticipation. However, I need to watch over those beans as they cook and stir them periodically if I plan on enjoying a tasty meal later on. If I fail to tend to the beans as they cook, more likely than not they will burn, and soon the burnt taste will permeate the whole pot. No one wants to eat burnt beans. Something really good is wasted because I did not tend to it.

St. Paul tells us in Hebrews 2 that we need to tend to what we have been given lest we be carried away and reject the gift of salvation we have received. So, too, we need to tend to the gift God has given us in the Charismatic Renewal. Recall also 2 Tim. 1:6, where Paul tells us: "I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God that you have received through the imposition of my hands." Brothers and sisters, it is time to do some stirring and attend to the treasure we have received.

Consider for a moment what God has done for us! Jesus took a bunch of fish (and some of us were probably pretty smelly) and changed us into fishermen and women. What a miracle we are! We were swimming around in the darkness and he drew us up in his net into his glorious light and has given us the privilege of joining in his mission!

I think it is time in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal that we get real. What has God called us to? What is the mission he has given us? How are we responding to his call? It seems to be a great time to "stir the beans" so that we might witness anew the mighty hand of God at work in our groups, families and church. I would like to challenge all of us as leaders to make a special effort this year to tend to and to stir up the awesome

gift God has given us in Charismatic Renewal. Shall such a great gift be wasted and discarded because we fail to tend to it?

May I suggest we begin our stirring by doing the following:

**Pray.** Ask for wisdom and a humble spirit. Desire a heart committed to the stirrings of the Spirit. Seek the grace and the courage to go out into the deep with Jesus.

**Examine our mission.** Just who are we anyway and what are we about? The Charismatic Renewal by its very nature is evangelistic. Jesus has called us to get in the boat and go fishing with him. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we seek to restore the experience of being baptized in the Holy Spirit and to restore the use of the charismatic gifts to the heart of our daily life.

**Examine our prayer meeting / prayer group.** Having participated in prayer meetings for some thirty-four years, I have found that they require of me a deep love of God, a commitment to his mission of salvation, a hunger for holiness, and a zeal for souls.

As I have experienced it, there are four facets of a charismatic prayer meeting. I propose these as possible avenues of reflection for us as we assess our own group or community. If we study each of these areas surely we will be following Paul's exhortation to 'stir into flame' the gift that the Holy Spirit has been so gracious to bestow on us.

● The prayer meeting is a **temple of praise** where God's people gather to glorify the Lord in worship, exaltation, and humble openness to his awesome presence and word. How would you describe or rate the praise and worship of God in your meetings?

● It is a classroom or **training ground of the Holy Spirit** where we learn God's word through the Scripture readings. We grow in the use of the gifts of the Spirit such as prophecy, tongues, knowledge, discernment and service. We are trained in holiness by growth teachings on the gifts, sacraments, virtues and Spirit-filled living. Are the gifts of the Spirit operative in our meetings? Do we listen to God's word and respond to it? Can we give testimony to the changes in our lives because we have sat at the feet of Wisdom?

## Intercessory Prayer

For the renewing of the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church we pray:

Holy Spirit,  
sent to us by the Father  
in the name of Jesus,  
you help the church by  
your presence  
and you guide it infallibly.  
Renew your wonders  
in this our day  
as for a new Pentecost.  
Grant the church,  
united in prayer,  
insistent and perseverant,  
with Mary the mother of Jesus,  
that the reign of the divine  
Savior might spread—  
a reign of truth and justice,  
a reign of love and peace.  
Amen.

*Prayer of Pope John XXIII*

● It is a **community of God's love** where we learn to grow together as members of one body giving glory to God by our acceptance and love of one another, our support of each other in need, our encouragement of one another to be fully alive in Jesus Christ and to be living witnesses of God's love for all people. Our sense of community is broadened as we encompass the needs of others in our prayer, our outreaches of kindness, and above all in the Holy Spirit Seminars we provide regularly. When was the last time you offered a Life in the Spirit Seminar? Does love make your group grow, spiritually and numerically?

● I also experience the prayer meeting as a **spa of healing** where we can experience the

whirlpool and warmth of God's mercy and tender healing in body, soul and spirit. This often occurs as we praise and worship God, reflect on his word, or are ministered to through the prayers of our brothers and sisters. How is healing experienced in your group? Do you provide time to minister to those in need? What is today's miracle in your group?

**Surrender our excuses.** To all of us who are too old, too young, too busy, too tired, ungifted, blessed with a non-supportive pastor, whose group is too small, and the myriad other reasons why we choose to remain blissfully stagnant, I exhort you to lay your excuses at the feet of Jesus. Rise up as the chosen, gifted, glorious, empowered people you are and let the Holy Spirit use

you to set hearts afire with Jesus. Be faithful servants of the one who filled you with his Spirit. I believe God loves to send forth his Spirit through us.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful! Enkindle in us the fire of your love! Send forth your Spirit! Renew the face of the earth! ♦



*A former member of the National Service Committee, Sr. Martha Jean McGarry now serves on the NSC Council. She is the Director of the Catholic Charismatic Center, the renewal center of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, in Albuquerque, New Mexico.*

#### Hispanic Conference from p. 6

mor of God). She reflected on our weaknesses and the influence of the devil, making a point of the crisis that our church has gone through. She encouraged us not to focus much on the priests who have fallen; but

instead on the good priests who serve in truth and in love. "The heart must cry and not judge," she firmly advised.

In her other talk, "Be my witness," she made us aware that we are responsible for the welfare and salvation of our brothers and sisters. She quoted 1 Jn. 9: "Whoever says he is in the light, yet hates his brother, is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother remains in the light."

Saturday night all the attendees gathered again. In great joy and as one body we praised, sang and danced. That night we did not have to use the radios for translation because the speaker was Fr. Mario Castañeda, and the Master of Ceremonies was Demetrio Ortega, the coordinator of the Hispanic National Committee. Msgr. Joseph Malagracia did the translation for Fr. Castañeda.

We closed on Sunday with a multicultural celebration. Through praise, readings, songs and dance we proclaimed our unity. Hand in hand we recited the Our Father recognizing our brotherhood and our sisterhood, regardless of who we are or where we are from. We went back home ready to "go forth in the Spirit." ♦

*Teresa Rosero is a member of the Comité Nacional de Servicio Hispano.*

#### Filipino Conference from p. 6

A Festival of Praise participated in by various Filipino music ministries provided an avenue for those who came to use their gift of music. Some people commented that they received healings of depression, headaches and heaviness of heart during the Festival of Praise. Others claimed that they received the gift of joy and laughter from the Holy Spirit.

The Filipino Conference concluded with the celebration of the Eucharist. Fr. Perry Kenaston from Juneau, Alaska, was the presider. The Mass was followed by a healing service conducted by this writer. Physical, spiritual and emotional healings were claimed.

Patti Isaac, a Regional Coordinator of the AFCCPC, East Atlantic Region, had this to say: "I was indeed touched by the spirit of love and unity that was clearly displayed by the various prayer groups in attendance. The conference was very anointed and powerful, and many people have been touched. The Lord Jesus has undoubtedly been glorified." ♦

*Bob Canton is National Coordinator of the Filipino Catholic Charismatic Prayer Communities.*



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

- ◆ For the Gathering of National Leadership Groups in January 2003 in Augusta.
- ◆ For the preparations for the 2003 National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference in San Antonio, May 31-June 2, for God's guidance in each step of the planning and for an abundance of pre-registrations.
- ◆ For upcoming Regional Leaders Gatherings in New Jersey, Michigan and Iowa.
- ◆ For all those in the nation who are presenting or participating in Holy Spirit Seminars.
- ◆ For the NSC, as they welcome and orient new members during this first quarter of 2003.

*Please join the NSC and other national leadership groups in a Day of Prayer and Fasting on February 28 (the Friday before Ash Wednesday).*

## NEWSBRIEFS

**NSC and Council Meet**

Following its usual rhythm, the National Service Committee met with the NSC Council after the 2002 National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference in Pittsburgh in September. The site of the meeting was the retreat house in Pittsburgh that had been the location of many of the prayer meetings in the early years of the Charismatic Renewal. The Lord moved in a powerful way as the leaders came together to reflect on the Lord's word in the Conference as well as what the members were observing in their various areas and ministries.

There was an extended time of praise and worship after which each one present was asked to write down what he or she was hearing the Lord say or seeing the Lord do. The accumulated prophetic words and images and pastoral responses are still being discerned, but everyone present agreed that the Lord was truly present. As one member summed it up, "I was struck by the fact that I heard no new word tonight, but questions came to mind: 'Why does the Lord keep repeating the same words to us?' [Perhaps] 'we have not heard the word or our human weakness saps the power of the word from us and we need to hear it again and commit ourselves again to God's mission for us.'"

After the NSC Council members left, the Service Committee continued to meet for another day and a half. Time was given to assessing and reflecting upon the Conference and its implications for future conferences.

Internal matters were also dealt with: the establishment of a Development Committee to oversee fundraising initiatives; directions to its Membership Committee about the NSC elections and NSC Council selections; and a review of the tasks proposed by the various Working Groups of the NSC/NSC Council.

The Service Committee was to meet by phone in November, and in person for an extended time of prayer in December. The Service Committee will again meet with the NSC Council in San Antonio after the 2003 National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference. ♦

**NSC conducts Regional Leaders Gatherings in Northeast and Northwest**

The National Service Committee continued its initiative of meeting with Renewal leaders in local areas by conducting Regional Leaders Gatherings in the Pacific Northwest and in the Northeast. Forty-three participants representing groups from California, Oregon and Washington State attended the Regional Leaders Gathering November 1-3, in Issaquah, Washington. NSC Chairman

Aggie Neck and members Fr. Art Cooney and Virginia King facilitated the weekend. On November 8-10, fifty-four leaders from Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts gathered in Bloomfield, Connecticut. NSC members Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner and Fr. Art Cooney facilitated the Gathering.

Upcoming Regional Leaders Gatherings will be held in New Jersey, January 28-February 2; Michigan, March 21-23; and Iowa, March 28-30. For further information call the Chariscenter office. ♦

**Two-Week Retreat Trips to Poland and Medjugorje with Msgr. Joe James**

March 3–March 15, 2003 ● April 21–May 3, 2003  
**\$1800 per person**

Celebrate the 2003 Divine Mercy Sunday at the new Divine Mercy Basilica in Krakow, Poland, with retreat director Msgr. Joe James, from Slaton, Texas, where he serves as director of the Mercy Retreat Center.

We will stay at the convent of St. Faustina in Krakow, Poland, where St. Faustina lived and died. We will visit:

- ◆ the tomb of St. Faustina
- ◆ the home of Pope John Paul II
- ◆ the famous icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa
- ◆ the Auschwitz concentration camp where St. Maximillian Kolbe died.

We will then go to Medjugorje for a few days. There will be healing Mass, confession and daily retreat discussion with Msgr. James.

The cost of the trip is \$1800, which includes roundtrip airfare from New York to Poland and Medjugorje, room and two meals daily, and all transportation for sightseeing. \$100 Deposit.

**For more details call Scott Scaria at 860-289-2606.** If there is no answer, please leave a message, the call will be returned.

Additional dates for this trip with Msgr. James:  
July 22–August 2, 2003,  
November 3–November 15, 2003.  
*These dates are subject to change, based on availability.*

# CHARISMS

## Understanding charisms

by Sherry Weddell

I first met Ellen at a Called & Gifted Workshop in Idaho where she told me her story. Two years before, she had a vivid dream in which she saw the words “works of mercy.” Shortly afterward, she attended her first Called & Gifted Workshop and was startled when she had scored high in the charism of mercy on the *Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory*. Ellen felt that this was clearly the prompting of the Holy Spirit and so she took a simple next step and got involved with her parish’s food pantry.

Two years later her world had been turned upside down as an unexpected passion for working with the poor exploded in her life. When wildfires devastated the forests of Idaho that summer, Ellen organized and completely outfitted a fire-fighting team of homeless men. By the time I met her, she was negotiating with the state to open the first day shelter for the homeless in Idaho. “How can I explain what has happened to me to others?” she asked. “Where can I find a spiritual director that understands something about charisms and my particular call to work with the poor?”

As Ellen discovered, discerning and exercising your charisms can radically change your life! That is because charisms, or spiritual gifts, are special abilities given to Christians by the Holy Spirit to enable them to be powerful channels of God’s love and redeeming presence in the world. As the Second Vatican Council put it:

Indeed, everyone should diligently prepare himself for the apostolate, this preparation being the more urgent in adulthood. For the advance of age brings with it a more open

mind, enabling each person to detect more readily the talents with which God has enriched his soul and to exercise more effectively those charisms which the Holy Spirit has bestowed on him for the good of his brethren (*Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, n. 30).

None of this will come as news to those involved in the Charismatic Renewal, but many participants in our Called & Gifted Workshops ask, “How come I’ve never heard of charisms before?” All Catholics must be taught, as catechumens in the early church were taught, both to expect the charisms, and to recognize and exercise them effectively when they emerge.

The single biggest challenge when helping others discern their charisms is distinguishing between a spiritual gift and a natural talent or ability. Charisms, or spiritual gifts, differ from natural talents in several important ways. First, charisms are not inherited from our parents, but are given to us by the Holy Spirit whom we received through baptism, strengthened in confirmation and renewed in Eucharist.

Secondly, charisms are supernaturally empowered and enable us to bear fruit for the Kingdom of God above and beyond our normal human abilities. Some charisms are obviously supernatural like the gift of a young friend of ours who is regularly used by God to bring astonishing healing to the seriously ill. Other charisms, like hospitality or administration, may escape our notice altogether because they don’t seem obviously “spiritual” and we may assume that “anyone could do this.”

Another characteristic that sets charisms apart from natural talents is that they are always for others, not for ourselves. We can happily keep a natural talent of music to ourselves like my colleague, Fr. Michael Sweeney, who was trained as a concert pianist but doesn’t like to play for other people. But a charism seems to seek out the persons or situations for which it is intended. We will be restless until we take steps to give it away.

Lastly, we cannot use a charism for evil. You can’t use a charism of writing to write hate literature or a charism of administration to run a drug-smuggling operation! Charisms have only one purpose: to be a channel of the love and redeeming power of God. If we try to deliberately use a charism for evil, it will simply disappear.

Of course, in real life, our charisms and natural talents work together because we are whole people. But when we seek to follow Christ, we are not limited to just the gifts with which we were born. We have been anointed with the Holy Spirit as apostles, ones who Christ sends as agents of his love to the world. ♦



Sherry Weddell is Associate Director of the Catherine of Siena Institute, a program of the Western Dominican Province dedicated to equipping parishes for the formation of lay Catholics for their mission in the world. For more information on the Catherine of

Siena Institute, visit their website at [www.siena.org](http://www.siena.org).



**Go forth from p. 5**

of the Pontifical Council of the Laity. His affirmation of the tremendous benefit that Charismatic Renewal has been in the lives of so many Catholics was cause for great rejoicing. "We are all in amazement and wonder at the power of the Holy Spirit manifested in many forms: how many deep conversions; how many spiritual healings; how many persons have rediscovered the treasure of their own faith, of the word of God, of filial and joyous prayer in the Holy Spirit, of holiness of life...how many Christian communities that, thanks to Charismatic Renewal, have found again their vitality and dynamism!"

Again we were exhorted to be attentive to what the Holy Spirit wants from us in the years to come. Bishop Rylko explicitly called upon us to be faithful to the radical demands of living a Christian life in a secularized culture. He quoted Pope John Paul:

"There is so much need today for mature Christian personalities, conscious of their baptismal identity, of their vocation and mission in the church and in the world! There is great need for living Christian communities! And here are the movements and the new ecclesial communities: they are the response given by the Holy Spirit to this critical challenge at the end of the millennium."

The Conference was preceded by several events Friday, including a Day for Clergy and sessions on Ministering to and with Youth, Living Community, Women and the Holy Spirit, Christians in Commerce, and the *New Life in the Spirit Seminars*.

There were a variety of special sessions sponsored by the national leadership groups for the Filipinos, Haitians and Hispanics as well as the NSC. There were also sessions for teens and children (see accompanying articles).

At the NSC session on Saturday, Sr. Nancy Kellar spoke of the lack of unity that we have experienced over the years in Catholic Charismatic Renewal. And yet she called us to see in the Conference the hope that the Holy Spirit was pouring out new power for reconciliation.

Tom Curran exhorted us to go deeper, to use the gifts we have been given, to trust the Lord more, and to take responsibility for living the life in the Spirit not only for ourselves but on behalf of others.

Bishop Sam Jacobs reminded us that we need to leave our meeting rooms and go out to where the fish are, to launch out into the deep, beyond our comfort zones.

On Saturday afternoon, there were six different NSC sponsored workshops, each of which focused on a different aspect of being renewed in the grace of Pentecost.

The Conference closed with a wonderful celebration of the Eucharist which included several joyous processions. Bishop Sam Jacobs preached about the mercy God has shown to us, a mercy which has the power to change us into people who can forgive from the heart.

The first thirty-five years of Catholic Charismatic Renewal have set us on course, but the demands of the future are great. This conference sent us forth full of hope in the holiness, power and faithfulness of God. It is our privilege and responsibility to manifest that holiness, power and faithfulness in our lives and to courageously carry that hope into the world. ♦

*To order audio and video tapes of the Conference, contact Resurrection Tapes at 612-721-7933 or [www.resurrectiontapes.com](http://www.resurrectiontapes.com)*

*Virginia King is a member of the National Service Committee. She serves as Executive Director of Western Washington Catholic Charismatic Renewal, the renewal center for the Archdiocese of Seattle.*

**Youth from p. 5**

These lay apostles were faithful to the call as they ministered God's truth and love.

The program for the Teen Track was relational, deep in truth, and, as Sam Schmidt, a teen participant, said, "really fun." Teens who attended had great examples of openness to the Spirit in the ministry of Youth Arise.

In addition to the excellent music ministry, teens heard one young leader, Simone, tell of how an encounter with the Lord at a retreat broke through her faith crisis and set her on the road of faith. She now uses her singing and testimony for God and others. Another anointed speaker, Michelle, told of her work at a crisis pregnancy center where she saw the results of the "culture of death" in the pain of young

women with devastated lives. She invited and challenged the teens to respond to God's love for them and to choose life.

Tam spoke of the impact of not having an involved father and how his emptiness led him into bad relationships and sinful choices. After his cousin was killed in a drive-by shooting, he had a wake up call and began to seek God seriously. After thirteen years away from the sacrament of reconciliation he returned to Christ's sacrament of mercy.

At the end of the day each teen was invited to explicitly put faith in Jesus Christ and to receive prayer for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Members of the Youth Arise team felt that the teens were really

open to the skits and especially the small group times where they shared their lives, struggles and faith.

As we closed the Teen Track with prayer, I was also praying for the future of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Pope John Paul is calling us to "ecclesial maturity" and I pray to know what that means. The fresh-faced college students of the historic 1967 Duquesne Weekend have matured beautifully; the children of the Charismatic Renewal are grown and having children of their own. I prayed with our spiritual grandchildren—and wondered what their future would hold. ♦

*Fr. Tim Hepburn is Liaison for the Charismatic Renewal in the Archdiocese of Atlanta.*



From the  
Director

by Walter Matthews

## The changing face of the Renewal

Recently a reporter for *The Washington Post* called me for background for his article on the impact of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal among Hispanic Catholics in the greater Washington, D.C., area. By the time he called me he had already spoken to a number of others: professors at nearby universities, seminarians, and priests in the local diocese as well as in the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. An interesting and challenging thesis had emerged from his prior conversations that he wanted to explore with me: that since the late 80s, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal had become increasingly “ethnic.” He was surprised when I was not surprised!

While I questioned the accuracy of some of the numbers others had given him, I did not question the bottom line: that the Renewal in the US, like the church in the US, has changed.

In fact, for several years now, when reporters call (I get such a call at least once a month), I freely tell them that the growth in the Renewal in the US is among our ethnic brothers and sisters: Hispanics for sure, but also Haitians, Filipinos and Koreans. That is not to say that there is not growth in the Renewal among the white middle class (composed of older immigrant groups such as the Irish, Italians, Polish, Germans, etc.)—after all, we still have many Holy Spirit Seminars being done across the country and more since the NSC’s publication of *The New Life in the Spirit Seminars: Catholic Edition 2000*. However, with some of our long-standing members dying or no longer able to participate due to health, or moving on in ministry, our numbers are lessening. Whereas, among our ethnic brothers and sisters, there is much growth.

This was dramatically evidenced at last Fall’s 2002 National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference in Pittsburgh celebrating 35 years of the Renewal. About half the attendees were Haitian, Hispanic or Filipino. The strength of the Conference was, for many, this multi-ethnic presence, the multi-ethnic music, and the variety of ethnic speakers and leadership from the stage. (It was for some, however, a difficult stretch.)

This clearly reflects the changes in our church—whether we like it or not, whether we feel comfortable with it or not. In a recent issue of my diocesan paper, an article about the twenty-five active Hispanic Catholic bishops in the US made the point we surely are all aware of: presently Hispanic Catholics are about 39% of the Catholic Church in the US and growing. That may not be true in places like Minnesota, Iowa or St. Louis, but it is clearly so in New York, Chicago, Texas and California.

What has been the role of the NSC in this changing reality? To build bridges and to work for the strengthening of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal among our ethnic brothers and sisters.

As early as 1982 the NSC invited Pepe Alonso, formerly of Mexico then living in Ann Arbor (now in Miami) to join the Service Committee in caring for the growing Hispanic population in the US. Pepe was a valued member of the Service Committee until 1992.

Also in 1982, Sr. Linda Koontz, who works among the poor in Juarez, Mexico, was added to the Committee. In 1984 Marilyn Kramar, an Anglo with a strong ministry to Hispanics in Los Angeles and throughout the country, was added. Both served well until their terms ended in 1990. More recently Ros Hernandez, the Associate Liaison in San Antonio, was elected to the Service Committee.

In the late 1980s the NSC formed a Joint Ad Hoc Committee with the Association of Diocesan Liaisons to further unity in the growing Renewal among Hispanics in the US. In May 1989 a jointly-sponsored national meeting of Hispanic leaders was held. At the meeting a process was begun for discerning a Hispanic National Committee. In June 1990 a national structure was decided upon by the over 140 leaders gathered in Chicago. This structure is called *Comité Nacional de Servicio Hispano* (Hispanic National Service Committee).

I still remember the day when Korean Catholics from Cincinnati and a priest leader from Korea came to our offices in South Bend to discuss how we could help them organize in the US. I had met Deacon Joseph Lee of the Twin Cities area in Minnesota years before, so the Korean presence was not totally new to me. The NSC was privileged to help birth the Korean Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the United States of America in the early 90s. Deacon Lee is now their Chairman.

While the NSC was not directly instrumental in helping the Haitians form their leadership structure, *Le Conseil du Renouveau Charismatique Catholique des Haïtiens D’Outre-Mer*, in 1990, nor the Filipinos the Alliance of Filipino Catholic Charismatic Prayer Communities in 1996, we have been very close to both groups and their leaders.

The changing face of the Renewal in the US is not something to be afraid of or to be discouraged by. Rather, it is a sign of hope.

It can become an even greater sign of hope if we all recognize the gifts of one another, see them as something we need, and then work together more effectively in our church and our society to build the culture of Pentecost. ♦

## FRIENDS OF THE NSC

One of the most helpful ways a donor can support the National Service Committee is to make a pledge. A pledge can be for any length of time, paid monthly, quarterly or annually, and can be for any amount.

Pledges help us to better plan our income and expenses when we can know that in a given month we will receive a certain dollar amount of donations.

For the pledger making a pledge eliminates the not knowing when you last gave to the NSC!

In addition, if the pledger sends in the pledge before the 10th of the month, then no reminder is sent. Less paper!

### We have two types of pledges.

Friends of the NSC make a pledge, usually at the beginning of the year, but also in response to our Pentecost Appeal, for several months or for the year. The amounts vary but range from \$5 a month to \$200 a month. Most are in the \$10 - \$25 a month range.

Fanning the Flame Partners are asked to make a five year pledge at a minimum of \$300 a year or \$25 a month. There are higher giving levels of \$500, \$1000 or more a year.

In both cases, pledges are not a legal contract. They can always be stopped if circumstances change (loss of a job, death of a spouse, etc.)

Please consider becoming a pledger to the work of the National Service Committee!

### Thank you for your support.

#### Special website need

For over a year we have had the NSC website in suspension where no work has been done on it except related to the Conference in Pittsburgh. Why? No money! We need a special gift of \$3500 to get the website cleaned up and running. If you would like to make a dedicated gift of cash or stock or other means for this purpose please call Walter Matthews at 1-800-338-2445. Thank you.



In January, two of our NSC members completed long terms of service on the Committee. I asked them to share their reflections.

#### Michele Needham Greischar, Ph.D.

Twelve years ago, when Bishop Sam Jacobs called me to tell me that I had been elected to the NSC, I could only respond that I was ready to listen to the Lord who knows all things, and I would trust him in whatever he sent me.

Since that time, God has placed me in some challenging positions. He has called me to teach and to minister nationally and internationally. Disregarding my own sinfulness, he has used me as his instrument. He has walked with me through dark valleys and raised me to the Transfiguration. With him and in him, the way has never been dull.

I have been richly blessed by the people of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. I have truly seen Jesus' face in them, from New Mexico to Seattle, from Vancouver to North Carolina, from Ohio to Italy. The people of the Renewal are truly a precious gift, energizing not only the Charismatic Renewal, but also their local parishes and dioceses with vision and service. Because I have known and served them, my life will never be the same.

My hope is that the NSC will continue to relate to the grassroots of the Renewal—that we will continue to form lasting relationships centered in Christ. I pray that together we will continue to spread the good news of the Father's love, of Jesus, crucified and risen, and of the transforming breath of the Holy Spirit. I pray for a new outpouring on our whole church. May God restore us to daily living out of the Acts of the Apostles.

For all, in all and through all, I give thanks to our Lord, Jesus Christ.

#### Deacon Bill Brennan

It seems like yesterday that I received the letter informing me that I had been elected to the NSC. The experience of serving the church and the Catholic Charismatic Renewal as a member of the NSC for these past nine years has given me a deeper sense of hope. I see the signs of hope for the church in the dedication of brothers and sisters from all walks of life serving God's people in parishes, prayer groups and various ministries. I also see hope in the many ways in which the Renewal has impacted the life of the church—an impact noted often by our Holy Father. These are all signs that the Spirit is moving in the church "as by a new Pentecost." Is there still work to be done? Of course there is. But I know this: God has begun a new thing and he is not finished yet.

I also see signs of hope for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Service on the NSC has allowed me to see the work of the Renewal from a national and international vantage point. I now see more than ever how every prayer group, no matter its size and no matter its charisms and ministries, is a vital link in a chain connecting us all in Christ. And most important of all, I see hope in the evidence that through this renewal of the Spirit, our God is still touching lives and transforming them, enabling average ordinary people to do extraordinary things for the kingdom. This renewal has barely started, and the future is before us.

As I end my time of service, I have a prayer in my heart for the Renewal and for all of those whose lives have been touched by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. I pray that we never take this gift for granted, that we open ourselves more and more to the Spirit, that we never forget the moment of the encounter that changed everything—that is, baptism in the Holy Spirit, however it happened for us—and that we never be afraid to step out of the boat and walk on the water with Jesus. ♦



# Join us in San Antonio

Home of the Alamo and the beautiful Riverwalk

2003 National Catholic  
Charismatic Renewal Conference  
May 30–June 1

## Remove All Bounds to Hope

*and bring to life the "culture of Pentecost"  
in the power of the Holy Spirit*



Experience worship  
drawing you into the glory  
of God.

Have a deeper experience  
of Jesus Christ, the only  
sure hope.

Receive prayer to lift you  
out of any hopelessness.

Be empowered by the Holy  
Spirit to bring others to an  
encounter with Jesus.

### Dynamic speakers include:

**Johnnette Benkovic** (Florida)—encouraging a life of  
hope by living his life abundantly

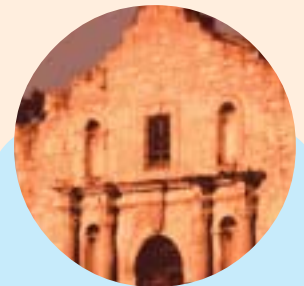
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