



Suggested Prayer Requests

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

- ◆ For the Gathering of National Leadership Groups of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal to be held in Louisiana in January.
- ◆ For a generous response to the Day of Prayer and Fasting for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the United States on Friday, February 24.
- ◆ That the spirituality of Pentecost will spread in the Church as a renewed incentive to prayer, holiness, communion and proclamation.
- ◆ For an increase in the number of Fanning the Flame Partners, that the financial resources for the work of the NSC will always be available in a timely way.

Why include the NSC in your will?

As you know the National Service Committee relies almost entirely on gifts from individuals to continue its mission. We ask you to please consider a gift to the National Service Committee when you make your will or update it. Making a gift to the NSC can be as simple as adding a codicil to your existing will or estate plan.

You may use this or a similar statement: "I/we bequeath \$ _____ (or % of my residual estate) to the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the United States, Inc. P.O. Box 628, Locust Grove, VA 22508-0628."

Please let us know if you have included us in your will so that we can properly thank you.

Sent forth to build the culture of Pentecost

2005 National Leaders' Conference, Chicago November 11–13

by *Father Larry Carew*

It wasn't easy getting out of Chicago, by air, on Sunday, November 13th. It was extra windy in the "Windy City" that day. Departure delays abounded on account of that. Nearby, football pros and their fans watched in amazement, as the pigskin just kept going where it wasn't supposed to. The weather may well have been symbolic of the great Wind that had been blowing through the National Leaders' Conference that weekend.

Earlier that day, over six hundred assembled leaders at the Crowne Plaza Hotel listened, as NSC Chairman Aggie Neck challenged us to examine ourselves and face up to whether we might have allowed ourselves to become like the dry bones spoken of in the Book of Ezekiel. Had we allowed our former zeal, expectancy, hopes and dreams, along with our reliance upon the gifts of the Spirit, to degenerate into dry bones?

"We're in the valley of decision..." she declared. In the next breath, we heard her cry out, "Speak to the dry bones, Lord!"

One of the word gift members I met later, at the airport, shared with me that, independently of Aggie, she'd also received, and was ready to share, that very same word from Ezekiel 37. In this passage God does not simply speak and breathe over a lifeless people in order to restore them to life. God decides to do this through a human instrument, anointed with a charismatic gift, called prophecy.

On Friday evening, just before the official opening of the conference, a small group of us, who belong to the NSC Council intercessory network were gathered together in prayer. As we cried out to the Lord on behalf of our brothers and sisters about to assemble, we also found ourselves addressed by Ezekiel 37. At that moment, we knew the we'd been authorized to first prophesy life over dry bones and then to prophesy in intercession, once more, so that God's Spirit would come "from the four winds" and raise us to our feet. After all, if you are going to participate in a new move of the Spirit, you're definitely going to need to be full of the breath of God, not to mention ready to get those feet a movin'.

In a variety of ways, this event was significantly unlike previous national conferences, even though it followed the familiar format of general sessions followed by smaller workshops, etc. On the surface of things, what made this get-together different was the abundance of workshops (thirty-six in all); the emphasis on youth ministry and the youthfulness of the presenters; the availability of "practicum" workshop presentations, where you could get "hands-on" advice on "how to" do ministry, this way or that way; the opportunity to be blessed by the presence, teaching and preaching of not just one bishop, but three: Bishops Sam Jacobs, Robert Carlson and Tom Flanagan; the chance to get a taste of cutting-edge ministry to teens, founded by Sal Solo, a former rock star who now employs music and multimedia special effects in the service of the Gospel; the wonderful privilege of encountering St. Francis Assisi, as he resolves to rebuild the beaten-down Church of his own day, dramatized through the amazingly inspired artistry of actor Leonardo DeFilippis.

Above and beyond all of that, however, what made being there so significantly different from prior gatherings was, for this “reporter,” the fresh ways in which I could sense the Spirit moving. Whenever we charismatics gather together for praise and worship, for instance, it’s rare for not just a few of us to find ourselves simultaneously graced with an array of various experiences of the Divine Presence. In that sense, Chicago’s blessings were no different. Touches of God’s love, Christ’s joy and even the Holy Spirit’s conviction abounded.

Yet, something nearly indefinable made this gathering quite different. At one point, for instance, as the evening general session presider, Cindy Erivez, found herself prompted to suddenly cry out to us: “Ride the wave!” I was nearly knocked off my feet. Something akin to a powerful swell of the Spirit had just swept through the place.

Moments like that signaled to me, and many others, I’m sure, that the Holy Spirit is surely poised to anoint us with fresh power, if we are willing to settle for nothing less and if we are simultaneously determined to follow his lead wherever it may take us.

Music minister Bill Richart gifted all of us with a wonderful new song to sing. He’d written it especially for the conference and the fresh move of the Spirit meant to accompany it. It’s a rousing and lovely hymn entitled: “I Say Yes, Lord.” We delighted in singing it, one more time, just before the conference concluded. As we did, Fr. John Gordon could be overheard, interpreting with side comments. We’d sing: “Oh, send me with your fire from above,” as Father interjected: “Only say it if you mean it!” We’d sing: “Wherever you send me, I’ll go,” while Fr. John threw out the prophetic challenge: “He’s going to take you up on this!”

Moments earlier, youth minister, Paul George, had shared wisdom with us that applied to charismatics, both young and not so young alike: “The bad news is that no one, on his own, can build the culture of Pentecost. The good news is that, through us, God is quite able to build the culture of Pentecost.”

After all, he did it once before with a handful of cooperative charismatics. It appears that he’s determined to do it once again, if he can find a handful of charismatics who prove to be equally cooperative. Are you ready to summon him to breathe life into

your dry bones? Are you ready to ask him to raise you to your feet? Are you ready to help build the culture of Pentecost? **“I say yes, Lord.”** ♦

Fr. Larry Carew is the Bishop’s liaison to the Charismatic Renewal for the diocese of Bridgeport, CT. He has been active in the Renewal for over 30 years. Fr. Larry is the author of the book, Healer of Hearts, Healer of Minds, as well as several retreats on healing.



**2006
National Leaders'
Conference**

November
10-12
Albuquerque
New Mexico

Come join us in scenic and historic Albuquerque for our next Leaders' Conference.

Pre-registration of \$59 is available until March 31st. Please call 1-800-338-2445 or get more information online at www.nsc-chariscenter.org

Called to holiness: John Paul II and lessons from the saints

by *Ralph Martin*

Pope John Paul II spoke of 3 rediscoveries that the Holy Spirit has led the Church to beginning with the Second Vatican Council which concluded in 1965. One of these is the rediscovery of the “universal call to holiness.”

Before we go much further in our examination of the spiritual journey let’s take an initial look at what “holiness” really means. In the Book of Ephesians we read: “God chose us in him before the world began, to be holy and blameless in his sight, to be full of love” (Eph. 1:4). To be holy is not primarily a matter of how many rosaries we say or how much Christian activity we’re engaged in; it’s a matter of having our heart transformed into a heart of love. It is a matter of fulfilling the great commandments that sum up the whole law and the prophets: to love God and our neighbor, wholeheartedly. Or as Teresa of Avila puts it, holiness is a matter of bringing our wills into union with God’s will.

Thérèse of Lisieux puts it very similarly: “Perfection consists in doing his will, in being what he wills us to be...who resists his grace in nothing...” Or as Thérèse put it towards the very end of her life: “I do not desire to die more than to live; it is what he does that I love.”

John Paul II urges us to reconnect with the mystical tradition of the Church, embodied in a particular way in the writings of certain saints, as an important resource in helping us respond to the great call to holiness. “This great mystical tradition...shows how prayer can progress, as a genuine dialogue of love, to the point of rendering the person wholly possessed by the divine Beloved,

vibrating at the Spirit’s touch, resting filially within the Father’s heart.”

He makes clear that this depth of union isn’t just for a few unusual people (“mystics”) but is a call that every Christian receives from Christ himself. “This is the lived experience of Christ’s promise: ‘He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him’ (Jn. 14:21).”

Then John Paul summarizes some of the main wisdom taught by the mystical tradition about the spiritual journey, drawing in particular from the writings of Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Therese of Lisieux, and Catherine of Siena. He identifies four principles in the writings of the saints that are essential to a proper understanding of the spiritual journey.

1 Union with God of this depth is totally unattainable by our own efforts; it is a gift that only God can give; we are totally dependent on his grace for progress in the spiritual life. Yet we know also that God is eager to give this grace and bring us to deep union. Without him, we can do nothing but with him all things are possible (Jn. 14: 4-5; Lk.18:27; Phil. 4:13).

2 At the same time our effort is indispensable. Our effort is not sufficient to bring about such union, but it is necessary. The saints speak of disposing ourselves for union, by our spiritual practices. If we really value something we must be willing to focus on doing those things that will help us reach the goal. And yet it remains God’s grace that enables us to live the necessary “intense spiritual commitment.” “You will seek the Lord your God and you will find him, if you search

after him with all your heart and with all your soul” (Dt. 4:29).

3 Much has to change in us in order to make us capable of deep union with God. The wounds of both original sin and our personal sins are deep and need to be healed and transformed in a process that has its necessarily painful moments. The pain of purification is called by John of the Cross the “dark nights.” It is important not to be surprised by the painful moments of our transformation but to know that they’re a necessary and blessed part of the whole process. “Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14: 22).

4 And finally, we need to know that all the effort and pain is worth it! Infinitely worth it. The pain of the journey will appear in retrospect to have been light, compared to the weight of glory that we were being prepared for (2 Cor. 4:16-18).

Deep union, (“spiritual marriage”) is possible even in this life. Teresa of Avila tells us that there’s no reason that someone who reaches a basic stability in living a Catholic life can’t proceed all the way to “spiritual marriage” in this life, and bear the great fruit for the kingdom that comes from such union.

The teachings of these saints show us how to make this journey, and overcome the obstacles we meet along the way. ♦

Ralph Martin, a long time leader in renewal, has developed a series of audio albums that make accessible the teachings of the saints mentioned in this article and others as well. Available at: www.renewalministries.net. Ralph currently serves as President of Renewal Ministries and Director of Graduate Theology Programs in the New Evangelization at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Newsbriefs

Charismatic Retreat at Ars attracts 850 priests

by Fr. Edward O'Connor, C.S.C.

Priests from 71 countries of the world and numerous bishops, on one day 19 of them, made a retreat at Ars, France, during the week that ran from September to October this year.

The retreat was for priests involved in the Charismatic Renewal, **to rekindle the fire of the Holy Spirit in their ministry**; it was also an impressive testimony to the enormous growth of the Renewal during the 38 years of its history. As one who witnessed the origins of the Renewal in 1967 in two Notre Dame graduates teaching at Duquesne University, and its rather modest acceptance here in the United States, I was astounded to discover how far the Renewal had spread abroad. I had supper one night with a bishop from Malaysia and a priest from Singapore. Frequently I found myself in the company of priests from Africa. One from El Salvador told me that practically every parish in his country had several charismatic prayer groups

The principal speakers were both from Ireland. Father Kevin Scallon, after years of ministry in England and Nigeria, had been appointed Spiritual Director of All Hallows Seminary in Dublin, where he started the "Intercession for priests," a month long retreat. Since 1985, however, he has been mostly collaborating with Sister Briege McKenna, O.S.C.

She was the other speaker, and is, in her own person, a remarkable testimony to



Fr. John Gordon & the National Service Committee
invite you on

A Pilgrimage to Italy & the Pentecost Vigil with Pope Benedict XVI

May 27—June 5, 2006 (10 days)
\$2,899 (\$50 discount if booked by February 1)

Visit Florence, Siena, Assisi & Rome
Attend the Renewal Movements Gathering
in Rome with Pope Benedict XVI.

Call 1-800-338-2445

Visit our website:
www.nsc-chariscenter.org

Attend the ICCRS Pentecost Celebration

the Charismatic Renewal. As a young nun with the Sisters of St. Clare, she had been sent to Florida in 1967 to teach kindergarten. However, she was afflicted with rheumatoid arthritis so badly that her fingers were stiff and her feet deformed. A doctor told her there was no hope for a cure; that soon she would be in a wheelchair. A few years later, while attending a conference on the Charismatic Renewal, she was miraculously healed. Shortly afterwards, she received the gift of healing herself. Despite her utter repugnance for such a ministry, she gradually found herself praying over people, many of whom were healed. Some years later, Father Hal Cohen asked her to help him give a retreat for priests. Then, when he fell ill, she had to give the remainder of the retreat herself. That led to other invitations, and since then, her chief ministry has been that of preaching to priests all over the world.

Towards the end of the retreat, all who wished were invited to come forward and be prayed with for what is called the "baptism in the Spirit," the key experience of the Renewal. About two hundred did so, and the rest of the congregation prayed over them. Later, several testified about the spiritual experience they had received.

There was a great deal of singing before and after the talks, and during the celebration of Mass, Lauds and Vespers. But after one or two days, I began to wonder why there was no singing in tongues, as usually happens at a charismatic conference. Not long after that, someone did indeed begin singing in tongues, and a few others joined in. A little later, a bigger group did so, and later a still bigger one. Finally, the whole auditorium thundered, each person singing in the tongue and the melody given to him. One might expect that this would become utter bedlam; on the contrary; it was beautiful and harmonious.

One day, the retreatants made an excursion to visit the shrine of St. Margaret Mary at Paray-le-Monial. On another day, there was a conference on St. Therese of Lisieux. But chiefly the retreat focused on St. John Vianney, the priest who made this little village of Ars famous all over the world, and whose hidden presence seemed to give this retreat its power. ♦

Save this date: June 22-24, 2007.
Plans are underway to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Meadowlands Exposition Center, New Jersey.

Discernment of spirits

The protection of faith

by Abbot David Geraets, OSB

We evaluate the authenticity of any gift by the fruit it produces, not by how flashy it is.

Though often humble in its overt expression, discernment in general, is one of the most important spiritual gifts. For without discernment we often confuse or abuse other gifts of the spirit. Discernment in general is supported by three practical rules.

◆ Jesus says that, “By their fruits you will know them.” We must learn to be good “fruit inspectors” and not bruise the fruit.

◆ Evil cannot long endure on the face of the earth. The devil is in a hurry. God has all eternity. “He is never in a hurry, but neither is he ever late,” as Tommy Tyson used to remind us.

◆ A word from God always builds up and edifies the Body, the Church.

The Charismatic gift, discernment of spirits (*diakrisis pneumatou*), empowers Christians with the ability to tell the difference between gifts of the Holy Spirit and those alleged gifts that may come from some other source. Paul, in the Corinthian text (1 Cor. 12:7) was particularly interested in recognizing the experiences coming from the Holy Spirit of God, the third person of the Blessed Trinity. He didn't want anything attributed to the Holy Spirit that was only human, angelic or demonic in origin.

Careful observation of scriptures and other Church writings show that early Christians employed the charismatic gift of discernment in three ways. The first, discernment of spirits, empowered Christians with the ability to discern the presence of the risen Lord Jesus Christ in the worshipping assembly—principally in the Eucharist (1 Cor. 11:29). In 1 Cor. 11:29, Paul uses the same Greek word (*diakrisis*), “For all who eat and drink without *discerning*,” as he later uses it in 1 Cor. 12:10, when he writes about discernment of spirits. This suggests that the first usage of the gift of discernment is to *recognize* and invite the presence of the risen Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit into the Eucharistic worship and Christian community.

The second way early Christians used discernment of spirits was to *recognize* and invite the presence of angels and saints into their worship and other prayer forms. A special place was given to Mary in both Eastern and Western Churches, but always in relationship with Jesus. When Paul writes about speaking in tongues of mortals and of angels (1 Cor. 12:1), he is writing to people who

have a common knowledge of angels and saints by experience. This *recognition* is another function of the gift of discernment.

A third way the discernment of spirits was used among early Christians was to *recognize* an evil spirit, confront it and reject it, and then get back to worshipping the risen Lord Jesus Christ. To help appropriate the gift of discernment and to perfect the gift once it is received, Fr. Edward O'Connor, C.S.C. wrote a couple of articles for *New Covenant* in the early days of the Renewal that I have found quite helpful. He presents these suggestions under two headings, subjective and objective criteria, for what he considers helpful in *prudential judgment*.

Subjective Criteria

1. **Usage of a charismatic gift** must first of all bear good fruit in the life of the person exercising it, and then in the lives of those receiving ministry.

2. **To be an authentic charismatic** one must be a person of prayer. No pray, no prophet!

3. **Ethics.** A person who would speak God's word, must live it out in their life.

4. **The life and practice** of a charismatic must exalt Jesus Christ.

5. **The life and practice** of a charismatic should manifest the fruits of the Spirit.

6. **An authentic prophet** or charismatic will be the occasion for good happenings. They are the founders of religious orders, charismatic movements or groups and important religious events.

Objective Criteria

1. **Pastoral authority.** Be under some kind of pastoral covering.

2. **Public revelation.** It's contained in Sacred Scripture.

3. **Solid teaching.** Paul's admonition to both Timothy and Titus, “Make sure your teaching is orthodox.”

4. **State in life.** Stay where you are when you receive God's call.

5. **Community.** Salvation always comes in, through and to community.

6. **Spiritual Director.** He or she can be ordained or lay.

7. **Journal.** Keep a record of your soul.

8. **Grace builds on nature.** If something is true on the psychological level, it is also true in an analogous way both on the spiritual and physical level.

These are just a few suggestions about the charismatic gift, discernment of spirits. May my sharing be helpful to you, and may we pray for one another. ◆



Abbot David Geraets OSB is Abbot of the Monastery of the Risen Christ in San Luis Obispo, California. He has been actively involved with giving retreats, counseling, spiritual direction and evangelization on a worldwide basis in the Charismatic Renewal since 1967.



The Portuguese Renewal in the Diocese of Fall River

by Father Henry S. Arruda, Liaison for The Portuguese Charismatic Renewal for the Fall River Diocese

Immigrants from Portugal's mainland, the Azores and Cape Verde Islands, have immigrated to good USA for a long time. Saint John the Baptist Church in New Bedford, Massachusetts, established in 1869, was the first Portuguese parish in North America. The latest influx of Portuguese immigrants into Southeastern Massachusetts, occurred in the 1970's.

Thirty years ago some Portuguese people started to attend unheard-of prayer meetings run by the good Franciscan Fathers at Our Lady's Chapel in downtown New Bedford. Soon afterwards, both clergy and laity from the Portuguese community began organizing what became known as the "*Renovamento Carismático de Etnia Portuguesa*" (*Portuguese Charismatic Renewal*) of the Diocese of Fall River.

Immediately the renewal took root and the numbers of Catholics who participated in these prayer meetings reached, or even surpassed, the thousand mark! Large prayer groups were established at

Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Saint John the Baptist and Immaculate Conception, all of New Bedford; followed soon by the formation of other prayer communities at Espírito Santo (Holy Ghost) Church in Fall River and St. Anthony's Church in Taunton. Leaders were formed, and Holy Spirit Seminars, counting hundreds of participants, took place. Since then, the number of charismatic groups in the Diocese of Fall River has increased to nine. I would say that the number of participants in our different communities totals in the thousands.

The Renewal flourished with its impressive participation of people at leadership schools, seminars and conferences. We feel a very special affinity with the renewal communities of Bermuda, Hillmar, California, and some prayer groups from Rhode Island and Connecticut, as we have extended to them a helping hand in their formation.

We, as a rule, sponsor a *Conference*, to which we invite everyone, every other year. At these conferences we gather anywhere from 600 to 800 people. On the alternate year we offer a *Spiritual Retreat* to which 400 to 500 people attend.

Besides these conferences and retreats, and weekly prayer meetings of all communities, we also offer leadership and study schools monthly to all diocesan leaders. We sponsor as well general gatherings of all New Bedford and Taunton prayer groups (*Reuniões Magnas*) every three months, alternating between the New Bedford and the Taunton communities.

Our Diocese also sponsors an annual "*Pentecost Celebration*" and the Portuguese Renewal is the major constituent of that celebration which usually takes place at St. Anthony Church, Taunton, Massachusetts. Our Bishop, George W. Coleman, presides over this celebration.

A very important service offered by the Portuguese Renewal in the Diocese is "*The Cenacle*." People call in with requests for prayers and counseling. Many people have found solace and peace through this ever-loving service. Another service our leadership has provided is support to the various Portuguese communities, particularly those in California, Connecticut, Bermuda and even the Azores!

In conclusion, I see the Lord working through our Renewal in a very real and beneficial way. Many of our participants have, through the renewal, found their way back to the Lord and to the Church. The support the renewal has offered, particularly to immigrants, has been a true blessing to them; and, they become very involved, active members of their particular communities.

We, consequently, hear the Lord, with a loud voice, expressing his joy and encouragement for the wonderful work the Spirit of Jesus is dispensing abundantly amongst the faithful of this specific area of his vineyard. Praise the Lord! ♦

For more information on the Charismatic Portuguese Renewal of the Fall River Diocese, please contact "O Cenáculo" (The Cenacle), tel. 508-992-3829.



From the
Executive
Director

.....
by Walter Matthews

Holiness and a year of opportunities

The National Service Committee has emphasized in recent years (as has been true in every phase of the Service Committee's existence) the call to holiness in the Renewal: of prayer groups, communities, ministries and service committees; of individuals, and, especially, of leaders. A call to holiness and deeper prayer has been a part of the NSC's Renewal Leaders' Gatherings for several years now. It was a focus of the National Leaders' Conference in Nashville in 2003 and the recent National Leaders' Conference in Chicago (see article p.8). In Chicago, Bishop Tom Flanagan, Auxiliary Bishop of San Antonio, shared his reflections on holiness for those in the Leadership Track.

No one is exempt from this call to holiness, especially not leaders. "The baptism in the Holy Spirit includes both the Spirit's sanctification and charismatic gifts" (*Fanning the Flame* p.13). We distort what it means to be baptized in the Holy Spirit if both aspects are not emphasized, taught and lived! If we are to truly respond to Pope John Paul II's call to "build the culture of Pentecost" then our personal and communal holiness must be essential building blocks.

As we move into 2006 "sent forth to build the culture of Pentecost" I want to highlight several opportunities the Lord is providing to us this year.

In April (25-29) the worldwide Pentecostal churches will gather in Los Ange-

les to remember and celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Azusa Street one hundred years ago.

In June Pope Benedict XVI has called for a gathering of participants in ecclesial movements to gather with him on the eve of Pentecost in St. Peter's Square similar to the event that Pope John Paul the Great convened in 1998. On Pentecost the Charismatic Renewal will have a specifically charismatic celebration of Pentecost (June 4) organized and sponsored by ICCRS. The theme is "My soul does magnify the Lord." The NSC will sponsor a Pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi that will culminate in these two events.

ICCRS will then convene an International Conference June 5-9 in Fiuggi, outside of Rome, under the theme "Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," followed by an optional pilgrimage to Assisi and San Giovanni Rotondo.

In the fall the NSC, in collaboration with the Association of Diocesan Liaisons, will convene the 2006 National Leaders' Conference in Albuquerque. (See ad page 11 this issue.)

Finally, I would like to share with you part of a note I received from Fr. George Kosicki, an early leader in the Renewal and a founding member of the NSC, about my column in the last issue of *Pentecost Today* concerning my interview with Fr. George Montague and Fr. Kilian McDonnell. Fr. Kosicki wrote: "...the *real experience* of the early Church is for the Church today, NOW, 'the real thing' is the fire from heaven. Come, Holy Spirit and set our hearts (and minds) on fire!" ♦

Friends of the NSC

As the National Service Committee prepared to meet in mid-September for its annual Retreat Meeting the impact and devastation of Hurricane Katrina was profoundly before us and that of Hurricane Rita was soon to follow. There was already awareness of how the hurricanes had affected the individual lives of a number of Renewal leaders and participants as well as of the Renewal's ability in several dioceses to go forward due to damage to facilities and/or the cancellation of events.

The NSC decided that it could best show solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the Renewal in the Gulf Coast area by taking a special collection at the National Leaders' Conference in Chicago to support the most affected Renewal groups.

As St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it."

The collection taken received a most generous response of \$7,500 as the 600 leaders present wanted to show support to those affected for their years of fruitful service to the Renewal.

Based upon an assessment of need the National Service Committee has distributed the money to three Renewal Groups in the area: the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of New Orleans which lost most of their equipment and files because of the flooding; the Center of Jesus the Lord that suffered damage to their Chapel; and the Renewal in the Diocese of Lake Charles which was unable to hold their annual conference due to the lack of facilities in the area being used as shelters.

If you would like to make a special donation to support the Renewal in the Gulf Coast area please send it to Chariscenter USA, PO Box 628, Locust Grove, VA 22508. Mark it Gulf Coast Renewal.

List your prayer group on our website!
Visit NSC-Chariscenter.org for list and see the links to national and international websites.

Executive Director

Walter Matthews

Editorial Board

Fr. John Gordon

Virginia King

Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner, SSND

Editor

Sr. Martha Jean McGarry

Production Manager

Jean Beers

© 2006, National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the United States, Inc. Not to be reproduced without permission.

For Your Information

This is a publication of the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the United States, Inc. The mission of the NSC is to stir into flame the grace of Pentecost within and beyond the church, to broaden and deepen the understanding that baptism in the Holy Spirit is the Christian inheritance of all, and to strengthen the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

The National Service Committee-Chariscenter USA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Contributions to defray the cost of this publication are gratefully accepted and are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please mail to:

NSC-Chariscenter USA

PO Box 628

Locust Grove, VA 22508-0628

Tel. (540) 972-0225

www.nsc-chariscenter.org

National Service Committee members:

Aggie Neck (Chairman)

Josephine Cachia

Fr. John Gordon

Rosbel Hernandez

Chuck Hornsby

Judith Hughes

Virginia King

Fr. Richard Loch

Gerry Mader

Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner, SSND

A limited amount of advertising space is available. For information call Jean Beers, (360) 730-1740. Advertisements for events not sponsored by the National Service Committee do not imply endorsement by the NSC/Chariscenter USA.

The 2005 Index of articles can be found on our website at:
www.nsc-chariscenter.org.

Bishops speak to the Renewal

In October 2005, I had the opportunity to participate in the "Bishops Speak to the Renewal" Conference in the Minneapolis, Minnesota area.

People gathered to hear speakers in general sessions, bishops speaking to priests, bishops and priests speaking to the laity, a deacon speaking to deacons and a religious speaking to religious. All who registered received a booklet of letters from bishops from throughout the entire US. They had been asked to address these questions: "What are the Strengths of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal? What are its weaknesses? How could the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Church be more effective?"

Bishop Sam Jacobs spoke of how this renewal has been part of the church since Pentecost. The renewal is rooted in the heart of the church. From the early days of this renewal the leaders sought the guidance of the Pope and the Church. International gatherings have been held since early on. John Paul II spoke of his conviction that this is of the Holy Spirit. In 1976 the bishops of the US decided to have liaisons to the bishops in each diocese. Among the many strengths of the Renewal he spoke of were the ecumenical gatherings, the Life in the Spirit Seminars and the rooting and forming of people more deeply in their faith so that they can grow in the life of the Spirit. The Renewal has fostered mature and continual personal conversion, deeper commitment to Jesus Christ, and a profound openness to prayer, especially spontaneous prayer, including praise, thanksgiving, glorification, worship and repentance. This is only one renewal in the church. God gives different graces to different individuals/groups.

Ministry
Update

by Sr. Mary Anne
Schaezner



Bishop Jacobs stated that Pope John Paul II recognized that a great number of men and women have achieved a deeper understanding of their Baptism through this renewal. People are more aware of the call to evangelize, and to give witness to the Spirit. We see how many people have become involved in ministry in their parishes. God has touched us so that we can share it with others. A number of vocations to the church have come out of the renewal.

Benedict XVI stands in the same attitude of Pope John Paul II toward the Renewal. In 2006, for the Vigil of Pentecost, and as a public demonstration of faith in Jesus Christ, the Pope has called for ecclesial movements and charismatic renewal communities to gather in Rome.

This renewal has had its weaknesses. Sometimes the prayer group becomes a prayer club, taking care of its own needs instead of evangelizing and reaching out. We need to get in touch with our original experience so that we can be empowered again. There are times when there is a lack of being fully Catholic. There has been elitism among some, e.g. saying that one is not baptized in the Spirit if one does not speak in tongues. Some groups have little teaching and spiritual formation. Sometimes the charismatic gifts are not active.

Bishop Jacobs concluded his talk by saying that we stand at the heart of the church. We are called to bring the grace of Pentecost to the world and to bring the charismatic gifts to the church. ♦

For Letters, conference talks from US Catholic Bishops to the Renewal or National Leaders' Conference in Chicago contact Colin LaVergne: 888.809.0267, or resurrection@usfamily.net.

PENTECOST *Today*

PO Box 628 • Locust Grove, VA • 22508-0628

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Published by the National Service Committee
of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the
United States, Inc.

*If you have received more than one copy of this
publication, please return all the mailing labels and
we will make the necessary corrections. Meanwhile
please share the duplicate copy with someone else.*

Nonprofit Org.
US Postage
PAID
National Service
Committee



Sound the Trumpet

July 2-7, 2006

Rouse the Warriors to Arms
2006 Summer Conference
Omaha, Nebraska

Joel 4:9

Intercessors of the Lamb

4014 N. Post Rd. / Omaha, NE 68112-1263
(402) 455-5262 / www.bellwetheromaha.org

CONTACT US TODAY

to receive your
Conference Info
& Registration pack!

