

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

- For God's blessing and ongoing fruitfulness of the Gathering of National Leadership Groups of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (January 9-14, 2009).
- For the promotion of the Friday before Lent, February 20, 2009, as a Day of Fasting and Prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit in our Church.
- For Pope Benedict XVI's hope that "dialogue between pastors and ecclesial movements (like CCR) intensifies on all levels: in parishes, dioceses and with the Apostolic See."
- For the generous financial support of Chariscenter by prayer groups.
- May Charismatic Prayer Groups manifest the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, so that people experience that God is truly in our midst.



Strengthening Prayer Groups



2008 Leaders' Conference in Nashville

"Let's stand and celebrate God's work!"

by Sr. Mary Anne Schaenzer

ith these words we were exhorted to give joyful praise to God as we entered into the 2008 Catholic Charismatic Leaders' Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. This was a time of powerful praise and of a manifestation of joy through song and dance. A young adult music ministry from the Alleluia Community in Augusta, Georgia, led us in praise and worship throughout the weekend.

During this conference we explored the meaning of "A Future Full of Hope." At this time in history there are many reasons for practicing hope, not that life is easy and hope is therefore easy. Rather, many are experiencing difficult and challenging times that call for the virtue of hope.

On Friday evening Al Mansfield of New Orleans shared his experience of Katrina and how that has evoked the virtue of hope for him and his wife, Patti. Al reflected on some practices that will assist us in being strengthened in hope. 1. Receive and welcome the Holy Spirit. 2. Read and consume the Word of God. 3. Pray. 4. Examine your attitudes. 5. Cultivate relationships/friendships in the Lord. Finally, it is easy for us to find God on the

mountain but remember that the God of Day is also the God of Night.

Dr. Tom Curran then took us on a journey of exploring our lives moving forward by asking the question, "What am I going to do with what remains?" Our horizon of hope comes from our relationship with Jesus. We want to find our joy in God. We have hope in God and not in self. God is our absolute future. Tom spoke of what he named "thrown-ness." We are being thrown into the future. We are thrown forward in time. To exist is to be drawn back to God. It is God who is drawing us back. Jesus is the one who draws near to us. We can reflect on this: "God draws near to me." In a sense Jesus says to us, "As you remember, I draw near." Hope is associated with the future knowing that Jesus draws near to us from the future.

Tom reflected on Advent as a season of hope. It is a time when it is getting darker and colder. Advent means coming: it is Jesus who is coming. God created the world so that Jesus could be born in it. God created you so that Jesus could be born in you. We are people of hope. We have to be a *Gaudete* people, i.e. a people who rejoice (1 Thes 5:16). He posed this question: "Did you live the 2008 that God held in his hand for you? We have one chance. Will we live the 2009 that the Lord has for us?

right: Tammie Stevens.

he Transfiguration is a glimpse of what awaits us. We need Jesus to draw near to us from the future. "You who were far off have been brought near through the blood of Christ." We are people of Pentecost, radiators of God's Glory. Tom closed by pointing out that to sacrifice is to make holy. He challenged us by using a poker analogy, "We are either all in or we are bluffing." Jesus was all in for us before we were born. We are planted in the world. We are people of hope!

Saturday opened with Eucharist celebrated by Bishop David Choby of Nashville. This was followed by six tracks with three workshops each, enabling leaders to deepen in an area of interest/giftedness. These included: School of Prayer, Youth and Young Adult Ministry, Healing, Ecclesial Maturity, Praise and Worship, and Year of St. Paul.

Late Saturday afternoon we experienced a healing service, led by Judith Hughes and Fr. Richard Loch, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament followed by reflection together on how we had experienced God's healing.

Ron and Carole Bergman gave witness, on Saturday evening, to their experience of God's presence in their marriage of 30 years.

Jim Murphy, the main speaker on Saturday evening, reminded us that a leader transmits hope. A leader has vision. As long as there is hope a person can survive. God wants to give us a future full of hope. Jim thinks of hope as long-term faith (cf. Heb11:1). This has three perspectives. 1. The fullness of the Kingdom: Jesus says, "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev 21:5). Jim used the example of a crocus breaking up through the snow in the spring. 2. The hope of our own redemption, our own salvation. Paul reminds us that we

will also be raised by Christ (cf. Rom 8:11). We are children of God. We shall be like Christ, not because we get our act together. It is because of the work of God. 3. Our hope is in the person of God. The world will not be saved by a plan but in a person. Our hope lies in who sits on the throne of God not who sits in the oval office. The Church sees hope as an anchor. We all have stormy seas. Fear takes over when we take our eyes off of the Lord. The capacity of a leader is someone who can go back and gift others. We have to help people cross the gap. We help to sustain them. Pray for a fresh heart. The love of God has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. We were exhorted to be open to God and to where and how God may be calling us at this time in our lives.

On Sunday morning Kim Kollins, presently residing in Germany, spoke of Pentecost of the Nations. This takes place in two parts. The first consists of a novena in preparation for Pentecost in order to form a global net of prayer, day and night, around the world. The second is the actual celebration of Pentecost. Kim is a member of the ICCRS Pentecost of the Nations team.

On Sunday morning Michelle Moran, President of International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Service (ICCRS) exhorted us to go forth in hope and stated that we are called to be people of vision. The Church has given us a marvelous vision, to "put out into the deep." She spoke of Jesus having crowd control problems and using Peter's boat, then blessing Peter. She stated that when Jesus uses us he blesses us. When Jesus told Peter to put out the nets he responded with, "We worked all night and caught nothing but if you say so, we will" (cf. John 21:3-6). We have to be people who say, "If you say so, we will." Like Peter we need to move from testing the waters to walking on



Above and right: conference participants, bottom: Sr. Mary Anne Schaenzer and friends.

the water. We need to step out of the boat (cf. Matt 14:29). Peter would say, where I'll do it sooner." She reminded us that Joshua told the people to be strong and stand firm "for the E Lord, your God, is with you" (Joshua \$\xi\$ 1:9). We can look to the past with \$\sigma\$ gratitude. We look forward with hope. We are moving along in the journey as a Joshua generation. Some things have died and passed away (cf. Joshua 1:2). We have already crossed a line in terms of all that has happened in the Renewal over the last 40 years. In the spirit of Joshua it's time to cross the Jordan empowered by the Spirit for mission. Break camp. You have not gone over this road before.

We were sent forth, nourished by the Eucharist, to be people of hope and, in the words of the closing line of the Program Booklet Welcome, "to make a difference in the Church and in our society."



Prayer and Hope: How to handle prayer group struggles

by Deacon Chuck Matzker

f you are involved in a prayer group, or are a leader of a group, you know this: Trouble will eventually knock on the door, and will walk in, invited or not. It is going to happen. There are some things certain, and one of them is that leaders and groups WILL experience difficulties. When that happens, we can feel many things—frustration, fear, inadequacy, depression, anger, exhaustion and even a desire to "scrap it all."

How can we handle these difficult circumstances? There are many organizational problem-solving processes: interpersonal relations courses, mediation, communication improvement methodologies that can be implemented, but I would like to look at this from another perspective. I would like to share a simple process our Pastoral Team has found to be effective in dealing with difficulties, and strengthening hope. It is identified by five simple words, the first letters of which spell "POWER": Past, Organize, Word, Enact and Rejoice.

PAST: First, we look back, and remember. This gives us perspective and shows that we are not alone, but are in good company.

Jesus and his disciples experigenced difficulties. Remember the mother of James and John asking Jesus to let her sons sit one at his right and one at his left in the Kingdom, and the reaction of the other apostles to this: anger and resentment (Matthew 20:21-28). And then there were the apostles on the road to Capernaum, arguing about which of them is the greatest (Mark 9:33-35).

- ◆ St. Paul did too. Just reading Paul's letters to the communities he founded and pastored gives us a window into his world. While the letters are full of instruction and commendation, there is also correction and advice. How discouraged he must have become at times, but he did not let anything deter him from his mission!
- ◆ All leaders and groups experience them—We are not unique. "In this world you will have trouble..." (John 16:23). A great spiritual director to our Pastoral Team, Fr. Jerry Borer S.J., would help me keep perspective when I tended to take upon myself too much responsibility for success; his question to me in those times always was "Chuck, are you the Savior?"

of our group leaders to address the problem. In an atmosphere of prayer, unity and honesty, we discuss the issue, each sharing his or her perspective... "Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray..." (James 5:13). As a group, we try to make sure our hearts are docile to the Holy Spirit, and open

to correction, and that pride and anger are not at work in our decisions. A spirit of love and humility must prevail. "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all" (Mark 9:37).

WORD: We then spend time in prayer and praise, open to the charismatic gifts, seeking God's word and the Spirit's guidance for us in inspired Scripture, prophecy, word of wisdom, etc. The Spirit is always faithful. "Ask and you shall receive" (Luke 11:9). It is after this time of prayer that we achieve clarity and a good sense of the right way to deal with the difficulty. We look at the issue again, and then decide on the proper actions to take.

ENACT: It is now that we implement and perform the actions decided upon. However, to do this, we identify which of us is the most loving toward the person(s) we must meet with to address the problem. Those that care for the person(s) most are the ones we send. A wise saying that has always stuck with me is, "The stronger the bond of love, the heavier the burden that can be carried across it."

REJOICE: No matter what the situation or the outcome, we take time to praise God.

- ◆ "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:4-7).
- ◆ He is present in the difficulty, and works all things to good. "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who

have been called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

▶ In the conclusion of Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians, he says, "Finally, brothers, rejoice. Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you" (2 Corinthians 13:11).

Past, Organize, Word, Enact, Rejoice = POWER, the Power to deal with difficulties and continue on in hope. Jesus last words to us before ascending to the Father were, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). This is our mission still. To do it, we need the Holy Spirit. For leaders and groups, a great way to start the

day would be to pray the prayer of Cardinal Mercier.

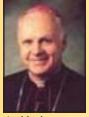
"O Holy Spirit, Soul of my soul, I adore you. Enlighten, guide, strengthen and console me. Tell me what I ought to do and command me to do it. I promise to be submissive in everything that you permit to happen to me, only show me what is your will." (Cardinal Mercier)

In doing God's will, there is no reason to lose heart.



Deacon Chuck Matzker is the Bishop's Liaison to the Charismatic Renewal in the Diocese of Colorado Springs. He and his wife Barbara are on the NSC Advisory Council. Day of Prayer & Fasting Friday, February 20, 2009

For the eighth year in a row the NSC is joining with other leadership groups to ask Renewal participants to fast and pray on the Friday before Ash Wednesday for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the United States and that the Church in our country might be renewed in the grace of Pentecost.



Archbishop Edwin O'Brien



Bob Canton

Patti Gallagher Mansfield

Bishop Oscar Solis



Jim Murphy

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." Isaiah 61:1

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Encouragement—the charism that gives hope and transforms lives

by Reneé Marazon

"There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit" (1Cor 12:5-7).

t. Paul tells us that each one of us, not some of us, not a few of us, but each one of us has a manifestation of the Spirit. That is to say, you, who are reading this article, have at least one way, and most likely, more than one way that others come to know Christ through you.

Do you know what your manifestation of the Spirit is? Do you know for what benefit vou have been given your manifestation of the Spirit? Take a moment to read each of the following statements and respond either "yes" or "no" as you do this.

People who need comfort, reassurance, and encouragement often seek my help.

Others tell me I am an effective listener and/or counselor who is able to comfort, direct, or encourage them with my words of how God touches lives.

It is very fulfilling for me to talk with and build up those who are confused or having difficulties in life, whether they are in despair, sorrow or just unsure of themselves.

People tell me they grow spiritually when I talk with them about the Lord's love and his care for them.

One of the most satisfying ways I express my faith is to listen and talk with those who are troubled, depressed, confused or struggling in life.

If you responded yes to four out of five of the statements, the charism of encouragement may be one of your spiritual gifts for ministry. If you did not, spend just a moment thinking about someone you know who fits these statements and thank God for this person who may have the charism of encouragement.

Encouragement is the special ability God gives some to uplift, enrich, comfort, offer words of encouragement and reassurance in such a way that others become filled with hope. What is hope? "Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit" (CCC #1817).

People with this charism come to the side of those who are discouraged, in trouble, needing truth to set them free, needing reassurance. Though all receive the theological virtue of hope at Baptism, encouragers are God's instruments for the re-filling of hope into our lives since the world, the flesh and the devil are continually seeking to drain our souls of hope. Encouragers have a way that brings us more deeply into hope—the hope of life in Christ Jesus, that does not disappoint but rather lifts us up and sustains us. The person gifted with the charism of encouragement nurtures and fosters hope in others through simple presence and through spoken words. Encouragers are anointed with God's promises when they speak and there is a confidence in their voices that lifts our sprit and draws our hearts closer to our Lord and Savior. Encouragers seem to bring forth a listener's reaction that says, "I know this is God's truth being spoken to me."

If there were to be a patron saint of the charism of encouragement it surely would be St. Barnabas. Although his given name was Joseph, he was given the Hebrew name Barnabas, which means, "Son of Encouragement," by the apostles. In this year of St. Paul it seems most fitting to acknowledge that if it had not been for the encouragement of Barnabas, the other apostles would never have accepted Paul into their Christian community. It was Barnabas who persuaded them and the church in Jerusalem that Paul had been converted from a persecutor to an apostle (Acts 9:26-27).

Paul's persuasive and encouraging style set the stage for him to be sent on mission to Antioch to spread the Good News. "When he [Barnabas] arrived [in Antioch] and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced and encouraged them all to remain faithful to the Lord in firmness of heart, for he was a good man, filled with the Holy Spirit and faith. And a large number of people was added to the Lord" (Acts 11:23-24).



DIOCESAN LIAISONS

The welcome mat is out A call to all liaisons

by Fr. Larry Carew

aturday, November 15th turned out to be a very long day for those privileged to attend the 2008 National Leaders' Conference in Nashville. An early morning Mass celebrated by Bishop David Choby of Nashville came first. We could not help but find ourselves truly affirmed and encouraged by his wonderful homily. Then came the morning and afternoon workshops. Mid afternoon would offer the opportunity to enter into the blessings of a powerful healing service. After dinner, praise and worship, testimonies and the sharing of word gifts climaxed in an unforgettably convicting and prophetic teaching presented by Jim Murphy.

It was now after 10:30 p.m. and, for most, the day's activities had come to a close. But not for all. The Steering Committee of the Association of Diocesan Liaisons was about to host a gathering. It was over in about a half hour. Information was shared about the Association's purpose; its yearly gatherings, held in different settings, East and West, North and South (next Spring we'll be meeting in Spokane); and the richness of learning experiences and fellowship opportunities made available to the association's membership.

It appeared to me that there were about twenty of us gathered there: half of us "old timers" the other half, newly-appointed liaisons. Of course, the Holy Spirit was also in attendance. He was clearly inviting all of us into deeper unity—brothers and sisters, old and new alike.

Please allow me to echo the invitation offered there by liaisons Jane Barz and Deacon Pat Frye. If you are a liaison and haven't joined the Association, please prayerfully consider doing that. You will find yourself very welcomed and so very blessed. (Check us out at www.nadl.net.)

Fr. Larry Carew is the Bishop's liaison to the Charismatic Renewal for the diocese of Bridgeport, CT.

t. Paul mentions Barnabas rather often in his letters and although he was not one of the original twelve apostles, he was honored with the title of apostle (Acts 4:36). Perhaps Barnabas is the reason Paul could speak with such conviction about encouragement, referring to it as the charism of exhortation. "Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them: if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation" (Rom 12:8).

Paul's letters were words of encouragement and hope as well. "As you know, we treated each one of you as a father treats his children, exhorting and encouraging you and insisting that you conduct yourselves as worthy of the God who calls you into his kingdom and glory" (1 Thes 2:11-12).

In this year of St. Paul, let us become more intentionally aware of the charism of encouragement, and name it, nurture it and call it forth in ourselves and in others. Let us thank God for this powerful charism of speech and presence within our prayer groups, our families, our parishes, and our world that has the potential to give HOPE to all of God's children.



Renée A. Marazon is a Catholic author, consultant, workshop, retreat, and mission presenter. She is an active member of All Saints Parish in Rossford, Ohio. Renee serves as the Coordinator of the Diocese

of Toledo Ministry to Catholic Charismatic Renewal Healing Ministry and Outreach to Parishes Ministry.





Conferences: Work and Blessings

Why "Leaders' Conferences" and not "General Conferences?" And who is a leader anyway?

For a number of years in the late 1990s and the early years of this new Millennium the NSC, both internally and in dialogue with other leadership groups like the Association of Diocesan Liaisons, heard the Lord clearly call the Renewal to more maturity ("ecclesial maturity"). We also heard a call to a greater focus on preparing the Renewal for further engagement in the Church and in our society: fostering the "spirituality of Pentecost" and building a "culture of Pentecost." All are challenges to us from Pope John Paul II.

We saw that while there were many Diocesan General Conferences and Days of Renewal not much was being done in many places to strengthen and encourage those already serving in various leading ways, not to mention the formation of new leaders.

For these Conferences we see "leaders" as those serving in positions of leadership in the Renewal such as Prayer Group leaders, prayer meeting leaders, Diocesan Liaisons, Renewal Center Directors, as well as those in full time ministry in the Renewal. We are also reaching out to those serving in music ministries, Life in the Spirit teams, prayer/healing teams, those with prophetic gifts—really anyone who has been baptized in the Holy Spirit and is seeking further formation.

As those involved in Conference planning on the local level, a lot of effort goes into these events. The Planning Committee meets by phone for prayer, brainstorming and discussion of Renewal needs and possible speakers. When this year's Planning Committee identified the theme from Jeremiah, A Future Full of Hope, early in the process we were not thinking primarily of our economy or of our government transition. We were thinking about the many veteran leaders who, it seemed to us, were seeking a boost of fresh vision, and renewed faith and trust that leads to hope. The confluence with our focus and the economic and political challenges was truly prophetic.

Further, as so often seems to be true with these events, we needed to trust the Lord for his financial provision. The attendance, due to the economy, was not what we had hoped for nor planned. I am happy to report that thanks to the Lord and to the financial generosity of the attendees we not only left Nashville paying all our bills but with most of the money the Service Committee had budgeted to receive from the Conference for its other projects and operating expenses.

Sometimes it seems that all the effort, including that of staff and many volunteers may not have been worth it. Then one receives emails like these from participants:

As many discussed, the National Conference had a little something special in the air. I believe it was a real grace and blessing from the Lord to the Renewal and all who attended. I want to express my appreciation for all the effort you and the leadership do to host these events.

We were really touched by the leaders' conference... It was great, to say the least, and I believe it will prove to be a milestone for the Renewal in this country.

Friends of the NSC

We want to thank all our Friends' donors for your giving in 2008 in spite of the economic difficulties. Our Christmas Appeal by Aggie Neck has just been mailed and we are hopeful that by the time you read this we will have reached our budgeting goals for the year.

It did, however, take a Special Appeal to our top donors in order to close the gap when the bottom seemed to fall out in August. Since 2009 is looking to be even more of a difficult year we would really be grateful if those of you who receive Pentecost Today who are not donors would send even a small amount. If one thousand recipients of Pentecost Today who are not donors contributed \$15 each we would cover not only the cost of one issue, but provide additional funds for the other projects of the National Service Committee.

Allow me to share with you this quote from Bishop Sam Jacobs, former member and Chairman of the NSC and currently one of our Episcopal Consultants, "All of us are experiencing some financial concerns. But gratitude to God for his many blessings should not hinge upon the economic ups and downs of the market. The work of the Gospel needs to continue. I invite you to either continue or become part of the great work that NSC/ Chariscenter USA is doing to bring people into the grace of Pentecost, the sanctifying and anointing gift of the Holy Spirit. God has blessed you. Now, he is asking you to bless others through your generous support of the work of the Gospel."

This is no time to turn back or fall back. This is a time to go forward. We can do so much more together.

Pentecost Today

Volume 34 Number 1

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For Your Information

Jean Beers

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.

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Fr. Bob Hogan accepts for Fr. George Montague

What we have seen and heard by Sr. Mary Anne Schaenzer



Charismatic gifts are not a consumer product that we sell as one might sell an aromatic perfume. Rather they are gifts that the Holy Spirit freely gives and that we are invited to freely receive. We don't need enough money or enough holiness in order to receive these gifts. We do need to be open and ready to receive. We do not receive these gifts for ourselves only but we receive them that in some way we may be in service to others and promote the reign of God.

Over the past years many people have devoted much of their time and energy to encouraging and nurturing these gifts of the Spirit. In recent years a variety of individuals have been honored at NSC sponsored National Conferences for their dedication and generosity of time in service to the Renewal. This past November three such individuals were honored for their faithfulness and service.

Rudy Pruden was honored for his over 17 years as a member of the National Service Committee. During most of these years he also served on the Executive Committee and as Chairman of the Finance Committee. "At all levels you sought to bring practical wisdom, learned from many years of service in the Church and in government, and your prayerfulness, zeal and prophetic gifts to the many opportunities and challengers facing the Renewal." "In all that you have done and continue to do you have sought to build bridges of understanding and to give voice to the hopes and dreams of those with no voice."

Fr. George Montague, S.M. was honored in this year of celebrating his fiftieth anniversary of ordination to the priesthood. His early involvement (1971) in Charismatic Renewal "was crucial in helping the Church embrace this movement at the very heart of the Church." Fr. George was also recognized for his writing, "such as the important Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First Eight Centuries, to situate baptism in the Holy Spirit solidly in the Church's understanding of Pentecost and pneumatology." Along with Fr. Bob Hogan, who received the plaque in Fr. George's absence, he founded a new charismatic religious community, the Brothers of the Beloved Disciple. Fr. George served on the National Service Committee for four years and as a theological consultant to the NSC for the last eighteen years.

Aggie Neck, outgoing chairman (seven years) of the National Service Committee was also honored as "a prophetic voice both within the NSC and in the Renewal ever reminding us of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the power of living baptized in the Holy Spirit, and the challenge and opportunity we have to exercise the charisms of the Holy Spirit." During these years the NSC has "sought to rearticulate its Vision and Mission so that we can more effectively provide leadership and service to the Renewal in the years to come." As Aggie completes ten years of service in January of 2009 we concur with this wish: "May the Holy Spirit continue to be the air you breathe and empower you in all that you do."

As we reflect on the good works of Rudy, Fr. George and Aggie, we can reflect on our lives and ask the Holy Spirit to assist us in being faithful to giftedness and service. Thank you for all that you do to promote the reign of God.

Pentecost Today

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January/February/March 2009 Prayer & Hope! INSIDE:

Receive Power Live, Robert Galea

St. Paul on prayer, Sr. Bernadette Beamsley

Fr. Larry Carew visits the jail at Philippi

Leaders' Conference at Nashville

Hope in Prayer Group struggles, Chuck Matzker

The charism of encouragement, Renee Marazon

page 3

page 4

page 6

page 8

page 10

page 12

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