

PENTECOST *Today*

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Life in Community Acts 4, St. John's Bible, see page 9

The ministry of Magnificat p. 3

Strengthening ecclesial maturity p. 4

Blocks to maturity p. 6

Charisms & community p. 8

Where do we go from here? p. 10

Charism of word of wisdom p. 12

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



Chairman's Corner

by Aggie Neck

A new zeal

I am certain that if we questioned 100 people on what they think “ecclesial maturity” is, we would get 100 answers. For me ecclesial maturity is coming to know the truth of the gospel, the hope that is in it and living and ordering our lives by that. It is this maturity in our spiritual life that urges us to speak out.

Do you remember when you first experienced Jesus and were baptized in the Holy Spirit? We could not contain the joy we felt and we wanted to share this wonderful experience with everyone we knew. Time has shown us that our confident witness is what attracts others to want to know more. Then what happened. We became “sophisticated.” We took on a sedate persona and walked in ways that were “acceptable” and did not “rock any boats.” This is not the maturity to which God calls us.

Oh, woe to us who have tasted the goodness of the Lord and have kept this treasure locked up inside and deprived so many of the wonder of a Holy Spirit empowered life. We kept it for the few who already knew and we discuss it among ourselves in our gatherings. God is serious about what he asks of us and procrastination is not an option, for these are urgent times.

“The Christian message does not inhibit men and women from building up the world, or make them disinterested in the welfare of their fellow human beings; on the contrary it obliges

them more fully to do these very things” (*Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 52).

I think that asking for a new zeal is a good way to start. It does take a heart that has zeal for the Lord and the fire of the Holy Spirit to begin the task, but also to bring it to completion.

In order to know the Lord and mature in our walk we must be with the Lord on a daily basis in prayer. Then we can hear, understand and feel the prompting of the Holy Spirit showing us what the Lord our God is asking of us. “Ours is a time of continual movement which often leads to restlessness with the risk of ‘doing for the sake of doing’. We must resist this temptation by trying ‘to be’ before trying ‘to do’” (*NMI*, 15).

I believe ecclesial maturity is fulfilled when we are rooted in and stand on the firm foundation of the truth in Jesus. It is brought to completion when we bring it into our society. It isn't only head knowledge we are to teach and proclaim, but the experience of the life that is ours after we have encountered the living Lord.

Declaring that there is a need for witnesses to “the things above” the Pope said, “This requires that the groups and communities of the Renewal be ever more places of contemplation and praise, where the heart of man is filled with the love of God, opens up to the love towards his brother and becomes capable of building history according to God’s design” (John Paul II – 2001 – *And Then Peter Stood Up*). ♦

Aggie Neck is Chairman of the National Service Committee.



Editor's Desk

by Sr. Martha Jean McGarry

The Renewal as well as other groups and movements in the Church have been encouraged by Pope John Paul II to strive for ecclesial maturity. Maturity is not always something with which we wish to deal. Remembering that growth often causes some pain we tend to turn a deaf ear to any encouragement “to grow up.” However, growing can be fun. Christians do it all the time. It brings new life!

In this issue our writers will do their utmost to bring some understanding to what is meant by “ecclesial maturity” as well as present us with some practical and exciting means to achieve it.

Dr. Alan Schreck's article is challenging and full of insights. Check out his “HORSE” to get you moving in the right direction.

Charles Whitehead encourages us to embrace our mission and keep moving in the Spirit. Looking at stumbling blocks on our journey (**Michelle Moran**) and continuing the efforts to build community through the charisms we have received (**Fr. Bob Hogan**) are a couple of areas that would profit our exploration and reflection.

Marilyn Quirk gives witness to the movement of the Spirit through the *Magnificat* ministry and **Virginia King** unravels for us the charism of Word of Wisdom.

Our columnists, too, give us further thoughts on “ecclesial maturity.” Reading this issue I think you will find that it is not some kind of disease, but a blessing for each individual, the Renewal and our Church. ♦

Magnificat

A Ministry to Catholic Women

“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. He who is mighty has done great things and holy is his Name.” (Lk. 1: 46-47, 49)

by Marilyn Quirk

Mary's beautiful hymn of praise has become the song of many of us who have been involved in *Magnificat, A Ministry to Catholic Women*, from its humble beginning in the Archdiocese of New Orleans on October 7, 1981. The Almighty has done great things for us and we know without a doubt that this ministry of his love and mercy to women was begun by God through the hands of Mary. Only God could have orchestrated and formed this beautiful work which has brought together and impacted the lives of tens of thousands of women and, through them, the lives of so many.

Magnificat draws its inspiration from the mystery of the Visitation (Lk. 1:39-56). We have tasted a portion of the joy Mary and Elizabeth experienced as they rejoiced together in the power of the Holy Spirit. Those of us who have had a personal encounter with the living God through the baptism of the Holy Spirit want to share this grace with our Catholic sisters. The gift we have received we want to give as a gift (Mt. 10:8).

Magnificat was born of the Charismatic Renewal and is nurtured by it. It was the inspiration of the late Auxiliary Bishop of New Orleans, Stanley Ott, with the encouragement and approval

of retired Archbishop Philip Hannan. It is a private association of the Christian faithful, a canonical entity within the Catholic Church. Presently Magnificat has 70 chapters across the US, Canada, the Caribbean Islands, Malta, Poland and Africa. There are 15 chapters now in formation, including those in Ireland and Jerusalem.

Its primary mission is to evangelize and help Catholic women to grow spiritually into holiness through the power of the Holy Spirit. We do this mainly through a meal that can be simple or formal—a breakfast, a lunch, a tea or a dinner—in a relaxed social setting. There is time of prayer, fellowship, praise, intercession and a powerful testimony; usually from a woman whose life has been transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Magnificat draws together women from all ages and socio-economic groups and many places in the Church. Many come who would never go to a prayer meeting or a charismatic event. Several priests are regularly in attendance, invited by friends or parishioners, and we often hear homilies based on their experience. We have found it to be a point of unity in the diocese, bridging many together within the Church. It is a door many enter to experience the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

John Paul II, in his apostolic letter to women, *“The Dignity and Vocation of Women,”* stated that it is only in the Spirit that women come to understand their true identity, their true femininity. He also quoted an excerpt from the message given at the close of the 2nd Vatican Council, December 8, 1965...“The hour is coming, in fact has come, when the vocation of women is being acknowledged in its fullness, the hour in which women acquire in the world an influence, an effect and a power never hitherto achieved. That is why, at this moment when the human race is undergoing so deep a transformation, women imbued with the Spirit of the gospel can do much to aid mankind in not failing.”

St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein) wrote: “Woman is God’s weapon to combat evil... Her strength lies in an openness to the ways of the Spirit. Women who ‘forget themselves’ completely in imitation of Christ’s passion can change the face of the earth.”

Magnificat is not one person’s ministry, but the combination of a multitude of gifts placed at the service of God, with Mary, to make something beautiful for him. This woman-to-woman ministry, in the power of the Holy Spirit, has brought forth and embellished the unique gifts that God has entrusted to us as women for the building of his kingdom. It is not only a privilege to serve God in this exciting ministry, but also a blessing to be united in love and prayer with Godly women throughout the world. ♦



Marilyn Quirk serves as Coordinator of the Magnificat Central Service Team and has led this ministry for the past 25 years.

How to Strengthen Ecclesial Maturity in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal



Life in Community Acts 4, detail see page 9

by Alan Schreck, Ph.D.

When I wrote the first draft of this article, I assumed that everyone reading it would understand what “ecclesial maturity” means in the context of the Catholic Charismatic renewal. However, when a visiting in-law asked me what I was writing about, she thought “ecclesial maturity” referred to the Church’s hierarchy being mature enough to recognize the charisms of the laity and allow them to be exercised. Not a bad interpretation. Then I explained that I was writing about how the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, as a movement, was to become mature in its attitude and contribution to the Church. This seemed to help, but the discussion then shifted to what it meant for a movement to be “ecclesially mature” and why this is important. I referred to Pope John Paul II’s address to the gathering of the movements in Rome on Pentecost, 1998, where he spoke of a “new stage [that] is unfolding before you: that of ecclesial maturity,” which is “a challenge. A road to take.” Since this papal address, many have written about “ecclesial maturity” and how this might be pursued and achieved in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. In this article, I simply wish to contribute a perspective on the issue, and to make a few suggestions on how we might grow in “ecclesial maturity.”

There is, I believe, a particular challenge that the charismatic renewal faces in pursuing “ecclesial maturity.” I believe that there is still widespread misunderstanding (or differing understandings) of what the charismatic renewal movement is all about—even among “charismatics.” What is the goal of the movement? What are its essential characteristics? And further, in spite of all that Vatican II, Pope

Paul VI, and Pope John Paul II taught about what the “charisms” are and how they are part of the Church’s nature and essential to her life, there still remains a widespread view among Catholics that “charisms” are just for participants in a particular movement—the “charismatics”—but certainly aren’t for everyone. In fact, some Catholics view focus on the charisms or the use of charisms as something intrinsically immature; identifying these gifts of the Holy Spirit with a particular type of religious experience or religious emotionalism that they see in prayer meetings where people are “carried away” with raising their hands, swaying to emotionally charged music and even praying or singing aloud in gibberish that they call the “gift of tongues.” To speak of ecclesial maturity for “charismatics,” for many

Catholics, is to insist that they put aside this “emotionalism” and grow up spiritually into sober, mature Catholics whose faith is not emotional or experiential, and who do not need “charisms” to live a good Catholic life and build up the Church. In short, to be “spiritually mature,” in this view, means to stop being “charismatic!”

Even after forty years, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal still faces two challenges with regard to her acceptance by the Catholic Church (and here I mean by the “average Catholic” even more than the hierarchy): 1) enabling Catholics to understand that being “baptized in the Holy Spirit” (or whatever name you prefer) is a grace of renewal of life in Christ that God offers to *all*, and that is beneficial to all, and 2) that “charisms” are not the marks of a particular movement, but that *every* Christian receives charisms (gifts of the Spirit for the building up of the Church and for the

● A “new stage is unfolding before you: that of ecclesial maturity,” which is “a challenge. A road to take.”

spread of the faith) and needs to learn how to recognize one's own charisms and to use them in order for the Church to function properly and fulfill her mission. To say that a Catholic is "charismatic" should be accepted in the same way as it may be said that a Catholic is Eucharistic, sacramental, Marian, pro-life, socially concerned and so on.

In summary, "ecclesial maturity" means, for those involved in charismatic renewal, *not* to identify this renewal with a particular charism or charisms (such as the gift of tongues or prophecy), nor to equate being "baptized in the Holy Spirit" with a particular type of experience of God that all must have. "Ecclesial maturity" means, for those Catholics *not* involved in the charismatic movement to recognize that the Church is "charismatic" (as it is sacramental and hierarchical), which means that each Catholic possesses charisms to be discovered and used for the service of the Church and the world. It also means that every Catholic ought to desire and to seek a fuller grace of the Holy Spirit to deepen and enliven the relationship we have with Jesus and with the Father, a relationship which began at our baptism but must continue to grow. Hopefully Catholics will also come to understand that this is basically what "charismatic renewal" is really all about: a renewal of something that is essentially Catholic and Christian.

Having said this, I would like to reflect on how those in the charismatic renewal could grow in 'ecclesial maturity.' As a heuristic device, the word "horse" is an acronym for the goals I see. First, the letter "h" stands for two principles that are the foundations of ecclesial maturity: *holiness* and *humility*. "Strive for peace with all... and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14). Growth in ecclesial maturity is only possible and attainable as individuals and groups are seeking that ongoing deepening of our relationship with God, and transformation into the image of God in his Son Jesus Christ, that we call the pursuit of holiness. "...as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct" (1 Pt. 1:15). Ecclesial maturity cannot be strengthened or attained in any movement, community, prayer group or parish unless the members understand that their goal is to be holy: to be progressively transformed by grace into the image of Jesus Christ; to live godly and God-like lives.

This quest for holiness requires humility. The greatest sin of members of the charismatic renewal (including me) for many years probably was *hubris*—pride. Charismatics

thought we were spiritually superior because God was working so evidently and powerfully among us in this renewal movement. We did glorify and praise God for this, but we were blind to the extent that it affected our attitudes. Then many communities and prayer groups experienced very dark and difficult times that brought to light areas of sin and weakness, including pride that "goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18). However, it is maturity that recognizes that the revelation of sin and sinful attitudes is actually the mercy of God at work, inviting us to repent, to change and to attain holiness. Humility, which includes conviction of our sin and the need to repent, is the only path to holiness.



There are a number of results or "fruits" of the pursuit of holiness through humility that are signs of personal and ecclesial maturity. One of these is *openness* to the presence and work of the Lord in other movements and in the broader Church. A form of immaturity in the Catholic charismatic renewal is the failure to see God's 'hand' in other movements and in the broader Church. Ironically, sometimes Catholics could see the work of the Holy Spirit more

clearly in evangelical Protestant or Pentecostal churches than in other Catholic movements. The recognition of authentic workings of God in other Christian churches and communions is important for ecumenism, but Catholics in charismatic renewal must also recognize (and thank God for) how the Holy Spirit is at work in other Catholic movements and groups, 'even' in the 'normal' Catholic life of fellow Catholics in their parishes. Openness to the work of the Holy Spirit outside of charismatic renewal breaks down barriers and helps overcome "labels" that tend to divide instead of unify. Openness to the grace of God in the broader Church is a sign of ecclesial maturity and overcomes the "party spirit" that St. Paul once condemned in that very "charismatic" church in Corinth (see 1 Cor. 1:10-13; 3:1-9).

Related to this openness is the *respect* we must foster for other Catholics and especially for our ordained leaders: our bishops, priests and deacons. St. Francis of Assisi is an exemplary model of this respect. Despite the worldliness and dissolute lives of some of the clergy of his time, St. Francis always was obedient to and respectful of these 'elders' by virtue of their office and position. He chose to let the witness of holiness and poverty that he and his followers pur-

See **Strengthen** page 13



Four blocks to ecclesial maturity

Sometimes, however we can be guilty of basking in the glory of yesterdays' Spirit and not making room for, or being open to, the new things that the Holy Spirit wants to do.

by Michelle Moran

Addressing lay movements and new communities at Pentecost 1998, John Paul II prophetically stated that a new stage was unfolding that of *ecclesial maturity*. He issued a challenge saying that “the Church expects from you the mature fruits of communion and commitment... there is an urgent need for powerful proclamation and solid in-depth Christian formation.”

St Paul wanted to feed the Corinthians on ‘solid food’ but found that they were immature and still needing milk (1Cor. 3:2). I remember meeting a priest in the early days of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, the Holy Spirit had really renewed his ministry and he was using the gifts to the full. However, when I met him several years later he told me that he had ‘moved on’ from the Renewal as he began to find it all a bit superficial. Clearly there is nothing lightweight about living life in the power of the Holy Spirit and using the charisms for the building up of the body of Christ. Sometimes, however we can be guilty of basking in the glory of yesterdays’ Spirit and not making room for, or being open to, the new things that the Holy Spirit wants to do.

Be open to the surprises of the Spirit In this year as we celebrate our 40th anniversary we need to be attentively listening to what the Spirit is saying to us in the Renewal. What are the Lord’s priorities for the next 40 years? Looking at the biblical pattern, after the liberation from slavery the Israelites were formed in the wilderness. They were being trained and moulded together as a community. Then when those who were still left crossed the Jordan a new era was inaugurated. They were now called to “take the land.” I am reminded of the words of Jesus, “to those who have been given much then much is expected” (Lk. 2:48). Through the graces of the Renewal we have all received so much and now is the time to allow the mature fruit to ripen.

Today I sense that there are four major blockages that can prevent us from fully embracing the ecclesial maturity to which John Paul II and subsequently Pope Benedict XVI have called us.

■ Spiritual gluttony

The culture in Western Europe and the United States is very materialistic. This has an influence on all of us, so in the Renewal, we too can adopt a consumerist mentality. We may have impressive collections of Christian books, CD’s and other resources. Many of us have frequently listened to some of the best preachers and teachers. We have attended numerous conferences and seminars. However, we keep on asking the Lord for more of his Holy Spirit. I firmly believe that the Lord has a lot more in store for us than we are currently seeing and experiencing but perhaps our spiritual gluttony blocks a more abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Maybe the Lord is asking us to look carefully at what we have done with the gifts and blessings that he has already bestowed on us. Have

we been good stewards using the gifts for the building up of the Church or do we need to repent because we have stockpiled the treasure in our own private storehouses?

■ Attachment to experience

One of the graces of the Renewal is coming to know Jesus in a personal way through the power of the Holy Spirit. However, in this experiential age where everybody is looking for the next buzz, we too, can become so attached to feelings and experiences that we are reluctant to move on. Like Peter and John at the Transfiguration we want to stay with the experience rather than letting the experience empower us for ministry. Imagine what would have happened if at Pentecost the disciples had just stayed with the experience! God wants us to grow up and know him as the God who transcends all experience. Indeed, sometimes to bring us to this place of maturity the Lord can seemingly hide his face from us. We remain steadfast to the Lord through faith not feelings. We are called, irrespective of our feelings, to proclaim the Good News and witness to those around us.

■ Tradition

Our 40th anniversary provides us with an opportunity to look back and give thanks for all that the Lord has done. However, even after such a short time there is a danger that we can become an established people of tradition. I visit some groups where the same people have been doing the same things in the same way for many years. When our programs, structures and organizations become too rigid then we can block the Spirit. We have taken control and there is often little room for the free reign of the Spirit to be amongst us. Consequently, the Renewal becomes old and stale and then with nostalgia we keep looking back to “the good old days.” The Lord has prom-

ised to make all things new. So we must seek the Lord to know what he is doing today and get behind it. We will then live the present moment with passion and look to the future with hope and confidence.

■ Comfort and complacency

In the early days there seemed to be so much excitement and so many new things to discover. Inevitably, with time, we can become comfortable or even complacent. This can lead to a lack of expectant faith and less receptivity to the new things of the Spirit. Then, instead of maturing, we grow old and tired. During the ICCRS 40th anniversary celebration at Pentecost 2006 Archbishop Stanislaw Rylko, from the Pontifical Council of the Laity in the Vatican, gave us some timely advice. He said, “ecclesial maturity isn’t about growing old in the Spirit but about staying forever young. Never lose your youthfulness, your capacity to be amazed about the works of God and your commitment to the mission of the Church.” Clearly there is a difference between youthfulness and immaturity. Therefore, those who are elders in the Renewal need to show what it means to be forever young.

As we cross the 40-year threshold I believe that we are entering a new era of the Spirit. I am reminded of Psalm 1 where the tree planted by the living water yields its fruit in due season. For a tree to be healthy it needs deep roots. So ecclesial maturity is a call for us to continue to go deeper in the Lord and to grow tall with confidence. The graces that we have been given in Renewal are not for a fringe group of charismatics who like that sort of thing. They are for the whole Church. Archbishop Rylko told us that, ‘new movements are not just movements in the Church but the Church in movement.’ So as mature people let’s

Prayer Card



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

May the Holy Spirit who came on Jesus at his baptism open the heavens to those who do not know a living God. May the Spirit rest on them and may they hear the heavenly Father’s words of love.

May we allow the Spirit to lead us into the desert so that we can receive Jesus’ victory over our temptations and learn to live in the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5: 22-23).

May we go forth in the power of the Spirit, anointed to bring Good News to the poor and liberty to captives.

not keep the graces of the Renewal to ourselves but let’s be willing to share all that we have been given with the Church and indeed with the whole world. ♦

Michelle Moran is a founder of Sion Catholic Community for Evangelism. She has a MA in Pastoral Theology and has written books on evangelisation as well as numerous articles for magazines and journals. She is currently Chair of the NSC for Catholic Charismatic Renewal in England and Wales and President of ICCRS, the International Council for Renewal in Rome.





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

- For a renewal and deepening of the gifts of praise and worship in our personal lives, our prayer groups and in the whole Church.
- That we may come into a greater union with Jesus as the Christ (Messiah, Anointed One, Anointed of the Spirit) during the Advent/Christmas Seasons.
- For the National Leaders Gathering (January 18-23) that all groups graced by Charismatic Renewal may work in harmony according to God's plan.
- For the finances to expand the national office for Catholic Charismatic Renewal, so that we can be even more fruitful in promoting all the graces of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church.
- For the February 29-March 5, 2008 pilgrimage to the Shrines of Mexico.

Goodsearch

What if the National Service Committee earned a penny every time you searched the Internet? Well, now we can!

GoodSearch.com is a new search engine that donates half its revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. You use it just as you would any search engine, and it's powered by Yahoo!, so you get great results.

Just go to www.goodsearch.com and be sure to enter Chariscenter USA as the charity you want to support. Just 500 of us searching four times a day will raise about \$7300 in a year without anyone spending a dime! And, be sure to spread the word!

Editor's Note: Last issue Fr. Gelpi, SJ wrote an article with the focus on community. This article by Fr. Bob Hogan further highlights the relationship between charisms and building community.

Part Two

Charisms and Community Building

by Fr. Bob Hogan

Charisms (spiritual gifts) are a treasure in the Church. How do we make sure that they do not become "fool's gold" without the full, lasting value that God desires? I believe that the answer is found in a renewed effort to "build community" in our prayer groups.

Community building is essential for those seeking the lasting, fruitful use of charisms in the Church. The idea of charisms is exciting. We want to see "manifestations of the Spirit" in our lives (1 Cor. 12:7). It is wonderful to see God's presence made visible by charisms that awaken faith, demonstrate that God is in our midst, and build up the Church (1 Cor. 14:4, 12, 25-26). Charisms in individual lives are a great blessing for the Church. The Charismatic Renewal is an important reminder that God's work is not done only with our human abilities, but with charisms that manifest God's power, love and wisdom (1 Tim. 1:6-7).

However, the focus in the early church was not only, or mainly, on individual charisms. God manifested the Holy Spirit's presence through the witness of a committed, united community. Acts 2:42-47 describes the Jerusalem disciples after Pentecost: "They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles, and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers...to meeting together in the

temple area and breaking bread in their homes...and every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved." Steven Clark writes: "No doubt there was individual evangelism, but the account in Acts 2 emphasizes that it was their life together that impacted others. The result of the outpouring of the Spirit was a community living "in the Spirit," and this drew others to the Lord" (*Charismatic Spirituality*, p. 27). The community itself was a manifestation of the Spirit, a charism. St. Paul confirms this truth by regularly describing charisms in the context of being a committed, united community, the "body of Christ" (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4:1-16).

What does this mean for prayer groups? We must "strive eagerly" (1 Cor. 12:31; 14:1, 12) for the charism of "community building." People should witness a "togetherness" in the Spirit that manifests God's presence. Here are some suggestions for growing in this charism in prayer groups:

- 1) Pray together for the desire to be a community like Acts 2, that witnesses the presence of the Spirit, bringing others to Jesus Christ.
- 2) Pray for the community building charisms of pastoring, administration, wisdom, encouragement, hospitality, communal vision, practical teaching on relationships, etc.

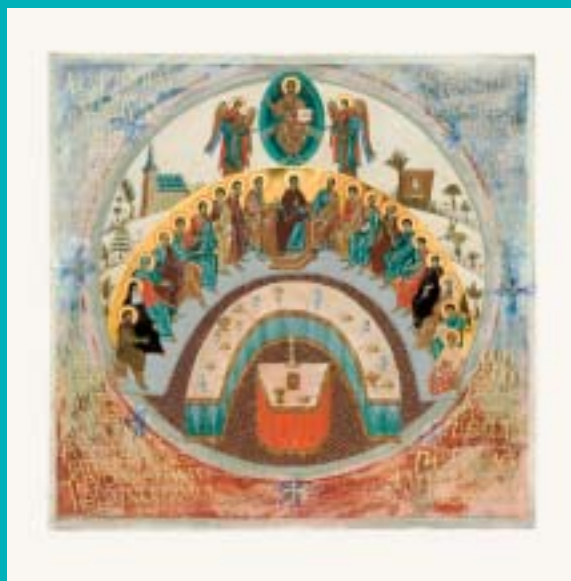
3) Pray for the grace to “think collectively” and “see connections,” so that people do not think only of their own desires and gifts, but learn to interrelate with others and complement each other. Teach about these abilities and practice them in your groups.

4) Have a yearly group plan that includes regular community building activities: one-to-one sharing where people can share their background and testimony; teachings on “working collectively,” communication skills, and group dynamics; “small group” sharing about one area of growth and one area of challenge in each person’s life; socializing together. Spend time helping people to get to know each other and grow in spiritual bonds of friendship.

5) Ask the Lord what persons and groups he wants you to be relating with in a committed way. Start with family and parish community, but also, smaller groups where you can share your faith journey.

As St. Paul teaches, we grow in maturity in Christ when we are in committed relationships where “living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, with the proper functioning of each part, brings about the body’s growth and builds itself up in love” (Eph. 4:15-16). ♦

Fr. Bob Hogan is Co-founder of the Brothers of the Beloved Disciple, a Charismatic and Marian Religious community of priests and brothers. Presently he is a member of the NSC and involved with working at the Catholic Center for Charismatic Renewal in San Antonio, Texas.



Cover illustration: *Life in Community Acts 4*, Aidan Hart in collaboration with Donald Jackson. What Luke describes here is his idea on an ideal community. This passage has been the inspiration for monks, nuns, religious and others, who have tried to replicate this description of the early church in monasteries, parishes and communities. The illumination depicts a circle of people sharing a never-ending common table.

A vast illuminated manuscript, the *Saint John’s Bible*, has been commissioned by Saint John’s University in Collegeville, Minnesota, from the contemporary scribe and illuminator, Donald Jackson. Mr. Jackson works in the Scriptorium in Wales, where he handwrites the Bible and creates illuminations in a unique collaboration with other artists and scribes.

Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, Catholic Edition, copyright ©1989, 1993 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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Artist:	Donald Jackson
Date:	2004
Medium:	Natural hand-ground ink on calfskin vellum
Dimensions:	15-7/8" X 24-1/2"
Collection:	Copyright 2004 <i>The Saint John’s Bible</i> and the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library at Saint John’s University, United States of America

**We are called to be
in the front line of
the Church's
mission to the world.**



Where do we go from here?

by Charles Whitehead

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is 40 years old, and today we stand at the heart of the Church as valued members of the family. Our International Council, with its office in a Vatican building, is recognized by the Holy See for the promotion of the Renewal worldwide. But we cannot relax and live on past or present glories; we must have vision for the way ahead. We may be reluctant to face new challenges, but we know that “the Lord gives strength to the wearied, he strengthens the powerless” (Isaiah 40:29), and we need to keep moving on with the Lord.

A grace of Pentecostal refreshment

Our most important gift to the Church is baptism in the Holy Spirit. As Cardinal Leon Suenens wrote in 1996. “The soul of Renewal—baptism in the Spirit—is a grace of Pentecostal refreshment offered to all Christians.” With this grace come the charisms, which Vatican II reminds us are “fitting and useful for the needs of the Church” (*Lumen Gentium* 12). It is here that we face a major challenge the temptation to make ourselves more acceptable by speaking less about those things others find uncomfortable—baptism in the Spirit, tongues, prophecy, healing, witnessing and evangelization. But we are called to be prophetic, and while we must always be sensitive to others, we should never give in to this temptation. Baptism in the Spirit remains our particular gift to the Church.

Families and young people

If we are to see a strong and vibrant Church, we need to give more attention to families and young people. We know the importance of good teaching for everyone, and we need to ensure that both these groups receive the fullness of the Spirit so that a hunger for more will rise up inside them. Our charismatic communities know this well; all of us must now pay more attention to the formation of families and young people.

Brothers and sisters in Christ

We share the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit with many Protestant, Pentecostal, and non-denominational Christians, and so we have an important contribution to

make in building strong ecumenical friendships and working relationships with these brothers and sisters in Christ. This is certainly on God’s agenda; it needs to be on ours too. But to do this effectively we must be sure of our Catholic identity—we are Catholic first and ecumenical second.

Divisions in the CCR

Our history shows a tendency to compete and divide, and this is something for which we must repent. There are still too many divisions in the CCR and they undermine our witness. We must also make sure we are not creating new divisions between the charismatic and the institutional parts of the Church. The two are co-essential, as Pope John Paul II reminded us in 1998, and we must always be on our guard against any spirit of division, competition or exclusivity.

Go into the whole world

Finally, we are called to be in the front line of the Church’s mission to the world. At Pentecost 1998, Pope John Paul II publicly gave us a clear mission: “Christ repeats to each one of you: Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15). He is counting on each one of you, the Church is counting on each one of you.” Let’s embrace that mission in unity with the whole Church, but let’s make sure we remain both prophetic and charismatic. What use is a Charismatic Renewal without the charisms? It would be like salt that has lost its taste “good for nothing and can only be thrown out and trampled underfoot” (Matthew 5:13).

So my prayer is that each of us in the CCR will remain faithful to our calling to be both prophetic and missionary, walking in the love, the freedom and the power of God, not of man, until we hear those wonderful words: “Well done, good and faithful servant... come and join in your master’s happiness” (Matthew 25:21). ♦



Charles Whitehead is Past President of ICCRS, was Chairman of the English National Service Committee Consultation until 2006, and is currently Chairman of the International Charismatic Consultation. He is a popular speaker and writes for a variety of publications.

Marching Orders

Peoria Diocese celebrates the Holy Spirit

There are many things one might expect to hear in a homily, but marching orders generally aren't among them. And yet that's what Deacon Greg Serangeli heard at the Prayer Vigil for the Feast of Pentecost on May 26 at St. Mary's Cathedral in Peoria.

The first of its kind in the Diocese of Peoria, it was based on an experience Bishop Jenky had in Rome when Pope John Paul II called together representatives of the groups and movements that were active in the church for an evening of prayer on the night before Pentecost. In a homily that capped an evening of scripture, musical praise and testimonies about how the Holy Spirit is working through the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Cursillo and Teens Encounter Christ, Hispanic ministry and campus ministry, and the Neocatechumenal Way, Bishop Daniel R. Jenky, CSC, urged his listeners to beg God for "a profound renewal of all the Pentecost gifts of the Holy Spirit."

"Why do we rest when so many still do not know the Lord," he asked. "Why are we so passive when even many Catholics have fallen away from the true faith? Let us all pray for a second phase

of our conversion, a deeper and more profound experience of the Spirit of God, for a new evangelization and a new springtime of faith," Bishop Jenky said. "That's the marching orders right there," said Deacon Greg Serangeli, director of the diocesan Office of Evangelization and one of the spiritual directors for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Diocese of Peoria.

At this diocesan celebration representatives from the various groups or movements gave testimony of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives and ministries:

- "I have found—sometimes the hard way—that I have to cling to the Holy Spirit so that my actions will bear fruit. What a joy God brings to me through the Holy Spirit!"
- "With the Spirit's help there are no barriers that cannot be broken down. We can work together to build up the kingdom of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit gives us the wisdom, the energy and the strength to go forward."
- "I realize how much I am loved—loved beyond measure. Christ comes to be with us in every moment of our day. Are we awake? Are we ready for him to come?"

● "The Holy Spirit became a real person, a person I could talk to."

In his homily, Bishop Jenky said that the disciples' encounter with the risen Christ was the first phase of their conversion. The descent of the Holy Spirit, the Advocate promised by Jesus, was the second. "From now on their time and talent belonged to the Lord and would be used for his kingdom," Bishop Jenky said. "Pentecost and all the transforming and comforting power of the Holy Spirit had changed everything about them." The bishop chal-

lenged Catholics to use their gifts to further the kingdom by defending their faith, and standing up for the poor and those in need.

Bishop Jenky encouraged those present to pray for a new Pentecost and to ask the Holy Spirit to dwell in their hearts. What would happen in our Church, and in society if we all prayed for a new Pentecost, he asked. ♦

Information in this news brief was taken from an article by Jennifer Willems in The Catholic Post, newspaper of the Diocese of Peoria, IL.



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WISDOM

The charisma of word of wisdom

How this charisma helps the Body grow in maturity

by Virginia King

Reflect on the following scriptures.

Which type of wisdom is described?

How does this apply to your life?

1 Kings 3:9

Wisdom 7:7

Proverbs 3:1-2

Acts 6:3

1 Corinthians 2:1-16

James 1:5

Charisms are for the body, for building up the body of Christ. Discerning, developing and using the charisms is essential for the growth and maturing of the Church and for the fulfillment of our mission. Therefore we must eagerly desire the charisms, as Paul exhorts us in 1 Corinthians 14:1 and pray for them to be manifest in us.

This article focuses on the charisma of word of wisdom. It is important to make distinctions between natural wisdom, the sanctifying gift of wisdom which is mentioned in Is. 11:2, and the charismatic gift of word of wisdom which is mentioned in 1 Cor. 12:8.

Natural wisdom is a certain understanding that is gained by life experience and by training. We learn natural wisdom from our parents and other mentors and role models. Often the older generation is known as the wisdom generation, because their maturity has given them an abundance of opportunity to gain natural wisdom. For example, in Proverbs 3:1-2, the author exhorts his son to learn from his advice.

The **sanctifying gift of wisdom** is an understanding of how God is calling us to live in order to become holy. It is seeing things from God's perspective rather than from our own limited perspective. Whereas natural wisdom is often called "common" sense, the sanctifying gift of wisdom might be called "Godly" sense. And seeing something from God's perspective always involves seeing it through the lens of

love. The Holy Spirit gifts us with the ability to understand our lives through the lens of love, which may appear as "foolishness to unbelievers" (1 Cor. 1:20-25).

The **charism of word of wisdom** is a manifestation of the Spirit in a particular time for a particular situation that builds up the body of Christ by providing understanding of how to live or how to respond. This charisma may be manifested in a large public gathering or in counseling an individual. It can be a gift of teaching or of healing or of counsel.

My own experience of the word of wisdom has come in apparently casual conversation when I have found myself speaking things that I had never thought about before. The words speak to the person's particular situation with power that is from God. I find that I am learning even as I am speaking. I find myself thinking, "Wow, where did that come from?" at the same time that I am aware that the Holy Spirit is providing the words that the other person needs to hear.

On other occasions, I am not conscious of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit but the person reports back, months or years later, that something I said had a life-changing impact on them. Normally I don't even recall the incident.

The charisma of word of wisdom can be a gift for healing when a person engaged in healing prayer ministry is given insight into how to pray

WISDOM

for a person. This gift often accompanies a Word of Knowledge – the word of knowledge reveals some facts about the person being prayed for, and the word of wisdom helps us know what to do with those facts, how to act on them. If we receive a word of knowledge about a disturbing incident in a person's past, the word of wisdom will give us understanding of the best way to bring that up in a prayer session. Or whether to bring it up at all. Perhaps it is information that we are to use to intercede for the person, but not to articulate to them.

The charism of word of wisdom can also be a gift for teaching. When preparing to give a teaching for a prayer meeting or other gathering, earnestly seek a word of wisdom, an inspiration that will touch people's hearts and transform their lives. This might be an insight into the nature of God or it might be practical ideas on how we are to respond to a prophetic word or scripture.

There are many ways that the Holy Spirit uses the charism of word of wisdom to build up the Body of Christ. Any of us may be used by the Holy Spirit at any time to exercise this gift. Be open to receive and use this charism whenever the Holy Spirit chooses to bestow it upon you. ♦

Virginia King is a former National Service Committee member and executive director of Western Washington Catholic Charismatic Renewal located in Seattle, Washington.



Strengthen from p. 5

sued speak for itself. He followed the admonition of St. Paul: "We beseech you, brethren, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves" (I Thess. 5:12, 13). Respect of others is a sign of maturity, even when others act or speak in ways that are difficult to respect. We are called to respect others because of the image of God in each person.

The next sign of ecclesial maturity should not be surprising: *service*. One of my favorite biblical texts is the end of Galatians 5:13: "For you are called to freedom, brethren, only to not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh but through love be servants of one another."

Our attitude should be that which Jesus recommended in his parable in Luke 17:7-10, which concludes: "We are unworthy servants, we have only done what was our duty." Whatever we do, we do in imitation of Jesus, "the Son of man [who] came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mt. 20:28). Charismatic groups, as well, should be ready to serve the needs of others and of the wider Church, as directed or guided by their pastors and by the local bishop.

Finally the last element that reflects ecclesial maturity is the ongoing pursuit of *education*. Education does not guarantee holiness or virtue ("knowledge puffs up, but love builds up", as St. Paul warned in 1 Cor. 8:1). However, if we desire to grow to maturity in Christ, those involved in the charismatic renewal would benefit from education in the true Catholic understanding of God's revelation as presented in Sacred Scripture, and Sacred Tradition.

The Church communicates God's revelation to us in many ways, such as in *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*,² papal teachings and the teachings of the Second Vatican Council. I have been enriched over the years not only by my own study of Church history and the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, but also by the work of charismatic renewal leaders such as Ralph Martin, who in recent years has presented in a very understandable and powerful form the teachings of the great Catholic mystics. He has presented those both in his tape series, distributed by *Renewal Ministries*, and in his recent book, *The Fulfillment of All Desire* (Emmaus Road). I have also been struck by the increasing number of lay Catholics pursuing advanced degrees in Theology, such as through our distance learning degree program at Franciscan University of Steubenville.

Through education in scripture and the tradition of the Church, we can truly grow into fuller maturity in Christ! So here is our challenge, to grow in 'ecclesial maturity' through the pursuit of *holiness* and *humility*, with *openness* to all the Holy Spirit's working in the Church, with sincere *respect* for others and how the Holy Spirit is working in them especially in our ordained leaders, in *service* to the Church and to our neighbor, and always seeking to grow in wisdom and maturity through ongoing *education*. May the Lord enable us through his Holy Spirit to strive for this full maturity in Christ! ♦

(This is a condensed version of Dr. Schreck's article. The entire article may be read on the NSC website: www.nsc-chariscenter.org.)

Dr. Alan Schreck is a full professor and Chair of the Theology Department at Franciscan University of Steubenville.



From the Executive Director

by Walter Matthews

Bishops Speak, Our Response

In anticipation of the Renewal's 40th Anniversary the Renewal Office in the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis wrote to all the (arch)bishops in the US asking them "to provide an evaluation of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal." Over fifty responded and their responses were collected and published.

Recently, we responded to those who wrote:

"We are grateful for the reflections you offered us in your letter published in the booklet *Bishops Speak to the Renewal* (revised edition).

We want you to know that as leaders in the Renewal we have read your reflections—the affirmations of strengths and delineation of weaknesses and have prayerfully considered your suggestions for how the Renewal might make an even deeper impact on the Church in the US.

As was summarized by the editors we have taken to heart the call to be more effective in passing on the fire of Pentecost to the next generation, more effective in the ways we work to "encourage clergy to be more open to a deeper understanding and experience of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal," the training of leadership and greater participation in the Church's educational and evangelization efforts.

Allow us to highlight steps we have taken in response:

◆ with the Diocesan Liaisons we formed a Youth Ministry Committee and tasked them "to foster openness to the work of the Holy Spirit among youth ministers."

In addition we are in dialogue with Franciscan University of Steubenville concerning follow up to the over 30,000 youth who participate in their youth conferences each year.

◆ with regard to clergy we have begun in the areas we have seen most fruitful: diocesan days of prayer for priests, most recently in conjunction with the World Day of Prayer for the Sanctification of Priests on June 15. We also sponsored a Day for Priests and Seminarists with Fr. Benedict Groeschel, CFR on the topic "The Holy Spirit in the Life of Priests." We will do more;

◆ as for leadership training we have convened three National Leaders' Conferences and will hold a fourth next year. We have also published a new series of five Leaflets on the basics of the Renewal. We intend to publish more.

◆ Finally, [it] has been our constant encouragement in our Conferences and quarterly publication, *Pentecost Today* [for the Renewal] to catch the vision of the new evangelization as Pope John Paul II articulated it and its recent re-articulation by Pope Benedict XVI who called for a "true first evangelization."

We will work for prayer groups to become better "schools of prayer" and schools of mission.

Again, thank you for taking the time to write, to speak! We heard you and, by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, we are seeking to respond."
(End of letter.)

We encourage all groups in the Renewal to be in communion with the Church through their diocesan Bishop and other appropriate authorities. That is ecclesial maturity. ◆

Friends of the NSC

One of our donors recently spoke to me of the need to make the case to those whose lives were touched, changed or transformed by the Renewal that the Lord wants us to pass this grace on to the next generation. And more specifically, the need to ensure that this Renewal, and in this case, the National Service Committee and Chariscenter USA continue by making "a gift of property, especially personal property, as money by will," which is the first definition of "legacy." In short, a bequest.

The donor felt that there are many who may not be conscious of the need—the obligation—to provide for the future. Further, he did not feel that leaving a legacy was necessarily confined to bequests and wills. Those whose children are raised and gone, who have already retired or who will soon be retiring may be in a position to make substantive gifts **now** to insure that this work continues.

One donor who thought to make a legacy we want to thank is Agnes Hagan, who died two years ago and who named us in her will. May she rest in peace.

I encourage you to pray: am I such a person? What can/should I do? Do I know someone in my prayer group, parish or diocese who was touched by the Renewal who is of modest or better means? Will you approach them on the NSC's behalf?

Should you like to discuss a legacy gift further please call us at 1-800-338-2445.

Our legal name is: The National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the United States, Inc. (Dba Chariscenter USA).

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What we have seen and heard

.....
by Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner



Special honor for Renewal leaders

At the National Conference in June, during which we celebrated and praised God for 40 years of Charismatic Renewal, we also honored and thanked five people for some ways in which they have responded to the call of leadership within this movement of the Holy Spirit.

Dave Mangan, Sister Nancy Kellar, S.C., Patti Gallagher Mansfield, Jim Murphy and Monsignor Joseph Malagrecia were individually recognized for their roles over the years. Each received a plaque citing specific contributions.

Dave Mangan, a former member of the National Service Committee for Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the United States was reminded that "Forty years ago at a retreat for students and faculty now known as the "Duquesne Weekend" you took a step of faith and from that moment your life has been a witness to many."

Sister Nancy Kellar, a founding member of the Saint Elizabeth Seton House of Prayer, a former member of the National Service Committee (US) and of the Council of the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services, then becoming the first female Director of ICCRS in Rome (1994-1996) has challenged us to believe that "There is always more!"

Patti Gallagher Mansfield, who, on behalf of renewal movements, had the privilege of addressing Pope Benedict XVI on the eve of Pentecost 2006, was also present at the "Duquesne Weekend." Patti has "traveled to over a dozen countries telling the story of

what the Lord did then and continues to do now."

Jim Murphy, also a former member and chairman of the National Service Committee and more recently, of the ICCRS Council, has been an enthusiastic witness and leader on the local, national and international levels. "Your eighteen month 4,200 mile journey on foot carrying a cross across America in an effort of prayer and evangelization will long be remembered."

Monsignor Joseph Malagrecia, a parish pastor and former member of the Steering Committee for the Association of Diocesan Liaisons for Charismatic Renewal was recognized for showing us "the way to be among the diverse ethnic peoples of the Church as one who serves" and as a leader "who draws forth the gifts of all around you."

There is so much more that could be shared about each of these individuals. We thank Dave, Sister Nancy, Patti, Jim, and Monsignor Joe for their faithfulness, their leadership, their enthusiasm, their witness and their encouragement.

We pray that they will continue to know the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

We thank each of you, our readers, for each one has a story to tell of the wonders God has worked in and through your lives. May the Holy Spirit be ever alive in them and in you! ♦

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