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PENTECOST *Today*

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



Chairman's Corner

.....
by Fr. Richard Loch

Gathering joy & strength

This past summer I had the opportunity and joy of taking part in several charismatic conferences. They were of various sizes, 200 to 2,200, and each had a unique personality, particular format, and style of worship and music. Among the elements common to each, one stood out for me, the blessing that comes with being at a charismatic gathering.

So often I hear the lament that prayer groups are small and lack the joy, enthusiasm and depth of charismatic gifts that were present in years gone by. It would be foolish to try to recreate the prayers groups of the past for that was a particular time that is now gone. It would also be foolish to minimize the power of the Holy Spirit and the importance of the gifts of the Spirit, for the Holy Spirit is ever present in the Church and we do not want to be blind to the Spirit's power.

Conferences, Days of Renewal, Festivals of Praise, etc. are times when we charismatics gather in larger numbers to praise the Lord. These events bring us together and allow us to use the charismatic gifts to praise God in a way that builds up the body of Christ and encourages us to grow in our faith. Excitement, devotion and rejuvenation flow through those present as they rediscover the power that comes from being with other Catholic charismatics to do what we do best—praise the Lord!

The Holy Spirit is ever present in the Church and we do not want to be blind to the Spirit's power.

At these gatherings I am lifted up by the beauty and harmony of the praise, both in our native languages and in tongues. It is a praise that reflects psalm 141:2 "Let my prayer arise before you like incense, the raising of my hands like an evening oblation."

At one of the conferences I attended the emcee announced some other upcoming charismatic events in the area. He then went on to invite those gathered, who had information about other events, to pass it on to him. As the weekend progressed the list grew longer and longer and I was pleasantly surprised with how much was going on in that area. I realized how many opportunities there are for all of us that we might not be aware of. I suggest that we proudly and enthusiastically get the word out in our areas of all that we are doing. Rather than giving into the temptation of being protective of our turf let us open up to announcing and promoting the activities that others in our area are sponsoring.

The joy, enthusiasm and depth of charismatic gifts that we desire in our prayer groups could very well already be present in our area. Take advantage of what is there as a means for us to praise the Lord, and then to return to our prayer groups with renewed joy in the power of the Holy Spirit. ♦

Fr. Richard Loch is Chairman of the National Service Committee.



Editor's Desk

.....
by Sr. Martha Jean McGarry

...so that they all may be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that the world may believe that you have sent me (John 17:21).

Several articles in this issue help us to reflect on the vastness of the Body of Christ and our call to unity.

Fr. Bob Hogan's article encourages us to seek the Spirit's guidance in renewing all of Catholic life in our day. His practical suggestions and Biblical insights can be most helpful in our own growth and in our efforts to share the Good News within our own Church community. **Fr. Peter Hocken**, in his article on the ecumenical grace of the Renewal, recalls its history, prophetic dimension, and blessings. Fr. Peter suggests what we can do to ensure both our Catholic and ecumenical heritage. See page 15 for a related article.

What is the Spirit doing today among our youth, ethnic groups, and other components of the Charismatic Renewal? Check out **Walter Matthews** article and Newsbriefs for updates.

In her article on pastoral planning **Jane Guenther** details how her archdiocese is sharing the hidden treasure of the Holy Spirit. Renewal offices and prayer groups can glean much wisdom from this article.

Sister Christine Edwards asks: Why isn't there more love, joy, and peace among Christians? Look for her response in this issue's reflection on the fruits of the Spirit.

With hearts filled with thanksgiving, let us love one another, share the Good News, and build the Body of Christ.

Can we grow spiritually to a point of having joy even in the midst of trials?

Love, Joy & Peace

by Sister Christine Edwards

Have you ever met someone who had such grace about them and exuded so much love, joy and peace, that you felt drawn to them? Love, joy and peace are God's great gifts to us and are actually the normal state of a Christian. Yet these gifts don't come to us naturally, but come through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. That's why they're called the fruits of the Spirit. We cannot produce them by our own power.

"God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, that has been given to us" (Rom. 5:5). And love is his first gift, containing all others. It's in God's love that we find joy and peace. It is the love of the Holy Spirit that flows through us as we love with God's own love. It's far different from the world's counterfeit for love, which can be brute passion or vile egoism.

Jesus says, "Abide in my love so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full" (Jn. 15:10). Abide means a constant presence—to live there. The key to our joy is our abiding in Jesus. It's not the world's joy, which is a superficial fleeting happiness.

St. James says, "Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance" (Jas. 1:2-4). So joy can be present even in suffering. It's not a surface emotion, but it's a depth experience—it's deeper and inner. We have access to a love, peace and joy that cannot be destroyed by pain, suffering and death, as long as we live in the Lord.

Can we grow spiritually to a point of having joy even in the midst of trials? The saints did. Jesus said, "Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete" (Jn. 16:24).

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem the angels proclaimed peace. On the last night Jesus spent on earth he said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you" (Jn. 14:27). His customary greeting to his apostles after his resurrection was, "Peace be upon you!" (Jn. 20:21). Peace is a gift so beautiful, so profound, and so efficacious, that we shall never fully comprehend it. It's the fruit of the Holy Spirit in us and the synthesis of all the graces and heavenly blessings that we have received in Christ. It's the peace that surpasses all understanding. The world cannot counterfeit peace, because peace is a Divine thing.

Since the fruits of the Spirit are such wonderful gifts, why isn't there more love, joy and peace among Christians? In a world beset by terrorism, recession, natural disasters and evil of all kinds, it can be increasingly difficult to live in Christ's spirit of love, joy and peace. The world, the flesh and the devil are at war to keep us from living in the fruit of the Spirit.

In Galatians 5 we find the fruits of the Spirit listed by St. Paul immediately after he is talking about the works of the flesh—meaning all that is opposed to the will of God. Paul gives a list of obstacles to the fruit of the Spirit. Here he is clearly telling us what to avoid and oppose, and what we

See **Love** page 12

Renewed Catholic life

by Fr. Bob Hogan

It is a wonderful grace when the Holy Spirit touches our lives in a personal way! This grace is meant to be a *beginning* of new life for us, not a final accomplishment. The Holy Spirit has so much more! The seed planted can bear fruit 30, 60 and 100 fold! The Holy Spirit is the power of the new creation, renewing all things, **RENEWING THE FACE OF THE EARTH!** How does the Spirit want to renew all of Catholic life in our day?

The new Vision Statement for the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal says: “Catholic Charismatic Renewal invites all people to experience the Holy Spirit who opens us to a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father. The Holy Spirit empowers us for personal holiness, renewed Catholic life, and evangelization.”

The Holy Spirit makes the persons of the Trinity real in our lives. We experience union with God’s love and presence. From this union we are given the power to be clothed with the qualities of Jesus (personal holiness); to share the Good News of Jesus with others (evangelization); and to participate in the re-creation of all aspects of Catholic life (renewed Catholic life).

The U.S. Bishop’s Ad Hoc Committee for Charismatic Renewal produced a document, “Grace for a New Springtime” (1997), which states, “Baptism in the Holy Spirit makes Jesus Christ known and loved as Lord and Savior, establishes or reestablishes an immediacy of relationship with all the persons of the Trinity, and through inner transformation affects the whole of the Christian’s life. There is new life and a new conscious awareness of God’s power and presence. It is a grace experience which touches every dimension of the Church’s life: worship, preaching, teaching, ministry, evangelism, prayer and spirituality, service and community” (p. 5). In its fullness baptism in the Spirit can lead to “renewed Catholic life” in “every dimension of the Church’s life.”

The description of renewed Catholic life in Acts

What does this “renewed Catholic life” look like? After Pentecost (Acts 2:42-47 and 4:23-37) the believers experienced the Spirit moving them from a personal experience of renewal to creating a whole new lifestyle that influenced their priorities, their families, their work, their finances, and the way they related with one another and their society:

- ✦ **Priorities:** “They devoted themselves” (Acts 2:42, 46). The Spirit led them to commit themselves to certain focused priorities for their lives.
- ✦ **Devoted to the teaching of the Apostles:** They desired to keep learning about Jesus and his teachings, and recognized the apostles’ role of teaching authoritatively about Jesus.
- ✦ **Devoted to the communal life:** They were “together and held all things in common” (Acts 2:44) and had “one heart and mind” (Acts 4:32). The Church was a community with close, supportive, sharing relationships.
- ✦ **Devoted to the breaking of the bread:** They celebrated together the Eucharist, the Lord’s Supper, as Jesus had commanded them.
- ✦ **Devoted to the prayers:** They met together in the temple area to pray, praising God (Acts 2:46-47). They “raised their voices to God with one accord” (Acts 4:24) when they faced persecution, seeking a renewed experience of the Spirit’s boldness in order to evangelize.
- ✦ **Devoted to evangelization:** They did not pray mainly for protection from persecution, but for boldness to continue to evangelize (Acts 4:29-31).
- ✦ **Devoted to sharing their finances:** They did not claim their possessions as their own but held them in common, focusing on caring for each person’s needs (Acts 2:42-45; 4:32-36). They gave even more than 10% (tithe) for the Church!

Every dimension of their lives was influenced by their Spirit-led lifestyle.

Renewed Catholic life today

What does this image of the first Christians’ lifestyle mean for us? The First Letter of John tells us that if you “let what you heard from the beginning remain in you” (2:24), then you can trust the anointing of the Spirit to continue to teach and lead you (2:27). As we are devoted to the full image of the community lifestyle at the beginnings of the Church, we can receive the Spirit’s anointing concerning the ways he wants to develop “renewed Catholic life” in

They did not pray mainly for protection from persecution, but for boldness to continue to evangelize.

today's world. We want to learn to let the Holy Spirit be our Advocate (Divine counselor, helper, guide, companion) in every aspect of daily life and the life of the Church. We want Spirit-inspired (guided, empowered, energized): family life and parenting; work relationships and Godly direction in our work; worship, music, liturgy and sacraments; teaching and preaching; pro-life ministry; practical moral living; service to our communities; service for the poor; development of Churches and groups; youth ministry; financial responsibility and sharing; communications and media; united Christian efforts for our cities; lay ministry; priestly and religious life.

Our initial spiritual awakening by the Spirit is meant to open us to be a people that are led, empowered and given practical wisdom in developing a renewed Catholic lifestyle. I believe that God is calling us to become very practical in seeking the Spirit's guidance. Here is one way that we can seek guidance during our prayer time in order to develop a renewed lifestyle.

We ask the Holy Spirit:

- 1)** To reveal to us what renewed life looks like in each area of family, work, finances, church, society, culture, media, relationships, ministry, etc.
- 2)** To empower us with charisms (spiritual gifts) and the fruit of the Spirit to live what is revealed to us.
- 3)** To give us the wisdom to apply God's direction in our practical situations.
- 4)** To give us God's priorities for us. Which area(s) of renewed Catholic life are we being called to be active in developing under the Spirit's guidance?

Prayer Group leadership teams, Diocesan service committees, Liaisons, Covenant communities, parish leaders, ministries, families, and all groups seeking to be led by the Holy Spirit can ask the Lord how he wants them to join in the renewal of Catholic lifestyle and culture. Even people who attend church regularly can be affected more by a media

influenced lifestyle, than by one based on scriptural and Church teaching that is applied in new ways for today's world under the guidance and wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

Within the Catholic Charismatic Renewal we have seen "renewed Catholic life" developing through:

- ✦ Covenant communities that have gained much wisdom about Catholic family life;
- ✦ Parish prayer groups that support families and offer specific Spirit-led services in their parishes;
- ✦ Ministries for youth (Steubenville conferences, National Evangelization Teams (N.E.T.), Lifeteen, etc.) that influence the lifestyle of youth;
- ✦ Evangelization ministries that help people to hear and share the Good News;
- ✦ Ministries serving the poor that bring faith and service together;
- ✦ Healing ministries that heal and strengthen families;
- ✦ Music and media ministries that seek to leaven our society with a Catholic Christian outlook.

These are a few examples. Let us be open to the Holy Spirit's full leading and creativity! Each of our groups has some calling to promote the development of "renewed Catholic life." Be practical with the Holy Spirit. Paul and Barnabas were sent on their first missionary journey because the leadership team at the Church of Antioch came together to pray and fast in order to seek the Spirit's direction. Use the four areas that I have given you to seek your group's particular calling. Pray and ponder the image of the first Christian community in Acts to see if the Lord may be calling your group to emphasize a certain aspect of their lifestyle. We want to be people who pray, "Come Holy Spirit! Fill the hearts of your faithful, and kindle in them the fire of your love." Then we complete this prayer by cooperating with the Spirit as we pray, "Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and you shall **RENEW THE FACE OF THE EARTH!**" ♦



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

The ecumenical grace of Charismatic Renewal

by Fr. Peter Hocken

For many years a major tension has existed in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) between, on the one hand, the need for the renewal to be authentically Catholic and to contribute in a significant way to the renewal of the Catholic Church, and, on the other hand, to do justice to the ecumenical character of the Renewal from its beginnings and to realize its major potential for Christian unity.

Both concerns have a fundamental legitimacy. From this angle, the tension is necessary. In this article I suggest ways to maintain this tension so that neither tendency takes over from the other: either the unity concern becomes so dominant that the need for the Renewal as an identifiable expression of charismatic renewal is called into question, or the concern to be Catholic leads to an ignoring or playing down of its ecumenical character and potential.

The origins

From its beginnings as a movement in 1967, the Renewal was blessed through the ministry of Protestant charismatics and Pentecostals. The famous Duquesne weekend in February 1967 resulted from Catholics reading *The Cross and the Switchblade* by then Pentecostal David Wilkerson. Some Catholics were baptized in the Spirit through the ministry of Episcopalians Richard Winkler in Wheaton, Illinois and Dennis Bennett in Seattle. The first prayer meetings at Notre Dame were helped by a Pentecostal, Ray Bullard. Francis MacNutt experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit through Episcopal healing pioneer, Agnes Sanford. In England,

the Renewal had two sources: one the movement arriving from the United States, the other from Catholics baptized in the Spirit through the ministry of Pentecostals. In France and Italy there were also ecumenical contributions to the origins. In Colombia, Harald Bredesen lit the flame. In Peru, a visiting ecumenical team triggered the beginnings of charismatic renewal. In Korea, the Renewal began through the ministry of a Swedish Pentecostal called to Korea in 1970 to pray for Catholics to be baptized in the Spirit and through a Pentecost retreat she organized with Episcopalian Archer Torrey.

The origins of Renewal also manifested a strong orientation toward the renewal of the Catholic Church, which had no exact parallel among Protestants. The Second Vatican Council had placed a vision for the renewal of all Catholic life firmly in the Catholic consciousness. The emerging group of young leaders included graduates from Notre Dame, who had been active in Vatican II-oriented campus groups. This vision that the Renewal should serve the rejuvenation of the Church was examined in the book *Where are we headed?* (1973) by Steve Clark, an early Renewal leader.

These two elements were evident in all the large Renewal conferences of the early-to-mid 1970s, both at Notre Dame and the mid-Atlantic conferences at Atlantic City, New Jersey. The ecumenical component was visible in the invited participation of Protestant charismatic teachers, both for major talks and to lead workshops, and the honoring of guests from other Chris-

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World Methodist Council representative, Rev. Edgar Hiestand, meets with Pope John Paul II at the Interreligious Assembly at the Vatican, October 1999, on the eve of the third millennium.

tian traditions. The orientation to renewal of the Church was clear in the teachings, in the role of the liturgy and in the presence and support of Catholic bishops. Both elements were evident in the life of new communities with an ecumenical make-up and an ecumenical vision. This holding together of the tensions reached its climax in the great Kansas City conference of 1977, in which the mornings were spent in church groupings, the afternoons had optional workshops from leaders in all traditions, and the evenings brought everyone together in the giant stadium.

A period of consolidation

From 1980, the period of mushrooming growth appeared to be over, at least in the United States, and a period of consolidation followed. It included more structuring of the Renewal (including diocesan liaisons, liaisons' conferences, a more representative National Service Committee) and the move of the International Renewal Office from Brussels to Rome, followed by the retirement of Cardinal Leon Suenens who was an early leader in the Renewal and had encouraged the move of the International Office to Brussels, and the first appointment of a bishop in the Vatican with responsibility for the Charismatic Renewal. People spoke about "moving to the heart of the Church." In the Vatican, the Renewal came under the Pontifical Council for the Laity, which had responsibility for

Photo: courtesy of Rev. Edgar Hiestand

lay movements, which have since become known as the “new ecclesial movements.” This brought definite advantages for the recognition of the place of the Renewal in the Catholic Church, but it also tended to obscure its unique features—that it had no human founder like the other movements, as well as its ecumenical origins and character.

It is maybe not surprising that this period saw a decline in the ecumenical expressions of renewal. This prompts the question: was this decline a factor in a loss of dynamism in the Renewal and a decrease in its impact?

New ecumenical stirrings

While the ecumenical expressions in CCR were lessening, the Holy Spirit was raising up new witnesses to unity. Several pioneer figures (notably Michael Harper, then Anglican, Lutheran Larry Christenson, Pentecostal Vinson Synan and Redemptorist preacher, Fr Tom Forrest) came together in the mid-to-late 1980s to launch a new ecumenical network at the world-wide level, a pattern repeated in Europe and North America. Papal preacher, Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, whose charismatic initiation had begun in Kansas City, was deeply convinced of the ecumenical character of renewal, and many will remember his electric talk on unity at the Brighton (UK) conference of 1991. At this time Charles Whitehead from England was emerging as a major figure in CCR; Charles has an Anglican wife and he was baptized in the Spirit through the ministry of an Anglican priest. So it is no surprise that he has constantly championed the ecumenical component of Renewal (he is currently chair of the International Charismatic Consultation). Charles Whitehead provides an outstanding example of holding the ecumenical and the Catholic together.

Theological developments

Only at Vatican II in 1964 did the Catholic Church first endorse Catholic

participation in the movement for Christian unity. In its teaching on the Church and those baptized outside the Catholic Church, the Council taught clearly for the first time that other Christians and their ecclesial communities are not simply “outside” the one Church. Since then, official Catholic documents have a language for describing their situation: other Christian bodies are in “imperfect communion” with the Catholic Church, that is to say, there is a real communion in the things of Christ within the one Body of Christ, but there is not yet the full or perfect communion that characterizes the Church in communion with Rome. This change in our church understanding has not yet adequately influenced the ways that we Catholics think and talk about “the Church.” When we speak as though other Christians are totally “outside,” there is something lacking in our understanding.

Holding together the Catholic and the ecumenical belongs to the heart of our Catholic faith. So Pope John Paul II wrote on unity in 1995: “ecumenism, the movement promoting Christian unity, is not just some sort of ‘appendix’ which is added to the Church’s traditional activity. Rather, ecumenism is an organic part of her life and work, and consequently must pervade all that she is and does” (*Ut Unum Sint*, #20). Following the Council it is no longer acceptable for Catholics to define what it means to be authentically Catholic in anti-Protestant terms—that the more you emphasize what Protestants deny, the more Catholic you must be! To be Catholic is to embrace the fullness of the biblical revelation, the fullness of Jesus Christ, the universal service of the Pope and to stand against all individualistic tendencies that weaken the ecclesial and corporate character of Christian faith. So, in *Ut Unum Sint*, John Paul II describes his ministry as Pope as a “ministry of unity” to bring the whole Body of

Prayer Card

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens, as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be whole and without blemish before him.”

Ephesians 1: 3-4

Christ to its fullness of being “one” as Jesus and his Father are one.

Many are concerned today about the future of the Renewal. Fr. Cantalamessa has said that if the Renewal is not prophetic, it is nothing. One of the areas at the heart of the prophetic dimension of CCR is its ecumenical character. When we lose that, we lose the deep dynamism of the Spirit. But what can we do to ensure that the Renewal is both Catholic and ecumenical? **First**, and most fundamental, we have to help Catholics to acquire a new post-Vatican II sense of Catholic identity, that is defined in terms of Catholic fullness and no longer by what we are against! **Second**, we can ask what are the gifts that the others will bring to the Catholic

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Intercessions:

- ▲ For those who gather for the National Leaders and Ministries Conference in Raleigh, may they be prepared in heart, soul and spirit to receive what the Holy Spirit has prepared for them
- ▲ May the presenters of the Conference be led and protected by the Holy Spirit in the preparation and fulfilling of their ministries.
- ▲ That the National Service Committee, with the council, be attentive to the leading of the Holy Spirit as they gather in prayer for service.
- ▲ May the Editorial Board Planning Committee of "Pentecost Today" be blessed by the Lord with fruitful plans for future editions.
- ▲ As the leadership groups come together in January, 2010, may the fruits of their prayer and discernment help to bring growth and unity amongst all whose lives have been touched by the Holy Spirit.

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fullness that unity will require. This corresponds to the teaching in *Ut Unum Sint* that: "Dialogue is not simply an exchange of ideas. In some way it is always an 'exchange of gifts'" (#28). **Third**, we can bring the grace and empowerment of the Spirit in the Renewal to the wider Catholic work for Christian unity. **Lastly**, we need to pray. Ecumenism can never be reduced to a program! It is always a calling that can only be received in prayer. ♦



Fr Peter Hocken is a priest from England who lived in the USA for 20 years. He is a member of the Doctrinal Committee of International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services.



How we share the hidden treasure of the Holy Spirit

by Jane Guenther

Five years ago in January I was appointed to the position of Coordinator of our Archdiocesan Renewal Center and one of the first questions I was asked by a priest friend was, "What is the pastoral plan for the Catholic Renewal Center?" That single question has shaped the approach to our Center's development. So what exactly is pastoral planning? In the case of the Catholic Renewal Center it was establishing a mission statement for our work in response to the Archbishop's mission for the archdiocese "to bring Jesus Christ to others with a new enthusiasm and new energy."

That was not difficult for it is the Holy Spirit that is the power behind our enthusiasm and energy. Once a mission statement was established, we brought together a group of leaders in the Renewal and had a daylong brainstorming session at a local retreat center. We established some visioning

It seemed as though the most important step to bring the Holy Spirit was to establish consistent events to expose the hidden treasure.

for the Renewal and developed plans to implement the vision and priorities. The Renewal Center's Service Committee met and established steps to achieve the mission. It seemed as though the most important step to bring the Holy Spirit was to establish consistent events to expose the hidden treasure. For years the National Service Committee has encouraged us to bring the Renewal down the "center aisle" of the Church. Keeping that in mind we wanted to be as concrete as we could to bring this treasure to the heart of the Church.

Establishing Life in the Spirit Seminars and Healing Masses in the 10 Deaneries of the Archdiocese was a first. Although it took two years we have established a Life in the Spirit Seminar

(LISS) within our local seminary. We will be holding our third annual seminary LISS this fall. The seminary has a Thursday evening prayer meeting to follow-up for the remaining of the school year. We moved on to host the first religious sisters' LISS and they are beginning a prayer meeting this August. This fall we will also be offering a LISS for the Curia of the Archdiocese. It has been a wonderful gift to see the Spirit ignite in the hearts of these committed faithful.

One of the benefits of collaborative ministry is that the gifts of each can be used for the common good. Yes in some ways our Center tries to implement one of the four pillars of Catholic social teaching: common good. In recognizing the gifts of other ministries in your diocese you can move to work together on programs and projects that will help the entire Church. Working with the local stewardship office to expose the talent portion of stewardship has been a rewarding process and certainly brings the Holy Spirit into the heart of each parish. Working with the youth ministry we are spreading our wings to help out with Girl and Boy Scout retreats on the Holy Spirit, and of course with Life in the Spirit Seminars for teens. Partnering with the Office of Evangelization to help bring a School of Evangelization to the parish leaders of the archdiocese bore much fruit. Looking at some of the ways in which the Charismatic Renewal has sprouted ministries like the Magnificat and working to establish them on a solid foundation within the archdiocese takes concerted pastoral planning. Patience is a must if you are going to grow strong.

Spreading the message in a systematic way can be beneficial for the liaison in reporting to the bishop about the work



being accomplished among the faithful. It gives a way for adjusting programs to fit the needs that may be seen throughout the Church. We know that the "Spirit blows where it will" and we certainly can be willing to live by "you can't change the direction of the wind but you can adjust your sails." A willingness to work in cooperation with the Spirit and others in ministry will lead to successfully bringing the Renewal to the heart of the Church. We all have to recognize that the Spirit is always doing something new. In Isaiah we hear "I am doing something new;" at the birth of the Renewal over 40 years ago everything was new. The challenge now is to grow as Pope John Paul II encouraged us in "ecclesial maturity" and I believe that takes pastoral planning. Children have a tendency to act quickly and sometimes get burned. In our maturity we have better sense. We can anticipate and plan to move with the Spirit with conviction and certainty exercising the gift of discernment in the process.

Ongoing training for leaders is a must to keep the flame fanned. It is important to create opportunities for larger gatherings of those in the Renewal where manifestations of the Spirit will be diverse. Our prayer groups allow for the intimacy of the Lord to be among God's people and the larger area wide gatherings of prayer groups gives way to surrendering to the Spirit in a larger Church setting with a wider circle of gifts being used. Giving opportunities for those involved in the Renewal to hear what is happening nationally and

internationally within the Renewal is also essential in the pastoral plan. It helps us move out of isolation into the fullness of the community of the worldwide Church.

Creating evaluations for programs aids in successfully elevating the program to benefit God's people the most. "If something is worth doing it is worth doing well." These wise words pull us in a direction of understanding why we work on pastoral plans and work to implement them.

Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap writes in the book *Remembering Jesus Christ*, "another characteristic of kerygma: it has an explosive or germinative character, so to speak. It is more like the seed that becomes a tree than the ripe fruit at the top of the tree that in Christianity is constituted by charity." The real test of the kerygmatic experience is what a pastoral plan hopes to accomplish: the formation of disciples who actively participate in the mission of the Church, to evangelize. Pope Paul VI said, "Finally the person who has been evangelized goes on to evangelize others. Here lies the test of truth, the touchstone of evangelization: it is unthinkable that a person should accept the Word, and give himself to the kingdom without becoming a person who bears witness to it and proclaims it in his turn" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 24). May you have success in developing a pastoral plan for the Renewal in your area that will help build the kingdom. ♦



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