

## Prayer card

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

- ◆ For the NSC Pastoral Planning Meeting in September
- ◆ For the preparations for the 2005 Prayer Summit
- ◆ For the people to respond to the words of Pope John Paul II at Pentecost, especially for inspiration for liaisons, prayer group leaders and priests in assisting that response
- ◆ For the financial needs of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal at the local, national, and international levels
- ◆ For the upcoming Regional Leaders Gatherings



## 2004 National Catholic

by Mary Anne Schaezler, SSND

“Lord, we long to see your face.” This was the theme of the 2004 National Catholic Charismatic Conference in Lowell, Massachusetts, June 25–27.

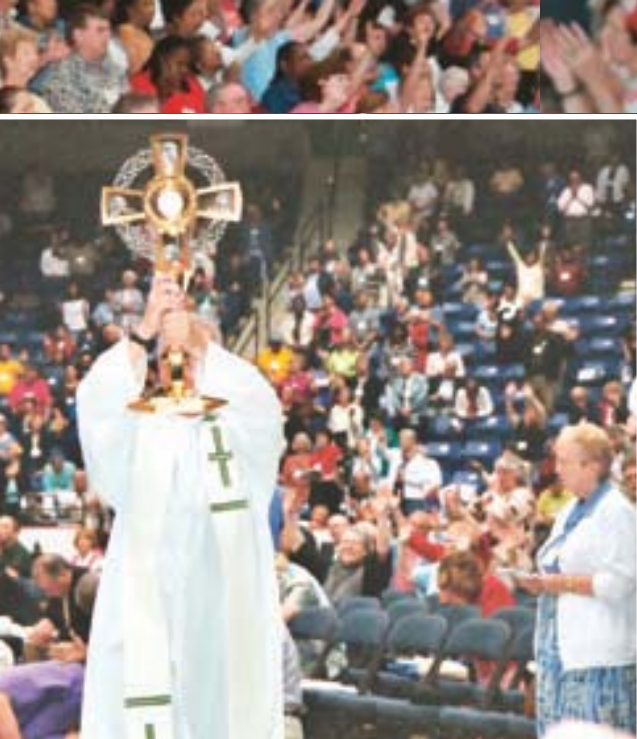
On Friday evening **Fr. Bruce Nieli, CSP**, engaged our imaginations around the theme of the conference as he painted a verbal image of four rivers of living water. They are the rivers of unity or intimate love, of truth or endless love, of goodness or sacrificial love, and of beauty or universal love. Fr. Bruce has a unique way of drawing on the history of our country and the lives of people who challenged the status quo in areas of justice.

On Saturday we were invited to see the face of the Lord in the poor with examples shared by **Fr. Richard Ho Lung, M.O.P.** of Jamaica. We were exhorted to see the Lord’s face through intercession by **Kim Kollins** of Germany who shared her vision of the burning bush and prayer for Christian Unity and through the witness of **Elizabeth Hundley**. Seeing and proclaiming the kingdom of God was the theme of the evening session with **Jim Murphy** and **Barbara Ryan**. Jim exhorted all those present to get into the presence of God, to become holy, to “pray in” the kingdom of God, to make a practical difference in the world, to be zealous, bold and focused until all are safe at home in the kingdom of God. At this session and through prayer room ministry during the lunch and dinner breaks there were many opportunities to seek the face of God for healing on many levels. Witnesses, such as **Fr. Richard Loch** sharing his escape from fire, encouraged listeners to be in touch with their own human experience of God’s compassion as the face of God shines upon us.

On Sunday morning we heard **Virginia King** witness to how God broke into her heart and shared a deep love for one whom she found difficult to love.



Photos: Shannon Marraffino, Mike Marraffino



# Charismatic Conference

Her prayer was that the Lord would give her his love with which to love. And God did. Barbara Ryan then elaborated on the power of God which raised Christ from the dead and which dwells in us.

In his homily at the Sunday morning mass, **Fr. Marc Montminy** spoke of the Holy Spirit as the Lord and Giver of Life. Without the Holy Spirit God is far away. We need the Holy Spirit. A parish cannot be transformed without the Holy Spirit. In his parish there are ministries that directly touch the poor. **He shared that if we don't see God's face we won't see the face of the poor, the aged, and the sick.**

On the wall above the altar area in the Lowell Auditorium were the words, "Liberty to all." It was interesting to me, as I noticed the words from an era in our country when we were seeking political freedom, to hear in Sunday's second reading from Galatians 5 the words, "For freedom God set us free."

As always, music was wrapped around and embedded in the weekend experience. God was enthroned on the praises of the people. There was much joy and worship. There was freedom in dance. As we began on Friday evening we had heard the word to, "Let your joy be bountiful because I am here."

Fr Bruce, on Friday evening, proclaimed that we are on the eve of a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the United States. Let us ready ourselves through prayer asking that we might be ready and willing to be instruments through whom the Holy Spirit can spread the aroma of this great anointing upon our earth and its people who are suffering and who long (whether or not they know it) to see the face of the Lord. **"Lord, we long to see your face."** ♦



What is the nature of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal?



Charles Whitehead

## Extra! Extra! Read All About It

There is an exciting new pamphlet by Charles Whitehead! Addressing leaders of the Renewal in September of 2003 at an international gathering held at Castelgandolfo in Italy, Charles invited leaders to look again at the nature of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and how we are living out our mission in the Church and in the world. *What is the Nature of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal?* by Charles Whitehead has been published in pamphlet form and is available from *Chariscenter USA* for \$2.00.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit this booklet has the capacity to stir afresh the power of Pentecost within us and our prayer groups and communities. It is a great resource to help us clear our vision and to re-establish our true focus in the Renewal. It is a real “stir into flame” document! Below are some quotes taken from his address.

- Baptism in the Spirit is a personal experience of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, who brings alive in new ways the graces of our baptism. The Holy Spirit not only sets on fire all that we have already

received, but comes again in power to equip us with his gifts for service and mission.

- Our most important gift to the Church is the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. As Cardinal Suenens wrote in 1996: “The soul of the Renewal—Baptism in the Spirit—is a grace of Pentecostal refreshment offered to all Christians. The grace will lead us into a personal, living relationship with God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and will help us to seek holiness.”

- We know very well that our special calling is to teach and minister the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. This is our primary gift to the Church—it is the particular grace given to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

- Cardinal Suenens reminded us that charismatic Christianity is normal Christianity, because the Church herself is charismatic, and we were never supposed to live the Christian life without the full presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

- Renewal is firstly about me and God – I make a conscious decision to accept what he offers to me. The result? My faith

comes alive. It has nothing to do with my plans, my ideas, or my merits. It has everything to do with the love, the mercy, and the power of God. The gift is God himself – given to us in a fuller and more wonderful way. We enter into a living relationship with Jesus, and we place this relationship under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

- The Lord uses conferences, courses, and programs, but no one is “renewed” except by a sovereign act of God, who touches our lives by the power of his Holy Spirit and changes us.

- Renewal is not man-made and humanly ordered. It comes directly and sovereignly from God.

- The nature of leadership in the Renewal is to offer service, not to demand obedience and conformity. ♦

*Charles Whitehead is the Chairman of the English National Service Committee and was President of ICCRS (International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services) for 10 years. He has been involved in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal for almost 30 years.*

**Eve of Pentecost, 2004**

On Friday, May 21 a formal and public message from Pope John Paul II was delivered to the headquarters of the Italian Charismatic Renewal that set in motion events that have been felt throughout the world. In his message, the Pope wrote:

Next Saturday, on the eve of the Solemn Feast day of Pentecost, at 6 pm, I will preside over the solemn celebration of Vespers. I invite all the faithful, and particularly the members of the Renewal in the Holy Spirit, to participate in this prayer vigil, to invoke upon ourselves and upon the entire Church, an abundant outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

As it happened, May 21 was the first day of a scheduled Pentecost Novena organized by the Italian Renewal, which was to be completed on the following Saturday, the eve of Pentecost!

Each year, the Holy Father sends a letter of encouragement to the Renewal in Italy, explicitly acknowledging the role of Charismatic Renewal in the Church, and he has met with them privately, but this event was planned to draw public attention to the Renewal and to the Burning Bush project that they have been developing. The Pope would not be speaking to them privately, but from the Chair of Peter to the Universal Church!

As planning progressed, word came from the Vatican that Ves-

pers were to be moved from the Basilica to St. Peter's Square, allowing for more flexibility in prayer and music. Members of the Renewal were to serve as deacons, clergy and lectors. In addition, the Renewal was invited to lead charismatic prayer for 45 minutes prior to the official start of the Vigil!

Rather than speaking *to* them, the Pope was offering to stand *with* them. On May 29 15,000 Catholic Charismatics and many others heard him say:

...I greet in a special way the members of Renewal in the Spirit, one of the expressions of the great family of the Catholic Charismatic Movement. Thanks to the Charismatic Movement, many Christians, men and women, youths and adults, have rediscovered Pentecost as a living and present reality in their daily life. I desire that the spirituality of Pentecost be spread in the church, as a renewed thrust of prayer, holiness, communion and proclamation.

In this connection, I encourage the initiative called 'Burning Bush,' promoted by Renewal in the Spirit. It is about incessant adoration, day and night, before the Most Holy Sacrament, an invitation to the faithful "to return to the Cenacle" so that, united in the contemplation of the Eucharistic mystery, they intercede for the full unity of Christians and the conversion of sinners. I sincerely desire that this initia-

**NSC/NSC Council Meet**

The National Service Committee and the NSC Council met for two days of prayer and discussion prior to the 2004 National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference. About 50 members and guests were present.

The meeting focused on evaluating how we, individually and as a Renewal, are living or not living the vision articulated by the Gathering of National Leadership Groups at its meeting in January (see report on page 11 of the last issue of *Pentecost Today*).

The members then met in various Working Groups to move forward initiatives in intercession, praise and worship, strengthening prayer groups, etc. There was also time to reflect and minister to one another in the area of holiness and to share about what is the Spirit saying/doing today. All seemed to find the meeting helpful and hopeful.

The NSC later met after the Conference to move forward its planning of A Prayer Summit for next Pentecost (see page 12), work on its By-Laws, and approve exploration of a number of projects that will be announced at a later date. ♦

tive lead many to rediscover the gifts of the Spirit, which have their source in Pentecost.

Dear brothers and sisters! This afternoon's celebration reminds me of the memorable meeting with the ecclesial movements and the new communities on the vigil of Pentecost six years ago. It was an extraordinary manifestation of the unity of the Church, in the richness and variety of charisms, which the Holy Spirit infuses in abundance. I energetically repeat what I said on that occasion: The ecclesial movements and the new communities are a "providential answer," "inspired by the Holy Spirit" given the present need of new evangelization, for which "mature Christian

personalities" and "strong Christian communities" are needed.

For this reason, I also say to you: "Open yourselves with docility to the gifts of the Holy Spirit! Receive with gratitude and obedience the charisms that the Spirit does not cease to offer! Do not forget that all charisms are given for the common good, that is, for the benefit of the whole Church!"

This is a powerful endorsement of the work of Catholic Charismatic Renewal. It reinforces our mission and challenges us to even greater commitment to "renewing the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church." ♦

# A Prayer Summit for America

## 40 Hours of Prayer for Pentecost

Following the example of Pope John Paul II, who recently called the Renewal in the Spirit (the Italian Catholic Charismatic Renewal) to join him at the eve of Pentecost Vespers to “invoke upon ourselves and upon the entire Church, an abundant outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit” the National Service Committee, in collaboration with *Renovación Carismática Católica Hispana* of Miami and the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services will convene A Prayer Summit for America in Miami, Florida Pentecost weekend, May 13-15, 2005.

The weekend will not be a typical conference but “40 Hours of Prayer” for Pentecost. We will begin Friday, May 13 at 7 PM and conclude the 40 Hours at 11AM on Sunday with a grand celebration of Pentecost. It will be, in the words of our Holy Father, a kind of return to the Cenacle. Pentecost for America!

When we announced the Summit at the pre-Conference NSC-NSC Council Meeting in Massachusetts, Kim Kollins (a leader in the Renewal in Germany) who was present as an international guest in anticipation of her speaking at the conference, came forward excitedly to say that this Summit was an expression of the Burning Bush Initiative she and others had been involved in and that the Holy Father on the eve of Pentecost had endorsed.

Our excitement grew.

Representatives of the NSC, *Renovación Carismática Católica Hispana*, and the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services had met in San Antonio in June 2003 after the NSC's National Conference to discuss how to work together to bring an International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services sponsored event to the US in 2004. For various reasons these efforts did not reach fruition for 2004.

After additional conversations with ICCRS, and more recently with representatives of *Comité Nacional de Servicio Hispano* (US) and CONCLAT (the umbrella leadership group for Latin America), an Ad Hoc Planning Committee has been formed of NSC, ICCRS and *Renovación* representatives.

An Advisory Committee of ethnic committees in the United States, the Association of Diocesan Liaisons, as well as representatives of Canada and the Caribbean, is being formed to assist in the planning.

For the Summit we will use as the basis of our reflections our Holy Father's pastoral reflection *Ecclesia in America*. Invitations will be extended widely: to North, Central and South America and to the Caribbean so that together we might hear the Lord for the Renewal in the Western Hemisphere.

May 13 is the feast of Our Lady of Fatima and we have placed the Summit under Mary's protection as Mother of America under her title as Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Miami was chosen as the site for the Summit for its accessibility to Central and South America, and the Caribbean, as well as for the fact that it is already a multi-cultural hub.

The Summit will be conducted multi-lingually (English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Korean etc.) as needed. ♦

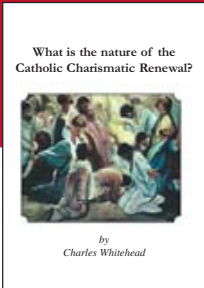
## Attention All Priests, Deacons and Seminarians

In 2005 there will be two international priests retreats. The first will be held in Guadalajara, Mexico July 25-28. The speaker will be the Archbishop of Loretto, Italy who gave the Advent Retreat to the Pope last year. More information will be made available on our website.

The second opportunity will be held in Ars, France, September 25-October 1. Speakers will be Sr. Briege McKenna and Fr. Kevin Scallon. This retreat is organized by ICCRS, the Community of Beatitudes in France and the Jean-Marie Vianney Society. For more information visit their website at: <http://retraite.ars2005.beatitudes.org>.

## Note to Diocesan Renewal Centers and Service Committees and Prayer Groups:

The National Service Committee strongly encourages you to reach out to the priests new to the Renewal or not involved, especially young ones, and offer to pay for their attendance at one of these retreats, or the Annual Priests Conference in Steubenville, June 13-17, 2005. Visit: [www.franciscanconferences.com](http://www.franciscanconferences.com). ♦



**Spread the word**

**"What is the nature of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal?"**

by Charles Whitehead of England, ICCRS

Use this booklet for:

- ◆ handouts for prayer groups
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- ◆ gifts

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## GROWTH SEMINAR!

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by Sr. Nancy Kellar

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From the  
Director  
.....  
by Walter Matthews

## Going Forward

Toward the end of his Apostolic Letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, Pope John Paul II exhorts us, "Let us go forward in hope!" (58). Earlier he wrote, "What we have done this year [the Jubilee] cannot justify a sense of complacency, and still less should it lead us to relax our commitment. On the contrary, the experience we have had should *inspire in us new energy*, and impel us to invest in concrete initiatives the enthusiasm which we have felt" (15).

It is with this resolve, inspiration, energy and hope that the National Service Committee has decided to go forward with A Prayer Summit for the Americas next Pentecost in Miami (see announcement, p. 12). Even though our resources are thin (see *Friends of the NSC* column, next page), we move ahead with the planning of this and other initiatives to strengthen the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. In the recent words of our Holy Father, we desire to spread "the spirituality of Pentecost... in the Church, as a renewed thrust of prayer, holiness, communion and proclamation."

Some of these initiatives we are working on include: an expanded website with more information/links/resources; the development of a searchable database for the web so that Renewal prayer groups, ministries, liaisons, conferences, etc. can be located; praise and worship workshops; tools to strengthen prayer groups; outreach to youth and youth ministers who serve them.

There is no question that the Renewal in the US is struggling in many places: prayer groups are dwindling and participants are

getting older; conferences are less well attended; prophetic charisms are less in evidence and so the list goes on.

But the Lord isn't done with us yet—if we take our Holy Father's words as prophetic inspiration and encouragement.

In the National Conference in Lowell, Fr. Bruce Nieli declared that in his opinion we are "on the eve of a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Church in the US." Kim Kollins, so instrumental in the development of the *Burning Bush Initiative* led us in prayer that whatever had been blocking the Holy Spirit in the US would be broken and declared that "something significant happened here." The *Burning Bush Initiative* is a call back to the Cenacle for prayer, intercession, and adoration, calling for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church and, indeed, upon the whole Body of Christ for unity.

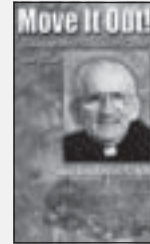
Some have written to us concerned about the low numbers at the Conference while others have written about how encouraged and energized they were. Is the glass half full or half empty? Is the Renewal almost over or have we only just begun?

Barbara Ryan, speaking personally on "the same power working in us that raised Jesus from the dead" encouraged us to read the histories of the Church when discouraged: the Holy Spirit has gotten us through. "Instead of allowing the difficulties to affect us, ask the Lord how to change the way we respond."

There are many hopeful signs: 300 people at a recent Life in the Spirit Seminar in Portland, OR; nearly 50 parishes in San



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Antonio using the Life in the Spirit Seminars as preparation for Confirmation; and continued growth in numbers among our ethnic brothers and sisters. If your situation is not so encouraging, you don't have to look too far away to see signs of hope. Again, our Holy Father has words to keep us looking beyond difficult circumstances: "Despite all the losses the church has suffered, it does not cease to look toward the future with hope. Such hope is a sign of the power of the Spirit." The NSC is committed to going forward with hope. We are full of excitement about what the Lord is doing and full of expectant faith. We pray for each of you that you, too, will decide to go forward with great hope!

"The Holy Father fervently prays that your assembly and its well-chosen theme... will renew in you a deeper consciousness of your dignity as baptized and confirmed Catholics and of your mission to work unceasingly... for the spread of the Gospel and for the building up of the Church in a communion of faith, hope and charity." (Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo, Apostolic Nuncio, to the National Conference Participants).

The Renewal over?! We have only just begun! ♦

# Friends of the NSC

As of June 30 The National Service Committee's income from donations was \$20,000 below budget and 7% below 2003.

This, along with the National Conference in Lowell, Massachusetts not doing as well financially as we had hoped and budgeted, has left the Service Committee short financially.

We do need your help.

We especially need the help of the over 5,000 recipients of *Pentecost Today*—prayer group leaders etc.—who are not active donors. If you would send a small offering of \$15 or more, we could cover the National Service Committee's deficit and dramatically expand the scope and work of the National Service Committee.

Another suggestion—perhaps each prayer group could take up a special collection before the end of 2004 to assist the Service Committee in its financial need.

To those "Friends of the NSC" and "Fanning the Flame Partners" we say thank you for your support.

Donations can be sent to: Chariscenter USA, PO Box 628, Locust Grove, VA 22508.

As I write this column it is the feast of Martha, Disciple of the Lord. Martha, as a model of hospitality, illuminates an aspect of our lives. We are all invited to welcome Jesus into our lives. We do this in various ways. We welcome Jesus during our times of prayer, as modeled by Martha's sister, Mary. We also welcome Jesus in all of the people whom we meet in the course of a day, as modeled by Martha.

Most of us participate in parish life. There is a challenge in allowing Christ living in us to reach out to Christ coming to us in others. It is easier to think in the single dimension of Christ, present in me, reaching out to others or of serving Christ in others.

No one of us can do it all. In serving on a large parish staff south of the Twin Cities in Minnesota, one realizes that one is part of the Body of Christ, which serves in a variety of ways with a variety of gifts. This past year I had the privilege of serving seven people who felt called to become members of the Catholic Church through RCIA. We moved from few people knowing each other to a fresh sense of community. At the Easter Vigil they made their profession of faith. Other adults joined them in receiving the sacrament of Confirmation. We celebrated First Eucharist, including the daughter of one of the candidates. The infant child of another was baptized. By now three couples have been married. This was a wonderful experience of the Spirit at work in the Sacramental life of the Church. As the *Fanning the Flame* booklet says, "RCIA...is a most apt vehicle for evangelizing both catechumens and the whole parish, bringing them to a full life in the Spirit. A key to this is the promotion of expectant faith..." (p. 24).

Following the Vigil Service on Holy Saturday one man from the congregation commented to me that the faces of the

## Ministry Update

by Sr. Mary Anne  
Schaenzer



thirteen people who had been confirmed were so radiant as they returned to their pews that he had tears coming down his face. The Spirit is at work in the Sacramental life of the Church. This was only one parish. Multiply this over and over in our country and then throughout the world. It is a tremendous sign of hope at a time of crisis in the Catholic Church.

We are all called to serve one another. We are all called to provide, and at times to receive, hospitality in the name of Christ. Let us follow the example of both Martha and Mary—that we serve Jesus in outreach and that we serve Jesus as we sit at his feet in prayer. ♦

## Why include the NSC in your will?

The National Service Committee relies almost entirely on gifts from individuals to continue its mission. A bequest will help our ongoing work of renewing the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the church.

Please consider a gift to the National Service Committee when you make your will or update it. Making a gift to the NSC can be as simple as adding a codicil to your existing will or estate plan.

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

Please contact us for other ways to give. And please let us know if you have included us in your will so that we can properly thank you.



# PENTECOST *Today*

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## A PRAYER SUMMIT FOR AMERICA

On Friday, May 13, we will begin "40 Hours of Prayer" for Pentecost—a kind of return to the Cenacle—concluding with a grand celebration on Pentecost Sunday.

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40 Hours  
of prayer  
for  
Pentecost

Miami, Florida  
Pentecost weekend,  
May 13–15, 2005