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**In this issue :** *News from the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) in French-speaking Belgium. A report by Gildo and Fabienne Gorza, who work for the Grace of Charismatic Renewal.*

## **News from the French-speaking Charismatic Renewal in Belgium**

The French-speaking Belgian Charismatic Renewal is made up of a little over 160 prayer groups spread in four dioceses and engages in a variety of services within the Church.

Community prayer for anyone who so wishes is a regular feature in local parishes. At these encounters the Word of God is shared and prayed after calling on the Holy Spirit; God's Word lies at the very core of the meetings and boosts our faith. The time of worship that strengthens hearts by focusing them on the Lord and of intercession for one another while sharing personal charismas, leads the group towards ever greater hope and love.

Other activities involve:

Training sessions for the groups from the four French-speaking dioceses;

Recollections to grow in spiritual life and healing recollections;

Practical commitments and prayer of intercession for the new evangelisation of our regions;

Other missions whether for several people or by oneself.

### **The summer session**

Over 1,000 people convened for this year's summer session on the theme "*See how they love one another... how they sow*". We were graced to live this gathering in a spirit of mutual love and above all of love for the whole Body of Christ. We learnt to love the Church as Jesus Himself does, to give thanks for the very Life of Christ it offers since He truly lives in it and through it, to beg forgiveness for its failings and its sins, to be reconciled with it if it hurt us or we hurt it: all this we experienced during prayer evenings and celebrations in a spirit of truth and humility, often in the company of one or several bishops. Team sharing and service besides various workshops and casual encounters all enabled us to build relationships where true fraternity reigned. Joyful worship shared each day by all ages, from the youngest to the eldest not forgetting children and youths, at the close of the event were all a source of thanksgiving for the fruits born in participants' hearts. "Carry on the work of your hands, Lord, and help the decisions and engagements taken by each and everyone for the life and growth of your Church in Belgium."

The next session, which will focus first and foremost on evangelisation and will take place in Brussels, represents a major change in the location and operating habits... hence our entreaty that you would pray for us, dear readers. Evangelisation, the Church's first mission, lies evermore at the heart of the Charismatic Renewal.

### **Prayer for pardon of our country's collective memories and the Pentecost Novena**

In November 2010 as Christians of different tongues and confessions we were impelled to pray to the Lord to implore His Mercy on our country and all its inhabitants; to beg for forgiveness and healing of History's wounds on the collective memory of our French, Flemish and German communities; to invoke the Holy Spirit in order to confess the gifts of each cultural and linguistic community within our country and bless them; to give worship in the hope that all would acknowledge God as the source of Life and that our nation might bear witness to His Love to all.

This prayer took place on 28 May 2011 in Brussels and was attended by the Archbishop and the Apostolic Nuncio; it was led by the shepherds of the French- and Flemish-speaking Renewal, assisted by the shepherd of the Communauté du Verbe de Vie. The community of Sant'Egadio and the Focolari movement also partook of this prayer. On looking afterwards at how preparation of the event proceeded, we had to confess the work of the Holy Spirit and the meekness of the team.

As every year the texts of the Pentecost Novena that followed were prepared by a national team from Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels at their joint monthly prayer. They came out in a booklet translated into Belgium's three languages and were widely circulated. The Holy Spirit was thus able to work further. One of the purposes of this Novena is to implore God's blessing on our country and its people. The lead this year was given us in Ezechiel's vision as described in Ez 47, 1-12.

### **The "Together for Europe" gathering in Brussels on 12 May 2012**

Our prayer meeting on 28 May 2011 laid the groundwork for the *"Together for Europe"* gathering in Brussels due on 12 May 2012. It will provide an opportunity of bearing witness to the communion of the New Movements and Church Communities in Europe. Actions testifying to the commitment of Christians will be staged on the same day in a variety of cities throughout Europe. The French- as well as Flemish-speaking Renewal besides communities originating from it will cooperate in this major happening. Nevertheless, prayer to connect them to their very source, communion in the Holy Trinity, remains essential. All want the Lord to bestow on them the thirst to share the desire to know Him or acknowledge Him, in order to be born into our true vocation of sons and daughters of God.

We stay mindful of the fruits of the Spirit in the life of the Church and try and induce groups to open up on broader issues than strictly their own. The challenge is often to reconcile one's immediate concerns with more far-ranging ones and always to let the Holy Spirit fashion us. At a time when societies and people tend to withdraw upon themselves, He urges us to open up to others, to meet them, appreciate them, share our path with them and be evermore united to them. For us to share the Grace of the Renewal with other movements and communities is what the Holy Spirit demands of us. He likewise points us on the very practical path of individual and collective healing for the people of this country, "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the sky, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Ph 2, 10-11)

**Christian greetings,**

**Gildo and Fabienne Gorza**

Servants of the Grace of the Charismatic Renewal

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