

In this issue: *Hungary.* How is the Catholic charismatic renewal doing in Europe? Representatives from all Europe will come together in the beginning of March. CHARIS will start in June. A good moment to update each other. *From Hungary the recently re-elected chairman gives us an update on the renewal in his country. The Catholic charismatic realities are cooperating well and recently two priests who are involved in the renewal were ordained as Bishop.*

Report from the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Hungary

by Dcn Zoltán Kunszabó, chairman of the NSC

Budapest, 8th of January, 2019.

„We feel, that we should stay radically open in front of the miracles and power of the Holy Spirit, but at the same time we should put the emphasis on Love in everything, leading our members to maturity, ballance and wisdom in every dimension of their life. To stay simply 'normal' and loving in a crazy world is a great sign! That's what we learned also from Jim Murphy during his visit to Hungary in 2018 at our National Conference. On this line the Spirit uses us more and more to serve the families, the children, the youth and the poor. It brings us to a more and more holistic understanding of the CCR. There is a lot to learn on that field from the Spirit in the future...”

1. **History:** The Renewal started in the middle of the '70ties in Hungary, mostly by protestant influence. The bigger bursting out was in the early '80ies, mostly by the spread of the Life in the Spirit Seminars.

In 1991 we formed our *National Council*, as a forum of our communities. From that year we celebrated our *Annual National Conference*, mostly in sport arenas. (In the recent years the 2000-2500 persons came together there.) This year we had our *27th Gathering*, with *Jim Murphy*, the president of ICCRS as main speaker.

In 1994 the National Council elected the *National Service Committe*. Than the NSC appointed its president. The presidents are: *Dcn. László Gorove* (1994-2006), than *Angéla Bartha SSS* (2006-2014), and last time *Dcn. Zoltán Kunszabó* (2014-in 2018 reelected).

In 2006 the Renewal set up its *National Office* with a part time secretary. The National Council comes together two times a year, the NSC at least five times.

2. **The present situation:** There are around 110 communities in our database between the present borders of Hungary. (There is also a developed and well organized Hungarian speaking *Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Transylvania, Rumania*. We have good connections with them and we mutually serve each other. (There are also Hungarian speaking Catholic Charismatic communities in *Serbia, Slovakia* and *Trascarpathia/Ukraine*, but without a stable network, a National Council or a NSC. We have also good connections with them and we visit them regularly.)

The majority of the 110 communities are smaller prayergroups. There are bigger covenant-type communities too. We have the big international ones: the *Emmanuel*, the *Beatitudes*, the *Shalom*, the *Cor et Lumen Christi*, the *Chemin Neuf*. We have also Hungarian-founded covenant

communities, as the *Emmausz*, the *New Jerusalem Catholic Community*, the *St. Philip of Neri Community-family*, etc.

We have also developed ministries: Pepe Prado's *Saint Andrew School of Evangelization*, the *This is the Day Worship Festivals* (ecumenical with a Catholic main organizer), the *Only One Homeless Service*, the *Marana Tha Publishing House and Magazine*, the *Kafarnaum inner healing and deliverance service*, the *Hungarian Unbound Team*, the *Alpha Course's Catholic Team*, the *Saint Ignatious School of Spirituality*, the *Cellgroup Missions*, etc. We have very good and deep cooperation with Ralph Martin's *Renewal Ministries*. We have also a developing *House of Prayer* movement, in connection with Augsburg, with a big annual national conference. And so on and on...

3. **A highlight – The Covenant of Communities:** In 2017 (after 6 years of preparation) the National Council worked out new statutes, and re-defined itself as a *Covenant of Communities* (full name: *The Covenant of the Hungarian Catholic Charismatic Renewal*). The actual membership of it is up to 60 communities till now (and growing). The majority of the big covenant communities take part in it. There is a growing unity and solidarity within the communities of the Covenant. We feel that we are part of the same mission of evangelisation and spreading Baptism in the Holy Spirit in the Church. We also feel the importance to strengthen our communities as basis of our mission and the places to reach maturity in every level. We worked a lot on the field of reconciliation and forgiveness between the leaders and communities and the results are remarkable. There are no alternative and paralel 'Catholic Charismatic Renewals' in Hungary.

In 2017 Pope Francis appointed the first „labelled” charismatic priest as diocesan bishop. He is *László Varga, Bishop of Kaposvár*. After that we also elected him as *the Honorary President of the Covenant*, and he accepted it. There are some other bishops too, who openly identify themselves as close friends and collaborators of the CCR. Just recently Pope Francis appointed another Charismatic priest, *Fr. Gábor Mohos* to be the auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Esztergom-Budapest. He is an important servant of the CCR in Hungary and an active member of the National Council. He was ordained in December, 2018, and he is very open to work with us in the NSC.

Many of the charismatic communities and leaders are respected in the eyes of the bishops. Sometimes they choose charismatic priests and leaders to lead very important projects in the Church. Ten years ago almost all the main organizers of the big *City Mission of Budapest* were charismatic, including the main organizer. And now the chief organizer of the *International Eucharistic Conference 2020 in Budapest* is also a charismatic priest, *Kornél Fábry* from the *Emmanuel Community*.

It doesn't mean, that the acceptance of Renewal is necessarily very high everywhere in front of the „official” Church. On the level of everyday life our groups aren't experience a lot of help from the side of the parish priests or from the priesthood in general.

4. **Charismatic Priesthood.** The state of the 'charismatic priesthood' is not the best. We have ca. 70 names on our lists as charismatic priests. But most of them do not belong to a charismatic community and their activity in our services are very diverse. Almost none of them leads a charismatic community. *It means, that the leadership of the Charismatic Renewal in Hungary characteristically consist of lay people.* Which is good, but also a weakness. There is no communion between the charismatic priests. Last year we organized a priest retreat and 30 of them came together (another 15 non-charismatic priests were also our guest). Now we try to organize a charismatic priest retreats every year. We have a big hope, that the our newly ordered bishops can make a difference in the close future. We develop plans with them.

5. **The Service of the NSC and the Office.** In the last years the NSC and the National Office organized and helped a lot of programs „from the center”, helping the life and services of the communities. We have a *Leadership Training Course*, and we also run a *Course of Woship*. This is our fourth year, and we had 80 attendants for every shool-year in the worship course. This year in 2019 – following the needs of the communities – we organize different types of seminars in the area of prayer ministry, inner healing and deliverence.

We also publish a *good quality magazine (Renewal in the Holy Spirit)* two times a year with teachings and actualities. The main office is also the main organizer of the gatherings of the National Council and the big Annual Conference.

Recently the main Office organize help to meet actual needs of particular communities. For example, we collected smallgroup leaders to a big Life in the Spirit Seminar in Budapest (120 attendants). We also organized prayer teams for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit-event for another big LHS seminar in the city of Eger (130 attendants). In the level of solidarity and help we can act as the members of one community, which is a great development! It is very rare now, that a bigger service is not based on a wide cooperation of different communities.

6. **The Highlight of our Service – Youth Ministries.** Ten years ago the NSC begun to sponsore a new youth ministry through its youth rapporteur. It was a youth summer camp, which today collects 500 youngsters in two age-group and 4 diferrent turns. Lot of new communities emerged from here, including big ones with 100-120 members. Between the summer camps we serve them with different courses and programs. A brand new branch of the Hungarian Renewal is coming now through them!

In summary: we feel, that the Jubilee season released great mercies on us. We are growing also in maturity, service skills, unity, structures and in numbers too. We are more and more hungry for the Spirit, who make us one with Jesus to adore more and more the Father.

Shortly: We ask the Holy Spirit to renew our hearts > which renews our Church > which renews our Nation. This is our vision. Amen.

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