

Report on the CHARIS European Assembly Conference

Budapest 24-26 September 2021

Swedish participants: Firas Daykh, Bola & Maria Richards, Ludwig Gelot

About CHARIS

The Charismatic Renewal is a current of grace in the Church. It is not an institution or a movement since it is not limited to a group of members and does not have a founder or a government. Instead, it is destined to bring the baptism in the Holy Spirit to the whole Church. It has a great diversity of expressions and aims to allow all baptised – Catholics and non-Catholics – to live more fully the sacrament of baptism itself. The Charismatic current of grace includes many realities born of the Holy Spirit including prayer groups, evangelization schools, ministries, retreat centres, radio and television stations, etc.

CHARIS was established as an initiative of Pope Francis. The objective is to facilitate the emergence of a service organisation that would promote service and fellowship through the establishment of Continental and National Services of Communion. These Services of Communion do not have authority over the multiple realities of the Charismatic Movement who remain under the jurisdiction of the competent ecclesiastical authorities. Their role is not to decide and govern but to coordinate with a view to achieving greater communion through the unity of hearts. CHARIS acts as a 'petrol station' on a highway where charismatic realities can stop to rest, share information and recharge the batteries on their journey. The objective always remains to give the first place to the Holy Spirit and to share the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the entire Church.

Purpose of the Conference

The purpose of the conference was to elect the CHARIS representatives to serve on the Continental Coordination Team (CoCoTeam) and the European Service of Communion. Youth representatives were also to be elected for the different bodies.

During the election process, challenges emerged regarding the interpretation of the CHARIS statutes, the absence of 'job description' for those who would be elected and insufficient information about the candidates. The conference schedule was changed to provide the time and space to solve these issues.

Sweden and other Scandinavian countries do not have National Services of Communion. As such, members of the Swedish delegation could only vote for the election of members of the European Service of Communion and not for the Continental Coordination Team. Firas, as a youth under the age of 30, could take part in the election of the youth representatives.

Spiritual Dimension

The Swedish representatives were warmly welcomed. A fraternal atmosphere of friendship and collaboration was established from the very beginning with an ease in making contact and communicating with other participants.

Many participants are inspired by and live in the Spirit. During worship and prayer times, people with gifts of prophecy could come to share with everyone what they had received from the Holy Spirit. Messages were always supportive and positive. Members of the assembly had multiple charisms including tongues and prophecy. The energy was always powerful and the Holy Spirit clearly present.

A spirit of ecumenism was present with members of different rites as well as different traditions. A member of the Service of Communion is a Protestant missionary.

On Saturday, Firas and Ludwig asked if the Assembly could pray for Sweden. In the evening, as the worship was well advanced the leader of the worship music band (Bo) called on Sweden's representatives to come up to the stage. Ludwig did so and asked for the Assembly's prayers for all Scandinavian countries. The Holy Spirit responded very strongly and words of prophecy as well as references to the scriptures were given:

- Joshua 1:3 (Dominic McDermott)
- Joshua 1-6 (Teresa Lally)
- Be courageous
- Sweden is ready to be taken by the Spirit
- Should set up a Youtube channel for Sweden that would bring people together in a network (Damian)

Discoveries:

Variety of communities: representatives of various communities were present and could describe and explain how they have organised themselves and how they support each other. Some communities are 100% lay while others are mixed. Some separate men and women and others do not. Communities included Chemin Neuf, Béatitudes, Emmanuel, Sword of the Spirit, etc.

Members of the Assembly had different ministries including youth, healing, etc. Healing ministry made a big impression on the Swedish delegation. Els Fletcher (who uses inner healing and deliverance techniques from both the Unbound and Encounter Ministries) and Dominic McDermott agreed to organise short inner healing session with members of the Swedish delegation. The sessions were intense, powerful and effective.

Gaps in the Scandinavian/Swedish Team

The team of Swedish delegates met a few days prior to the conference and did not know each other deeply. They came as representatives for Scandinavia but they had a limited network outside their respective parishes.

Members of the Scandinavian team would have benefited from having a deeper and longer experience in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Next step for Sweden

Following the conference, the following steps could be considered to facilitate the flourishing of the baptism in the Holy Spirit in Scandinavia:

- Build a network of charismatic groups and communities with communication channels
- Organise regular meetings online and face-to-face to strengthen and deepen relations
- Identify people with a calling/charism for deliverance and train pairs in Unbound or Encounter Ministry to roll out inner healing in Sweden
- Establish a National Service of Communion

Members of the CoCoTeam offered Sweden support to set up a National/Scandinavian Service of Communion.

/Swedish delegation Bola, Firas, Ludwig