



International Catholic
Charismatic Renewal
Services

Serving
the Charismatic Renewal
in the Catholic Church

ICCRS NEWSLETTER

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A new season of the Spirit

by Michelle Moran

This Issue

A new season of the Spirit

The CCR, a Church
Movement or a
Stream of Grace?

Assisi 2010

ILTC 2010 – Steubenville

Leadership Formation

The gift of Prophecy

Practicing the Charism
of Tongues in the CCR

On seeking Charisms

As President of ICCRS I am often asked to share something about the present reality of CCR in the world and where I see the Lord leading us in the future. In Revelation 2:7 there is the encouragement to 'listen to what the Spirit is saying to the Church'. So what is the Holy Spirit saying to us in CCR at this time? This year marks the 50th anniversary of when Pope John XXIII prayed his famous prayer 'renew your wonders in this our day as by a new Pentecost'. The prayer was accompanied by the encouragement to join with the disciples in constant prayer (Acts 1:14). At the same time as the Church was being renewed through Vatican II, we saw the emergence of Catholic Charismatic Renewal in USA. Those early years were characterised by a new freedom in the Spirit. There were deep conversions and lives were changed as people received baptism in the Holy Spirit and entered into a 'personal relationship' with Jesus.

When the Israelites were set free from captivity in Egypt they were released into the desert where they remained for 40 years. This was the place of their training and formation. During this time some people fell away either due to sin, lack of perseverance or other distractions. We have seen this in CCR during our short 40 year history. After the desert the Lord led them to the banks of the river Jordan where they could see the Promised Land. I sense that this is where we are at this moment. We are on the threshold of a new season of the Spirit. We need to prepare to cross the Jordan, enter and take possession of the land that the Lord has promised us.

In order to embrace the new season we need to be a people of vision so that we can keep growing and moving forward. Proverbs 29:18, has several English translations eg, 'without a vision the people perish'. CCR is either growing or dying we can't stand still. In some parts of the world Renewal is dynamic and vibrant. I still have many fond memories, of the ICCRS 'love in action' conference in S Korea. Clearly in that nation CCR is a strong current grace flowing from their deep commitment to intercessory prayer. This grace is made visible through the mission that the Holy Spirit has put into their hearts and there are many projects and services undertaken by those involved in Renewal. In contrast, in some parts of the world it seems that Renewal is perishing, it has grown old and tired and people seem to spend

more time nostalgically looking back at what the Lord did in the past than moving forward into the new things that the Lord has in store for them.

Another translation of the verse is, 'without a vision people become rebellious'. In the early days of CCR, we saw the Lord do many wonderful things in our midst. Thankfully this is still happening in many places. I think of the courageous evangelisation project in the Amazon and the creative outreach to university students currently being undertaken by CCR in Brazil. However, rather than developing a deeper dependence upon the Lord, we have sometimes become rebellious, taken control and done our own things. This blocks the Holy Spirit and we fail to carry out his perfect will. As St Paul warned the Galatians, 'what began in the Spirit has ended in the flesh' (Gal 3: 3).

A third translation of Proverbs 29:18 reads, 'without a vision the people get out of hand'. It seems that when we lack future orientation things become stale then it is easy for us to become inward looking and for our energy to become diverted. As a result, we may begin to compete with, judge or criticise other groups and realities in the Renewal. Why are there so many tensions, divisions, and relationship problems in the CCR when one of the main characteristics of the Holy Spirit is unity? Clearly there is a need for repentance and reconciliation. Our pride, squabbling, and immature behaviour have led to the whole body becoming weaker. We must beg the Lord for forgiveness, and ask him to change our hearts. Then we will be able to move forward with vision in unity.

I sense that at this time of transition there is a strong call to deep intercession. Many battles are won in prayer. Through intercession, God can change the destiny of a nation. He can give us the insight, courage and ability to act decisively and strategically so that his Kingdom is advanced. As we journey towards the golden jubilee of CCR in 2017, we need to be guided step by step. So, ICCRS is holding 'the road to Pentecost' intercession event in Assisi 19th-23rd May 2010. Like Joshua we need to have the faith and confidence to claim our rightful inheritance and to undo the works of the enemy. Be ready then to embrace this new season with courage and enthusiasm. Our God is doing new things and we need to be open to the surprises of the Spirit. ☺

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The CCR, a Church Movement or a Stream of Grace?

by Maria Eugenia de Gongora

In the Acts of the Apostles, we find confirmation of how the Church has been revitalized through the help of the Holy Spirit from the very first years of its life. The first communities, where “joy and simplicity of heart” (Acts 2,46) reigned, were rich in dynamism, openness and sustained by missionary zeal. These communities shared the breaking of the bread in brotherly cheer, illuminated by the Word, serving each other with mutual humility—an authentic testimony that drew the admiration of those observing the disciples—and stimulated in many the desire for conversion and for sharing in this new style of life. The Gospel of St. John offers us a photograph of this new spiritual family dedicated to love and which brings to life and gives witness to the new commandment: “...love one another, as I have loved you” (John, 13,34).

These brothers of that time testified to the power and the efficacy of the Word: healings, liberations, signs and prodigies happened in abundance. In this atmosphere it was normal to live under the vigorous action of God, which produced renewed courage in the face of the persecutions by inspiring a deep and growing love; and all this was the fruit of His presence. In Acts 1,8 there is a specific reference to Jesus’s promise regarding the effusion of the Spirit and the marvellous results of His action in our brothers of that period. It is right therefore to expect that this action will continue to operate in the Church of today also: the whole Church must be renewed.

When we compare the early Church communities to the present ones we realize that something of the love and the intensity of that period has been lost, probably as a consequence of our becoming more bourgeois and of increasing egotism. The authentic predisposition towards our spiritual ideal was progressively diluted, replaced by cold scepticism that numbs, limits and freezes and, at its worst, kills. Should we not perhaps renew our faith in the promise of Jesus who sent us His living Spirit at the beginning of the history of the Church, assuring us also: “I will be with you always even to the end of the world” (Mt 28,20)? We have seen these words of Jesus come true in different phases of the history of the Church, in particularly difficult moments because of conflicts and situations that made it seem that Peter’s boat would be wrecked: divine help never failed and always succeeded in stimulating new

spiritual gifts, through the renewing impulse of the Spirit. Today too we are actors and protagonists of a powerful renewing action in the Church, living in a blessed “stream of grace” which takes the name of Charismatic Renewal, a new invitation from the Lord for a Christianity which is manifested through evident signs and behaviour, the fruit of our openness to the marvellous action of the Spirit. This renewing stream embraces the whole Church: we cannot reduce it to a simple “Movement” or “Association”; it is a powerful breath of the Spirit that bursts into the Church, to shake us out of our indifference and torpor. We must in fact recover this type of experience typical of the early community, thus confirming what Jesus promised: “He also who believes in me will do the works that I do and will do even greater ones” (John 14,12).

To those who say that the CCR will pass away, we can answer with conviction that this will not be so: the Church, throughout its history, has always received from the Spirit a renewing breath in response to the needs of the world in every era... and it will be so also in the future! Obviously, in order to collaborate with this “stream of grace” in this period of history we also need structures that can guarantee an adequate service to the Church and to society. For this purpose, therefore, the Church in its wisdom considers this “stream of charismatic grace” also as an “Ecclesiastic Movement”, canonically recognized and approved. Thus the Holy Father John Paul II spoke in his message to the Church Movements and the New Communities on the eve of Pentecost 1998 (30 May) in St. Peter’s Square: “It is from this providential rediscovery of the charismatic dimension of Church that, both before and after the Council, there came into being a singular line of development of the Church Movements and New Communities.” The term “Movement”, therefore, refers to entities which are often different from one another, even in their canonical form. This term is not a rigid definition, nor does it fully express the richness of the forms arising from the life-giving creativity of the Spirit of Christ. Furthermore, it also indicates a concrete ecclesiastic entity formed mainly by lay people, consisting of paths of faith and Christian testimony that base their particular *raison-d’être* on a specific charism granted to their own founder in specific circumstances and through specific

(continued on Page 4)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

ASSISI 2010

Intercession Event: The Road to Pentecost

MAY 19–23

This international event, with a special focus on intercession, will be an opportunity to:

- Experience a renewed outpouring of the Holy Spirit
- Celebrate the Pentecost Triduum and the Pentecost of the Nations with ICCRS in Assisi
- Deepen our understanding about the call to intercession
- Intercede for the nations in the power of the Holy Spirit

Event, food, and accomodation is €400

Optional one day pilgrimage in Assisi on May 24th is €100

The conference is limited to 400 participants so we recommend early registration.

For more information and registration, visit

<http://www.iccrs.org> or e-mail events@iccrs.org or call us at +39 06 6988 7126



ICCRS LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSE

Franciscan University of Steubenville
Ohio USA

SEPTEMBER 12–18 —2010—

“Take strength from the grace which is in Christ Jesus. Pass on to reliable people what you have heard from me through many witnesses, so that they in turn will be able to teach others.”

Tim 2:1–2

The ICCRS Leadership Training Course is a way for ICCRS to help foster leadership in the worldwide Catholic Charismatic Renewal. In partnership with local Charismatic realities, ICCRS provides this week-long programme that will call and empower new leaders as well as strengthen and encourage current leaders.

One day retreat for Priests and Bishops, friends of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

ROME, JUNE 8TH 2010

Join ICCRS and the Catholic Fraternity for a one day retreat held in Rome to coincide with the world-wide meeting of the Holy Father with priests (June 9–11, 2010) at the conclusion of the Year of the Priest.

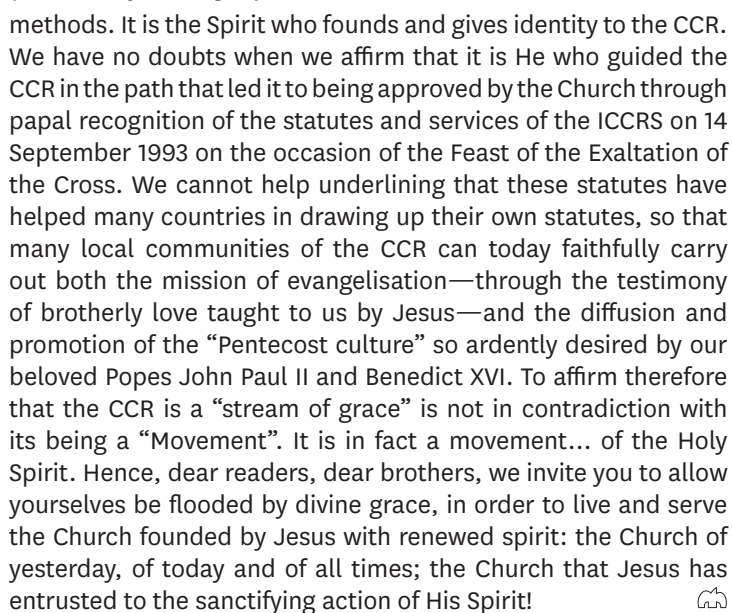
Information will soon be available on our website at <http://www.iccrs.org> or contact the ICCRS Office by email at events@iccrs.org

“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up”

Ephesians 4:11-12

From time to time, ICCRS seeks the help of those who are able to serve with their God-given talent and time to further the mission of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the very heart of the Church for a minimum of 1 to 2 years. Currently we are in need of individuals who have technical expertise in computer hardware, and a working knowledge of database and server systems. We also need graphic and web designers, to increase our accessibility on the web. As ICCRS is an international office, it is important to speak English in addition to being fluent in another language.

If interested, please send us your CV and a photo to director@iccrs.org



Date _____ Signature of donor _____