



CHARIS

MAGAZINE



ISSUE · No. 2 - YEAR 2019 // www.charis.international

Evangelization Challenges

Dr. Mary Healy

CHARIS and the call to Christian Unity

Father Etienne Vetö

Christian Unity

*Pastor Giovanni
Traettino*

No new Pentecost without evangelization

Jean-Luc Moens

Blessed Conchita

José Prado Flores



Since the launch of CHARIS at Pentecost, many events have taken place: the First CHARIS South East Asia Conference in Malaysia, a Leadership Training Course (CLC) in Zambia and another in South Korea, the first 3-week Leadership Institute in Rome (CLI). Projects are being finalized: the first Brazilian Community Conference organized by CHARIS Brazil (January 14, 2020 in Recife), the first World Conference of Charismatic Communities (January 15-17, 2020 in Recife), the First International Training of Youth Leaders (CLC-Y) at Castel Gandolfo from July 19 to 26, 2020. You will find information on all these events in this 2nd edition of CHARIS Magazine.

We also continue the publication of the wonderful discourses of last Pentecost

as well as the section on the saints of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

Finally, a little story I want to share. Last Pentecost, a well-meaning brother told me this: “We would like to support CHARIS financially, but we do not know how to send you the money!”. Since the 1st of October, sending money has become easy: in fact, the CHARIS bank, the Institute of Religious Works (IOR), has joined the SEPA (Single Euro Payment Area). We now have the IBAN and BIC codes that will allow you to easily help us. You will find them prominently in this issue. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Jean-Luc Moens
CHARIS Moderator

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CHARIS Leadership Institute - Rome, Italy - 6th – 26th October 2019



The curtains have fallen on the first CHARIS Leadership Institute (CLI 1), that took place in Rome from 6th – 26th October at the Domus Urbis Hotel, on Via Della Bufalotta 550.

Forty-eight students, from twenty-one countries spanning four continents, gathered for three weeks of teaching, fellowship, ministry, and prayer.

They were taught by a panel of international teachers: Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa (Italy), Fr. Etienne Vetö (USA), Charles Whitehead (England), Pr. Joe Tosini (USA), Michelle Moran (England), Andres Arango (Columbia), Jim Murphy (USA), and Jean-Luc Moens (Belgium). Topics ranged from in-depth studies of the person of the Holy Spirit, to a history and perspective of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, without forgetting Christian Unity and Ecumenism. Useful teachings on group issues, topics of ministry, and service to others were also included.

Some of the best moments of learning came when the students took ‘field trips’ to key sights in Rome, as well as important Vatican offices. They met with Mons. Juan Usma Gómez, from the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Dr. Ghisoni and Fr. Awi Mello from the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life. After Mass at the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, they were received by the current Secretary, Archbishop Protase Rugambwa, and his colleague.

One exceptional moment for the group was a trip to St Peter’s square for a public audience with Pope Francis. The formation also gave the participants an opportunity to discover historical sites of interest of the Catholic Church in Rome, visiting major basilicas, the Colosseum, and discovering some saints who lived in the eternal city. One highlight of such an international group of students and teachers was that a very broad perspective of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and the worldwide Church was seen. Many students commented that their view of the Church and the Renewal was stretched way beyond what they had understood before coming to the Institute.

Recorded testimonies on Friday 25th all strongly and vividly demonstrated how these 3 weeks have been a wonderful and fruitful experience.

For more photos please visit: www.charis.international/en/photos/

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The Challenges of Evangelization

Dr. Mary Healy, STD

Chair of the CHARIS Doctrinal Commission

Her discourse during the Leaders Conference
(Thursday, June 6th).



The Gospel of Mark ends with these words: “They went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it.” What a beautiful depiction of what is meant to be the evangelizing activity of the Church in every age! The risen Lord “worked with them” (Greek *synergeō*), or “engaged in a collaborative endeavor with them”, so that through their faith-filled proclamation of the gospel, his saving power would be displayed to those most in need.

A good example of what such a collaboration looks like is in the prison ministry of my friend John. He regularly volunteers at prisons and rehab centers, bringing the love and compassion of Christ to the inmates. On one typical day, he had gathered some of the inmates for prayer, and this is what occurred:

An inmate named Rick said he had back pain. I prayed for that, and the pain left him. But then I had a nudge from the Holy Spirit to ask him if he had one leg shorter than the other. He said he didn’t know, but he had had ankle surgery. I sat him down to check and, sure enough, he did. I told the dozen or so men in the room to gather around and

watch. Jesus did not disappoint. The leg grew out to match its twin. They were, of course, stunned, because they all saw it happen right before their eyes. I used the opportunity to evangelize and talk about God’s love and how he not only wants to heal physical ailments, but to heal Rick’s relationship with Him, and the same for all of us.

The inmates that day received not only good catechesis, but a visible demonstration of the power and mercy of Jesus that radically changed their lives.

For more than half a century the Church has been ringing out a clarion call: the call to a new evangelization. It began with Vatican Council II, which sought to renew the Church in order to proclaim the gospel more effectively in our time. After the Council Pope Paul VI boldly declared, “Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize.” Every subsequent pope has repeated that message. Pope Francis put it this way: “we cannot passively and calmly wait in our church buildings; we need to move from a pastoral ministry of mere conservation to a decidedly missionary pastoral

ministry.” The whole Church is being invited to rediscover its identity as a “community of missionary disciples.”

Given this summons re-echoing continually from the chair of St. Peter, it is wise to ask from time to time, How are things going with this new evangelization? And in many parts of the world, the honest answer is, “Not so well!” In Europe and North America the number of practicing Catholics has been in rapid decline, and it is declining faster among young people. A recent survey in the United States found that for every one adult who joins the Catholic Church, 6.5 people leave; the surveyors noted that no other religious group has such a high ratio of losses to gains. In Latin America, the most Catholic part of the world, millions have left the Church to join Evangelical or Pentecostal groups. In parts of Africa and Asia the Church is growing, yet even there, relatively few Catholics have fully awakened to their call to be missionary disciples.

This mediocre response prompts the question, What is missing? What is not in place that ought to be in place for the new evangelization to take off? Could it be that we are missing something in the Great

We cannot passively and calmly wait in our church buildings; we need to move from a pastoral ministry of mere conservation to a decidedly missionary pastoral ministry

Commission given to us by the Lord himself?

I believe that question can best be answered by returning to the Scriptures, where we find the story of the first evangelization—the explosive spread of the gospel in the ancient world. In the New Testament we discover how a little band of fishermen, tax collectors, and other ordinary people, even while being subjected to waves of violent persecution, “turned the world upside-down” for Jesus (cf. Acts 17:6). So effective was their proclamation of the good news of salvation in Christ that by the mid-fourth century, when it was finally safe to become a Christian, Christians were already nearly half the population of the Roman Empire. What explains that exponential growth?

Jesus had taught his disciples that their mission is rooted in his own mission: “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (Jn 20:21). Jesus, then, is the model for us. His mission formally began with his baptism by John in the Jordan River, an act of humble obedience

to the Father’s plan. Immediately afterward the heavens opened, the Holy Spirit descended on him in the form of a dove, and Jesus heard the Father’s declaration of love: “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased” (Luke 3:22). The gospel does not say that the heavens then closed up again. The implication is that Jesus lived under an open heaven! After his baptism, he was “full of the Holy Spirit” and went “in the power of the Spirit” into Galilee to begin his ministry of teaching, healing and liberating the oppressed (Luke 4:1, 14). It was from that day forward, not before, that he began to minister in power. Although he is the Son of God, Jesus chose to live as man, dependent on the Holy Spirit.

After resisting the temptations of Satan in the desert, Jesus went into the synagogue at Nazareth and gave his inaugural sermon, in which he summed up his mission as the Messiah. He took the scroll of the prophet Isaiah and read a messianic prophecy:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to evangelize the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives

and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord (Luke 4:18-19).

Jesus then declared that this passage is fulfilled in himself. It is in fact his “mission statement,” the perfect description of what he came to do. He has been anointed by the Holy Spirit so as to be sent into all the places of human bondage, blindness, sickness, oppression, guilt, and misery, in order to proclaim the good news of salvation and to visibly demonstrate it by actually setting people free.

Jesus is teaching us that the gospel he preaches is good news because it comes with power! Conversely, without power the gospel would not be good news. An example may help to clarify this basic principle. Imagine a dark, dank underground prison in which hundreds of people are chained up; they are filthy, hungry, cold, sick, miserable, and full of bitterness and despair. Then suppose someone walks into that dungeon and loudly announces, “Hey, everybody! I have good news: there is a savior who has come to open the doors of prisons and let all the captives go free. Anyway,

I just wanted you to know that. Have a nice day.” Then that person walks out, leaving everyone still chained up just as before. Was that message good news? Of course it is no good news at all unless what it announced actually happens. So it is with the gospel: the gospel is good news because comes with power to actually bring about what it announces—healing, freedom, forgiveness, blessing, and salvation.

Another immensely important truth is embedded in Jesus’ mission statement in Luke 4:18-19. Jesus attributes all the mighty works he is about to do—his healings, miracles, casting out demons, preaching with authority, ushering in the kingdom of God—not to his divine omnipotence as the Son of God, but to the anointing of the Holy Spirit imparted to him in his human nature. The reason this is so important is that he promised to give us, his disciples, the very same Spirit who had anointed him. Just as his mission was founded on his being filled and empowered in his human nature with the Holy Spirit, so our mission is founded on being filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit, who was first poured out at Pentecost and is now given through baptism and confirmation, and whose presence is to be continually renewed in the life of a Christian.

After Jesus declared the essence of his mission, he proceeded to do as he had said. From that point on, a large proportion of the gospels is devoted to accounts of his healings, deliverances and miracles. Again and again the gospels summarize his ministry with statements like this: “He went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and

healing every disease and every infirmity among the people” (Matthew 4:23). Jesus’ healings and miracles cannot be separated from his preaching. They are not merely an external proof of the good news he preaches; they are its embodiment. They visibly manifest that the kingdom is here. They show in a powerfully convincing way that his message is true: he really is the Messiah, he is victorious over sin and every kind of evil; he has compassion on all the sick and all sinners, and he has come to set people free.

“As the Father has sent me, so I send you”
(Jn 20:21)

After modeling in his own life how to evangelize, Jesus commissioned his followers to continue his mission. He commanded them to preach the gospel in the same way he had: not only in words but in supernatural deeds that would demonstrate the truth of the words. He instructed the Twelve, “Preach as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons” (Matthew 10:7-8). Now many Christians, reading this extraordinary charge, have assumed that it applied only to the apostles. But there is no basis for this assumption, since Jesus later sends out a larger group of seventy disciples, representing all his disciples for all time, and he gives them essentially the same charge: “Whenever you enter a town and they receive you... heal the sick in it and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you’” (Luke 10:8-9).

Again, some readers assume that that mandate was only for the first generation of Christians, during

the period of the initial growth of the Church. But Scripture leaves no room for such a conclusion, since the risen Lord Jesus again repeats it just before ascending into heaven, as a command and promise that is valid for all time:

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation.... These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them [i.e., they will be protected from evil]; they will lay their hands on the sick, who will recover.” (Mark 16:15-18)

Jesus does not say “These signs will accompany great saints,” or “These signs will accompany a few extraordinarily gifted people,” but “These signs will accompany those who believe,” i.e., Christians. He makes a similar promise during the Last Supper discourse in John: “Amen, amen, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father” (Jn 14:12).

How can the Lord expect ordinary Christians to do what is extraordinary or even impossible? He reveals the secret in his last words before ascending into heaven: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses...” (Acts 1:8). It is the Holy Spirit who will clothe the disciples with “power from on high” (Luke 24:49) to accomplish works that are beyond what is humanly possible, and that therefore demonstrate that Jesus Christ is truly victorious over sin, Satan and death.



On the day of Pentecost Jesus’ promise was fulfilled. The Holy Spirit fell upon the Christians gathered in the Upper Room with a mighty wind and tongues as of fire. The love of God began to burn within them, their timidity and fear vanished, and they were filled with an extraordinary boldness. Compelled by the love of Christ, they did exactly as he had commanded: they went out in all directions to proclaim the gospel, accompanied by healings, miracles, signs and wonders.

A striking example of their evangelizing dynamism is the mission of Philip, one of the first seven ordained deacons, in Samaria. Jews and Samaritans were not friendly toward each other, to say the least. Yet Philip, a Jew, comes to a Samaritan village proclaiming Jesus, a Jewish Messiah, and lo and behold, crowds of people believe and are baptized! Luke tells us

why: “The multitudes with one accord gave heed to what was said by Philip, when they heard him and saw the signs which he did. For unclean spirits came out of many who were possessed, crying with a loud voice; and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed” (Acts 8:6-7). With their ears they heard the verbal message of the gospel; with their eyes they saw the accompanying signs that visibly corroborated the truth of the message.

The mighty works that accompanied evangelization did not end with the apostolic age. The writings of the Fathers attest that miracles were often done not just by great bishops and evangelists, but by ordinary people. Indeed, these signs were a major reason for the rapid growth of the Church in the ancient world. The kingdom of God was visibly breaking in on a society

that had been mired in moral and spiritual darkness, with all the consequent emotional and physical brokenness. The sun of justice had risen with healing in his wings! (Malachi 3:20). St. Irenaeus of Lyon gives a snapshot of what normal Christianity was like in his time, in the third century:

[Christians] perform miracles in his name for the well-being of others, according to the gift each one has received from him. For some truly drive out devils, so that those who have been cleansed from evil spirits frequently believe in Christ and join the Church. Others have foreknowledge of things to come; they see visions, and utter prophecies. Still others heal the sick by laying their hands on them, and they are made whole. Yes, moreover, the dead have even been raised up, and remained among us for many years.

In later ages, signs and wonders became less frequent as mistaken views of the gifts of the Spirit began to arise. But they never disappeared from the life of the Church, especially in periods of intense evangelization. St. Francis Xavier, the great Jesuit missionary, brought the gospel to the Far East. In one of his letters from India, he describes what he did when he was besieged with requests to visit and pray for the sick in the nearby villages.

It was impossible for me myself to satisfy all... so I hit on a way of serving all at once. As I could not go myself, I sent round children whom I could trust in my place. They went to the sick persons, assembled their families and neighbors, recited the Creed with them, and encouraged the sufferers to conceive a sure and well-founded confidence of their restoration. Then after all this, they recited the prayers of the Church. To make my tale short, God was moved by the faith and piety of these children and of the others, and restored to a great number of sick persons health both of body and soul. How good He was to them! He made the very disease of their bodies the occasion of calling them to salvation, and drew them to the Christian faith almost by force.

By healing people through the faith of these children, the Lord was giving a powerful message to the people whom Francis was evangelizing: you do not need to be a European missionary to be an instrument of God's healing power. You do not need to be a priest, or a scholar, or a saint. You don't even need to be an adult! You just need a heart filled with simple, childlike faith in the Lord Jesus.

Today the Lord Jesus is reminding his Church that He is alive, and what He did back then, he still does now. My friend Tom, a doctor, learned this a few years ago when he went on a mission to Mexico. He went with a team to serve the poor who live in a garbage dump, eking a living out of what they can find picking through the garbage. Tom provided medical care to those he could help, but the hard cases he sent to the prayer ministry team! He remembers:

Today the Lord Jesus is reminding his Church that He is alive, and what He did back then, He still does now.

As the people came into the medical tent, many of them had permanent afflictions I could not meaningfully change. My heart broke for them. The best I could do for many of them was hand them a bag of ibuprofen, which would only relieve their pain for a short while.

An elderly woman walked in, hunched over from osteoporotic back fractures, leaning on a cane. You could see that she lived in daily pain. Moved almost to tears, I gave her two bags of ibuprofen—and then sent her to receive prayer. A little later, I saw her reenter the medical tent. She stood straight up and threw the cane at me, laughing and cheerfully exclaiming that she had no more pain! Then I saw a man who had had a neck fracture; his head was permanently bent down so that his chin touched his chest. He went for prayer and returned to me saying, “Nada.” No pain.

His neck was straight. Then a man with a huge hernia—gone. Another with a tumor in the stomach wall—gone.

When I returned home to the USA, one of my beloved patients had developed lung cancer and was scheduled for surgery to have the lung removed. It broke my heart, because he had been an alcoholic but had joined Alcoholics Anonymous and was sober. He had also met Jesus and was passionately pursuing a life of sharing Jesus with others. His daughter was devastated because she felt like she was only now getting to know her Dad. I told him about Mexico, and asked if he would allow me to pray with him. So we prayed, asking Jesus if He would remove the cancer or at least allow the surgery to be safe and effective. When he went to the hospital to have his preoperative chest X-ray, there was no tumor! Two years have passed and he has had normal chest rays ever since.

The extraordinary resurgence of signs and wonders today is not something alien to the Catholic Church. It is a return to normal. It is a rediscovery of what belongs to our DNA: the power of the Holy Spirit and his supernatural gifts as the normal equipment given by the risen Lord to equip all baptized believers for their evangelizing mission. People today, no less than people in the first century, need more than a message. They need an encounter with our all-powerful, prison-shaking, chain-shattering, healing, delivering Savior! And the Lord is once again clothing his children with power from on high to empower them to bring his good news to the ends of the earth.

CHARIS Leadership Course (CLC) - South Korea - 29th Sept – 5th Oct 2019



The 2019 CLC (CHARIS Leadership Course) was held in Kkottongnae - South Korea for a week, from September 29 to October 5.

The teachers were Jim Murphy, Michelle Moran and his brother James Shin. About 170 leaders attended the course. The subjects taught were Ecclesiology, Life of a Leader, Elements of a Prayer Meeting, Baptism in the Holy Spirit, RCC, Mission Theology and Practical Techniques of Evangelization.

The topics covered were communicated effectively to the participants. In particular, Baptism in the Spirit was addressed and preached in relation to the current of grace. The topic of a leader's life and the elements of a prayer meeting were transmitted in an intense and well organized way.

The theme of Mission Theology was presented with real-life experiences on the theme.

The purpose and objectives of CHARIS were explained to the participants during the question and answer time.

During the course, three periods of reflection were offered to deepen the teachings they had faced.

On the last day, a national meeting on the theme “Come, Holy Spirit” was organized with about 3500 participants. During the meeting, Jim Murphy gave a talk on “God has freed us. We must serve God with that freedom”. And Michelle Moran gave the message that God always wants to make things new with us: we must open our hearts and be ready to do them.



CHARIS and the call to Christian Unity

Father Etienne Vetö
International Service of Communion Member

His discourse during the Leaders Conference
(Thursday, June 6th).

-The ecumenical dimension of CHARIS is probably one of the 2-3 points of insistence of the Statutes.

-These recognize that the CCR is part of a wider current of grace, that started in other Christian denominations: "What we know now as Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) is part of an ecumenical current of grace" (CHARIS Statutes, opening sentence).

-For this reason, one of the main purposes of CHARIS is to work for the unity of Christians, the unity of the Body of Christ. It is even the 2nd Purpose exposed by the Statutes, just after presenting the mission to promote the current of grace itself and communion among its members. "Recognizing Catholic Charismatic Renewal as part of an ecumenical current of grace, CHARIS is an instrument to

promote and work for unity in the body of Christ, as expressed in the prayer of Jesus" (Jn 17)" (CHARIS Statutes, Purposes, §2).

Let us reflect on why and how.

1. The Charismatic Renewal is born ecumenical and is part of God's design of unity

It is fundamental to recognize that the CCR is a current of grace that is "born ecumenical". This is an expression of Pope Francis, who insisted on this point two years ago at Circo Massimo for the 50th anniversary of the CCR: "(We are celebrating) a flood of grace, the flood of grace of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. A work that was born... Catholic? No. It was born ecumenical! It was born ecumenical because it is the Holy Spirit who creates unity, and the same Spirit who granted the inspiration for this." Relationship with other

Christians and the call to unity of Christians is part of our DNA.

This is a historical fact: we know that the group of Catholics from Duquesne University who received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1967 had been praying and reading the Bible with Protestants during the year the preceded. Indeed, the CCR comes from and was born into a current that started with the Pentecostal communities and spread firstly among Churches and ecclesial communities from the Protestant world. This is a first reason why we are called to put unity of Christians at the heart of the existence and mission of CHARIS. It is a question of gratitude: we have received this gift of God through others. Who takes a present and runs away with it, cutting the bridges with the gift-giver? It is a question of humility. I repeat,

we have received this gift from others... Isn't it irritating when you have an excellent idea that you just air out over a drink with a friend and this "friend" presents it to your boss as his own stroke of genius? In Universities there is a very strict rule and sanctions against plagiarism... In the end, it is a question of politeness/decency (good education).

However, there is a deeper, spiritual reason. God chooses the gifts he will give us, but he also chooses the way he gives them. If he has given us this gift through other Christians, it means something and we need to discern what he is telling us. What is he telling us? It is quite simple: "I give you this gift through others because it is a gift that unifies, it is a gift of unity." The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is the person who sets us in communion with God and with others. He is the Spirit of love, of communion, of unity. God has graced us with a renewed outpouring of the Spirit so as to renew the Church and part of this renewal is the unity of all Christians. The current of grace we are part of spills over the borders and over the walls of divisions of our Churches and communities precisely so as to bring these walls down and to overcome these borders.

Fr Raniero Cantalamessa insisted on this point, also at the Vigil of Pentecost two years ago: "God has poured out his Holy Spirit on millions of believers who belong to almost all the Christian denominations and,

lest there be any doubt about his intentions, he has poured out his Spirit with the identical manifestations, including the most unique one of speaking in tongues." Fr Raniero explains that we are left to draw the same conclusion that Peter did when he was in front of Cornelius and his household who had received the Holy Spirit although they were not Jewish like the Apostles (Acts 11): "If God then has given them the same gift he gave us, who are we to continue to say that other Christian believers do not belong to the body of Christ and are not true disciples of Christ?"

Not only have they received the same gift, in the same way, and shared it with us. Another point in common draws us closer together in these present times. Christians are persecuted throughout the world: it is said that Christianity is the most persecuted religion, in absolute numbers, today. Now these are not only Catholics, or Orthodox, or Protestants. We are already together in what the Popes have called an "ecumenism of the blood". Let me quote Pope Francis: "Then there is an ecumenism of blood: when they kill Christians, we have so many martyrs.... starting with those in Uganda, canonized 50 years ago: half were Anglican, half Catholic, but the ones [who killed them] didn't say: 'You're Catholic.... you're Anglican....' No: 'You are Christian', and so their blood mixed. This is the ecumenism of blood" (In-flight press conference of His

Holiness Pope Francis from Istanbul to Rome, Sunday, 30 November 2014).

Unity of Christians, carrying the current of grace together, witnessing together, sometimes "to the blood": this is an incredible responsibility. It is our joy to have here with us brothers and sisters from other Churches and ecclesial communities.

2. A few words about the "ecumenical movement"

More or less at the same time as the Holy Spirit initiated the first manifestations of the current of grace of the Renewal in the Pentecostal communities, at the beginning of the XXth century ago, the Spirit also inspired the different Christian denominations to yearn and strive in a new way for Christian unity. This is what we call the "ecumenical movement". It too started outside of the Catholic Church but, as with the current of grace of the Renewal, it too was recognized by the Catholic Church as "fostered by the Holy Spirit" (Unitatis redintegratio 1) – this recognition happened during the Second Vatican Council. It is good to learn to recognize the particular "sound" of the wind/breeze of the Spirit, which is the sound of unity.

What is the "ecumenical movement"? The Church has always prayed and labored for her unity: we see this already in Paul's exhortations in First Letter to the Corinthians and throughout all the history of the Church. But it has taken a special form in the XXth c. In

Scotland, in 1910, at a congress of Protestant missionaries, the representatives from the southern countries expressed their gratitude for the Gospel that had been preached to them, but at the same time lamented the divisions that had been exported with the Gospel: “Why have you preached us love and brought us divisions?...” A great desire for unity and a worldwide commitment to do all that was possible to realize it started at the time, and the Catholic Church gave it a major boost when she started being part of it.

What makes this movement of unity special?

1) First, the recognition that our divisions are not exclusively the fault of the “other” who has left us. Objective historical research showed that, as is the case with many divisions and tensions, between individuals, in a family, between nations, the fault of division and rejection is never 100% on one side.

2) Second, the ecumenical movement does not try to attain unity by bringing individuals to change Churches but by bringing Churches and ecclesial communities together. In this way, many Protestant Churches which were divided have officially united; we hope the same will one day be possible with the deeper divisions between Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants. There is a deep conviction that the closer each of our Churches and ecclesial communities grow to Jesus, the closer they grow to each

other, until one day they will be one.

3) Third, it does not concern only the pastors and leaders, but as the Council said, “all Catholics are exhorted to take an intelligent and active part” (UR 4). There have been many attempts by Church leadership to rebuild unity during the history of the Church, but the difference now is that it is for all.

**We have received
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4) Of course, we still have differences in our beliefs. Never will unity happen at the cost of truth. However, we also realize all we have in common, which are the central elements of the faith of each Church: the faith in God, Father, Son and Spirit; in Jesus Christ, Lord and Savior; of the Scriptures in which all this is revealed; the shared hope of eternal life; the shared commitment to evangelizing; the love for the Body of Christ, the Church... And we realize, when we do have contacts with other denominations, how putting different perspectives together actually gives us a better understanding of faith. Catholics have been inspired to read and love the Bible in contact with Protestants, and to read the Church fathers through contacts with the

orthodox. We can repeat here that we have received the current of grace through contacts with Pentecostals and Evangelical Christians. And others have learned to appreciate the Eucharist and to seek for visible unity in contact with Catholics. What a treasure we would have missed if we had not believed that we should grow closer and that we could learn from each other.

5) An almost final note. It really is a question of love. Fr Raniero says this, for instance at Pentecost 2017: Christ did not command us called to love only those who think the way we do. If we love only those we agree with, what is special about that, since the pagans do the same (cf. Mt 5:46)?... I have seen examples of this love, of deep understanding. On the feast of the Immaculate Conception, a CN member from an evangelical Church was introducing the day. A older Catholic priest, who had been trained in the ‘60s-70s got up and explained that for him the Immaculate Conception was superstition! What did the evangelical do? She explained the deep meaning of the Catholic dogma, in a better way than any Catholic I had heard so far. She told me she did not believe that it was true, but that she tried to understand it as a Catholic should – and she had done an excellent job!

6) A final note: we always need to remember that only God can give unity to the Church. And this is exactly what he is doing through the gift of the

Spirit. We, in the CR, are at the center of this work of unity God has been operating and we are called to be aware of this and enter into God’s work.

3. The power of common prayer and common witness

How should we retrieve this heritage, this part of our DNA? And what are the fruits of unity? I will just stress two aspects.

The first step of ecumenism is common prayer. Prayer is powerful! Common prayer is even more powerful. Jesus said that when two or three are gathered in his name, he will be in their midst (see Mt 18:20): “Amen, I tell you. If two of you on earth agree about any matter that you pray for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven”. This is true of course at an individual level. It is true in a couple: when a couple agrees on something, when a couple agrees to ask God for the same thing, how can he resist?... It is true among generations: when young and old, children and their parents, grandchildren and grandparents pray together, Jesus is happy. When people from different nations pray together, especially nations that have fought or are fighting, how powerful will that be! And when Christians from different Denominations, that have sometimes fought bitterly, pray together, what a source of blessing. Our prayer here in these days pleases God in an extraordinary way

and is certainly extremely powerful...

Another dimension of Christian life that is given tremendous power by being united among Christians is witnessing to the Gospel. “If you have love for one another, people will recognize you for his disciples” (Jn 13:35). Our lack of unity is a major obstacle to evangelization. We probably cannot imagine how the world would now be, how many more Christians there would be, how much more love and unity there would be, if we had not been divided for centuries. I remember evangelizing in the streets with a mixed catholic and protestant group. We were giving out flyers for a concert of Christian music, and on the flyer was the sentence: “Together, Catholics and Protestants, we announce Jesus Christ”. People would often refuse even to take the flyers, or change sidewalks when they saw us from far enough, but those who did look at the flyer always reacted the same way: “What, Catholics and Protestants together?!” They didn’t react about “announcing Jesus Christ” but about Catholics and Protestants together. And they would ask us how it was possible, why we were doing it. They were intrigued and impressed. There was beautiful fruit...

Of course, one may be afraid of evangelizing with someone from another ecclesial community. What if the people we talk to enter another denomination?! I have had

experiences that have obliged me to reflect on this. I was asked to preach on a Sunday in an Anglican Cathedral and the priest, when he introduced me, forgot to say I was a Catholic. At the end of the Eucharist people came to speak to me. There was a young couple who introduced themselves: he was Anglican, she was Catholic. They told me that they went sometimes to the Anglican Cathedral and sometimes to the Catholic one, and that they didn’t know which one to choose. And then they said: “Your sermon was great. It has helped us choose. We will come here..., to the Anglican church!”. Gently I told them that if they were a mixed couple it was probably better if they kept going to both!

However, the Catholic Church does give indications about such questions. The Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism (1993) insists that “ecumenical cooperation” is a great sign to the world, a sign that faith in Jesus Christ is more important and more powerful than our divisions. And then it adds: “Catholics would want all who are called to Christian faith to join with them in that fullness of communion they believe to exist in the Catholic Church, yet they recognize that in the Providence of God some will live out their Christian lives in Churches and ecclesial Communities that do not provide such full communion.” (PCPUC, Directory..., n° 206).

4. Reconciliation and repentance in the Catholic Church and in the Charismatic Renewal

So far, I have spoken about ecumenism, about the unity of all Christians. However, the call for unity that is addressed to us does not only concern the relations between the Catholic Church and other Christians. It concerns the Catholic Church herself. She too needs communion and peace: between “Charismatics” and “non-Charismatics”, between groups in a parish, between different conceptions of liturgy, between different ideas of what is the center of faith, of what can or should change or not. And there are so many struggles for power, or struggles not to lose power, or not to lose a role. In this situation, how can we be a “sacrament”, a sign and an instrument of God’s unity for the world, as the Church is defined in the Second Vatican Council? How can we be a sign of God’s love?

This unfortunately true inside of the current of grace of the CR. I do not want to be too simplistic but I believe we can say that we started off in the 1970s as a beautiful current with a sense of a common treasure and a common purpose, one big stream or river. But in the 1980s already many divergences and struggles divided us and the river became dozens and hundreds of streams that barely touched each other. Two years ago the CCR celebrated its 50 years, it’s Jubilee. CHARIS

is a first fruit of the Jubilee. However, we must remember that in the Jewish tradition a Jubilee is not only a moment of thanksgiving. It is a moment of repentance: we look back and see our sins. We repent and ask those we have wounded for forgiveness and forgive those who have wounded us.

Repentance and forgiveness are central for unity of Christians, unity of the Catholic Church, unity of the current of grace of the Renewal. Repentance and forgiveness are a gift of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit convicts us of our sins, his light shows us both God’s love and our sin. How many of us here have had this experience of “conversion”, of deep regret for our sins that has changed our lives? This is what we are called to live also at an ecclesial level. Repent for the divisions between our Churches and in our Churches. Division is not God’s will; it comes from stiff human necks and sinful hearts.

5. Gratefulness to God for the presence of Messianic Jews

So far, I have only spoken about unity of Christians among classical Christian denominations: Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants, Anglicans, Evangelicals, Pentecostals. However, we are graced with the presence among us of other believers in Jesus. I thank God for allowing us to share this moment with brothers/and sisters/a brother who are/is a Messianic Jew. Messianic Judaism is a current which is historically parallel to the CCR: it also started in the

1960s-1970s and has grown with ups and downs since then. Many Messianic communities are Charismatic, many are devoted to spreading the Gospel and introducing others to a personal and living relationship to God.

Messianic Jews are Jews who receive the conviction that the New Testament is the revealed Word of God and the Jesus – Yeshuah, in Hebrew – is the Messiah, the Son of God. They are Jewish disciples of Yeshuah. They do not enter into a historical Church, often because of it is too difficult and painful for them to be part of an institution that has contributed to their suffering and persecution throughout the ages. They also think that entering a Church will keep them from maintaining a Jewish identity.

They are for us a sign from the first period of the Church: Mary, Peter, the Apostles and all the first Christians were Jews and did not feel they were leaving the Jewish People and its Covenant with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when they started to follow Yeshuah the Messiah. They continued to go to the Temple and to the Synagogue, they continued the observances and prayers given by God to the people of Israel. The early Church was composed exclusively of Judeo-Christians and Messianic Jews are a way for the Body of Christ to retrieve its roots. They are a living question to the Church of today: what has become of the “Church of the Circumcision” in our midst? What has become

of Jewish believers in Jesus? Have we allowed them to be themselves, to pray and live according to the ways given to them by God as Jews, and play their role?

However, they are not only our past, they are so to speak our future. They are an eschatological sign. In the Letter to the Romans Paul prophesizes the fulness of times, when “all Israel” will be saved (Rm 11:26). That the members of God’s first people discover in their own way the Messiah is a sign that this Messiah is near.

The CR has always had an eschatological dimension: the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is announced in the book of Joel as a sign of the fulness of times, Pentecost is the sign that with Christ the world has entered the “completion of times” (Gal 4:4). Every renewed outpouring of the Spirit is an invitation to remember that this is an integral dimension of our faith. Christians are often concentrated in the past – the story of Israel and of Christ – and the present, the time in which they live. But this is incomplete. Christian faith

and salvation itself are missing a central dimension if they are not also focused on the second coming of Christ. God’s promises are that all suffering, injustice, wars and death itself will one day be overcome. And we profess it every Sunday: “I believe that (Jesus) will come again in glory...” This is to become as important in our prayer and thoughts as the past and present of salvation. We thank our Messianic brother/s for being among us a sign of things to come. With him we can pray: “Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus!” (Rev 22:20).

Regional Congress of the New Communities of Catholic Charismatic Renewal

On 19-21 July, the Regional Congress of the New Communities of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal took place in São José do Rio Preto - SP, which brought around 400 people together to reflect on the challenges the new ecclesial realities face.

Jean-Luc Moens, moderator of CHARIS, presented to everyone what CHARIS is, what Pope Francis wanted with this step towards unity, and discussed topics relevant to the next step forward of Charismatic Renewal and New Communities.

We also had the significant presence of Archbishop Orani João Tempesta, OCist., and Cardinal Archbishop of Saint Sebastian of Rio de Janeiro. The theme of his talk was the same as the Congress: “May they all be one”. Also Archbishop Joel Portella Amado, CNBB Secretary General, on “Unity in plurality”, Bishop Tomé Ferreira da Silva, Diocesan Bishop of St. Joseph of Rio Preto, Bishop Devair Araújo da Fonseca, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of São Paulo and Mons. Moacir Aparecido de Freitas, diocesan bishop of Votuporanga were present.

Fr Marcello Sampaio



Brazil National Service of Communion

From October 11th to 13th, the Brazil National Service of Communion met for the first time. This service is transitional until 2021. Katia Roldi was elected coordinator of the Brazil National Service of Communion.



CHRISTIAN UNITY

Pastor Giovanni Traettino

Evangelical Church of Reconciliation

**His discourse during the Leaders Conference
(Friday, June 7th).**

It is with a feeling of anticipation that I am here this morning! The waiting ends and I'm joyfully participating in the official launch of CHARIS, the tool devised by Pope Francis in order to renew and accompany – I'm using his words – “the current of grace” represented by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. I thank the CHARIS Moderator, Jean-Luc Moens (to whom I wish all the best for his new job!) for the invitation and for granting me the privilege of cooperating in this endeavour.

I am obviously not missing the meaning of this invitation, which goes beyond my person. It is evident that Pope Francis intends to recognise the help which the Pentecostals have given him from the very beginning, to reclaim and emphasise the ecumenical vocation which are in the nature and in the roots of the Catholic

Charismatic Renewal, and to set it in the goals and the agenda of CHARIS.

Thanks be to God, the process started by Vatican II, notwithstanding oppositions and set-backs, progressed successfully, with the recent addition – thanks to Pope Francis' sensitivity and foresight – of asking the Italian Pentecostals for forgiveness, and of the surprising and “revolutionary” opening of trust towards the Pentecostal world. The result has been to bring new openings and new perceptions (as I have also witnessed myself).

In the meantime, it has become increasingly clear that the path to Christian unity does not merely have as its goal one of today's Christian denominations (not even the Catholic Church), but Christ Himself and the

Bride, the one and only, who, on His return, Christ the Lord will marry: this will be the final Wedding with the Lamb.

God's dream

Personally, I am here as a lover and witness of that dream... the dream that God dreamt before the creation of the world.... The dream in which, for love of His creatures, He wishes to live within them and – starting from within the Church – He wants His creatures to love each other in the same way.

The mystery of Communion

Actually, God's mystery is a mystery of Communion: Communion in itself and the desire of Communion. Paraphrasing the introduction to John's Gospel, we could state: “In the beginning was the Communion, the Communion was with God and the Communion was God. All

things were created by it; and without it not even one thing was created”. That is to say: (1) The founding mystery of Communion is God! God is love! (2) The other mystery, which proceeds from the first, is that of the Communion which desires God: the Desire for Communion which is God!

The Gospel of Desire

Since the beginning of time, this God has longed to migrate, with his “internal love movement”, within the human spirit: love and the desire for love. To inhabit Man's heart, to get to know Man from within, to transfer Himself in spiritual union and dwell within him (!) and to enjoy the resulting unity. And the Father's Love has descended; the Holy Spirit has brought Him to us. It is written: “God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit” (Romans 5:5).

Unity of Christian believers – Christ and the Body of Christ

In the same way, based on the mystery of the Communion with the Lord (which does not necessarily coincide with the confessional Communion), the mystery of Communion is Christian unity. It was Pope

Benedict XVI who stated: “It has been the mistake of the confessional era to emphasize mainly what divides us, instead of perceiving in an existential way what we have in common...” (Erfurt). In particular I think about the mystery in which, immersed in Christ (repentance, faith and baptism), we are also part of the Body of Christ. The Spirit comes to live within us and our body becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Unity with God

Thus unity, that of the Christian with Christ and the Trinity, of Christ with the Body of Christ, and hence of the Christian with all other Christians, are all sourced from the same unity: the Communion which, once it is “in Christ” precedes us and is reality, and reality itself is more important than our ideas about that reality (Pope Francis). The truth is that we are “immersed” in that same “reality”, we are “in Christ” (and Christ is in us) and we are with Him in relation to the Trinity. This is why we are the Church and we all belong to one another. We belong to the same “reality” founded on the unity of God, the unity

between Christ and the Body of Christ, on the Trinity - we all belong to that same reality.

As Father Raniero Cantalamessa said: “The measure of our belonging to the Church is fundamentally determined by whether or not we have the Holy Spirit in reality, and not simply through legal or institutional ties. Between a purely visible belonging to the Church and a spiritual belonging there is the same difference as in the sacraments... between receiving the visible signal... and also receiving the grace contained therein... Herein lies the reason for our ecumenical communion with all true believers in Christ, even with those outside our Church. There is therefore a communion between all Christians, not only in votis, i.e. in our wishes and in the future, but also effective at present.

As Seraphim of Sarov said, the authentic aim of Christian life is to receive the Holy Spirit... to possess and to be possessed by the Holy Spirit. Having the Holy Spirit deep within our hearts is Christian living; being in

PRAYER WEEK FOR THE UNITY OF CHRISTIANS

The Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity organizes, together with the World Council of Churches, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, from January 18th to 25th. CHARIS, who has received from the Holy Father a special call for the unity of Christians, wants to join this prayer gathering by inviting the Charismatic Renewal to intercede for this intention, thus joining the prayer of Jesus to the Father: “May all be one so that the world will believe you have sent me”(Jn 17.21).

Through the CHARIS website and social networks, you will find the necessary information to join this prayer.

communion with Him deep within our hearts is to be saints.

Thus, if all this is true, in a mysterious way – because it is invisible – but not any less real, if we have the Spirit, we have Christ, we have the Trinity. Therefore we are Christians! We are part of the Body of Christ. We are the Church, because he who has Christ has the Church. He who is of Christ is of the Church. This is the deep and unbreakable bond between Christ and the Trinity on the one hand and the Church on the other, and between Christ and the Body of Christ: “οὗτος ὁ Χριστὸς” i.e. “This is Christ”. Indeed: “In the one Spirit we were all baptised to make one body.... and one Spirit was given to us all to drink.” – (1Corinthians 12:13).

The DNA of the Pentecostal Movement

For this reason I continue to believe that the Spiritual Movement known as that of the Pentecost, on both the Catholic and the Pentecostal side, has in its historical and spiritual DNA the same vocation for unity. Moreover, it will not have completed its contribution towards God's reason for its existence until it becomes inflamed with love for unity and transforms itself into a movement which is fully aware of its vocation for unity. This is because the Movement was born from the Spirit, it has its roots in that same Pentecostal visitation of the early 20th century (ref. Cardinal Suenens).

Sometimes the rain for which we pray and which we need starts falling on the next-door neighbours' garden. In any case, the aim of every Pentecost is, and must always be, life and peace: a life of resurrection and reconciliation. Supernatural life and Peace! As in the Pentecost in the Acts. As in the Valley of Dry Bones! Life and Peace!

Nature of the Pentecostal Movement

We have another confirmation when – and here I recall the extensive research carried out by Walter Hollenweger, my supervisor at the University of Birmingham – we examined the salient nature and characteristics of the Pentecostal Movement. Hollenweger identified five fundamental roots:

1) The Black Oral Root. I found confirmation of this during my visits to churches on the African continent. As in primitive Christianity, the people there communicate via oral culture: they prefer description to definition, song to systematic thought, dance to theory. These Christians, just like the primitive Christians, perform theology through adoration: they have an oral theology.

2) The Catholic Root. They believe in miracles. They normally evolve towards various strands of episcopal ecclesiology; they believe in freedom of choice (contrary to reformed theology). They continue to follow Wesley's concepts, such as a devoted way of life and the quest for sainthood.

3) The Evangelical Root. They are on the Reform branch of the tree: Scripture as the supreme authority, salvation by grace, universal priesthood, the Awakening, personal conversion, with roots in the “sainthood movement” of the 19th century.

4) The Ecumenical Root: Basic ecumenical spirituality. A unique experience, baptism in the Holy Spirit, considered identical, even when experienced in different settings, by people with Evangelical, Catholic, Protestant (conservative or liberal) backgrounds. David Du Plessis said: “Pentecostals cannot be viewed merely as the left wing of Protestantism, since their history and spirituality contain too many Catholic elements. Interesting! For the first time we see the emergence of a basic movement for unity between Evangelicals and Catholics. The basis for this closeness derives from their common experience, which lies at the heart of their spirituality, despite their differing theologies and interpretations of the same reality.

5) The “Critical” or “Prophetic” root: Consists in (a) the present-day criticism of a Christianity which has become nominal and lukewarm; (b) the embracing of “renewal” (for Catholics) and “awakening” (for Evangelicals) theories; (c) the criticism of indifference and passivity.

Conclusion: There would be more to say, but for the purpose of today's discussions I would simply like to emphasise that the pentecostal and charismatic

movements share close affinities, thanks to their common historical and spiritual roots.

A proposal for CHARIS

To follow up on all the above, if you would allow me to be bold, I would like to make a proposal for CHARIS. I listened several times to Pope Francis mentioning the crucial importance of this coming together, of friendship, of walking together and of promoting fundamental and spiritual ecumenism. This is exactly the same starting point from which I have begun, and

from here we can all rightly begin, in good conscience and faithful to our common foundation values, and from here we can go a long way together! We are brothers! We are on the same foundation as Christ and the Trinity and we belong to the same body, even with our diversity. On this foundation we can go a long way, with “Christ at the centre”, praying, praising and adoring together. Reading and studying the Scriptures, evangelising together, cultivating together “life in Christ”, growing together

towards maturity. We can walk together to enjoy fraternal communion, we can bear witness to our unity. A mixed Catholic-Pentecostal fellowship? There are already examples of this. A nucleus, maybe even a model to be replicated. Do you think that CHARIS can take the initiative in this direction by promoting this vision?

CHARIS Leadership Course - Zambia -

8th – 14th September 2019



The Course was held at the Christian Brothers International Spirituality Centre, Lusaka Zambia. The Course drew 70 leaders from different parts of the country, as well as neighboring countries namely Botswana and Namibia, in Southern Africa. All the seventy 70 participants were awarded certificates and commissioned at the end of the Course. In addition to the seventy 70 registered participants, three priests joined in the sessions occasionally and these were Fr Collins Moonga, Fr Paul Sakala and Fr Jackson Nyakosa. It was Spirit-filled, characterized by fervent praise and worship. The topics covered were very relevant to the local situation and the Facilitators were simply awesome. Many participants attested to the fact that the teachings spoke to them directly. For many, this was their best Leadership Course ever. The Charismatic Renewal in Zambia is grateful to CHARIS for this initiative.

No new Pentecost without evangelization



His discourse during the Leaders Conference
(Friday, June 7th).

The first Pentecost: a missionary transformation

As you know, the Holy Father has expressed several times the wish for a new Pentecost, and CHARIS has launched a prayer campaign for this purpose. But what did we ask the Lord when we prayed for a new Pentecost? What would this new Pentecost consist of?

To understand it, one must first understand what the first Pentecost was, as we are told in the Acts of the Apostles in chapter 2, 1-6. The result is clear: the Apostles who were closed inside the Cenacle “for fear of the Jews” (Jn 20:19) are transformed. They go out and announce the risen Christ, Lord and Savior, with such assurance that even Peter dares to accuse his hearers: “Men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs

that God did through him in your midst, as you yourself know, this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised him up” (Acts 2: 22-24). It is the same Peter who denied Jesus because he was afraid, who becomes a missionary by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The first Pentecost was necessary for the beginning of the Church’s mission. It was not a purpose in itself. The Holy Spirit did not come down upon the Apostles just so they could rejoice at having received it. The Holy Spirit came to make them missionaries, to send them on mission. Pentecost is therefore inseparable from mission, from evangelization.

The new Pentecost in Acts

What is extraordinary is that shortly after the first

Pentecost, Acts tells us about a second one that I want to call the New Pentecost of the Acts of the Apostles. Try to picture the scene: Peter and John have healed the lame around the beautiful door of the Temple, then they began to evangelize with power. The Temple commander arrives and puts them in jail. The next day, they appear before the Sanhedrin. They testify again with courage. They are released by prohibiting them from evangelizing. Saint Luke continues: “When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy

Spirit, ‘Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed-- for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.’ And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.” (Acts 4: 23-31)

Here is a new Pentecost shortly after the first one. What is going on? Things have changed since the first Pentecost. The Apostles have become missionaries, but they encounter opposition. So, what are they doing? They ask for more! And the Holy Spirit comes to give more! We are witnessing a shift in things:

- At the first Pentecost, the Holy Spirit comes to transform the apostles into missionaries;

- At the second Pentecost, the Holy Spirit comes because the apostles are missionaries and they need more!

It’s not the same movement. This slogan has sometimes been called “no new evangelization without a new Pentecost”. But we should say instead “no new Pentecost without an ever-new evangelization”.

Let me give you an image. We do not have to look like a car in a gas station that stays at the pump all the time to fill the tank. It is useless. Once the tank is full, it is full! At some point, the car must leave the station and go, that is, use the gasoline it has accumulated.

It’s the same for us: we have received the baptism in the Spirit. We prayed to give him more space in our lives; now it’s time to let him work. How? By evangelizing! And then the Holy Spirit will come to give us his strength and his charisms. Instead of a car stopped at a gas station, we will then look like a plane refueled in flight, that is to say that the Holy Spirit will supply us according to our missionary needs.

It seems to me, brothers and sisters, that we have arrived at an essential moment in the development of the Charismatic Renewal. The Lord is inviting us to enter the deep waters: *Duc in altum!* The Lord is inviting us to cast out our nets. He is inviting us to experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in evangelization.

A NON-CRITICAL PACT

With the creation of CHARIS, questions have circulated and sometimes critics. Will CHARIS be another bureaucracy? Is it not artificial? Some have used social networks to spread criticism about one other.

This is very detrimental to all of us and to the Renewal. Criticism is a sin against communion. I propose to resolutely participate in a path of communion and non-criticism. If you think something is wrong, you can go find the person you have a problem with and discuss with her/him. This is not criticism. But keep your distance and do not spread your remarks around you in the form of various criticisms.

I propose that everyone in the Renewal make a pact of non-criticism: do not criticize each other within our groups, do not criticize each other between groups or communities, do not criticize each other between leaders, do not criticize our priests, our bishops, do not criticize the Church ... But on the contrary, we may commit ourselves to speak well on each other so that the name of the Lord may be more and more glorified in the Church and that charity be visible in our midst. “By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (Jn 13:35).

Blessed Maria Concepcion Cabrera

Charismatic and Prophetic laywoman who foresaw a new Pentecost in the Catholic Church

Blessed Conchita



Maria Concepcion Cabrera also known as Conchita, was a great charismatic and prophet of our times; a Mexican, lay mystic, born in the last Century and beatified on 4th May 2019 . She lived the normal stages of family and Christian life: wife, mother and widow. She received from Jesus Himself the mission of preparing a New Pentecost that will precede the Kingdom of the Holy Spirit. A prophetic message had been revealed to her, and to us, through her enormous set of mystic and ordinary writings which have been approved by the Church. Many mystic dialogues with Jesus, written in a particular spiritual language, also help us understand how to collaborate in the New Pentecost age.

1. Jesus is my Lord and Savior

Her spiritual itinerary began with extraordinary experiences of God's merciful love.

2. I received the light and the strength of the Holy Spirit

While Maria Concepcion was praying in the Jesuit church at San Luis Potosi, her native town, she had a mystic experience. There suddenly, appeared to her the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Love, illumining and enkindling her soul.

Much through her very "ordinary" life, God came to choose this young married mother of a family, a simple lay person, to invite specially the lay People of God be mindful of the mystery of salvation. Providence has chosen not

a priest or a religious but a laywoman to proclaim a message of conversion for today's world.

3. Announcing a new Pentecost for the Church

Her mission in the Church consists in announcing a "new Pentecost," the reign of the Holy Spirit.

As written in her diary, Sept. 27, 1918: "May the Church preach Him, may souls love Him, may the whole world be consecrated to Him, and peace will come along with a moral and spiritual reaction, greater than the evil by which the world is tormented. Ask for this renewal, this new Pentecost, for My Church. One day, not too far away, at the center of My Church, at Saint Peter's, there will take place the consecration of the world to the Holy Spirit, and the graces of this Divine Spirit, will be showered on

the blessed Pope who will make it. It is My desire that the universe be consecrated to the Divine Spirit that He may spread Himself over the earth in a new Pentecost."

4. The Holy Spirit reveals the mystery of salvation

Her third charismatic experience consisted of the vision of the Holy Spirit crowning the glorious cross:

"I saw, one afternoon, in the same Jesuit church - a happy afternoon - a white dove in a large hearth from where flared brilliant and sparkling rays of light. The Dove, once again with its wings outspread, was perched at the center, and beneath It, at the bottom of this immensity of light was a large Cross, a very large one, with a heart at the center. From below the Cross there flared myriads of rays of light, which could be clearly

distinguished from the white light of the Dove, and the fire of the clouds.

"I saw a vast tableau of very vivid light, growing brighter and brighter at its center. A white light! and most surprising, above this ocean, this abyss of light with its thousands rays of gold and fire, I saw a dove, an all-white dove, its wings spread, covering I know not how, this whole torrent of light. I understood that there was here a vision most elevated and impenetrable, profound and divine. It left me with an impression of peace, of love, of purity and of humility. How can the inexpressible be expressed?"

5. What does this mysterious cross - illumined and covered by pure light of the Holy Spirit signify?

"The heart was alive, beating, human, but glorified, surrounded by a material fire which seemed to glow, and sparkled as in a hearth. Above it there flared other different flames, like tongues of fire of a higher quality or grade, I shall say. Luminous rays surrounded the heart, longer at first and then becoming smaller, distinguishable from the flames, which were below, and from the dim light and the most brilliant halo, which encircled it. The flames that blazed up from the hearth ascended rapidly as if dispatched with great force, covering and revealing the tiny crosses fastened within the



heart. The thorns which encircled the heart hurt us on seeing them as if they pressed against this so delicate and tender heart."

6. What does the Holy Spirit want to teach us through this glorified Cross of Jesus, Savior of Men?

"That is what I asked myself. What does the Lord wish? I rendered an account to my director. At first, he told me to disregard this; then, inspired by God, the significance was made clear. It signifies that the oblation of Jesus on the Cross (kenosis), constitutes the key to become disciples able to offer our lives to Him. The solution to our worldwide crisis is a new Pentecost ordered to reach the sanctity of priests, the integral liberation of humankind and the whole care of the God's creation.

"The world is foundering in the abyss since it lacks priests who will help it from falling in; priests who bear the light to shine on the paths of good; pure priests to pull out of the mud so many hearts; priests afire who

will fill the entire universe with divine love." (Diary, Nov. 1, 1927).

This charismatic and prophetic current of grace has a universal dimension that we want to receive and share with the whole Church, because never as today we need the fruits of sanctity of the self-giving offer of Jesus renewed through his priestly oblation in the Eucharistic mysteries.

Conclusion

He is the only one who will give us his Charisms, his Gifts, his Virtues and his Fruits to transform our hearts of stone into hearts of flesh re-evangelize and re-vivify our Church by a "new Pentecost".

We invite all the charismatic groups of the world to fast and pray together to reach the enormous grace of a new Civilization of Love. We are hoping that the promises of the Lord made almost one century ago to the Blessed Conchita Armida, one day, not too far away, will be a very happy reality.

José Prado Flores



Dom Hélder Câmara
Archbishop of Recife whose canonization process is underway



Cardinal Kevin Farrell
Prefect of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life

Dear friends,
As we mentioned at our meeting before Pentecost in Rome, CHARIS is organizing the first international meeting of leaders of charismatic communities, from the 15th to the 17th of next January, in Recife (Brazil). This meeting was prepared by the Koinonia Commission of the International Service of Communion. You will find the full programme of this conference on our website. Cardinal Kevin Farrell, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life, will honor us with his presence. This event will be preceded on January 14 by the first Brazilian national meeting of charismatic communities organized by CHARIS-Brazil. Many of you stressed the importance of maintaining bonds of communion between the different communities that have emerged from the Charismatic Renewal. Through its Koinonia Commission, CHARIS has taken it to heart to propose a formation program that can support the missionary work of the communities and at the same time allow them to forge bonds of communion.

Among the topics covered:

- CHARIS and the communities
- Ecumenical communities
- Following in the footsteps of Dom Hélder Câmara, Archbishop of Recife whose canonization process is underway
- Community action in the outskirts
- Abuse of authority: what can be done to prevent it?
- How to evangelize young people?
- Communities as sources of vocations for the Church

I am counting on your broad participation in this first meeting. You can download the registration form on our website. Your participation is important for the whole Charismatic Renewal because it will be a sign of your desire to maintain the communion that has been built in the past as well as your desire to actively support the initiative that Pope Francis took in erecting CHARIS.

I hope to meet many of you in Recife and entrust this important event to the intercession of our Lady of Aparecida, patron saint of Brazil.

Jean-Luc Moens
CHARIS Moderator

Please visit www.charis.international for registration

FIRST CHARIS TRAINING COURSE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

On the eve of Pentecost, during the first international conference of CHARIS, Pope Francis addressed these words to us: "Young people are the future of the Church, it is true, but they are the present: they are the present and the future of the Church. I am glad that you have given them the visibility and responsibility to see the present with new eyes and to look to the future with you."

Dear young people, let us respond with courage and enthusiasm to the invitation of Pope Francis who calls us to actively collaborate in the action of the Holy Spirit.

With great joy, I announce that CHARIS is organizing its first training course for young people from 19 to 26 July 2020 at Casa Divin Maestro (Roma, Ariccia).

Young people from all over the world, it is from the bottom of my heart that you are invited to pray, and to listen to the Holy Spirit and prepare yourself to assume the responsibilities which God calls you to take in order to respond to this trust that the Church places in us.

I am looking forward to meeting you soon in Rome; let us walk together guided by the Holy Spirit.



Giulia Rancan
Youth representative of the International Service of Communion

19 - 26 JULY 2020

CASA DIVIN MAESTRO
(ARICCIA-ROMA)

For more information, please visit our website:
www.charis.international
Registration opens soon

Among the speakers will be Father Raniero Cantalamessa

Help CHARIS

Dear friends of the Charismatic Renewal,

As you know, CHARIS is the service that Pope Francis wants for the current of grace that is the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. We started at Pentecost this year and in this magazine you can see that there are already some results present.

CHARIS as a service has no members. Therefore we have no quotas that can support our activities. We totally depend on providence for all our services.

We started our activities with the funds that ICCRS and the Catholic Fraternity left us, as required by our statutes. But these two Organizations had experienced a decrease in their donations, linked to the fact that they had to close their activities. This is why the funds received are not sufficient to cover the operating costs of CHARIS.

Now, **the time has come to appeal to your generosity.** If CHARIS has no members, it has many supporters; all of you who participate in the activities of a prayer group, a community, a school of evangelization or any other present expression in the Renewal Charismatic. Without your concrete help, CHARIS cannot answer the call that Pope Francis addressed to us all to spread the baptism in the Spirit throughout the Church, to serve the unity of Christians and to live the charity towards the poor. Help us, by your generosity, to respond faithfully to what the Church asks of us. As you know, God can never be outdone in generosity.

Some of you have continued to support us and we are very grateful for that, but this is not enough. Today, CHARIS needs everyone's help to continue its service activities. We count on your generosity. Even the smallest donations will be welcome!

Thank you for your generosity.



Jean-Luc Moens
CHARIS Moderator



Another Way to Support CHARIS!



Many of you have been very supportive after the publication of CHARIS magazine n°1. Many have also asked us to have a physical version. To meet this demand,

CHARIS is launching a subscription to the Magazine (4 issues per year). By subscribing, you will not only receive our Magazine in your mailbox, but you will also contribute to supporting CHARIS financially.

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