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ICCRS NEWSLETTER

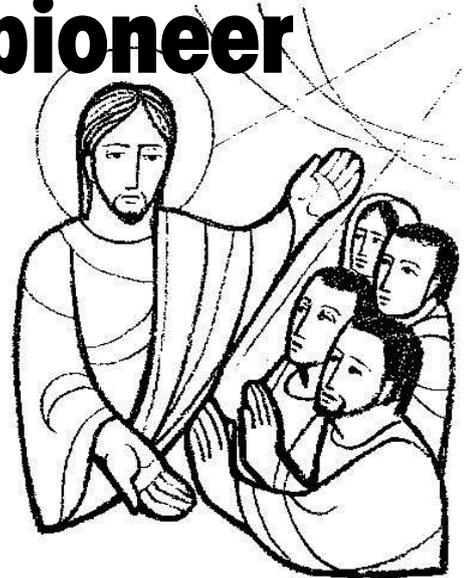
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October - December 2007

What the Lord is doing for and through the CCR:

Reflections of a pioneer

by Kevin Ranaghan



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Reflecting upon the extraordinary work of God that is the 40 year old CCR needs perspective. Memories can be selective. Our minds can return to the "big events," like the Rome conference in 1975 where thousands of us were greeted by Pope Paul VI in St. Peter's Basilica as we filled that historic building with singing in tongues, or the ecumenical conference in Kansas City at which over 50,000 people wept for the "broken body of the Lord." We are stirred by memories of the large, dramatic healing ministries, documents by bishop's conferences, celebrations of the Lord's presence and power at Notre Dame, at Paray le Monial, in Kerala, or in Rio. We think of the support and service structures of the renewal- the national and local service teams, conference committees, newsletters, magazines, books, tapes and financial supporters. And the continual encouragement from Pope John Paul II... priceless! Today there are over 135 million Roman Catholics in well over 100 countries who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit and who have come to use the spiritual gifts. We have done all of this and more, in Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

But to clarify our perspective and understand even more clearly the impact of the CCR, it is worthwhile to remember what life was like before our Lord decided to inaugurate this renewal. Very few Catholics then talked to their friends and neighbors about Jesus. Few dared to pray in their own words to the Lord or to read scripture knowing that the Word of God was speaking to them personally. Rarer still, were people who had the faith to pray for healing, or those who stopped to ask our Father for his will when they faced a choice, or sat down with other Christians to share their daily experience of life in Christ, or were bold enough to go out and witness and work to lead others to

Christ, to form prayer groups, or to decide as laymen and women to put their lives together in various forms of community life.

One of the earliest worries of church authorities (and it hangs on with some of them in spite of the evidence) was that Baptism in the Holy Spirit and the charisms would lead Catholics out of the Catholic Church into Pentecostal or charismatic denominations, or promote ecumenical indifference. Yet, at the grass roots of the renewal, we have often been able to enter, without fear, as faithful Catholics, into the rich give and take of ecumenical sharing. Further, through the "bridge" of the renewal, ecumenical dialogue between the Vatican and Protestant Pentecostals has begun.

From the beginning, three types of people became involved; those already serious about a life of faith and action but who wanted more life in the Spirit, those minimally practicing Catholics for whom the light of faith became a reality, and those who had left, or were never part of the life of the Church, who had a powerful first time conversion. The overwhelming evidence for all three groups is that the vast majority have been drawn more deeply into the sacramental life of the Church, have drawn closer to Mary and the saints, (not as distant models, but as living friends in Christ), have devoted themselves to understanding both scripture and the teaching of the Church, and have become zealous workers in evangelization and service alongside the clergy and religious. Furthermore, in addition to the innumerable testimonies of laymen and women in the work of the church, there are thousands of stories of

new vocations to the priesthood, the diaconate and religious life, and of clergy and religious vocations in danger which were saved and restored through the merciful action of God through the renewal.

Remembering both what God has done, and what so desperately needed to be done in the renewal in our Catholic Christian lives is essential. Nostalgia for the glories of our recent past is understandable, but none of us would ever want to go back to life as it was before the renewal. It is our entrustment from the Lord to courageously carry and continue this unfinished renewal into the future. To do that effectively, and to draw young people into the power of life in the Spirit, we will need to respect the freedom we have in Christ to follow God's call to serve the church through this renewal in many different ways, whether we work directly within the renewal in the parish or diocese, attempt to build a network of prayer groups, or invest ourselves in intentional communities. A new commitment to unity will find us offering mutual support, affection and respect as we respond to our different calls. Our unity, grounded in our shared desire to foster the baptism in the Holy Spirit, will require a commitment to work through difficulties together as we look for the mind and purposes of God. Pioneers are still needed.

Jesus
IS THE
gift
MERRY CHRISTMAS!



"THANKS BE
TO GOD
FOR HIS
INEXPRESSIBLE
GIFT!"
II COR 9:15

A report on the First Pan-African Congress in Ghana

by Jean Pliya

At its birth in August 2005, the AFSCI (sub committee of ICCRS for Africa) had had as its first task the organisation of the first Pan-African congress of the CCR.

This congress took place in Accra (Ghana) from 17 to 23 July 2007 to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the CCR and to pray for Ghana which was celebrating the 50th anniversary of its independence.

The first President of this country, Dr Kwame N'krumah had promoted the unity of Africa.

The mission of unity Jesus Christ entrusted to His Church can happen only with the Holy Spirit in a vision of Africa as the family of God. With the support of the Bishops' Conference of Ghana, the Pan-African Congress was organised jointly by the AFSCI and the CCR of Ghana. Dr Bernard Asante was the chairman of the planning committee.

The theme: "Africa, family of God, let streams of living water flow from your heart" (Jn 7: 37-39). The purpose was to pray for peace and unity in Africa and to announce to African people, Jesus-Christ, sun of justice, through the grace of the CCR.

About one thousand six hundred participants from seventeen English and French speaking African countries attended the three planned activities:

- Retreat of the leaders from 18 to 20 July, with a special session for youth.
- Public conference from 21 to 22 July.
- Consultation, in order to form the board of AFSCI.

The participants experienced lovely charismatic prayers and heard teachings from international speakers of the CCR.

Mrs Michelle Moran, president of ICCRS and Mr Jean PLIYA, chairman of AFSCI gave a powerful call to unity in the name of God (Ez. 37).

Bishop Ernest KOMBO from the Republic of Congo insisted on repentance for the divisions and tribal and national wars. After Mr Coovi Euloge's teaching from Benin and that of Mrs Deborah de Rosia from the Caribbean on conversion, forgiveness, and reconciliation, the Holy Spirit touched everyone's hearts. A reconciliation process initiated by the reverend Fr Emmanuel Tusime, Vice-chairman of AFSCI, moved people deeply and has led to reconciliation between Uganda and Tanzania, between Africa and Europe. The unction of the Spirit of love rested over the meeting.

Mrs Deborah de Rosia and Mr Pliya on one hand, Mr Oreste Pesare, the ICCRS executive director and Fr Ernest Sievers adviser to AFSCI on the other, led the participants to experience some spiritual dynamics with intercession prayers, inner healing and experimentation in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Pan-African congress reached its climax on July 21st and 22nd 2007 with such themes as: "Africa, family of God, come and drink Jesus' living water" and "Let living water flow from your hearts".

There had also been healing power testimonies, and prayer for a new baptism in the Holy Spirit.

The most reverend Charles Gabriel Palmer Buckle, metropolitan archbishop of Accra, powerfully showed how Africa, family of God is the continent where, worldwide, the Church is growing most, especially with conversions, sacerdotal (priestly) vocations and religious life.

Thanks to the dynamism of evangelisation, the Holy Spirit will make out of African Christians genuine witnesses in their entire life environment.

In order to materialize the setting up of African unity, a peace altar was built at the Independence

Square with stones brought along by each one of the nations represented in Accra: living stones united by Jesus, the corner stone and in a splendid Eucharist directed by Cardinal Peter Kwadwo Appiah Turkson, primate of Ghana. It was a great feast of the gospel's liturgical adaptation into African culture.

The consultation in order to elect the AFSCI board members and to define its program of activities reminded us of the vision for the next five years:

- A new beginning for Africa;
- Abundant blessings,
- Renewed fervour of the new evangelisation.

God invites Africa to unite in Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit and to develop a holy relationship with the Lord so as to bear fruit which last.

Among the chosen strategies, let's stress the following:

- Sharing resources between English and French speaking countries.
- The organisation of a Pan-African spiritual event every four years.
- African youth evangelisation.
- The institution of one AFSCI secretariat with bilingual workers who will work full-time with the chairman.

The new AFSCI board is made up of twelve members among which three members are from ICCRS (Mr Pesare, Mr Pliya, Fr Tusiime), plus one youth representative for Africa and an adviser priest.

The second Pan-African conference will be held in Cameroon in 2011 and the French speaking regional congress in Gabon on 2 to 9 August 2009. The regional congress for Central Africa will be held in Congo Brazzaville on August 2008.

In conclusion, the Pan-African congress has been a great feast of unity and charismatic faith, strengthened by the mobilization of the Church, as the Family of God. Amen, Alleluia. 

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School of Healing Prayer®

2nd edition
We are looking forward for you!



ICCRS is happy to announce that we are in the process of planning another conference with Christian Ministries (Francis and Judith MacNutt).

The first six-day conference was marvelously successful, with 450 in attendance (including 27 priests) and so many wanted to return for another such conference that proved to be life-transforming for many of the participants. The word has gotten out and now many more want to take part in such a conference, and so we hope to provide once again this marvelous opportunity.

This second conference will be more in-depth than the first one, so that all those who attended this year and can return will benefit by the experience. At the same time, we encourage everyone who was not able to come to April's conference to come to this one. You will be able to take part fully even if you were not able to come to the first. The topic will be: "Becoming a transformed person and Church through Jesus Christ's healing power."

Date : October 20-25, 2008

Place: Jacksonville, Florida, USA

More information will be given you in future ICCRS Newsletters.



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ICCRS NEWSLETTER

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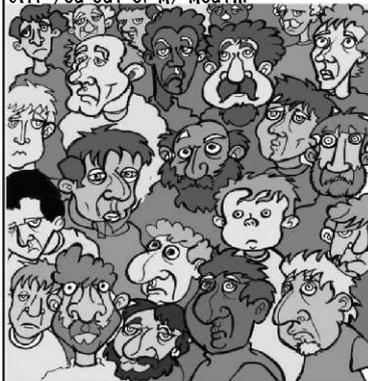
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CR TAKE COURAGE!: LAODICEA, GUILTY OF MEDIOCRITY

BY JAMT

"I KNOW ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES: HOW YOU ARE NEITHER COLD NOR HOT. IF ONLY YOU WERE ONE OR THE OTHER! BUT AS YOU ARE LUKEWARM, NEITHER HOT NOR COLD, I WILL SPIT YOU OUT OF MY MOUTH."



YOU SAY TO YOURSELF: I AM REPLETE WITH GOOD THINGS AND I LACK NOTHING. YOU DO NOT KNOW THAT YOU ARE UNFORTUNATE, MISERABLE, POOR, BLIND AND NAKED.

I ADVISE YOU TO BUY FROM ME THE GOLD THAT HAS BEEN TESTED IN FIRE SO THAT YOU MAY BECOME RICH; AND WHITE ROBES TO CLOTHE YOU AND HIDE YOUR SHAMEFUL NAKEDNESS; AND OINTMENT FOR YOUR EYES SO THAT YOU MIGHT SEE.



I CORRECT AND REPROVE THOSE I LOVE: SO REPENT WITH RENEWED ZEAL.

I AM KNOCKING AT THE DOOR. IF ONE OF YOU HEARS ME AND OPENS THE DOOR, I WILL ENTER AND EAT AT THAT ONE'S SIDE.



ANYONE WHO HAS EARS TO HEAR, LISTEN TO WHAT THE SPIRIT IS SAYING TO THE CHURCHES." (CF REV 3:15-22)