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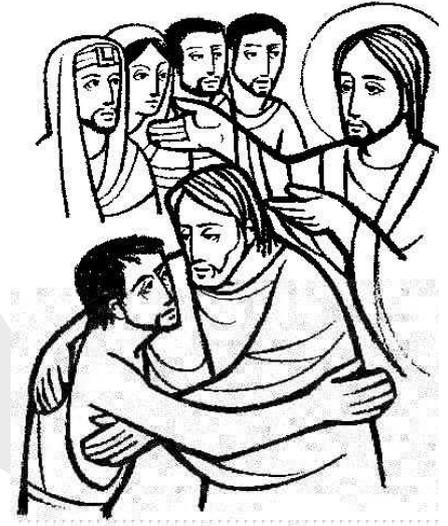
ICCRS NEWSLETTER

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All done in love

by Cyril John



This issue

All done in love

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on Charisms

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At the time of calling Peter to the highest form of service in the Church, the one requisite that Jesus reiterated was that Peter should love Him. The scene of the call was the beach of the Sea of Tiberias where Peter and other disciples had landed after fishing throughout the night (Jn 21:15-19). After serving them bread and fish for breakfast, Jesus must have pointed to the huge catch of fish, while asking Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" It was after Jesus got the confirmation thrice, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you", He commissioned Peter to tend His sheep. If only we love the Lord with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our mind (Mt 22:37), will we bear in our hearts love for the sheep and lambs of the Lord's flock.

In 1 Corinthians, after imparting teaching on 'spiritual gifts' in Chapter 12, St. Paul goes on to emphasize two things: to insist in Chapter 13 that charisms should be operated 'in love' and in Chapter 14 that the spiritual gifts should be used 'in good order'. "If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels... if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains...but do not have love, I gain nothing" (1 Cor 1-3). We need to look at St. Paul's teachings on gifts and love as one and give due importance to love in the use of spiritual gifts. Love for the Lord and His flock should be the motive for "seeking the higher gifts" (1 Cor 12:31) and also for their use. St. Augustine of Hippo was very confident when he said, "love, and do what you will!"

St. Thomas Aquinas defines the charisms (*gratiae gratis datae*) as graces given primarily and directly, not to sanctify the recipient himself, but in order to help him bring others to union with God. According to him charity unites directly to the end, which is God, whereas the

charism only creates the predisposition, prepares the ground, so that He might come into others. "Charisms are to be accepted with gratitude by the person who receives them and by all members of the Church as well. They are a wonderfully rich grace for the apostolic vitality and for the holiness of the entire Body of Christ, provided they really are genuine gifts of the Holy Spirit and are used in full conformity with authentic prompting of this same Spirit, that is, in keeping with charity, the true measure of all charisms (cf. 1 Cor 13)". (CCC, n. 800).

Love, in fact, is the heart of what Christian life and ministry is all about. Through the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, many people have experienced in their own lives the amazing power of charisms of the Spirit. These are gifts, freely bestowed upon us by a sovereign act of God, and they are not rewards, wages or prizes given based on our merit. God is love, and He bestows on us His gifts freely to be used 'in love', not for our benefit but for others. These are the means the Spirit gives to us to express the love of Christ in concrete and practical ways in our own life situations and ministry. Such awareness helps us to place every gift - be it prophecy, word of knowledge, word of wisdom, healing, miracles, etc. - at the service of the Christian community. St. John of the Cross pointed out that persons exercising such gifts should rejoice not in the fact that they possess and exercise such gifts, but only in the fact that they are doing God's will motivated by true charity.

One of the profound experiences at any charismatic gathering is the love that is visible among the members. Recently I was in the United Arab Emirates

where we had a gathering of leaders of the Renewal from different language, ethnic, professional and age groups. Despite the many differences that existed among the members, we could experience tremendous love and unity among ourselves "because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us" (Rom 5:5). It was the love for one another more than the manifestation of charisms that bore powerful witness to others. "Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end" (1 Cor 13:8). Selfishness and self-glorification weaken the power of charisms and come in the way of building up the body of Christ. Similarly lack of reconciliation, disunity and division stifle the charisms. Only when charisms are used 'in love' do they help in building up the Body of Christ.

It may be summed up in the words of St. John of the Cross, "At the evening of this life, we shall be judged on our love". St. Paul also says, "In short, there are three things that last: faith, hope and love; and the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor 13:13). God's infinite love can never be totally appropriated. As such, it should be sought repeatedly through prayer (Acts 4:23-31) in order that the "spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline" (2 Tim 1:6-7) may continue to be stirred up and rekindled in us. ☪

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Report on the 2nd International Colloquium on the Charisms

3rd - 6th April 2008

by Michelle Moran

"...The overall aim of the Colloquium was to reflect on the doctrine and the use of the charisms in the Church from the perspective of the experience of the CCR. The objective was to give some in-depth presentations of the Church's teaching on the charisms and to look at how they have been exercised throughout the history of the Church and in particular in the CCR..."

It was with great joy that 140 invited leaders from 46 countries representing every continent gathered in Rome from 3rd - 6th April for the 2nd International Colloquium on the charisms and the CCR. The event was co-sponsored by ICCRS and the 'Catholic Fraternity' (which is made up of Covenant Communities and fellowships within the Renewal) and it was organised in collaboration with the Pontifical Council of the Laity. This Colloquium followed the important gathering in 2001 that explored 'healing' within CCR. and the Catholic Church..

The overall aim of the Colloquium was to reflect on the doctrine and the use of the charisms in the Church from the perspective of the experience of the CCR. The objective was to give some in-depth presentations of the Church's teaching on the charisms and to look at how they have been exercised throughout the history of the Church and in particular in the CCR. Each morning consisted of two theological reflections on different aspects of the charisms followed by time for dialogue and questions. The afternoons were 'roundtable' talks focussing on the practical and experiential aspects of the charisms.

At the opening Mass Cardinal Rylko, the President of the Pontifical Council of the Laity congratulated the organisers for taking the

initiative to hold the Colloquium. He said that 'we need to be attuned and attentive to the charismatic gifts in our age, they are signs of hope for this 3rd millennium'. He exhorted the delegates to not only dialogue and study, but also to listen attentively to what the Spirit is saying to the Church. He emphasised the need for courage and boldness in the power of the Spirit. We were encouraged to be open to the charisms so that we can be more effective witnesses in this age when we are confronted by apostasy and relativism. He said 'every believer not only has the right, but also the duty to exercise the gifts - be they ordinary or extraordinary - within the Church pastors are to judge and examine, but they must not extinguish the gifts'.

The focus on the first morning was on the biblical and patristic/historical approach to the charisms. Fr Francis Martin (USA) gave a biblical overview of the charisms in the OT showing how they foreshadowed the future realities to come. His NT reflections focussed on charisms in the ministry of Jesus and the apostles. He also referred to Paul's letters where we are exhorted to desire the spiritual gifts and reminded us that everything must be done in love as the gifts are for the building up of the body. He concluded, by

reminding us that we are powerless to transform society or penetrate the Culture without the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

From a historical perspective, Fr Raniero Cantalamessa spoke about the 7 gifts in Isaiah 11 as means of sanctification for the individual. Whereas, the 'Charismatic gifts,' are given in different proportion and not equally to all. As the centuries passed and the Church became more institutionalised the 7 gifts were emphasised more fully and the extraordinary charisms were partially lost to the majority. However, he emphasised that the charisms were never totally lost and signs and wonders were manifest throughout the centuries in holy men and women.

The moderator for the second day was Professor Guzman Carriquiry, the under secretary of the Pontifical Council of the Laity. The theological reflection, given by Archbishop Alberto Taveira (Brazil) helped to reflect upon the specific gift of the CCR to the Church, i.e. what is our distinctiveness? He said that we have a mission to be apostles of the Baptism in the Spirit. He reminded us of the constant call to return to the upper room to invoke anew the fire of Pentecost. He also spoke about the Marian dimension of the charisms, reminding us of the Virgin Mary's role in saying 'yes' to the Spirit's action. Professor Mary Healy from

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the United States of America who is a member of the ICCRS Doctrinal Commission, spoke about Discernment and Accompaniment of the charisms. She began by putting things into a historical context, noting that Vatican II had laid the theological foundations for the resurgence of the charisms then followed the 'surprise' of the Spirit with the birth of CCR. It was as if the CCR was a realisation of Vatican II theology. The Church has always recognized charisms (See CCC, 799) but in practice ascribed a very limited role to them. Therefore, Lumen Gentium 12 (Vatican II) was a breakthrough in the Church's understanding. No longer were charisms seen to be so extraordinary or rare. Mary developed her topic and gave a number of very practical points about discernment and accompaniment of the charisms.

The initial roundtable discussions focussed on Baptism in the Spirit and there were short interventions from Fr Bob Faricy S.J. (USA) who shared his testimony of the baptism in the Spirit emphasising in a humorous way that it is not always a 'spectacular spiritual experience' but sometimes is a gradual release of the Spirit. Fr Alberto Ibanez S.J. (Argentina) has written books on the gift of tongues. He emphasised the need for

childlike faith to express our love of God in the gift of tongues, which is the love language of our Creator. Fr Carlo Colonna (Italy) gave practical advice on discerning the authentic use of the word gifts of prophecy, word of wisdom and word of knowledge.

The second 'roundtable' had the theme of healing. Professor Francis MacNutt (USA) shared personal testimony and encouraged us to step out in 'expectant faith' to use the charisms of healing and deliverance in the life of our families and communities. Fr Gabriele Amorth (Italy) is an official exorcist in the Church. He shared how he tries to work in collaboration with prayer groups and communities who can offer long-term prayer ministry to those afflicted by the demonic. Finally, from an African perspective Professor Jean Pliya (Benin) gave some practical advice from his great experience of praying with people for healing and deliverance and caring for souls.

The Colloquium evoked much discussion among the participants several of whom were 'founding fathers and mothers' in the renewal. The fellowship together was an

opportunity to share our various cultural experiences of the charisms, as well as providing a place for lively debate, reflection and questions. The Eucharistic celebrations were enhanced by the presence of several Archbishops and Bishops from both the Roman and Eastern rites. The main celebrant at the final Eucharist was Bishop Josef Clemens, the Secretary General of the Pontifical Council of the Laity. He encouraged us to be like the disciples at Emmaus whose hearts were stirred when they recognised the risen Lord so that they could step out with joy and confidence and bring the light of the good news that Christ is risen to all people.

It seemed appropriate to hold this Colloquium just after our 40th anniversary. As the Church has rediscovered the charismatic dimension it is highly appropriate that at this stage in our history we consolidate and reflect on what has taken place. We can then be open to the future unfolding of the Lord's vision for CCR. It is the intention of ICCRS, in due course, to publish the acts of the Colloquium where all the texts will be made available. We also hope to cover some of the questions that were raised during the colloquium in the next few newsletters. ☺

"...Cardinal Rylko the President of the Pontifical Council of the Laity said that 'we need to be attuned and attentive to the charismatic gifts in our age, they are signs of hope for this 3rd millennium'. He exhorted the delegates to not only dialogue and study, but also to listen attentively to what the Spirit is saying to the Church. He emphasised the need for courage and boldness in the power of the Spirit. We were encouraged to be open to the charisms so that we can be more effective witnesses in this age when we are confronted by apostasy and relativism..."

Marcos Volcan

Member of the ICCRS Council

Marcos Volcan was born on January 14, 1969, in Pelotas city, in the south of Brazil.

He is the first of five children of Helder and Maria Volcan; they encountered the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in 1981 through a Prayer Group. From this time on the whole family has been engaged in the Church's affairs, most specifically in the Renewal.

Since 1990 Marcos has been engaged in many activities for the Youth in his diocese. He graduated

in Agronomy with the title of Agronomic Engineer and Master in Science and has become a professor in the Catholic University of Pelotas.

He is married to Sandra Volcan and has three children.

Marcos was chosen to be state coordinator of the Renewal (Rio Grande do Sul State) in 1998, and, as a result, became a member of the National Council for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Brazil, where he has taken on the Commission of Formation.

He has also graduated in Theology, with a specialization in Systematic Theology, developing thesis regarding the CCR entitled: Catholic Charismatic Renewal: a theological and pastoral view.

In 2005, he was chosen as President for the National Council in Brazil. In 2008, he has been elected as representative of the ICCRS in Portuguese speaking Latin America.

May the Lord continue to accompany him and his family in serving His Church. ☺

"...Marcos in his family encountered the CCR in 1981 through a Prayer Group. From this time on the whole family has been engaged in the Church's affairs, especially in the Renewal..."

ICCRS NEWSLETTER

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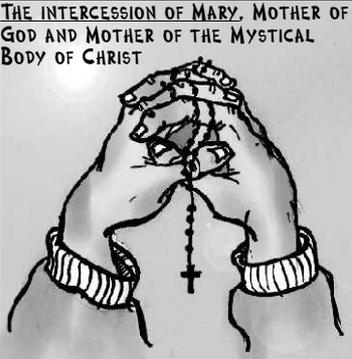
BY JAMT

EVANGELISE IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



"AND WHAT I SPOKE AND PROCLAIMED WAS NOT MEANT TO CONVINCE YOU BY PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENTS, BUT TO DEMONSTRATE THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT, SO THAT YOUR FAITH SHOULD DEPEND NOT ON HUMAN WISDOM, BUT ON THE POWER OF GOD." (1 COR 2: 4-5)

THE INTERCESSION OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD AND MOTHER OF THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST



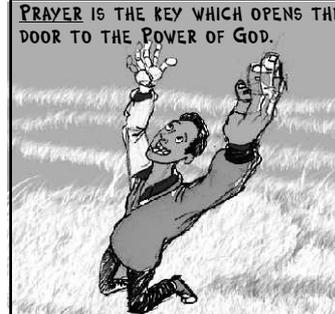
"FROM NOW ON ALL GENERATIONS WILL CALL ME BLESSED, FOR THE ALMIGHTY HAS DONE GREAT THINGS FOR ME AND HOLY IS HIS NAME." (Lk. 1: 48-49)

THE CHARISMS: THE INGREDIENTS FOR POWERFUL AND EFFECTIVE EVANGELISATION. (1 COR 12: 8-10, RM 12, AND 1 PET 4)



"FOR EACH ONE OF YOU HAS RECEIVED A SPECIAL GRACE SO, LIKE GOOD STEWARDS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THESE VARIED GRACES OF GOD, PUT IT AT THE SERVICE OF OTHERS." (1 PET 4:10)

PRAYER IS THE KEY WHICH OPENS THE DOOR TO THE POWER OF GOD.



"ASK AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU; SEARCH AND YOU WILL FIND; KNOCK AND THE DOOR WILL BE OPENED. EVERYONE WHO ASKS, RECEIVES, EVERYONE WHO SEARCHES, FINDS, AND EVERYONE WHO KNOCKS WILL HAVE THE DOOR OPENED." (MT 7: 7-8)