



ICCRS NEWSLETTER

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Fanning the flame through the Spirit of Power Love & Self Control: **Closeness to Jesus**

■ **Jude Muscat**



The allegory of the vine in John 15 beautifully illustrates our closeness to Jesus. It is easily understood and elicits from our heart a cry of joy and awesome wonder. For most, this deep spiritual experience lasts but a few moments, because when reality sinks in we find it difficult to root these experiences in the practicality of our daily lives.

Closeness: a participation in the life of God

Here we encounter the last of the “I Am” discourses in John’s Gospel. It is the only occurrence with a supplement: “and my Father is the Vinedresser”. This qualifies the statement and raises it up into the realms of the Divine Trinity. Our closeness to Jesus is communion with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We are invited to participate in the eternal, dynamic and ecstatic love of the Triune God. Closeness to Jesus is not an emotion or a religious devotion of some kind, but rather a participation in God.

Methods of Participation

‘Closeness’ actually deals with relationships. According to the Gospels, we encounter three levels of relationship in the life of Jesus: His relationship with the Father, with the disciples and with the world. We are called into these three levels of relationship. Each of these will bring special blessings in our personal life and in the life of others. In Christ we bear fruit as individuals and as community, in its various ramifications and echelons of belonging.

1. Relationship with the Father

Our closeness to Jesus is rooted in our genuine participation in prayer. Prayer has a multifaceted form but its character is constant: it is the I or the We in front of the Throne of God. First and foremost this has its source in the Liturgy. Our prayers are rooted in this one action of the Church in Christ Jesus. The Sacraments

are not magical formulae; they are not the mythical elixir of life that is meant to give immortal life to its possessors, irrespective of their intentions or genuineness. All sacraments require a committed and genuine response for them to bear fruit in us. While they bestow healing, they



bear in us the fruit of the Spirit (Cf. Gal 5:22-23). Genuine prayer binds us together as Children of God and sends us out into the world to exercise our gifts as individuals or ecclesial realities.

2. Relationship with the Disciples

Jesus states that without Him we can do nothing (Cf. John 15:5). On the other hand our closeness to Him allows the impossible to become possible. The fruit we are called to bear is necessarily heavenly and the key to this is love. He called us friends and laid down his life for us (Cf. Jn15:14). Jesus promised that if we love one another the Father will give us whatever we ask of him and the fruit that we bear will last (Cf. Jn 15:17). Belonging to a community of love teaches us to die to self and live to serve (see Jn. 13:1-14). “By this everyone will know you are my disciples” (Jn 13:35).

3. Relationship with the World

The world is a favourite theme in John. He mentions it 58 times as opposed to 21 in the Synoptic Gospels. He mostly refers to it regarding its wickedness, its sin and its disbelief. It is a hostile environment for those who accept Jesus as Lord. But Jesus did not come to condemn it, but to save it (Cf. Jn 3:17; 12:47), because he loves it (Jn3:16). He has conquered it (Cf. Jn 16:33) and declared that “the prince of this world is cast out” (Jn 12:31).

We too are called to love the world. We are sent like sheep amongst wolves (Cf. Mt 10:16) to heal it through the power of the Holy Spirit, knowing that the good shepherd will lead us (Cf. Ps 23; Jn 10:11). Fear separates us from Jesus, for it is the spirit of this world, but we have been given the Spirit of adoption (Cf. Rom 8:15) that unites us in love as we cry out: “Abba Father”. 🙏

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Report:

ICCRS Youth Committee

■ Dn Christof Hemberger



Since I became a member of the ICCRS-Council I have noticed that “young people” are always on our agenda when and wherever we meet. It seems to me that ICCRS is focusing a lot on the next generation(s). And this is right! Young people are the future of the Renewal. Their faces will be the faces of the CCR in 20, 30 or more years! They will be the leaders of tomorrow.

The ICCRS youth-committee has members from (almost) all regions in the world: Br. James Shin (Asia), Ann Brereton (Australia), Fr. Emmanuel Tusiime (Africa) and Fr. Wojciech Nowacki and myself (Europe). Unfortunately we “lost” our American representative (and up-till-then-chairman) but I am sure we will soon find someone who can take the seat of Marcos Volcan, who resigned at the last ICCRS-council-meeting.

The task of the ICCRS-youth-committee is simple and difficult at the same time: We shall keep an eye on the development of youth in the worldwide CCR and advise the ICCRS-Council in its intentions to serve the younger generation in the CCR all over the world.

In the past years we have done this in various ways:

At the ICCRS-council-meetings we often raised the question, whether what was discussed is also the situation faced by the younger generation. Are our decisions and resolutions including the young people and their way of thinking, planning and believing? Is what we are planning also including the next generation?

We also give advice to the leaders responsible for the ICCRS formation project: What kind of teachings need to be given at the various formation projects to enable young leaders to grow in spiritual maturity and leadership skills? How can we improve in promoting those training courses (because young people do speak a different language, make use of social media etc.)?

During the ICCRS-council meetings we also meet as a committee to prepare the upcoming youth events or youth-streams at ICCRS events. Here I would like to highlight the “First youth-

conference” that ICCRS ran in Brazil in 2012, followed by the “2nd youth gathering” during the ICCRS-conference that took place in Uganda in 2014.

It was amazing to see many young men and women coming from all over the world attending these two events! Everyone who came got encouraged in his/her personal discipleship by inspiring teachings, workshops and times of praise, worship and personal prayer. We also had panels and testimonies on stage that discussed and explained the situation of young people in the CCR of today. Besides what was happening on stage those meetings became platforms for networking among the younger generation. Strangers became friends while sharing about their personal experiences and testimonies. I know of a lot of participants who are still in contact with each other, organizing outreaches to the others’ countries, visiting each other and sharing their experiences e.g. via facebook-groups (see: CCR youth!).

The youth-committee also is supporting ICCRS in running special events. We do this in giving advice to those responsible and also by joining in if wanted / needed. Here I would like to mention two projects that had a deep impact on the younger CCR: one with a long tradition, the other one is rather “new born”:

Whenever a World-Youth-Day is taking place ICCRS is collaborating with the local CCR to host a “CCR event” at the heart of WYD. Here we invite all local CCR and those who come from far away to attend WYD to come together for a “praise & worship-event” as part of the official WYD-program.

The other project that I would like to mention is “Come to Me”. The idea was born when some young leaders met at the “ICCRS Prophetic Consultation” in Bethlehem 2013 who were thinking about how to connect all kinds of different CCR-groups, -ministries, -fellowships etc. to participate at one common prayer-project. In the end youth-groups and -initiatives coming from more than 50 (!) nations joined in! This event will be repeated from now onwards on 18th February each year (to remember the “birthday” of the CCR). 🏠

UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit www.iccrs.org or e-mail events@iccrs.org for more information about our events.



3rd Worldwide Priests' Retreat

"Called to Holiness for a New Evangelisation."

■ Rome, Italy · 10 - 14 June 2015

At this time of the Spirit in which the Church calls us to a New Evangelisation, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal offers to the presbyters an opportunity to stir up the gift of God which is in them by the imposition of hands (cf. 2 Tim 1:6) by participating at the 3rd Worldwide Priests' Retreat. Organised by ICCRS and the Catholic Fraternity, this spiritual retreat is open to all Catholic ordained ministers of the various languages, races and nations, to live a renewed Pentecost in the heart of the Church. 🏠

Programme:

- 10/June · "Gathered"
- 11/June · "Reconciled"
- 12/June · "Transformed"
- 13/June · "Empowered"
- 14/June · "Sent... for a New Evangelisation"

The online registration IS OPEN!

For more information visit our website www.iccrs.org or e-mail events@iccrs.org.

Michelle Moran and Dn. Christof Hemberger

MICHELLE MORAN · ICCRS PRESIDENT



It is easy for me to remember when I was baptised in the Holy Spirit as it was at the same time as my conversion. I was 16 years old and I attended a summer camping programme run by the St Vincent De Paul Society. I had little faith background as my family were not very religious. This was the mid 1970's and many of the leaders at the youth camp had recently experienced the power of the Holy Spirit through the newly emerging Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Before going to the camp, a chance encounter with a member of a religious sect had put into my mind that there was perhaps more to life than what I was experiencing. I was fairly happy and secure and had just done very well in my schools exams, however, I noticed that so many of the people at the camp seemed to have a joy/life about them that I didn't have. They spoke to me with great ease about their friend Jesus and by the end of the week, I knew that whatever they had I wanted. So I found myself in a prayer meeting where I went forward for prayer. When I was asked what I wanted to receive from the Lord I said, 'everything'. Even though I didn't know much about faith, Jesus or the Holy Spirit. I believe that moment was a turning point for me. It wasn't so much that I found the Lord but that He found me and so began the great adventure of beginning to live life in the power of the Holy Spirit. I could never have imagined that from that very simple, frag-

ile beginning I would go on to become a founder member of a Charismatic community, a leader in CCR not only at the national level but at ICCRS and as a missionary that I would travel to more than 50 countries teaching and preaching.

As a leader I am aware of the importance of spiritual feeding not only on the staple diet of the disciple; the word of God, the sacraments of the Church, prayer etc. I am therefore an avid reader. I am usually reading 3 religious books simultaneously. A 'theology' book to feed the mind, this takes longer to read and study. A 'testimony' book which builds faith and is an easy read and a 'devotional' book, which feeds my spirit. A devotional book which had a big impact on me this year was '33 days to morning glory' by Fr Michael E Gaitley MIC. It is a retreat in daily life leading to Marian Consecration. I chose appropriately to do this throughout May. Interestingly, the day of the consecration was 1st June when I was in the Olympic Stadium in Rome by the side of the Holy Father!!

As we journey towards the Jubilee, I am hoping that CCR in the future will be marked by a united body of humble, Spirit filled people whose lives have been transformed by the power of the Spirit. A people filled with expectant faith, moving in evangelisation as they allow the works of the Lord to be demonstrated through them. Only this will truly transform the Church and the world. 🙏

DN. CHRISTOF HEMBERGER



I was 10 years old when my parents got in touch with the CCR. I was 13 when I first attended a "Life in the Spirit Seminar" and was prayed over to receive the Holy Spirit. I can still remember how they prayed and what they said. One of the women who prayed over me had an encouraging word of God that she told me during this time of prayer that I have not forgotten!

I am working as an employee for the CCR in Germany. One of my tasks is to lead and organize the national CCR-staff-and-leadership-training. I am invited regularly to be a speaker at regional CCR-events and to give retreats, teachings or seminars to prayer groups and communities. But I am also helping practically at our national CCR-meetings: e.g. coordinating the workshops, collecting participants' fees, counseling and praying with people etc.

Together with my wife I am responsible for a cell group (small group of people) that belong to our local community, so I am experiencing a "normal leader-of-a-prayergroup-life" each Monday evening.

I am a member of the German NSC and of the ICCRS Council. At ICCRS I am also serving as chair of the European Subcommittee (ESCI) and of the youth-committee.

One of the books I have read recently is: "Emotionally Healthy Spirituality" by Peter Scazzero. The author experienced a

breakdown in his leadership and marriage and writes about the lessons he has learned during this time and how God led him to become a mature man of God.

It is difficult to speak about the future of the Renewal since the CCR is different all over the earth... On a global level the Renewal will grow in numbers, so it is my heart's desire that we will find ways to grow more in ecclesial maturity. In some parts of the world the CCR has a lot of young people. They need to be trained and taught to become mature men and women of God that live a humble but powerful life of a disciple. In other parts of the world I can see a gap between the generations: there is hardly any connection between the members of prayergroups (that get older) and the younger generation(s). Here I would love to see a deeper "together of the generations".

God has called us – and the recent Popes have reminded us about this – to grow in maturity and unity. If we do so we will be able to face the future without any fears.

But it's a lot to do till before reach this point.

I would love to see the Renewal of the future strong in numbers, mature in its expressions and ready to make a difference in our world today. I'd love to see the CCR giving a powerful but humble example about living in the power of the Holy Spirit to the entire Church! 🙏

Please send news from your group, community or NSC to newsletter@iccrs.org.



European CCR-Conference

"I have come to bring fire to the earth" (Lk 12: 49)

■ **Warsaw, Poland · 1 – 4 October 2015**

The European subcommittee of ICCRS invites you for an open European conference of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. We have not met at European level since 2002 – where we spent a very blessed time in Czestochowa. The meeting in 2015 will be an open conference for everyone in the CCR and shall be an encouragement to all CCR in our time!

The conference will take place from 1st – 4th October 2015 in Warsaw, Poland. We will provide accommodation in hotels and retreat-houses close by as well as a shuttle from/to the airport and the train-station in Warsaw. Among Speakers: Dr. Mary Healy (USA), Dr. Johannes Hartl (Germany), Michelle Moran (England) and other exciting speakers will be with us.

For more information and to download the registration form visit: www.iccrs.eu

ICCRS FORMATION

Visit www.iccrs.org or e-mail formation@iccrs.org for more information about our training programmes.



LFI · Rome, Italy

■ **6 – 26 September 2015**

■ **Contact: ICCRS Formation → formation@iccrs.org**

ICCRS offers its VI Leadership Formation Institute programme. Classes include studies in Scripture, Ecclesiology, Pneumatology, Mariology, Kerygma, CCR, Leadership and Ministry. Students will be offered practical teaching and workshops on various aspects of the ministry within CCR. In addition, the students will go on several field trips in the eternal city of Rome. The school will be held primarily in English, but other languages will be made available depending on the number of requests. Please make an indication on the registration form so that we can take your language preference into consideration. Online registration is open on www.iccrs.org.



LTC · Slovenia

■ **15 – 22 November 2015**

■ **Contact: Andrej Justinek → andrej.justinek@gmail.com**

LTC · Poland

■ **06 – 13 August 2016**

■ **Contact: Fr.Wojciech Nowacki → wnowacki@odnowa.orgau**

LTC · Guadeloup

■ **22 – 30 October 2016**

■ **Contact: Huguette BOQUE-OLANOR → o.boque@only.fr**

The ICCRS Leadership Training Course is for people of all ages, from charismatic organisations worldwide who want to spend some time of their lives being formed in leadership within the CCR. In partnership with local Charismatic realities, ICCRS provides this week-long programme that will call and empower new leaders as well as strengthen and encourage current ones. The programme includes daily Mass, Eucharist Adoration and a time of Charismatic Praise and Worship. The teachings cover: the foundations and vision of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal; and practical help and ideas for ministry. There is also time for reflection, sharing and ministry.

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