

ICCRS NEWSLETTER

■ VOLUME XLIII, NUMBER 1

■ JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2017

Celebrate Jubilee:

Blessed Elena Guerra “Missionary of the Holy Spirit”

■ Christof Hemberger



Blessed Elena Guerra (1835 – 1914) is remembered in the history of the Charismatic Renewal as someone who prepared the way. She courageously pursued what was on her heart: The Holy Spirit needs to find room again in the Church’s awareness! But who was this woman who caused a whole century to be called an “era of the Holy Spirit” – and what did she really achieve?

Blessed Elena Guerra was born into a wealthy aristocratic family and was educated as befitted her rank. Her nature was shaped by the desire “to do good for God”; her heart was burning for the conversion of unbelievers, she willingly visited the poor and ill of her city. She wrote down her spiritual intentions and thoughts in small brochures and tracts. Elena gathered like-minded people, and as a young woman she founded prayer groups and prayer initiatives (“the perpetual world-wide Upper Room”) and the Congregation of the “Oblate Sisters of the Holy Spirit”.

It was Blessed Elena’s desire to bring people into a close relationship with the Holy Spirit. Church and society – Blessed Elena says – need the Holy Spirit as never before for their own renewal and vivification! She was untiring in this task: she encouraged prayer to the Holy Spirit and exchanged letters with priests and bishops exhorting them to teach and preach about the Holy Spirit. In her diaries, Blessed Elena called herself “a poor maidservant of the Holy Spirit” and even a “baggage porter of the Holy Spirit”. As the reaction she received for her efforts still seemed too small, the desire to ask the Pope for support and for a global spreading of her intention, grew more intensely in her.

Blessed Elena’s message was received by Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903) readily and in openness: Only three weeks after her first letter, the Pope introduced a solemn period of prayer to the Holy Spirit between Ascension and Pentecost (now known as Pentecost novena). Between 1895 and 1903, Blessed Elena wrote a total of thirteen letters to the Pope. She encouraged him to urge the bishops to pray together with the faithful for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit as well as for the unity of Christians, which only the Holy Spirit could bring about. In 1897, Pope Leo XIII responded to Elena’s desire by writing an encyclical (“*Divinum illud munus*”)

about the Holy Spirit. This teaching document was about appreciation for the Holy Spirit and his gifts. While in 1900, Pope Leo had consecrated mankind to the Heart of Jesus on the occasion of the Holy Year, Blessed Elena was moved in her heart to ask the Pope to begin the new century by calling down the Holy Spirit. Pope Leo took up this suggestion and sang the hymn “*Veni Creator Spiritus*” (Come Holy Spirit, Creator Blest) in the name of the whole Church. This prayer did not remain without effect. On the same day, the Holy Spirit really came with his gifts as in the days of the early Christians. However, it was answered in a different way than Blessed Elena and the Pope had expected: The Holy Spirit was first experienced in a new way by people outside the Catholic Church, who had earnestly sought him in prayer: In the evening of that same day when the Pope prayed in Rome, a group of American Protestants gathered around Charles Fox Parham (1873-1923) experienced an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and his gifts. A second initial event for the so-called Pentecostal movement was a revival in the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles led by the African American William J. Seymour. The Holy Spirit did not adhere to confessional boundaries... It took quite some time till also members of the Catholic Church received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and experienced the outpouring of the charisms in 1967, which we consider to this day the starting point of the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church and which we celebrate in the 50 year Jubilee in 2017. Exactly at a time when our Church underwent major changes (the secular power of the Popes disintegrated with the loss of the Papal States during the time of Blessed Elena Guerra) this small, unimpressive religious sister helped the Church refocus on a power of the Church, which did not rely on rule or armies and had been forgotten for a long time: the power of the Holy Spirit.

At her Beatification on 26 April 1959, Pope John XIII called her a “missionary of the Veneration of the Holy Spirit in our present time” and thus testified to Blessed Elena’s extraordinary vocation in the church and for the church, which she lived courageously – which makes her a model for us to this day. 🙏

IN THIS ISSUE

ICCRS Newsletter

Celebrate Jubilee:

**Blessed Elena Guerra
“Missionary of the Holy Spirit”.**

Christof Hemberger

**Pentecostalism and
Spiritual Ecumenism**

Charles Whitehead

Together for Europe

Christof Hemberger

ICCRS Leadership Bulletin

**Awake from your
slumber**

Francis Edo Olotu

Father may they be one

Ann Brereton

**Nurturing future
leaders**

Jude Muscat

Questions to the ICCRS
Doctrinal Commission:

**Is baptism in the Holy
Spirit necessary for
those who receive
confirmation as adults?**

Pentecostalism and Spiritual Ecumenism

■ Charles Whitehead



The twentieth century is already being described by church historians as “The Century of the Holy Spirit”. Why? We already know that on January 1st 1901 Pope Leo XIII prayed for the Holy Spirit to come again in power on the whole Church, as he sang *Veni Creator Spiritus!* In his private chapel. This coincided with an experience of the power of the Holy Spirit at the Protestant Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas, followed by other similar events, and in 1906 by revival at Number 312, Azusa Street, Los Angeles, California, a poor, run-down mission church pastored by William J. Seymour, a descendent of African slaves. This heralded the arrival of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, which would soon be found in churches all over the world.

As William J. Seymour preached at Azusa Street in 1906 about the importance of being open to the Spirit’s supernatural presence, the small, multi-ethnic congregation experienced frequent manifestations of supernatural power and the charismatic gifts. So exciting was this that Protestant Christians from all over America began to come to Azusa Street to experience it for themselves. Most experienced Baptism in the Holy Spirit and returned to their own churches full of his joy, love and power, only to be rejected by their congregations. Not surprisingly many of them left their churches and formed new fellowships with others who shared their experiences of the transforming power of the Spirit. They soon became known as Pentecostals, and so gave birth to one of the most significant movements in the history of Christianity. But something wonderful that should have led to the empowering of existing churches all over the world, was in danger of ending up as just another new denomination in the body of Christ, with its own expressions of faith and practice.

By the 1960s, however, through the prophetic ministry of Pentecostal leaders like David du Plessis, this life-changing dimension of charismatic life had broken out in a number

of denominations – Anglican, Episcopalian, Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran and Reformed – and eventually in the Catholic Church among a group of students in 1967. The Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR), as it became known, spread rapidly throughout the world and from the beginning had close links with Pentecostal and the fast-growing New Independent Charismatic Churches and Fellowships, as well as with other denominational charismatics. It is largely for this reason that Pope Francis has clearly stated they should all be warmly included in our 50th Jubilee Celebrations as of right and not just as our guests. On June 1st 2014 in Rome, he quoted from the first Malines document 5:3: “The Charismatic Renewal is by its very nature ecumenical. Catholic Renewal rejoices over what the Holy Spirit carries out in other churches”.

Whilst fully accepting that there are important theological and pastoral differences between us, Pope Francis believes passionately in “Spiritual Ecumenism”. This means building positive relationships with members of these other churches so that we pray and work together as much as possible. Here we all have important parts to play, so that in the Pope’s words: “We remain united in the love that the Lord Jesus asks of all men, and in the prayer to the Holy Spirit to come to this unity which is necessary for evangelisation in the name of Jesus” (Rome, 1st June 2014). A wonderful sign of the progress we were all making even before Francis was elected Pope, came in 2004 when I was honoured to be invited as the only non-Pentecostal member of the 12 strong Azusa Street Centennial Cabinet, meeting regularly to prepare the big international meeting for thousands of Pentecostal leaders which took place in Los Angeles in April 2006 to celebrate 100 years since the birth of Pentecostalism.

So let’s give thanks for all our Pentecostal and Charismatic brothers and sisters – may we always pray and work together at every opportunity in response to the prayer of Jesus: “May they all be one, Father... so that the world may believe it was you who sent me” (Jn 17:21). 🙏



Stay updated about the event of the

CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

Golden Jubilee 2017

www.ccrgoldenjubilee2017.org



CCR-Golden-Jubilee-2017



CCR_GJ2017

Together for Europe

■ Christof Hemberger



Prior to the beginning of the third millennium two significant events took place which encouraged leaders of communities and movements to form the network “Together for Europe” (together4Europe.org).

First, in 1998 St. John Paul II invited all ecclesial movements and communities to Rome. This gathering emphasised how many there were! The second event took place the following year in Augsburg, Germany. Representatives of the Protestant churches and the Vatican signed a significant paper titled the “Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification”. After these historical moments several leaders (Catholics and Protestants) in Europe started to occasionally meet. Relationships began to grow and spread to larger groups. Soon those involved realised that we are all part of the Body of Christ and by virtue of our baptism, we are brothers and sisters in the Lord. A blessing to each other! It resulted in a powerful time of repentance and reconciliation with recognition of our need to forgive each other for any hurts inflicted through our thoughts, words or actions.

From this “meetings among friends” a network was born named “Together for Europe”. Leaders of European CCR-Communities and CCR National Service Committees are part of this network. The steering committee includes the ICCRS-president and the chairperson of the European Subcommittee of ICCRS. Those who belong to this network recognised that our history, our roots and our spiritualities are different and concluded that there is no need to build a new body in the body of Christ. We are also aware that although from different denominations we are brothers and sisters in Christ and therefore united in our love of Jesus Christ and our desire to live in unity. We show the world that unity is possible through reconciliation and acceptance of each other as brothers and sisters in the Lord. We have occasions when we gather together for Conferences or events to show that Unity is possible.

The last conference took place in Munich, Germany, in July 2016, followed by a public rally. The program was fresh and encouraging with statements from bishops, politicians and leaders, as well as testimonies and prayer times. Participants had opportunities to get to know each other and the various styles and spiritualities represented. I have never experienced such a strong sense of Unity.

Inspired by the upcoming anniversary of the reformation, a Rally organised in downtown Munich was titled “500 years of separation are enough”. “Together for Europe” proclaimed publicly “Although we are different in many ways, unity is possible!” A message not always popular in Europe these days. Bishops from all major churches spoke on stage. Cardinal Kurt Koch (president of the papal council for the promotion of unity among the Christians), Cardinal Reinhard Marx (archbishop of Munich) and Cardinal Walter Kasper, next to other representatives of Christian churches, gave excellent encouragements. The highlight was a video-message given by Pope Francis who said that the greatest testimony Christians could give these days is unity and love among each other.

This event showed the world surrounding us that we Christians can make a difference. We are called to seek and live in unity among each other and be a testimony of the love of God in a world that needs – more than ever before – love, peace and unity. 🙏

ICCRS Products

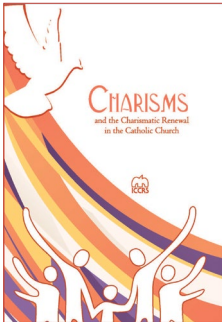
Over the years, ICCRS has published books, booklets, DVDs, and other resources for the CCR.

You can buy our products online with a credit card or PayPal by clicking the “Add to Cart” buttons on the website!

Publications

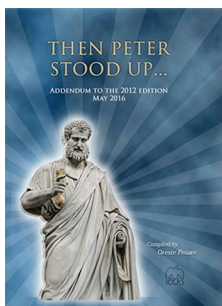
[Add to Cart](#)

New ICCRS publications



CHARISMS

For more information visit our Website: www.iccrs.org



ADDENDUM TO THE BOOK THEN PETER STOOD UP...

This booklet contains the speeches of Pope Francis to the Charismatic Renewal from 2014 - 2015

For more information visit our Website: www.iccrs.org

HELP! ICCRS needs YOU to reach more people for the Lord!



ICCRS needs well-organised and responsible people who have the talent of speaking more than one language to offer their **voluntary service** to the CCR worldwide. The texts are generally translated from English into Italian, Spanish, French, German, and Portuguese.

For more information visit www.iccrs.org

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

Comunità Gesù Risorto - International Statute

On Nov. 26th the Risen Jesus Community (Comunità Gesù Risorto) joyfully celebrated a Holy Mass in the Papal Arch basilica of St. John in Lateran, Rome, to thank the Lord for the final approval of its international Statute by the Pontifical Council for the Laity, which was given on April 3rd, 2016, Sunday of the Divine Mercy. The Community, whose main charisms are praise and evangelization, has nearly 18,000 members and is spread in fourteen countries. Jude Muscat participated in the event, representing the ICCRS Council. 🏰

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



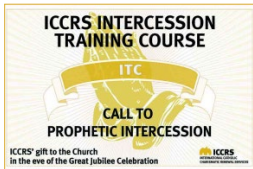
LTC • California

- 17 – 24 September 2017
- Contact: Carreno Yaneth → yaneth.carreno@adp.com

LTC • Zambia

- 15 – 22 October 2017
- Contact: Lawrence Kalando → lawrencekalando@gmail.com

The ICCRS Leadership Training Course, which is a one week school, is a way to help foster Leadership in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal worldwide. ICCRS is pleased to partner with local Charismatic realities in order to provide this week-long programme that will call and empower new leaders as well as strengthen and encourage current leaders. The course includes Mass, holy hour and charismatic praise and worship on a daily basis. In addition there will be periods of time throughout the programme for fellowship and community building, as well as opportunities for the participants to receive ministry.



ITC • Botswana

- 6 – 11 November 2017
- Contact: Alice Binny → modisenyanea@bob.bw

ITC • Germany

- 1 – 7 October 2018
- Contact: Christof Hemberger → christof.hemberger@erneuerung.de

New ICCRS programme of formation for the ministry of prophetic intercession. The International Intercession Training Course, “A call to prophetic Intercession” is an event of the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (ICCRS). It is a gift to the Church on the eve of the Great Jubilee Celebration. It is a one-week school. It is the concrete realization of the desire to form a large family of intercessors worldwide. Intercession, being at the heart of evangelization and mission, is well rooted in the Catholic tradition. It concerns all Christians, not just those who are members of a particular group or movement.



Postal Address: Palazzo San Calisto, 00120 Vatican City – Europe
 Telephone: +39 06 69 88 71 26/27
 Fax: +39 06 69 88 72 24
 Website: www.iccrs.org
 E-mail: newsletter@iccrs.org

The ICCRS Newsletter is an international publication released bimonthly in English, Spanish, Italian, French, Portuguese, German, Arabic and Romanian for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Its purpose is to provide information about the growth and development of CCR throughout the world, as well as the events organised by ICCRS.

Permission is granted to reprint an article from the ICCRS Newsletter as long as ICCRS is quoted as the source.

The ICCRS Newsletter is e-mailed freely. It can be posted to you for € 10 per year. In addition, the ICCRS Leadership Bulletin can be e-mailed for an annual subscription of € 15.

Begin or renew your subscription to the ICCRS Newsletter and the ICCRS Leadership Bulletin today!

You will receive the most current news and topics of discussion in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

ICCRS Council Members

- Michelle Moran, England (President)
- Marcos Volcan, Brazil (Vice President)
- Andres Arango, USA
- Denise Bergeron, Canada
- Ann Brereton, Australia
- Jane Louise Guenther, USA
- David Gonzalo Bustamante Cuellar, Bolivia
- Dn Christof Hemberger, Germany
- Bp. Francis Kalist, India
- Jude Muscat, Malta
- Fr Wojciech Nowacki, Poland
- Francis Edo Olotu, Nigeria
- Jean-Christophe Sakiti, Togo
- Endie Rahardja, Indonesia
- Claude Lopez, Australia (Advisor)
- Oreste Pesare, Italy (Director)