



# CHARIS

MAGAZINE 

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## **Share Baptism in the Holy Spirit**

Pope Francis

## **The Birth of CHARIS**

Cardinal Kevin  
Farrell

## **Peter, do you love me?**

Fr. Awi Mello

## **A Current for the whole Church**

Fr. Raniero  
Cantalamessa





CHARIS officially began its service on Pentecost Sunday 9th June 2019 after an intense week of meetings and prayer. My thanks to all those who have contributed to the success of this event. Various moments of grace come to mind - the encouragement of Pope Francis; the prayer to the Holy Spirit with the Pope; the unforgettable extended period of singing in tongues in the Paul VI Audience Hall; the strong words of Cardinal Kevin Farrell; the teaching of Father Raniero Cantalamessa... In this first issue of the CHARIS Magazine, we have gathered for you these interventions that will mark the future of Catholic Charismatic Renewal. We wanted to publish them in their entirety - despite their length - to allow everyone to read and meditate on as they deserve. Reading these texts will allow you to understand the development of CHARIS and also what the Church expects from this new unique service for this one current of grace.

## First meeting of the International Service of Communion

In addition to the conference of Leaders from the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (650 participants from 69 countries), the International Service of Communion began its work. This first meeting was very fruitful. It allowed members to get to know each other, to pray together and to take the first major decisions to organize the new unique service for this current of grace. It is impossible here to summarize the 4 days of intense meetings. Here are some of the points mentioned:

- Formation: a commission has been set up with Andres Arango and Cyril John to expand the training heritage that ICCRS has left us;
- Finances: a commission made up of Etienne Mellot, François Prouteau and myself will get to work. CHARIS only lives by donations - your donations. It means working on fundraising and the organization of an accounting system.

- The theological commission (Mary Healy, Etienne Vetö, Jean Barbara, Johannes Fichtenbauer, Julia Torres) will start working to reflect on ecumenism and also work on concrete pastoral proposals.

- CHARIS will also reflect on the setting up of a new training course on ecumenism.

- The Koinonia Commission for communities originating from the Charismatic Renewal was set up with Shayne Bennett, Johannes Fichtenbauer, Jean Barbara and François Prouteau). It will prepare various events including the international meeting of communities in Recife (Brazil) from 14 to 16 January 2020.

- For young people under 30, CHARIS will make an adaptation of the training of leaders. We also want to organize a big event for young people in Lisbon for the WYD of 2023.

- To support the service of the poor, a collection was taken on Saturday, June 8th. It brought in about € 16,000. Thank you for your generosity. Half of this sum will be donated to the eleemosiniere of the Pope, Cardinal Konrad Krajewski.

- A Pastoral Commission is also set up with Etienne Mellot to think about ways of further spreading the grace of baptism in the Spirit throughout the Church.

As you can see, there is plenty of work. Thank you all for your support, and enjoy reading our **NEW MAGAZINE!**

Postal Address: Palazzo San Calisto, 00120 Vatican City  
 Telephone: +39 06 698 87126/27  
 Fax: +39 06 698 87224  
 Website: [www.charis.international](http://www.charis.international)  
 E-mail: [info@charis.international](mailto:info@charis.international)

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Pope Francis

## Share Baptism in the Holy Spirit

**In his speech of June 8th, before 4500 members of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Worldwide, Pope Francis explained clearly what is CHARIS and what the Church expects from it.**

Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning!

I like how in some countries people greet one another in this Easter season, not by saying “Good morning” or “Good afternoon”, but with the words “Jesus is risen”. So let’s greet one another that way, saying together: “Jesus is risen”!

Yes, Jesus is alive! Thank you, because you remembered that I like that first song you sang.

This Pentecost begins a new stage begins on the journey inaugurated by the Charismatic Renewal fifty-two years ago. The Charismatic Renewal, which developed in the Church by the will of

God, represents, to paraphrase Saint Paul VI, “a great opportunity for the Church” (cf. *Address to Participants in the III International Congress of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, 19 May 1975*).

Today, in the name of the whole Church, I thank the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Service and the Catholic Fraternity for the mission they have carried out in the past thirty years. You have blazed a trail and, by your fidelity, have made it possible for CHARIS to be a reality today. Thank you!

My thanks go also to the four-person team I charged with bringing this unique new service

## A new and unique service of communion

into being. I am grateful likewise to the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, in the person of Cardinal Farrell, which has assisted you.

Today one thing ends and another begins. A new stage of this journey is beginning. A stage marked by communion between all the members of the charismatic family, in which the mighty presence of the Holy Spirit is manifested for the good of the entire Church. A presence that makes each one equal, since each has been born of the same Spirit: great and small, old and young, engaged on the worldwide or local levels, all form a whole that is always greater than the part.

A new and unique service of communion

New. As I told you at the Circus Maximus, what is new can be destabilizing. In the beginning, there is a sense of uncertainty about the changes that newness brings. Sometimes we prefer our own way of doing things and we draw back from the rest. This is a temptation of the devil. Whenever anyone things: “No, my way is better”, or “I prefer the old to the new”, the devil is there, because he cuts me off from unity with everyone else. True, a certain fear about what is new is quite human, but this should not be the case with spiritual persons. “Behold, I make all things new”, the Lord tells us in the Book of Revelation (21:5). Our God is the God of newness. The new things of God are always a blessing because they flow from his loving heart. There is always a temptation to say: “We are fine the way we are; things are going well, why change? Let’s leave things as they are; we know what we are doing”.

This kind of thinking does not come from the Spirit. Perhaps from the spirit of the world, but not from the Holy Spirit. Don’t make this mistake. It is the Lord who says: “I make all things new”.

New and unique. A service meant to assist all the charismatic groups that the Spirit has raised up in the world. Not one office to serve some and another office to serve others, etc. No, one service for all.

Service. Not governance. It can happen that in any human organization, secular or religious, there is a temptation to keep looking for personal gain. And ambition to stand out, to lead, to make money... That never changes. Corruption enters that way. No: service, always service. Service is not about filling our pockets – the devil enters through the pockets – service is about giving, giving, giving of oneself.

Communion. With hearts as one, turned to the Father, and testifying to unity in diversity: a diversity of charisms that the Spirit has raised up in these last fifty-two years. “Enlarge the site of your tent”, we read in the prophecy of Isaiah (54:2), so that all can dwell there as members of one family. A family where there is only one God and Father, one Lord Jesus Christ and one Spirit of life. A family in which no one member is more important than another, neither in virtue of age, intelligence or ability, for all are beloved children of the same Father. In this regard, Saint Paul’s example of the body and its members speaks eloquently to all of us (cf. 1 Cor 12:12-26). Each member of the body needs all the others. All together.

I see that there is a representative of young people in the International Service of Communion. Is she here? Congratulations! I am happy for you. Young people are the future of the Church. True enough, but they are also the present: the present and future of the Church. I am pleased that you have given them a high profile and a chance to exercise of the responsibility that is theirs, to see the present with a different set of eyes and to look to the future together with you.

I also see that CHARIS now has publication rights to the Documents of Malines. The president has given me the Spanish translation. Thank you! This is a good thing. Make those documents known! As I have said to you on different occasions, they are a “user’s manual”, the compass of the current of grace.

You asked me to tell you what the Pope and the Church expect from this new service, from CHARIS and from the entire Charismatic Renewal. But let me joke for a minute and ask what the Pope expects from the “spiritists”! (laughter). What does the Pope expect from you? I expect this movement:

- to share baptism in the Holy Spirit with everyone in the Church. It is the grace you have received. Share it! Don’t keep it to yourselves!

- to serve the unity of the body of Christ, the Church, the community of believers in Jesus Christ. This is very important, for the Holy Spirit creates unity in the Church, but also diversity. The personality of the Holy Spirit is interesting: with the charisms he creates the greatest diversity, but then he harmonizes the charisms in unity. Saint Basil says that “the Holy Spirit is harmony”; he creates harmony: harmony in the Spirit and harmony among us.

- and to serve the poor and those in greatest need, physical or spiritual. This does not mean, as some might think, that suddenly the Renewal has become communist. No, it has become evangelical, for this is in the Gospel.

These three things – baptism in the Holy Spirit, unity in the body of Christ and service to the poor – are the forms of witness that, by virtue of baptism, all of us are called to give for the evangelization of the world. An

evangelization that is not proselytism but first and foremost witness: a witness of love. “See how they love one another”. That was what impressed those who encountered the first Christians. “See how they love one another”.

Sometimes, of not a few communities it can be said: “See how they gossip about one another!” This does not come from the Holy Spirit. “See how they love one another”. To evangelize is to love; it is to share God’s love for every man, woman and child. Offices for evangelization can be established, programmes can be carefully planned and implemented, but without love, without community, they are useless! “See how they love one another”.

This is what community is. In the Second Letter of John there is a warning, an admonition, in verse 9. It says: “Be on your guard..., [for] anyone who does not abide in the teaching of Christ, but goes beyond it, is not of the good Spirit”. Perhaps some will be tempted to think: “No, let’s organize things this or that way, let’s build the house this or that way...” But love has to come first. With ideology or methodology alone, we can “go beyond” the community, and John has told us: “This is the spirit of the world, not the Spirit of God”. “See how they love one another”.

Members of the Charismatic Renewal, as a current of the grace of the Holy Spirit, be witnesses of this love! And please, pray for me.

And now, I would like to anticipate by twenty-five minutes – later, if you want, you can do it



yourselves – but together with you I would like to anticipate by twenty-five minutes the act that the entire Church carries out today: a minute of silence for peace. Why? Because today is the anniversary, the fifth anniversary, of the meeting here in the Vatican between the Presidents of the State of Palestine and the State of Israel. We prayed together for peace, and throughout the world today at thirteen hours, there will be a moment of silence. Let’s do it now, before the blessing, all together, standing.

Thank you. For a community of the Renewal to be quiet is something almost heroic! (laughter). Thank you!

And now I will give you my blessing. [Blessing] Christ is risen!

## COMMUNITIES

**CHARISMATIC COMMUNITIES,  
WORLDWIDE, ARE INVITED TO  
REGISTER WITH CHARIS.**

**PLEASE VISIT:**

**[WWW.CHARIS.INTERNATIONAL](http://WWW.CHARIS.INTERNATIONAL)**

**CHARIS WILL ENCOURAGE  
REGISTERED COMMUNITIES  
TO PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITIES  
ORGANIZED BY CHARIS.**

# The Birth of CHARIS

## and its Importance for Catholic Charismatic Renewal

### Cardinal Kevin Farrell's speech during the Leaders Conference (Thursday, June 6th).

I am grateful for this opportunity to come and speak in front of so many leaders in Catholic Charismatic Renewal about the vision, which has brought CHARIS into being, and about why CHARIS is important for the future of Charismatic Renewal and for the Church. In particular, I would like to thank Jean-Luc Moens the Moderator of CHARIS and Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa O.F.M., the Ecclesiastical Assistant, and greet the members of the International Service of Communion.

#### CHARIS: a Papal Initiative

When speaking of the beginnings of CHARIS, the first thing to point out is that the idea comes directly from Pope Francis himself. I think he surprised almost everyone when he wrote to the Presidents of ICCRS and of the Catholic Fraternity in 2015 asking them, initially, to reflect on the advantages of forming one single service for Catholic Charismatic Renewal worldwide, and then, in a second letter, asking them to enter actively into the process which led to the creation of CHARIS.

#### It is absolutely necessary to strengthen unity in International Charismatic Renewal

I think it is clear to all of us that the Holy Father's principal objective was not organizational, but pastoral. It is as a good shepherd that he has accompanied the process from day one. I can tell you that during the three-year period leading up to the establishment of CHARIS, the Holy Father frequently asked me for news on how the project was progressing.

#### A Special Time in the History of Charismatic Renewal

Pope Francis' letters concerning CHARIS say clearly that the testimony that Charismatic Renewal gives to the Church is more effective when it is a testimony of unity and of service, that those who lead must strive for this, and that it is absolutely necessary to strengthen unity in International Charismatic Renewal. He also underlines that we are currently in a special time in the history of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, after fifty years, it is a good time to take stock of things, and think honestly about how best to serve the Lord and his Church.

We should not be surprised that the Holy Father has very specific ideas about the role of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, because he has himself explained that, as a Bishop, he slowly came to appreciate the growth in an authentic Christian life that Baptism in the Holy Spirit brings; and at the end of his time as Archbishop of Buenos Aires he was also the Argentinian Bishops' Conference delegate for Catholic Charismatic Renewal. The vision that Pope Francis sets out for Catholic Charismatic Renewal, and the tasks that he has set for its leaders and for its members, form part of how Pope Francis exercises the charism of Peter, and of how he seeks to fulfil his mission as Pastor for the Universal Church. What the Pope asks of Catholic Charismatic Renewal today and for the future requires that it understand itself as a pastoral instrument in the service of the Successor of Peter. This means that we must enter with profound docility into an understanding that Catholic Charismatic Renewal does not belong to its members, but, rather, to the Church. This might surprise us: after all, the Renewal was not an episcopal or a pontifical initiative. Charismatic Renewal really



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

has grown from the bottom up, from person to person, through a series of private initiatives, powered by the Spirit, like a forest fire pushed by a powerful wind.

It is a fulfilment of Jesus' desire: "I have come to set fire to the earth, and would that it were already kindled" (Lk. 12: 49). And yet, this is often how the Spirit moves the Church: changing people's lives through a personal encounter with Him, compelling Pastors to take notice - to discern and then to confirm the presence of the Spirit and encourage His divine work. There are examples of this throughout the history of the Church. It is enough to consider the life of Francis of Assisi, a layman who allowed God to shape his life and in doing so set the spark for a profound renewal of the Church whose fruits are still visible today. Indeed, when Pope Francis talks of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal as a "current of grace", it reminds us of how the then Cardinal Ratzinger talked of the gift that has been given to the Church through the docility of Francis of Assisi. Yes, there are Franciscan orders and communities, but there is a spiritual current that envelops them and goes beyond them and which has become the patrimony of the whole Church. In the same way, Catholic

Charismatic Renewal has given birth to specific communities and institutes, but this current of grace goes beyond them, and does not belong to any of them.

Pope Francis calls on the Renewal, therefore, to enter into an ever-deeper ecclesial maturity concerning its identity and its mission, and CHARIS is the instrument given in the service of this process of maturity. Catholic Charismatic Renewal, because of this ecclesial identity, receives the confirmation of its identity from the Pastors of the Church.

The gradual maturing of Catholic Charismatic Renewal and its ecclesial identity is something that all the Roman Pontiffs who have known the Renewal have encouraged and accompanied.

Saint Paul VI, addressing the International Charismatic Congress in Rome in 1975, posed an authentic ecclesial discernment when he affirmed Catholic Charismatic Renewal as "a chance for the Church and for the world", and underlined three principles of discernment set out by Saint Paul in order to better "test everything and hold fast to what is good" (1 Thess. 5:12). These principles are:

- 1) Fidelity to the authentic doctrine of the faith - if something contradicts the faith it does not come from the Spirit;
- 2) Giving priority to the higher gifts - the higher gifts are those gifts given in the service of the common good;
- 3) The pursuit of charity - because love alone binds all gifts together and perfects them (Col. 3: 14).

## The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is an instrument of choice for the Church's ecumenical effort

When Saint John Paul II spoke to the participants of the Fourth International Leaders Conference in 1981, he repeated these principles as being fundamental for those who lead Catholic Charismatic Renewal, and noted how, since 1975, the leaders of Renewal had already "developed a broadened ecclesial vision and [...] made efforts to make this vision increasingly a reality for those who depend on them for guidance".

It was also Saint John Paul II, during the Great Jubilee of the year 2000, in a message to the World Meeting of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, who called on Charismatic Renewal - and the communities within Renewal in particular - to step forward to greater ecclesial maturity, and tasked the international leadership with helping to further develop this ecclesial awareness.

When Pope Benedict XVI spoke to a gathering of Catholic Charismatic Renewal on the eve of Pentecost in 2012 he invited them to welcome the power of the Holy Spirit in order to "grow in trust and in abandonment to his will, in faithfulness to our vocation and in the commitment to become adults in faith, hope and charity, [...] mature and responsible, [...] lowly, humble and a servant before God". For this maturity he underlined the importance of a "humble and disinterested" exercise of gifts for the common good, building solidly on the rock of the Word of God (Mt. 7: 24-25), and guided in this by docility to the Magisterium of the Church.

Clearly, this journey of ecclesial maturity, as affirmed by Pope Francis, is entering a new phase, and CHARIS is an instrument wanted by the Holy

Father in the service of this. At the evening in Circus Maximus, during the Golden Jubilee in 2017, the Holy Father invited us all: "I wish you a time of reflection, of remembrance of your origins; a time to leave behind all things added by the self, and to transform them into listening and joyful welcome of the action of the Holy Spirit".

Renewal today is a spiritual force permeating the lives of millions of people through their individual Baptism and Outpouring of the Holy Spirit. As well as an organized form of apostolate; it also takes on tasks and missions that go beyond the autonomy that the faithful have to organize themselves for evangelizing and for seeking holiness. Catholic Charismatic Renewal, in this



sense, receives its mission from the Church. In a very specific way, it is the Holy Father Pope Francis who, in our days, has given clear indications of what this mission is. It is because of the ecclesial mission vested in Catholic Charismatic Renewal that Pope Francis inspired the creation of CHARIS. Also, it is because of the public nature of this ecclesial mission that CHARIS has been doted with public juridical personality.

### **So what is this mission?**

The Holy Father has told Catholic Charismatic Renewal that the whole Church needs its help

in order to live the Gospel. When the Holy Father speaks to Catholic Charismatic Renewal he addresses at the same time each and every person who shares in this current of grace, and also those who serve in leadership roles, because all are responsible, each according to his or her own situation and role, for how the Renewal serves the Church.

CHARIS is intended to be in the service of all these persons and group, in order to help them answer these expectations:

- 1) The Holy Father expects permanent personal conversion to the love of Jesus, witnessed in a life grounded in the Gospel and consistent with it.

For this personal conversion we should note that it flows from Baptism in the Holy Spirit and the personal encounter with Christ. We all know that the adhesion to the Gospel is not first of all a moral effort of obedience, but rather willingness, time and time again, to choose discipleship.

- 2) He expects us to share with all people in the Church the grace of Baptism in the Holy Spirit.
- 3) He expects us to evangelize using the Word of God to proclaim that Jesus is Lord and that his love is for all people.

We have already noted Pope Benedict's reminder in 2012 that building our house on the rock

that is the Word of God (Mt. 7: 24-25) requires docility to the Magisterium of the Church. He takes this further when he says, on the same occasion: "It is therefore necessary to form consciences in the light of the Word of God and thus give firmness and true maturity; the Word of God from which every ecclesial and human project draws meaning and an impetus, also for building the earthly city (Ps. 127:1). The souls of institutions must be renewed and history must be made fertile with the seeds of new life".

During the Great Jubilee of the year 2000, Saint John Paul II exhorted Charismatic Renewal: "Always seek Christ! Seek him in meditation on the Word of God, seek him in the sacraments, seek him in prayer, seek him in the witness of your brothers and sisters". In his invitation to come back to the essential of what Renewal has received, Pope Francis exhorts us to rediscover the Word of God as our first love. "In the early days, they used to say that you charismatics always carried around a Bible, the New Testament [...] Do you still carry one today? [...] If not, return to this first love".

## Pope Francis calls on the Renewal to enter into an ever-deeper ecclesial maturity concerning its identity and its mission

- 4) He expects us to be a people of prayer and praise.

- 5) He expects us to be close to the poor and the needy.

Pope Francis exhorts the Renewal to stay close to the poor. He says, "In their flesh you will touch the wounded flesh of Christ". Although this insistence surprised some people, it has been ever present in what the Popes have asked of Catholic Charismatic Renewal. In 1975, Saint Paul VI said: "There are no limits to the challenge of love: the poor and needy and afflicted and suffering across the world and near at hand all cry out to you, as brothers and sisters of Christ, asking for the proof of your love, asking for the

Word of God, asking for bread, asking for life”. Saint John Paul II, in 2000, said “Serve Christ in those close to you, serve him in the poor, serve him in the needs and necessities of the Church. Let yourselves be truly guided by the Spirit! Love the Church” . In loving the poor and binding their wounded bodies, we love Christ. Moreover, if docile to the Holy Spirit, we can decide to give to these concrete gestures a further meaning as gestures of love for the Church. In the Golden Jubilee meeting at Circus Maximus, Pope Francis reminded us that the testimony of the first Christian community in Jerusalem is that “there was not a needy person among them” (Acts 4: 34), and that Baptism in the Spirit, praise and the service of our brothers and sisters are “indissolubly joined”.

6) He expects us to give a witness of spiritual ecumenism, as something owed to our brothers and sisters in other Churches and Ecclesial communities.

In Circus Maximus, Pope Francis identified Catholic Charismatic Renewal as an instrument of choice for the Church’s ecumenical effort. It is a sign of the providence of God that the same renewing of the Pentecost experience has emerged in all Churches and Ecclesial Communities. There is therefore a shared spiritual experience across Charismatic Renewal for Christians of all denominations. Charismatic Renewal is providentially placed as an experience that unites Christians: it was born as something ecumenical . In the maturing of its ecclesial identity, Catholic Charismatic Renewal is called by Pope Francis to participate in his task, as the successor of Peter, of reconciling Christian Churches and Communities, ‘so that all might be one’. On the same evening, Fr. Cantalamessa reminded us that this ecumenical path of love could begin at once: each person can do it now. At the same time, he continued, the shared spiritual experience of Christians in Charismatic Renewal provides a context in which brothers and sisters who share the same Spirit can strive to “speak the truth in love” on the questions that separate us, and in this way strive towards Christian unity. Clearly, with Pope Francis involving Catholic Charismatic Renewal in this institutional ecumenical effort, there is an onus on CHARIS to promote, discern and help shape how the Renewal participates in this. As Saint John Paul II said already in 1981: “Let

us be confident that if we surrender ourselves to the work of genuine renewal in the Spirit, this same Holy Spirit will bring to light the strategy for ecumenism which will bring to reality our hope” that all be truly one in Christ.

7) He expects us to seek and foster unity within Catholic Charismatic Renewal, because such unity is the sign of the Spirit.

CHARIS will accompany the Renewal as it prays and strives to let the Holy Spirit come down again, as in a new Pentecost. To paraphrase Pope Francis on Pentecost Sunday 2017: the Spirit resting on each person and then bringing all together in fellowship, giving new gifts to each person and gathering all into unity, the same Spirit creating unity and diversity. It is in this logic that CHARIS will serve Catholic Charismatic Renewal, in the service of all expressions of Renewal, giving support, providing training and formation, helping in discernment, encouraging mission, and assisting those who serve at all levels to avoid the recurrent temptations of seeking diversity without unity and of seeking unity without diversity.

## The Holy Father has told Catholic Charismatic Renewal that the whole Church needs its help in order to live the Gospel

CHARIS will seek ways to encourage all people who share in the graces of Baptism in the Holy Spirit to accept a personal responsibility as men and women of communion, where the renewed experience of “forgiveness received and forgiveness given” makes hearts new, and builds us up like new people for the service of the Lord. As Ezekiel prophesied: “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. [...] You will be my people, and I will be your God” (Ez. 36: 26-28).

### Advice to Leaders

Please allow me to finish with some considerations specifically for those among

you who are leaders in Catholic Charismatic Renewal. I borrow several points from Saint John Paul II, speaking to people like you in 1981, for they help us understand how, within CHARIS, each of us is called to be a servant.

Firstly, “The role of the leader is, in the first place, to give the example of prayer [...] with confident hope, with careful solicitude, it falls to the leader to ensure that the multiform patrimony of the Church’s life of prayer is known and experienced by those who seek spiritual renewal”.

“Secondly, you must be concerned to provide solid food for spiritual nourishment through the breaking of the bread of true doctrine. The love for the revealed word of God, written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is a pledge of your desire to ‘stand firm in the Gospel’ preached by the Apostles” [...] Take care, then, that as leaders you seek a sound theological formation designed to ensure for you, and for all who depend upon you for guidance, a mature and complete understanding of God’s word. ‘Let the word of Christ, rich as it is, dwell in you. In wisdom made perfect, instruct and admonish one another’ (Col. 3: 16-17)”.

“Thirdly, as leaders in the Renewal, you must take the initiative in building bonds of trust and cooperation with the Bishops, who have the pastoral responsibility in God’s providence for shepherding the entire body of Christ, including Charismatic Renewal. Even when they do not share with you the forms of prayer which you have found so enriching, they will take to heart your desire for spiritual renewal for yourselves and for the Church”.

Please allow me one final point

Taking stock of what we have received and looking to what must be done for the future requires of us that we plan for a new generation of leaders. One of the functions of good leadership is the capacity to plan for a time when others must come to the fore and, like the Precursor John the Baptist; we must diminish and make way (John 3: 30). In the Church, this is a requirement of good health, and this is why the Statutes of CHARIS include clear references to the renewal of our leadership teams. In the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis refers to various temptations among those who serve in the Church. Among other points, he talks of the

challenge of providing young people with a sense of belonging in our communities and structures. He notes that the Holy Spirit “blazes new trails to meet their expectations and their search for a deep spirituality”, so the challenge for Catholic Charismatic Renewal is that of making our existing communities places where we allow young people to lead us forward in holiness and mission.

## Conclusion

My reflections today have made little mention of Mary, but when we talk of life in the Holy Spirit she is rarely far away. My prayer for all of us is that we might learn from her, this Pentecost and every Pentecost, how to better receive the Holy Spirit and become disciples. At the end of the day, this is the reason for CHARIS.

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- [1] Francis, Address to Participants in the 37th National Convocation of the Renewal in the Holy Spirit, Olympic Stadium, Rome, June 1st 2014.
  - [2] Francis, Vigil of Pentecost and Ecumenical Prayer on the Occasion of the Golden Jubilee of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Circus Maximus, Rome, June 3rd 2017 (hereafter Circus Maximus); Francis, Olympic Stadium.
  - [3] J. Ratzinger, “The Ecclesial Movements: A Theological Reflection on their Place in the Church”, in *Pontificium Consilium pro Laicis, Movements in the Church*, Proceedings of the World Congress of the Ecclesial Movements, (Rome, 27-29 May 1998) (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1999) 23-51.
  - [4] Paul VI, Address to Participants in the 3rd International Congress of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Rome, May 19th 1975.
  - [5] John Paul II, Address to the Participants in the Fourth International Leaders’ Conference of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Rome, May 7th 1981 (hereafter, Leaders 1981).
  - [6] John Paul II, Message to Catholic Charismatic Renewal, April 24th 2000 (hereafter, Message 2000).
  - [7] Benedict XVI, Address to Participants in the Meeting Sponsored by Renewal in the Spirit, St. Peter’s Square, May 26th 2012 (hereafter, Benedict 2012).
  - [8] Ibidem.
  - [9] Francis, Circus Maximus.
  - [10] Francis, Olympic Stadium.
  - [11] Francis, Circus Maximus; Francis, Olympic Stadium..
  - [12] Francis, Olympic Stadium.
  - [13] Ibidem.
  - [14] John Paul II, Message 2000.
  - [15] Francis, Olympic Stadium
  - [16] Francis, Circus Maximus; Benedict, 2012.
  - [17] Ibidem.
  - [18] Ibidem.
  - [19] Paul VI, 1975; also cited in: John Paul II, Leaders 1981.
  - [20] John Paul II, Message 2000.
  - [21] Ibidem.
  - [22] Francis, Circus Maximus.
  - [23] John Paul II, Leaders 1981.
  - [24] Francis, Olympic Stadium; Francis, Circus Maximus.
  - [25] Francis, Holy Mass for the Solemnity of Pentecost, St Peter’s Square, June 4th 2017.
  - [26] All: John Paul II, Leaders 1981.
  - [27] CHARIS, Statutes, arts. 10 and 14.
  - [28] Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 24th November 2013, no. 105.



# Peter, do you love me?

Homily of Father Alexandre Awi Mello at Holy Mass during the Leaders' Conference (Friday, June 7th)

We are living in a historical moment for the universal Church. The establishment of a unique service for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal is much more than a simple "administrative reorganization". It is not the fruit of a desire of centralization or of exclusion from the services provided by ICCRS and the Catholic Fraternity.

The birth of CHARIS is the fruit of a profound understanding of the identity of the Charismatic Renewal as a current of grace. An understanding from the Church itself, which takes the initiative through its maximum representative, the Holy Father, to constitute a unique service for all the expressions of this current of grace, without excluding anyone.

## We are living in a historical moment for the universal Church

It was not the Charismatic Renewal that asked the Pope to create this service. It was the Pope himself, in the exercise of his pastoral ministry, of his solicitude for the whole Church, who wanted to erect this service, so that this current of grace could, on the one hand, reach everyone and everywhere in the world, and on the other hand,

so that it would remain open to the impulse of the Spirit, avoiding an hierarchical or selective leadership in relation to the countless expressions of this stream.

The text of the Gospel that we have just heard is absolutely providential! It is a fantastic dialogue between the Risen Lord and Peter, the head of the apostolic college. We are participating in a meeting with important leaders of the Charismatic Renewal from all over the world and – as leaders – it is not difficult for us to put ourselves in Peter's shoes.

Jesus, through his greatest representative on earth, Pope Francis, challenges us, challenges the servant leaders of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the world.

The text is very rich and certainly, we could say many things about it, make many exegetical and spiritual analyses. Many of you, as baptized lay people, full of the power of the Holy Spirit, can preach much better than I do. However, with humility, I would invite you to a simple reflection on the gospel. I believe that it offers us at least three important impulses.

First, the only condition for the exercise of leadership is love, a love above average: "Peter, do you love me more than these?"

Second, the mission that the leader receives is to serve the flock; it is shepherding: "Feed my sheep."

Third, the form of doing that is following God's will: "Another will dress you and take you where you do not want to go...You, follow me."

The context of this discourse of Jesus (the beginnings of the early Church, in the presence of the Apostles who must give continuity to his mission) leads us to a fourth impulse: the environment of the exercise of this mission is the communion.

### Love, shepherding, following, communion

**Love:** Even though he fled at the hour of Jesus' passion and he denied him, the Lord confirmed Peter as head of the group of apostles. Jesus did not give him a scolding, he did not "throw in Peter's face" that he had promised to remain faithful, but he ended up betraying him. Jesus asked a single question: "Do you love me?" For Jesus the only thing that mattered in order to confirm Peter's authority was love! That is all that matters.

However, a word sometimes goes not noticed: "Do you love me more than these?" As a personal testimony, I can tell you that once, this word "broke" me during an Ignatian retreat: Jesus asked me to love him more than those whom he

entrusted to me. Because I knew that, I love less than so many mothers, fathers and grandparents, less than so many young people who come to me for a conversation or a confession! Nevertheless, the invitation remains: In order to feed my sheep, I invite you to love me more than these. To serve, to be a servant leader means to love more! Our only competition should be: who loves more, who serves more? And never: who rules more, who has more power, who is more prominent!

## Communion is a "fruit salad", not a "fruit milk shake"

**Shepherding:** Jesus' invitation is to be a shepherd. "Feed my sheep!" Moreover, from the gospel we know that to be a shepherd means to take care, to know by name, to give one's life for the flock. Being a leader is always a function of service. The creation of CHARIS – not as an organism of government, but of service – makes even clearer the essence of its mission: to serve the Catholic Charismatic Renewal throughout the world, to shepherd by witness, by generous surrender, knowing and calling by name all the sheep of the flock (without excluding anyone).

Have you received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit? Then you take part in the “current of grace”! It is not the mission of CHARIS – nor of anyone else – to say that this group, this person, this initiative is from the Charismatic Renewal or not! It is not the mission of CHARIS – nor of any service in the Charismatic Renewal – to be a judge or to speak “in the name of the Charismatic Renewal”. The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is not a movement; it has no governance structure. The communities and groups within the current of grace may have a structure, but the current of grace does not.

**Following:** Obedience, in the first place, is to the Holy Spirit, who manifests himself in the Church. The ecclesial nature must continue to be a characteristic note of the Charismatic Renewal. Hence the importance of following the Pope, the visible head of ecclesial communion.

I know that for many of you CHARIS came as a “foreign body”, as something that you neither sought nor wanted. “Another will dress you and take you where you don’t want to go...You, follow me.”

However, you have opened your hearts to this grace, to this “surprise of the Spirit”. Because it was an explicit request of the Holy Father. Because it also responds to the original spirit of the Charismatic Renewal, expressed in the Malines Documents: a current of grace, a fruit of the outpouring of the Spirit, which is ecumenical, charitable, that is, open to all who receive this outpouring, open to non-Catholic Christians, open to the service to the poorest.

**Communion:** CHARIS is a service of communion. Its mission is to “extend the tent”, that is, to help all charismatics feel “inside” this current of grace. Communion is unity in diversity! It is not uniformity. As I used to say when I was a youth minister, communion is a “fruit salad”, not a “fruit milk shake”. In the fruit salad, each fruit keeps its flavor, its context, its form, and each one contributes to the whole with what is proper to it. In the “fruit milk shake”, the flavor of each thing is not well identified. We start to discuss “I think there’s pear”; the other one says, “No it’s apple” or even “it looks like there’s banana”.... Uniformity kills originality. Think of the diversity of the apostles (Peter and Paul were

almost like water and oil!). Think of the diversity of the Churches founded by them. Nevertheless, all sought to live in communion with the Mother Church of Jerusalem (and then with the Church of Rome).

There are leaders who only defend unity when it means unity with him/her, when unity means to do things in my own way! They speak of communion to disguise their desire for power and control, to have everyone “united”, in “communion” with him/her. But there are also leaders who take advantage of the discourse on diversity to look for spaces of power, which they did not have until then.

CHARIS, because it is not a structure of government (nor of power), necessarily places the accent on diversity: communion of diverse realities. All expressions – prayer groups, communities, schools of evangelization, mass media, large and

small, with pontifical or diocesan recognition – all with the same right to be served and the same duty to serve humanity and the whole world. All with the duty to respect the “Spirit that blows where it wants and how it wants”.

God wanted Mary to be overshadowed by the power of the Holy Spirit not only at the Annunciation to become the Mother of Jesus, but also especially in the Upper Room...

– in the Cenacle – so as to become the Mother of the Church. She, who was full of the Spirit, is the one who implores this same Spirit of love, shepherding, following and communion not only for the nascent Church, but also for us, gathered here in these days of Cenacle.

Tomorrow, with the encouragement of the Holy Father and the vigil of Pentecost, God wants to send us out to the world, having been transformed from how we were when we first started.

May Mary help us in our conversion: so that we may love the Lord more, serve his flock better, follow more faithfully his Word and truly cultivate communion (unity in diversity), as part of that current of graces called Charismatic Renewal.

May Mary, the Woman filled with the Holy Spirit and Queen of Apostles, intercede for us. Amen.

## CHARIS

is a service of communion. Its mission is to “extend the tent”, that is, to help all charismatics feel “inside” this current of grace



Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap

## The Catholic Charismatic Renewal A Current of Grace for the whole Church

I begin with the conviction shared by all of us and often repeated by Pope Francis that the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) is “a current of grace for the whole Church.” If the CCR is a current of grace for the whole Church, we have a duty to ourselves and to the Church to explain what this current of grace consists of and why it is intended for and necessary for the whole Church. In brief, we need to explain who we are and what we offer—or better, what God offers—to the Church through this current of grace.

Until now we have not been—not could we have been—able to say clearly what the Charismatic Renewal is. It is necessary in fact to experience a way of life before being able to define it. This has always happened in the past whenever new forms of Christian life appeared. It is unfortunate when movements and religious orders begin with many rules and a detailed constitution established up front as a protocol to follow. Life, as it progresses, acquires features and makes its own rule, like a river

that carves out its own bed as it moves forward.

We have to admit that until now we have given the Church ideas and portrayals of the Charismatic Renewal that have been different and at times contradictory. We only need to make brief enquiries of the people who live outside of it for us to become aware of the current confusion with regard to the identity of the Charismatic Renewal.

For some people it is movement of “enthusiasts,” no different than the “enthusiastic and enlightened” movements in the past, the Alleluia people with their hands raised who pray or sing in an incomprehensible language: in brief, an emotional and superficial phenomenon. I can say this with full knowledge of these facts because for quite a while I was among those who thought this way. For some people, the movement is identified with people who do healing prayer or exorcisms; for still others, it is a Protestant and Pentecostal “infiltration” into the Catholic



Church. At best, the Charismatic Renewal is seen as a movement whose members can be relied on to do many things in the parish but with which it is best not to get too deeply involved. As someone once said, people like the fruit of the renewal but not the tree.

After fifty years of existence and experience, and on the occasion of the inauguration of the new service organization CHARIS, perhaps the moment has come to attempt a reinterpretation of this movement and to define it, even if any definition cannot be definitive since its path is far from over.

I believe that the essence of this current of grace is providentially enclosed in its name, “Charismatic Renewal,” provided one understands the true significance of both these words. What I propose to do is to dedicate the first part of my speech to the noun “Renewal” and the second part to the adjective “Charismatic.”

### PART ONE: “RENEWAL”

It is necessary to make some preliminary remarks for us to understand the relationship between the noun “Renewal” and the adjective “Charismatic” and what each represents.

In the Bible we clearly see two modes in which the Spirit of God operates. There is the first mode that is called charismatic. This occurs when the Spirit of God comes upon some people in particular circumstances and confers on them gifts and an ability beyond a human capacity to accomplish the task God is expecting of them. The characteristic of this mode of operation

by the Spirit of God is that it is given to a person but not for that person’s sake—to make him or her more pleasing to God—but rather for the good of the community, for service. Some of the people who received these gifts in the Old Testament ended up leading lives that were anything but conformed to God’s will.

Only later, essentially after the exile, does the Bible begin to speak about a different mode of operation by the Spirit of God,

a mode that will later be called the sanctifying action of the Spirit (see 2 Thess 2:13). The Spirit is defined as “holy” for the first time in Psalm 51: “Take not your holy Spirit from me” (v. 11). The clearest testimony of this is the prophecy in Ezekiel 36:26-27:

*“A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances”.*

**A charism is not given because of, or in view of, a person’s holiness, but it is also true that a charism does not stay healthy and can actually become corrupt and end up causing harm if it is not grounded in personal holiness**

The innovation of this mode of acting by the Spirit is that it comes upon people and remains there, transforming them from within, giving them a new heart and a new ability to observe the law. Later, theology will call the first mode of the Spirit’s action “*gratia gratis data*,” a free gift, and call the second, “*gratia gratum faciens*,” grace that makes one pleasing to God.

As we move from the Old to the New Testament, this dual kind of action of the Spirit becomes even clearer. We only need to read chapter 12 of the First Letter to the Corinthians that speaks of

all types of charisms and then go on to the next chapter, chapter 13, that speaks of a unique gift, equal and necessary for all, which is love. This love is “God’s love . . . poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit” (Rom 5:5), the love, as defined by St. Thomas Aquinas, “with which God loves us and which makes us capable of loving him and the brethren.”

The relationship between the sanctifying action of the Spirit and his charismatic action is seen by Paul as similar to the relationship between being and acting and to the relationship between unity and diversity in the Church. Sanctifying action concerns the Christian’s being, the charisms concern acting because they are for service (see 1 Cor 12:7; 1 Pet 4:10); the first establishes the unity of the Church while the second establishes the variety of its functions. We can read Ephesians 4:4-13 on this point. There the apostle explains first what constitutes the being of a Christian and the unity of all believers: one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith; he goes on to say, “grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift” (v. 7): apostles, evangelists, teachers, etc.

The apostle does not stop at highlighting the two modes of operation by the Spirit but affirms the absolute priority of the sanctifying action over the charismatic action. Acting depends on being (*agere sequitur esse*), not the reverse. Paul reviews the majority of charisms—speaking in tongues, having the gift of prophecy, understanding all mysteries, distributing everything to the poor—and concludes that without love a charism is worthless for the one who exercises it, even if it benefits the people who receive it.

It is true that a charism is not given because of, or in view of, a person’s holiness, but it is also true that a charism does not stay healthy and can actually become corrupt and end up causing harm if it is not grounded in personal holiness. To recall the priority of the Spirit’s sanctifying action over his charismatic action is the specific contribution the Catholic Charismatic Renewal can bring to the Evangelical and Pentecostal movements, which had themselves among their roots the so-called “Holiness Movement.”

All that I have said about the renewing and sanctifying action of the Spirit is enclosed in the

noun “Renewal.” Why precisely this word? The idea of newness goes along with the revelation of the Spirit’s sanctifying action from beginning to end. Ezekiel had previously spoken about a “new spirit.” John speaks about being “born of water and the Spirit” (Jn 3:5). But above all St. Paul is the one who sees in this “newness” what it is that characterizes the whole “new covenant” (2 Cor 3:6). He defines the believer as “a new man” (Eph 2:15; 4:24) and the baptism as “the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5).

**Christianity does not begin by telling people what they need to do to save themselves; it begins by telling them what God has done in Christ to save them**

The thing to make clear right away is that this new life is the life brought by Christ. He is the one, in rising from the dead, who has given us the possibility, thanks to our baptism, of “walking in newness of life” (see Rom 6:4). It is thus a gift before being a duty, “something done” before being “something to do.” On this point we need a Copernican revolution in the common mindset of believing Catholics (not a revolution in the official doctrine of the Church!), and this is one of the most important contributions the Charismatic Renewal can make—and has made in part—to the life of the Church. For centuries the emphasis was so much on morality, on duty, on what to do to gain eternal life, that it inverted the relationship and put duty before gift, making grace the effect instead of the cause of our good works.

The Charismatic Renewal, concretely the baptism in the Spirit, brought about in me this Copernican revolution that I was speaking about, and because of that I am deeply convinced that it can bring about that revolution in the whole Church. And it is the revolution on which the possibility of re-evangelizing the post-Christian world depends. Faith blossoms in the context of the kerygma not in the context of the *didaché*, that

is, not in the context of theology, apologetics, and morality. These things are necessary for the “formation” of faith and bring it to the perfection of charity, but they are not able to generate faith. Christianity, unlike every other religion, does not begin by telling people what they need to do to save themselves; it begins by telling them what God has done in Christ to save them. It is the religion of grace.

There is no danger that one can fall into “quietism” this way and forget the duty of acquiring virtue. Scripture and experience leave no way out on this point: the surest sign of the presence of the Spirit of Christ is not charisms but the “fruit of the Spirit.” The Charismatic Renewal needs instead to be on guard against another danger, the one for which St. Paul reproached the Galatians: “Having begun with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh?” (Gal 3:3)—the return to the old legalism and moralism that would be the exact antithesis of what “renewal” refers to. There exists, of course, also the opposite danger of using “your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh” (Gal 5:15), but that is more easily recognizable.

#### **What the New Life in the Spirit Consists in**

But it is time to get more concrete and see what the new life in the Spirit consists in, how it is manifested, and thus what genuine “renewal” is. We rely on St. Paul, and more precisely on his Letter to the Romans, because it is there that he sets forth its constitutive elements almost systematically.



#### *A Life Lived according to the Law of the Spirit*

The new life is first of all a life lived “by the law of the Spirit.”

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom 8:1-2).

### **The Spirit has written the new law on our hearts, infusing love into them**

We cannot understand what the phrase “law of the Spirit” means if we do not begin with the event of Pentecost. In the Old Testament, there were two basic interpretations for the feast of Pentecost. At the beginning, Pentecost was the feast of harvest (the feast of weeks) (see Num 28:26ff) when people offered God their first fruits (see Ex 23:16; Deut 16:9ff). But later, and certainly by Jesus’ time, the feast had been enriched with a new meaning. It was the feast that recalled the giving of the law on Mount Sinai and the covenant established by God with his people—the feast, in a word, that commemorated the events described in Exodus 19-20. A text from the current Hebrew liturgy for Pentecost (Shavuot) says, “This day of the feast of weeks is the time of the giving of our Torah.” It seems that St. Luke deliberately described the descent of the Holy Spirit with the signs that characterized the theophany at Sinai; he uses images, in fact, that recall the earthquake and the fire. The liturgy of the Church confirms this interpretation since it includes Exodus 19 in the readings for the Vigil of Pentecost.

What does this parallel approach tell us about our Pentecost? In other words, what does it mean that the Holy Spirit descended upon the Church on the very day in which Israel recalls the giving of the law and the covenant? St. Augustine already asked this question and gave the following answer. Fifty days after the sacrifice of the

lamb in Egypt, the finger of God inscribed the laws of God on Mount Sinai on stone tablets, and here fifty days after the sacrifice of Christ, the true Lamb of God, again the finger of God, the Holy Spirit, wrote his law. But this time it was not on stone tablets but on the tablets of flesh of people’s hearts.

This interpretation is itself based on Paul’s affirmation that defines the community of the new covenant as “a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts” (2 Cor 3:3). The prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel about the new covenant are suddenly illuminated. “This is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts” (Jer 31:33). It is no longer on tablets of stone but on hearts; it is no longer an external law but an interior law.

How does this new law that is the Spirit function concretely, and in what sense can it be called a “law”? It functions through love! The new law is what Jesus calls “the new commandment” (Jn 13:34). The Spirit has written the new law on our hearts, infusing love into them: “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us” (Rom 5:5). This love, as St. Thomas explained to us, is the love with which God loves us and, at the same time, makes us able to love him in return and to love our neighbor. It is a new ability to love.

There are two ways a person can be induced to do, or not to do, a certain thing: by compulsion or by attraction. The external law induces a person the first way, by compulsion and with the threat of punishment. Love induces him in the second way, by attraction. People are in fact attracted by what they love without having to be subjected to any external constraint. Christian life is lived by attraction, not by compulsion, by love, not by fear.

#### *A Life of the Sons and Daughters of God*

Secondly, the new life in the Spirit is the life of the sons and daughters of God. The apostle goes on to say,

All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery

to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God. (Rom 8:14-16)

This is a central idea in the message of Jesus and the whole New Testament. Thanks to baptism that has grafted us onto Christ, we have become children in the Son. What new thing, then, can the Charismatic Renewal bring to this? Something very important, and that is the discovery and existential awareness of the fatherhood of God that has made more than one person melt into tears at the moment of the baptism of the Spirit. Legally, we are his children through baptism, but experientially we become his children thanks to the action of the Holy Spirit that is ongoing in our lives.

A filial sentiment is born. From being a master, God becomes a father. That is the moment in which a person wholeheartedly exclaims for the first time, “Abba, my Father!” This is one of the most frequent effects of the baptism of the Spirit. I remember an elderly lady from Milan, in receiving the baptism of the Spirit, who went around saying to everyone in her group, “I feel like a baby, I feel like a baby! I have discovered that God is my papa!” Experiencing God’s fatherhood means experiencing his infinite love and mercy.

### **This luminous rediscovery of Jesus as Lord is perhaps the most wonderful grace in our time that God has granted to his Church through the Renewal**

#### *A Life under the Lordship of Christ*

Finally, the new life is a life under the Lordship of Christ. In Romans the apostle writes:

“If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom 10:9)

And again soon after in the same letter he says, None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. For

to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. (Rom 14:7-9)

This special awareness of Jesus is the work of the Holy Spirit: “No one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit!” (1 Cor 12:3). The most evident gift I received on the occasion of my baptism in the Spirit was the discovery of the Lordship of Christ. Up to that point, I was a scholar of Christology; I taught courses and wrote books on ancient christological doctrines. The Spirit converted me from Christology to Christ. What emotion I had when I heard, in the stadium at Kansas City in July 1977, 40,000 believers from various denominations singing, “He is Lord, He is Lord. He is risen from the dead and He is Lord. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.” For me, who was still an outside observer of the Charismatic Renewal, this song had cosmic resonances since it brought into play what is in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. Why not repeat this experience, on an occasion like this, and proclaim the Lordship of Christ together in song. Let those who know it sing it in English...

**I believe the Charismatic Renewal can be (and in part has been) a great help in making the great truths of faith go from being thought to being lived, in making the Holy Spirit move from books of theology to the experience of believers**

What is special in the proclamation of Jesus as Lord that makes it so distinctive and decisive? It is that by proclaiming it one not only makes a profession of faith but also makes a personal decision. Whoever proclaims it is deciding the meaning of his or her life. It is like saying, “You are my Lord; I submit to you, and I freely recognize you as my savior, my head, my master, the one who has complete rights over me. I joyfully yield the reins of my life to you.”

This luminous rediscovery of Jesus as Lord is perhaps the most wonderful grace in our time that God has granted to his Church through the

Renewal. In the beginning, the proclamation of Jesus as Lord (Kyrios) was, for evangelization, what the ploughshare is to the plow, the blade that first breaks up the ground and allows the plow to make a furrow in the soil. Unfortunately, a change occurred concerning this word when we move from the Jewish sphere to the Hellenistic sphere. In the Jewish world the title Adonai, Lord, was enough in itself to proclaim Jesus’ divinity. And in fact it is with that title that Peter proclaims Jesus Christ to the world on the day of Pentecost: “Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36).

When it came to preaching to the pagans, however, this title was no longer adequate. Starting with the Roman emperor, so many called themselves “Lord.” The apostle notes it somberly: “Although there are many ‘gods’ and many ‘lords,’ yet for us there is one Lord, Jesus Christ” (see 1 Cor 8:5-6). Already by the third century the title “Lord” was no longer understood in its kerygmatic sense: it was considered the proper title used by anyone still at the stage of being a “servant” and of fear, and it was inferior to the title of Master that was appropriate to be used by a “disciple” and friend. People continued to speak of Jesus as “Lord,” of course, but it became just like any other title, and even more often it was one of the parts of the full name of Christ: “Our Lord Jesus Christ.” But it is one thing to say, “Our Lord Jesus Christ” and another to say, “Jesus Christ is our Lord!” (with an exclamation point).

What in all of this is the qualitative leap that the Holy Spirit makes us take in our understanding of Christ? It is in the fact that the proclamation of Jesus as Lord is the door that leads to knowing the risen and living Christ! Not the personage of Christ, but the person of Christ. He is no longer just a set of theses and dogmas (with their corresponding heresies), no longer just an object of worship and of remembrance but a living reality in the Spirit. The difference between this living Jesus and the Jesus of books and scholarly discussions about him is the difference between the real sky and a sky sketched out on paper. If we want the new evangelization not to remain wishful thinking, we need to put the ploughshare before the plow again, the kerygma before the parenthesis.

The shared experience of the Lordship of Christ is also what most prompts the unity among Christians, just as we see happening among us here. One of the top priorities of CHARIS, according to the directives of the Holy Father, is precisely that of promoting this unity among all the believers in Christ through every means possible, in reciprocal respect for each one’s identity.

#### **A Current of Grace for the Whole Church**

I believe at this point it is clear why we say that the Charismatic Renewal is a current of grace for the whole Church. All that the word of God has revealed to us about the new life in Christ—a life lived according to the law of the Spirit, a life as sons and daughters of God, and a life under the Lordship of Christ—is nothing but the substance of Christian life and holiness. It is our baptismal life actualized in fullness, that is, not only thought and believed but lived and presented, and not only to a few privileged souls but to all the holy people of God. For millions of believers of different Christian Churches the baptism in the Spirit has been the door to such splendors of the Christian life.

One of the sayings dear to the Pope Francis is that “realities are greater than ideas,” and thus that living the Christian life is greater than thinking about it. I believe the Charismatic Renewal can be (and in part has been) a great help in making the great truths of faith go from being thought to being lived, in making the Holy Spirit move from books of theology to the experience of believers.

St. John XXIII conceived of the Second Vatican Council as a “new Pentecost” for the Church. The Lord answered this pope’s prayer beyond all expectations. But what does “a new Pentecost” mean? It cannot consist only in a new flowering of charisms, ministries, and signs and wonders as a breath of fresh air on the face of the Church. These things are just the reflection and the sign of something more profound. A new Pentecost, to be truly such, must take place in the

very depth that the apostle revealed to us: it must renew the heart of the Bride, not just her dress.

**The Renewal is a current of grace intended and necessary for the whole Church. The only thing that remains is to move from that determination to implementation, from documents to life. And this is the service that CHARIS is called to render to the Church**

For the Charismatic Renewal to be the current of grace we have described, it needs to be renewed itself, and the institution of CHARIS is meant to contribute to this. Origen wrote in the third century, “You must not imagine that the renewing of the life, which is said to have been done once, suffices. On the contrary,... this newness... must be renewed”: “Ipsa novita innovanda est.” We should not be amazed at this. This is what happens in every project of God from the moment it is put into the hands of human beings.

Immediately after I joined the Renewal, I was struck one day in prayer by certain thoughts. I seemed to be sensing the new thing the Lord was doing in the Church; I took a piece of paper and a pen and wrote down some thoughts that even surprised me because they were hardly the



fruit of my reflection. They are in my book *The Sober Intoxication of the Spirit Part Two*, but let me share them again with you because it seems to me that it is the point from which we must start again.

The Father wants to glorify the Son, Jesus Christ, on the earth in a new way, through a new intervention. The Holy Spirit is appointed to carry out this glorification because it is written, “He will glorify me and take that which is mine.” A Christian life entirely consecrated to God, without a founder, without a rule, and without new congregations. The Founder: Jesus! The Rule: the gospel interpreted by the Holy Spirit! The Congregation: the Church! Do not worry about tomorrow, do not try to make something that will remain, and do not set in motion recognized organizations that can be perpetuated by successors. . . . Jesus is a Founder who never dies, so there is no need for successors. We always need to let him do new things, even tomorrow. The Holy Spirit will remain in the Church, even tomorrow.

## **PART TWO: “CHARISMATIC”**

Now we move to the second part of my talk, which will be much briefer, about what the adjective “Charismatic” adds to the name “Renewal.” First and foremost it is important to say that “Charismatic” needs to remain an adjective and never be a noun. In other words, we must absolutely avoid the use of the term “charismatics” to describe people who have experienced the Renewal. If anything, we should use the words “renewed Christians,” not “charismatics.” The use of this term rightly arouses resentment because it creates discrimination among the members of the body of Christ, as if some people are gifted with charisms and some are not.

**It is important to say that  
“Charismatic” needs to remain an  
adjective and never be a noun**

I do not want to give a teaching here on charisms about which there are so many opportunities

to speak. My intent is to demonstrate how the Renewal, insofar as it is also charismatic, is a current of grace meant for the whole Church. To illustrate this affirmation we need to glance quickly at the history of charisms in the Church.

### **The Rediscovery of Charisms by Vatican II**

What really happened to the charisms after their tumultuous appearance at the beginning of the Church? The charisms did not disappear so much from the life of the Church as they did from its theology. If we retrace the history of the Church, keeping in mind the various lists of charisms in the New Testament, we have to conclude that—perhaps with the exception of “speaking in tongues” and “the interpretation of tongues”—none of the charisms was ever completely lost.

The history of the Church is full of charismatic evangelizers, gifts of wisdom and knowledge (we only need to think of the Doctors of the Church), miraculous healings, people gifted with the spirit of prophecy or discernment of spirits, not to mention gifts such as visions, raptures, ecstasies, and illuminations that are also listed among the charisms.

So then, what is new that allows us to speak of a reawakening of charisms in our time? What was absent before? From their proper role of serving the common good and the “organization of the Church,” the charisms were progressively confined to the private and personal sphere. They no longer had a role in the constitution of the Church.

In the life of the early Christian community, the charisms were not exercised privately; together with apostolic authority, they delineated the features of the community. Apostles and prophets were the two forces that together guided the community. Very soon the balance between the two aspects—that of the office and that of the charism—broke down in favor of the office. A decisive element was the rise of false doctrines, especially those of the Gnostics. This fact increasingly tipped the balance toward the office holders, the pastors. Another fact was the crisis of the prophetic movement spread by Montanus in Asia Minor in the second century that further served to discredit a certain kind of collective charismatic enthusiasm.

All the negative consequences for charisms derive from these historical circumstances.

Charisms became relegated to the margins of the Church’s life. There were still reports for a while of some charisms persisting here and there. St. Irenaeus, for example, says that in his time there were “many brethren in the Church who possess prophetic gifts, who speak all kinds of languages, who disclose the secrets of men for their benefit and explain the mysteries of God.” But it was a phenomenon that was in decline. In particular the charisms that had worship and the life of the community as the arena of their exercise disappeared: inspired speech and glossolalia, the so-called Pentecostal charisms. Prophecy was reduced to the magisterium’s charism to interpret revelation authentically and infallibly. (That was the definition of prophecy in the treatises of ecclesiology that were studied in my day).

People tried to justify this situation theologically as well. According to one theory by St. John Chrysostom, which was often repeated right up until the eve of Vatican II, certain charisms would have been reserved for the Church in its “nascent state” but would have later “ceased” since they were no longer necessary to the general economy of the Church.

Another inevitable consequence was the clericalization of the charisms. Linked to personal holiness, they ended up being almost always associated with the usual representatives of this holiness: pastors, monks, and religious. The charisms passed from the sphere of ecclesiology to that of hagiography, that is, to the study of the lives of the saints. The place of the charisms was taken over by the “Seven Gifts of the Spirit” (in Isaiah 11) that, at the beginning and up to Scholasticism, were considered a particular category of charisms promised to the messianic king and later to those who had the task of pastoral governance.

This was the situation Vatican II wished to remedy. In one of the most important documents of the Council we read this well-known text:

It is not only through the sacraments and the ministries of the Church that the Holy Spirit sanctifies and leads the people of God and enriches it with virtues, but, “allotting his gifts to everyone according as He wills” [see 1 Cor 12:11], He distributes special graces among the faithful

of every rank. By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks and offices which contribute toward the renewal and building up of the Church, according to the words of the Apostle: “The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit” [1 Cor 12:7]. These charisms, whether they be the more outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation for they are perfectly suited to and useful for the needs of the Church.

This text is not a marginal note within Vatican II’s ecclesiology but rather its crowning achievement. It is the clearest and most explicit way of affirming that, alongside the hierarchical and institutional dimension, the Church has a pneumatic dimension, and the hierarchical dimension is in function of and in service to the other. It is not the Spirit who is in service to the institution, but the institution that is in service to the Spirit. It is not true, as the great ecclesiologist of the nineteenth century Johannes Adam Mohler polemically noted, that “God has created the hierarchy and has thereby provided more than enough for the needs of the Church until the end of the world.” Jesus entrusted his Church to Peter and the other apostles, but even before that he entrusted it to the Holy Spirit: “He will teach you, he will guide you into all truth, he will take what is mine and declare it to you...” (see Jn 16:4-15).

At this point, with the conclusion of the Council and its decrees collected in a book, the danger of marginalizing the charisms reappeared under a different form. But one that was no less dangerous: that of the text remaining a nice document scholars would never tire of studying and preachers would never tire of citing. The Lord himself overcame this risk by having a man see them with his own eyes—the man who had intensely desired this text on the charisms so that they could be restored not only to theology but to the life of God’s people. When Cardinal Suenens, for the first time in 1973, heard talk about the Catholic Charismatic Renewal that was appearing in the United States, he was writing a book called *The Holy Spirit: The Source of All Our Hopes*. He recounts the following in his memoirs:

I gave up writing the book; I thought it was a matter of the most basic courtesy to pay attention to the possible action of the Holy Spirit, however surprising it might be. I was especially interested in the talk of the awakening of charisms; at the Council, I had pleaded the cause of such an awakening.

And this is what he wrote after seeing with his own eyes what was happening in the Church:

Suddenly, St. Paul and the Acts of the Apostles seemed to come alive and become part of the present; what was authentically true in the past seems to be happening once again before our very eyes. It is a discovery of the true action of the Holy Spirit, who is always at work, as Jesus himself promised. He kept and keeps his “word.” It is once more an explosion of the Spirit of Pentecost, a jubilation that had become foreign to the Church.

Now it is clear, I believe, why I say that the Renewal, also as a charismatic reality, is a current of grace intended and necessary for the whole Church. The Church itself is the one that determined this in the Council. The only thing that remains is to move from that determination to implementation, from documents to life. And this is the service that CHARIS, in total continuity with the Charismatic Renewal in the past, is called to render to the Church.

This is not just a question of faithfulness to the Council but also of faithfulness to the very mission of the Church. The charisms we read about in the Council text are “perfectly suited to and useful for the needs of the Church.” (Perhaps it would be more accurate to say “necessary” instead of “useful.”) Faith today, as in the time of Paul and the apostles, is transmitted “not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power” (1 Cor 2:4; see 1 Thess 1:5). If at one time in a world that had become “Christian”—at least officially—one could think there was no longer any need for the charisms and signs and wonders that existed at the Church’s beginning, that is not the case today. We are back to being closer now to the time of the apostles than to the time of St. John Chrysostom. They had to proclaim the gospel to a pre-Christian world; we, at least in the West, have to proclaim it to a post-Christian world.

I have said up to this point that the Charismatic Renewal is a current of grace that is necessary for the whole Catholic Church. I have to add that this is doubly the case for some national churches that for some time have been witnessing a painful hemorrhage of the faithful to other charismatic entities. It is well known that one of the most common reasons for such an exodus is the need for an expression of faith more in keeping with people’s own culture and has more room given to spontaneity, to joy, and to the body—a life of faith in which popular piety is an added value and not a substitute for the Lordship of Christ.

### **Charisms without the institution are headed for chaos; the institution without the charisms is headed for stagnation**

Pastoral and sociological analyses of this phenomenon are being done, and solutions are being suggested, but it is difficult for people to realize that the Holy Spirit himself has already provided for this need in a magnificent way. We can no longer continue to see the Charismatic Renewal as part of the problem in the exodus of Catholics instead of as the solution to the problem. For this remedy to be truly effective, however, it is not enough that pastors approve and encourage the Renewal, remaining carefully outside of it. This current of grace needs to be received into their own lives. This is what the example of the Pastor of the universal Church, and the institution of CHARIS as well, is calling us to do.

I will mention some attitudes or virtues that most directly contribute to keeping a charism healthy and making it function “for the common good.” The first virtue is obedience. We are speaking in this case of obedience to the institution above all, to those who exercise the service of authority. True prophets and charismatics in the history of the Catholic Church, and even recently, are those who have accepted dying to what they consider certainties, obeying and keeping silent before seeing their proposals and criticisms received by the institution. Charisms without the institution are headed for chaos; the institution without the charisms is headed for stagnation.

The institution does not suppress charisms but assures them a future . . . and also a past. That is, it keeps them from ceasing to be a flash in the pan and puts at their disposal all the Church’s experience of the Spirit from preceding generations. It is a blessing from God that the charismatic awakening in the Catholic Church was born with a strong impulse toward communion with the hierarchy and that the pontifical magisterium recognized in it “a chance for the Church” and “the first signs of a great springtime for Christianity.” This obedience should be so much easier and appropriate for us today now that the supreme authority of the Church does not just praise and encourage this current of grace in the Charismatic Renewal but has clearly embraced its cause and proposes it persistently to the whole Church.

Another vital virtue for the constructive use of charisms is humility. The charisms are operations of the Holy Spirit, sparks of God’s own fire entrusted to human beings. How do we avoid burning our hands with that fire? This is the task of humility. It allows this grace of God to go forth and circulate within the Church and humanity without being dispersed or contaminated.

The image of “a current of grace” that is dispersed into a mass is clearly inspired by the world of electricity. But the technology of insulation parallels the technology of electricity. The higher the tension and the power of an electric current that passes through a wire, the more resistant the insulation must be to prevent short circuits. Humility, for the Charismatic Renewal and for spiritual life in general, is the great insulator that allows the divine current of grace to go through a person without dissipating or, worse, causing sparks of pride or of rivalry. Jesus introduced the Spirit to the world, humbling himself and making himself obedient unto death; we can contribute to promoting the spread of the Holy Spirit in the Church in the same way by remaining humble and obedient unto death, the death of our “I” and of the “old man” that is in us. As an ecclesiastical advisor, I have tried to offer my

contribution in this teaching to an accurate vision of the Charismatic Renewal within the history and current situation of the Church. However, it will be the moderator and the members of the international committee who will need to bear the major weight of this new beginning. I express to all of them my fraternal friendship and my unconditional collaboration as long as the Lord gives me the strength to do it. The Letter to the Hebrews recommended to the early Christians, “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God” (Heb 13:7). We should do the same, recalling with affection and gratitude those who first experienced and promoted the new Pentecost: Patti Mansfield, Ralph Martin, Steve Clark, Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, and all the others who later served the Charismatic Renewal in the ICCRS, the Catholic Fraternity, and in other service organizations.

I conclude with a prophetic word that I proclaimed the first time I preached in the presence of St. John Paul II. It is the word that the prophet Haggi addressed to the leaders and the people of Israel at the time when they were about to rebuild the temple:

“Yet now take courage, O Zerubbabel, says the Lord; take courage, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; take courage, all you people of the land, says the Lord; work, for I am with you, says the Lord of hosts” (Hag 2:4).

Take courage Jean-Luc and members of the committee, take courage all you people in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal: take courage you brothers and sisters of other Christian denominations: work, for I am with you, says the Lord!



# BLESSED SR. RANI MARIA FIRST CHARISMATIC TO BE BEATIFIED



Sr Rani Maria of the Franciscan Clarist Congregation (FCC), who was born in Kerala and worked as a missionary for the liberation and upliftment of poor and downtrodden people exploited by the landlords in the diocese of Indore in Madhya Pradesh State in India, was beatified in Indore on 4 November 2017.

Sr Rani Maria, while travelling in a bus, was brutally attacked and stabbed to death by Samandar Singh on 25 February 1995 as part of the plot hatched by the landlords of the area who were unhappy with the work being done by Sister for liberating the poor people in the area from their clutches. Samandar Singh has been forgiven by her sister, Sr Selmy Paul who is also a Clarist nun and her whole family. He was present to witness the beatification ceremony on 14 February. What has touched many people is the way Sr Rani Maria, who sustained 40 major wounds and 14 bruises through the stabbing, continued to chant the name of Jesus even in the midst of great pain until she breathed her last, the manner in which the whole family has forgiven the assassin and the conversion experience of the assassin himself. We

thank and praise the Lord for this.

Sr Rani Maria launched out in a big way into social action after she had the experience of Baptism in the Holy Spirit during a seminar conducted for the Charismatic leaders of the North India region in Indore from 13 to 20 September 1993. The Seminar was organized by the National Service Team. The teachings were mainly on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Leadership, Charisms and Intercession. For every one of us the Seminar as well as the Baptism in the Holy Spirit was a powerful experience.

Sr. Rani Maria was beatified a Blessed Martyr on 4th November 2017 at Indore. During the Holy Mass H.E. Angelo Cardinal Amato S.D.B, now Prefect Emeritus of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints beatified Sr. Rani Maria publishing the official decree of beatification signed by His Holiness Pope Francis. Sr. Rani Maria is the first woman Blessed Martyr of India.

**Cyril John**  
International Service of  
Communion Member

## What does the CHARIS logo mean?



Many people have asked us what was the CHARIS logo symbolises.

Here are some explanations:

The blue semi-circle on the right represents both the world and the mantle of Mary who protects us. Planted in the heart of the world is the tree of the Cross that saves us. The flame is that of the Holy Spirit who is to set fire to the world by the baptism in the Spirit that we have received. We are represented above the flame in an act of praise animated by the flame of diverse colors indicating the universality of cultures and languages that are representative of the Charismatic Renewal spread throughout the world.

Who can use the CHARIS logo? And under what conditions?

To answer this question, we must remember that CHARIS is a service. There is no member. One can belong to the current of grace which is the Catholic Charismatic

Renewal. One can say "I am from the Renewal" or "I belong to such a community of the Renewal". But one cannot say "I am from CHARIS" or "I belong to CHARIS" or "we are CHARIS of such country". The Charismatic Renewal is wider than CHARIS which is only a service for the Renewal.

Once, this premise is understood, it is easy to understand that the use of the CHARIS logo is restricted for its own structures: the International Service of Communion, the National and Continental Services of Communion. For an event to put the logo in its advertising, it must be done in full agreement with CHARIS and that the event is at least co-organized by CHARIS.

Similarly, members of the International Communion of Service cannot make use of the fact that they belong to CHARIS, when associated with personal events or movements.



## Formation offered by CHARIS

CHARIS mirrors the training initiated by ICCRS. The content of the courses is globally identical. Names are changed to conform to the new reality:

- LFI becomes: **CLI - CHARIS Leadership Institute**
- LTC becomes: **CLC - CHARIS Leadership Course**
- ITC becomes: **CIC - CHARIS Intercession Course**
- ICS (Formation School on Charisms - the latest born in the range) becomes: **CCC- CHARIS Charisms Course.**

We have kept the acronym in all languages to maintain consistency.

You will also notice that the banners that identified the different formation schools have changed.

In addition, each course provided by CHARIS will include an explanation of the innovation and identity of CHARIS with the opportunity to ask questions. CHARIS also wants to expand the teaching body of the various courses offered, while relying on the great experience of the people who helped build the training that has already yielded so much fruit.

- Mr. Jim MURPHY was, at his request, replaced as Director of Formation School by Mr. Andres Arango, member of the International Service of Communion. However, Jim Murphy continues to serve in Formation. We thank him very much.

- Mr. Cyril John, who was in charge of the Prophetic Intercession Course, remains in the team, and is also a member of the International Service of Communion.

Apart from the CLI, which only takes place in Rome, if you are interested in a Training Course (CLC, CIC or CCC) in your country, please contact us for more information:

[formation@charis.international](mailto:formation@charis.international)

We invite you to visit our website:

[www.charis.international/en/formation](http://www.charis.international/en/formation)

Other new developments, of larger sizes, are planned in the future. We will keep you posted in this Magazine.

### Upcoming Courses

#### **CLC Zambia**

8 – 17 Sept 2019

#### **CLC South Korea**

29 Sept – 5 Oct 2019

#### **CLC New York**

10 – 17 Nov 2019

#### **CLC Bolivia**

2 – 7 Sept 2019

### Upcoming Institute

#### **CLI Rome**

6 – 26 Oct 2019

**During the Summer of 2020 (July/August), CHARIS will hold its very first youth Program called CLCY:**

**CHARIS LEADERSHIP COURSE FOR YOUTH.**

**Venue and dates are yet to be decided.**