Streams of Renewal – Like a Mighty River
“If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink... out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.” – John 7:37-38

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Living Bulwark is committed to fostering renewal of the whole Christian people: Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox. We especially want to give witness to the charismatic, ecumenical, evangelistic, and community dimensions of that renewal. Living Bulwark seeks to equip Christians to grow in holiness, to apply Christian teaching to their lives, and to respond with faith and generosity to the working of the Holy Spirit in our day.

Go to > PDF Archives of back issues • (c) copyright 2017 The Sword of the Spirit
All who thirst draw water from the river of life

“On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”

– John 7:37-39

In this issue

This year, 2017, marks two significant anniversaries: the 500th Anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation and the spiritual renewal movements its spawned, and the 50th Anniversary of the beginning of the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church which in turn gave rise to a new and vital ecumenical work among Pentecostals, Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox engaged in charismatic renewal.

Charismatic renewal of the whole Body of Christ

Dr. Vinson Synan, author of The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century, is an eminent historian who has studied the origin and development of the charismatic movements (the Pentecostals, Neo-Pentecostals, Catholic charismatic renewal, etc.) which began in the United States and then spread rapidly around the world. His articles in this issue of Living Bulwark (Century of the Holy Spirit, and Building Charismatic Bridges) can give you a good understanding of the origins of these movements and why they have a key role in building bridges across the Christian traditions.

Steve Clark, in his article on Ecumenism and Charismatic Renewal, reminds us that “the Lord is at work through the charismatic renewal
not simply in individual lives but in the corporate life of the church." The Second Vatican Council stated clearly that genuine renewal of the Catholic Church in the 20th century must address itself to the question of Christian unity. "Ecumenism is part of church renewal. In fact, those working for the full range of church renewal sooner or later must become concerned with ecumenism if they are to be authentically Catholic."

The goal is not simply to have a charismatic movement but to have a complete renewal of Christian life in the power of the Spirit. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is not captive to any particular camp or individual movement. The baptism in the Holy Spirit and the spiritual gifts are for the whole body of Christ and for the normal life of the church.

**Unity in the Holy Spirit**
All the charismatic movements have been ecumenical from their beginnings. This should not surprise us because the Holy Spirit unites rather than divides, builds up rather than tears down, and restores what has been broken and lost. What unites us is greater than what divides us. The real source and power that unites us is the Holy Spirit. There can be real unity in the Spirit, even where divisions and disagreements exist, because true unity is rooted in the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit who renews, reforms, and transforms God's people into the image and likeness of the crucified and risen Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Rediscovering roots that refresh and bring spiritual life**
There have been many renewal movements throughout the course of Christian history because the Lord constantly calls his church, the body of Christ, to deeper conversion and holiness of life. At times these movements have led to unintended divisions. This fact contradicts what Jesus asks the Father in John 17:23: “that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” That is why ongoing renewal must begin with repentance and reconciliation - confessing our sins and praying for forgiveness and healing for the wounds which have resulted from our divisions. As we name these sins we recognize how they have become a wall which divides us.

**Commemoration of the 500th Reformation Anniversary**
The commemoration this year of the 500th Anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation, is an opportunity for Christians of all traditions to first of all rejoice in what unites us - the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the Gift and work of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Scriptures, Baptism, Apostles Creed, etc. - and to build bridges so we can grow in deeper relationships with brothers and sisters in Christ across the various church traditions. And to pray and seek the Lord together in fervent intercession and humble reconciliation for renewal and restoration of the broken body of Christ.

May we all drink deeply from the streams of living waters which the Lord Jesus provides for all who thirst for him. May we thirst for deeper holiness, greater purity, deeper knowledge of his truth and goodness, and a more fervent love and greater measure of expectant faith for what the Lord intends for each of us individually and together as his redeemed people, the body of Christ.

Sincerely in Christ,
Don Schwager
editor
Streams of Charismatic Renewal Movements Seek Unity Together in Kansas City 1977

First Gathering of Charismatic Renewal Streams Seeking Unity in the Spirit in Kansas City 1977
- 40th Anniversary of a Remarkable Ecumenical Gathering

50,000 Christians from many denominations and streams of charismatic renewal gathered for an ecumenical conference on "Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches" in Kansas City, USA in July 1977

Charismatic Renewal: The Conference 'Heard Around the World'
A Report by Rev. Robert H. Hawn
When I was asked to write this article I accepted readily. But, later it hit me. How does one write about the powerful acts of God in our midst? What words can describe the most historical, the largest and most powerful ecumenical conference ever held - the 1977 Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches?

I have an inkling of what Luke went through in describing that first Pentecost in Acts 2.

"Kansas City was super, great, dynamite and all the other adjectives young people use today," wrote a person who attended the conference.

These words only begin to describe the fantastic experience in the Holy Spirit that we all had as we gathered 50,000 plus strong in Kansas City, Missouri on July 20-24 to witness that "JESUS IS LORD" and to praise His Holy Name.

The conference was really a "conference of conferences." Eleven denominational conferences were held each morning. The afternoons included workshops led by almost all the charismatic leaders and teachers in the country. The selection of which workshop to attend often became a major decision. How does one decide between teachers like Francis MacNutt, Bob Mumford, Derek Prince, Roy Harthern, Larry Christenson or Mike Evans?

**Unity in the Spirit**

Each evening the day was climaxed as we gathered at Arrowhead Stadium to praise Jesus as Lord in one united body. Each night had a different theme given by the Lord to which the major speaker addressed the body.
Wednesday night Dr. Kevin Ranaghan [a Catholic Charismatic Renewal leader from South Bend, Indiana] spoke on the "Lordship of Jesus." He said, "Few of us here are bishops or theologians. We are just people of God. The Lord is saying if you want to be together, to be one, then love one another."

It has been more than three years since several charismatic leaders discussed the possibility of holding leadership conferences for the whole church. It seemed a waste of time, talent and tithe for each denomination to hold its own conference.

From that seed the Lord continued to widen our vision until the fullness of His Will came into being with the commitment to hold the Kansas City Conference.

A Planning Committee was formed 18 months ago from leaders of charismatic organizations and was added to as other groups and denominations became part of the conference. Meetings were held every three months as we prayerfully and carefully planned each part of this great task.

The Catholic Renewal Services volunteered their expertise to do the physical planning and handling of the conference. Their obedience to the Lord was the key factor in making the conference a success. Ranaghan was selected as planning committee chairman and the Lord's anointing became obvious. Through his guidance the complexities were made plain and the decisions were made in unity.

The planning committee itself was a miracle of the Lord. Who would have thought that church and organization leaders from such diverse backgrounds and set ways could ever be molded into a unified body?

Just look at the diverseness of the members of the committee: Kevin Ranaghan, Catholic; Larry Christenson, Lutheran; Brick Bradford, Presbyterian; Vinson Synan, Pentecostal Holiness; Bob Hawn, Episcopal; Ithiel Clemmons, Church of God in Christ; Bob Mumford, nondenominational; Nelson Litwiller, Mennonite; Howard Courtney, Four Square Gospel; Ross Whetstone, Methodist; Carlton Spencer, Elim Fellowship; David Stern, Messianic Jews; Ken Pagard, American Baptist; Roy Lamberth, Southern Baptist.

Other church bodies sent official representatives to the conference. The Assemblies of God was represented by Thomas F. Zimmerman, the General Superintendent, and others.

From this diversity the Lord brought a unity in the Spirit that molded us as true brothers in Christ to the degree that I believe any one of us would give our life for any of the others. This is a miracle.
On Thursday night, Larry Christenson [a Lutheran Charismatic Renewal leader from Minneapolis] spoke about "wholeness" and how there are many doors in the house we live in and Jesus comes to knock on any one of them. He went on to say, "We did not choose these gifts (of the Spirit). The Lord has chosen to come knocking at these doors, and we have responded to His knocking. The controversy over these gifts has to be with the Lord Jesus and not with us. The issue is not spiritual gifts; the issue is the Lordship of Christ."

**JESUS IS LORD!**
Friday night, Bob Mumford spoke about "holiness" and, as the Holy Spirit swept over the stadium, Bob stopped for what he called a "Holy Ghost Break."

He shouted "JESUS IS LORD!" and a thunderous response initiated a period of exultant praise as the crowd acknowledged that Jesus was Lord. Meanwhile, the electric scoreboard flashed alternately "JESUS IS LORD" and a picture of Jesus Christ with outstretched arms. That "Holy Ghost Break" lasted about 15 minutes.

Saturday night was a night of commissioning us to go into the world with a powerful talk by Rev. James Forbes Jr. of Union Theological Seminary in New York. He said the Lord's message was, "See Me, saith the Lord" and everyone in the stadium lifted their hands and eyes toward heaven as they gave themselves totally to Jesus.

**Prophetic call to repent and pray for unity**
One of the most powerful moments of the conference came when a prophecy on repentance was manifested. More than 50,000 people responded immediately to the call to "fall on your knees before the Lord." People knelt on the hard concrete in between the tightly spaced stadium seats, or they prostrated themselves in the aisles and on the staircases. Those in wheelchairs on the stadium floor struggled to get out of them and many came to their knees or were prostrate on the turf.
A prophecy given by Ralph Martin at the Kansas City Conference 1977

"The Body of My Son is Broken"

Come before me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit for the body of my Son is broken. Come before me with tears and mourning for the body of my Son is broken. The light is dim, my people are scattered - the body of my Son is broken. I gave all I had in the Body and Blood of my Son. It spilled on the earth. The body of my Son is broken. Turn from the sins of your fathers and walk in the ways of my Son. Return to the plan of your father. Return to the purpose of your God. The body of my Son is broken.

Tears of repentance fell from the eyes of both men and women as every soul knew that we all were part of the sin of the broken and separated body of Christ. That night I believe we all vowed to the Lord Jesus that we would work toward coming together as one united body regardless of the cost to each of us.

The conference message as given to us by the Lord Jesus was: "Love one another and come together as My body that the world may truly know that I Am Lord."

This message was manifested in the great outpouring of love among the conferences and reached out to not only Kansas City but the world. It was manifested in the deep realization that Christ's broken, separated Body MUST be brought together in the unity of the Holy Spirit.

The message was "Unity but not uniformity," and everyone realized that we must apply this in our local church situations.

We must begin to come together regardless of denomination, that the world can see the One Body of Christ in each place. Only then will the world notice the church. Only then will God pour His power fully through that body. Only then will the church be obedient to her Lord. Only then will we bring a new hope, a new message and a full salvation to the world. Only then...will we truly be able to proclaim to the world that "Jesus Is Lord."
A prophecy given by Bruce Yocum at the Kansas City Conference 1977

Stand in Unity with One Another

_The Lord says to you, Stand in unity with one another and let nothing tear you apart. And by no means separate from one another through your jealousies and bitternesses, and your personal preferences. But hold fast to one another, for I am about to let you undergo a servere time of trial and testing. You will need to be in unity with one another. I tell you this also, I am Jesus the Victor King and I have promised you victory._

Only in our unity will the world hear and repent and also come to know Him and His love. We have been given our marching orders and the time for the battle is not far away. Our individual and collective obedience to the call for unity in the body of Christ is the key to the fulfilling of God's mission for His church in the world.

The words of a song sum up what I believe our Lord Jesus wants in His Church: "One body, One Spirit, One faith, One Lord. One people, One nation praising the Lord."

Cardinal Leo Joseph Suenens from Belgium spoke about _A New Pentecost for Christian Unity_ [click link to read]

Rev. Robert H. Hawn has been actively involved in leadership in the Lutheran Charismatic Renewal. This article first appeared in the September-October 1977 issue of Charisma magazine.
A New Pentecost and Unity in the Spirit

“The Lord creates unity from the inside in the power of the Holy Spirit”

by Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens

The following address by Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens, Archbishop of Malines, Brussels, Belgium, was given on July 22, 1977 at the ecumenical Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches held in Kansas City, USA.

The Lord creates unity from the inside

My very dear friends, brothers and sisters, it was for me a surprise to be here this morning with you and to see the renewal coming all over the world. The Holy Spirit more and more alive to bring us together in that unity of Christ, and I really think we are moving forward in a very strong way.

Some years ago, I had the joy to spend a few days in my own place in Malines, Belgium, with Dr. Ramsey, the head of the Anglican Communion at that time. Before starting our dialogue – an ecumenical dialogue – I suggested we open the Gospel and just listen to the Word of God for that occasion. And the Word we received was:

In spite of the fact that the doors were still closed, Jesus was there in the midst of them saying, Peace be with you. (John 20:19)
And we looked at each other and we understood. The doors between the Anglican community and the Roman Catholic one are still closed, but the Lord was there between us as the center of our unity, saying to us: “Peace be with you.”

What I wish to repeat, that in spite of many diversities, the Lord is here because we are gathered in His name. We are coming here together for Him, with Him, in Him. And He says to you, “Peace, my children. I am here and I Myself will create inside of you that unity. You cannot do it from the outside. I will do it from the inside in the power of the Holy Spirit.”

**The Holy Spirit can move mountains**

And may I confide something to you? Yes, the doors are still closed, but already right and left you see windows open with a bit of fresh air coming through them... and the key is in the door. That key is the Holy Spirit – the power of the Holy Spirit – because He can move and He will move mountains. We have to go back and to renew from where we started – at nine o’clock in the morning there at Pentecost.

You know, in this year of the conference, I’m celebrating my fiftieth anniversary of priesthood. And I thought, where can we do that the best? And I thought – Jerusalem, the Cenacle of Jerusalem. Couldn’t that be the place to celebrate in thanksgiving Eucharist and to celebrate Pentecost? And I had the joy to go there with many friends, and I’m so glad to thank the Lord for that meeting in Jerusalem, coming there from where we started.

We will not cease from exploration. We will continue ‘till we arrive there from where we started: the Church at Pentecost. Peter spoke to the crowds and they were moved – deeply moved – and said, “Friend, what are we to do?” And the answer was, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus the messiah for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God may call” (Acts 2:38 – 39).

Well, that is what we see coming... slowly, we see the sun rising. We see the clouds disappearing. It is not yet finished. It’s a time of trouble. But it’s so wonderful to be with you here because you are open to the Spirit. You are open to the faith. You are open to the impossible dreams of the Lord.

**A new and renewed Pentecost continuing**

My final word to you: Happy those who are dreaming dreams and who are ready to pay the price to make them become true. And there is a Brazilian song, which goes, “When one person is dreaming a dream, it’s just a dream. But when two persons are dreaming the same dream, it’s already the beginning of a reality.”

Well, here in Kansas City, we are not only two persons. I see crowds. I see hundreds and thousands of people having the same dream, which means the beginning of a reality.

During the Ecumenical Council [Vatican II], we had a very important moment when Athenogoras, the head of the Orthodox Church, came to Rome. The Pope had visited him also in Jerusalem. I turned at that moment to a good friend of mine, an Orthodox, and I asked, “Tell me, what is the reason for our division according to you? What is the main reason?” And I will never forget his answer. He said, “The main reason of our division since the eleventh century is that we haven’t spoken to each other during nine centuries.”

Just think about that. Nine centuries of silence. And if we start with the Reformation, it’s four centuries of silence. And now we see the dialogue coming open – the prayerful dialogue; that’s the hope of the future. That’s the new and renewed Pentecost continuing. I want you to dream with me. To dream with us the same dream... and let the Spirit blow and let the wind blow and let the rain come and let the face of the world be renewed. Amen! Hallelujah!
Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens (1904 - 1996), was the Archbishop of Malines, Brussels, Belgium between 1961 and 1979. He was made a cardinal in 1962. His motto as bishop was *In Spiritu Sancto* ("In the Holy Spirit"). He was an active participant in Vatican II, and was named one of four moderators of the council by Paul VI. The author of many books and articles, Cardinal Suenens was recognized internationally as an ecumenical bridge-builder and leader in the Roman Catholic charismatic renewal.
“Weep and Mourn for the Body of My Son Is Broken”

The Lord's Call to Repent and Return to the Father's Plan of Unity for the Body of Christ

“Come before me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit for the body of my Son is broken. Come before me with tears and mourning for the body of my Son is broken. The light is dim, my people are scattered – the body of my Son is broken. I gave all I had in the Body and Blood of my Son. It spilled on the earth. The body of my Son is broken. Turn from the sins of your fathers and walk in the ways of my Son. Return to the plan of your father. Return to the purpose of your God. The body of my Son is broken.”

– prophecy given by Ralph Martin at the Charismatic Renewal Conference in Kansas City 1977

A Prayer for Christian Unity

composed and used by Sword of the Spirit communities

The Sword of the Spirit, an ecumenical association of Christian communities worldwide, urges its member communities to pray and fast weekly for Christian unity.

This prayer for Christian unity focuses on the restoration of Christian truth, holiness of life, unity, and witness. In this prayer we identify with the sin and infidelity of God's people, even as Daniel (Daniel 9:5-11,20) and Nehemiah (Nehemiah 1:4-7) identified themselves with the transgressions of Israel.
God relates to his people as a body. We stand before him in prayer not only as individuals, but also as representatives of his church. We may not have sinned personally in the ways mentioned in this prayer, but we have suffered personally from the effects of these sins, and we will all benefit greatly as God wipes them away.

Let us pray now on behalf of the whole people of God.

Lord God our Father, we come to you in supplication on behalf of all the Christian people. We lament the weakness and division among those who call on the name of Christ. We acknowledge that we have failed to “maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3). We grieve that our disunity has hindered the proclamation of the gospel to all the nations (Matthew 28:18; John 17:23).

We recognize that these evils have come upon us, not only through the malice of our Enemy, but because of our sin, the sin of your people.

Lord have mercy upon us, and pardon our sin

Response: Amen. Lord, have mercy

Lord, unite your people in brotherly love and in your truth that we might together give witness to Christ in the world.

Response: Amen. Lord, have mercy

Lord, frustrate your enemies and expose their plots; call to repentance all your sons and daughters; strengthen the weak and enlighten those who are confused.

Response: Amen. Lord, have mercy

Lord, encourage and strengthen by the presence of your Spirit all who are suffering for their faithfulness to you.

Restore your people for the sake of your great name.

May your people be without spot or blemish, ready for your Son’s return!

Response: Amen. Come Lord Jesus
Encountering Jesus on the road to Damascus radically transformed the life of Saint Paul. Henceforth, for him, the meaning of life would no longer consist in trusting in his own ability to observe the Law strictly, but rather in cleaving with his whole being to the gracious and unmerited love of God: to Jesus Christ, crucified and risen. Paul experienced the inbreaking of a new life, life in the Spirit. By the power of the risen Lord, he came to know forgiveness, confidence and consolation. Nor could Paul keep this newness to himself. He was compelled by grace to proclaim the good news of the love and reconciliation that God offers fully in Christ to all humanity.

For the Apostle of the Gentiles, reconciliation with God, whose ambassador he became (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:20), is a gift from Christ. This is evident in the text of the Second Letter to the Corinthians which inspired the theme of this year’s Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: “Reconciliation – The Love of Christ Compels Us” (cf. 2 Cor 5:14-20). “The love of Christ”: this is not our love for Christ, but rather Christ’s love for us. Nor is the reconciliation to which we are compelled simply our own initiative. Before all else it is the reconciliation that God offers us in Christ. Prior to any human effort on the part of believers who strive to overcome their divisions, it is God’s free gift. As a result of this gift, each person, forgiven and loved, is called in turn to proclaim the Gospel of reconciliation in word and deed, to live and bear witness to a reconciled life.

Today, in the light of this, we can ask: How do we proclaim this Gospel of reconciliation after centuries of division? Paul himself helps us to find the way. He makes clear that reconciliation in Christ requires sacrifice. Jesus gave his life by dying for all. Similarly, ambassadors of reconciliation are called, in his name, to lay down their lives, to live no more for themselves but for Christ who died and was raised for them (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15). As Jesus teaches, it is only when we lose our lives for love of him that we truly save them (cf. Luke 9:24). This was the revolution experienced by Paul, but it is, and always has been, the Christian revolution. We live no longer for ourselves, for our own interests and “image”, but in the image of Christ, for him and following him, with his love and in his love.

For the Church, for every Christian confession, this is an invitation not to be caught up with programs, plans and advantages, not to look to the prospects and fashions of the moment, but rather to find the way by constantly looking to the Lord’s cross. For there we discover our program of life. It is an invitation to leave behind every form of isolation, to overcome all those temptations to self-absorption that prevent us from perceiving how the Holy Spirit is at work outside our familiar surroundings. Authentic reconciliation between Christians will only be achieved when we can acknowledge each other’s gifts and learn from one another, with humility and docility, without waiting for the others to learn first.

If we experience this dying to ourselves for Jesus’ sake, our old way of life will be a thing of the past and, like Saint Paul, we will pass over to a new form of life and fellowship. With Paul, we will be able to say: “the old has passed away” (2 Cor 5:17). To look back is helpful, and indeed necessary, to purify our memory, but to be fixated on the past, lingering over the memory of wrongs done and endured, and judging in merely human terms, can paralyze us and prevent us from living in the present. The word of God encourages us to draw strength from memory and to recall the good things the Lord has given us. But it also asks us to leave the past behind in order to follow Jesus today and to live a new life in him. Let us allow him, who makes all things new (cf. Rev 21:5), to unveil before our eyes a new future, open to the hope that does not disappoint, a future in which divisions can be overcome and believers, renewed in love, will be fully and visibly one.

This year, in our journey on the road to unity, we recall in a special way the fifth centenary of the Protestant Reformation. The fact that Catholics and Lutherans can nowadays join in commemorating an event that divided Christians, and can do so with hope, placing the emphasis on Jesus and his work of atonement, is a remarkable achievement, thanks to God and prayer, and the result of fifty years of growing mutual knowledge and ecumenical dialogue...

Dear brothers and sisters, our prayer for Christian unity is a sharing in Jesus’ own prayer to the Father, on the eve of his passion, “that they may all be one” (John 17:21). May we never tire of asking God for this gift. With patient and trusting hope that the Father will grant all Christians the gift of full visible communion, let us press forward in our journey of reconciliation and dialogue, encouraged by the heroic witness of our many brothers and sisters, past and present, who were one in suffering for the name of Jesus. May we take advantage of every occasion that Providence offers us to pray together, to proclaim together, and together to love and serve, especially those who are the most poor and neglected in our midst.

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**Anglican Archbishops on Reconciliation and Reaching Out to Strengthen Relationships with Other Churches**

A Joint Statement Marking the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation
"This year, churches around the world will be marking the great significance of the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation in Europe, dated from Martin Luther's 95 Theses protesting against the practice of indulgences, on 31 October 1517 at Wittenberg. The Church of England will be participating in various ways, including sharing in events with Protestant church partners from Continental Europe.

The Reformation was a process of both renewal and division amongst Christians in Europe. In this Reformation Anniversary year, many Christians will want to give thanks for the great blessings they have received to which the Reformation directly contributed. Amongst much else these would include clear proclamation of the gospel of grace, the availability of the Bible to all in their own language and the recognition of the calling of lay people to serve God in the world and in the church.

**Remembering**

Many will also remember the lasting damage done five centuries ago to the unity of the Church, in defiance of the clear command of Jesus Christ to unity in love. Those turbulent years saw Christian people pitted against each other, such that many suffered persecution and even death at the hands of others claiming to know the same Lord. A legacy of mistrust and competition would then accompany the astonishing global spread of Christianity in the centuries that followed. All this leaves us much to ponder.

**Renewing our faith in Christ and in him alone**

Remembering the Reformation should bring us back to what the Reformers wanted to put at the centre of every person's life, which is a simple trust in Jesus Christ. This year is a time to renew our faith in Christ and in Him alone. With this confidence we shall then be ready to ask hard questions about those things in our lives and the life of our churches that get in the way of sharing and celebrating faith in Him.

**Repenting and reaching out to strengthen relationships with other churches**

Remembering the Reformation should also lead us to repent of our part in perpetuating divisions. Such repentance needs to be linked to action aimed at reaching out to other churches and strengthening relationships with them. This anniversary year will provide many opportunities to do just that, beginning with this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

**Uniting in the truth of the Gospel of Christ**

We therefore call on all Christians to seek to be renewed and united in the truth of the gospel of Christ through our participation in the Reformation Anniversary, to repent of divisions, and, held together in Him, to be a blessing to the world in obedience to Jesus Christ."
Building Charismatic Bridges
and removing walls and barriers to the Holy Spirit's work to bring Christians together in unity

by Dr. Vinson Synan

Dr. Synan's message is as relevant today as it was when it was first delivered to Charismatic Christians in 1974. Excerpt from Charismatic Bridges, by Vinson Synan, first published by Word of Life, Ann Arbor 1974. -ed.

Charismatic renewal has been ecumenical from the beginning
One of the greatest fruits of these movements has been a warm Christian fellowship that crosses ecclesiastical barriers. Although no one planned it, most charismatic prayer groups have been, in fact, ecumenical from the beginning. There always seems to be a special spiritual dynamic when charismatic Catholics, neopentecostals, and classical pentecostals join hearts and voices in prayer, praise, and worship, giving common witness to the magnificent work of the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ.

In the beginnings of the American pentecostal movement (from about 1900 to 1910) most Christians who received the pentecostal experience were members of the traditional Protestant denominations. Their first impulse was to go and share with their churches the good news that "the Comforter has come." Yet, in time, several new pentecostal denominations were formed, primarily because the established churches expelled the early pentecostals under charges of fanaticism. Walls were built then out of necessity as widely separated groups gradually formed what we now refer to as the classical pentecostal denominations. Despite this development, the historic goal of the movement remained the same: the renewal of the entire church by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit before the second coming of Christ.

God calls us to tear down walls that separate and divide
The present-day charismatic renewal is roughly at the same stage as the Pentecostal movement was in the first decade of its existence. There is a great deal of interchange between the various sectors of the renewal: great
joy is experienced as participants see persons from other traditions receive the Spirit's fullness. But there seems to be a definite trend now toward the building of charismatic walls that could eventually divide charismatic Christians rather than unite them. Of course, no one would plan such a thing, but these walls could gradually appear, and become hardened quite unconsciously, if efforts are not continued to keep the lines of communication open.

We now speak of the "Catholic Charismatic Renewal," the "Lutheran Charismatic Renewal," the "Orthodox Charismatic Renewal," and so forth. Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist pastors and laymen have joined also in denominational, charismatic fellowships, while classical pentecostals meet with themselves in their various national and world conclaves. If we do not pray earnestly for unity in the Spirit, we shall witness the great Pentecostal charismatic movement fragmented into carbon copies of the present day ecclesiastical divisions.

Already there are reports of prayer group that welcome only Catholics, while others serve only Lutherans, etc. There are even some classical pentecostal groups that make a hobby out of denouncing "neo-pentecostalism," as if this renewal constitutes a direct danger to their tradition rather than the historic fulfillment of their mission to the world. The most striking feature of the groups that practice such exclusivism is a turning inward, a loss of the experience of victory, and a decline in both spirit and numbers. Indeed, some prayer groups have ceased to exist, precisely because of their exclusiveness.

I believe that God has called us to build charismatic bridges rather than charismatic walls. We must always endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3) if we are to effectively evangelize the world and renew the church…

**The Holy Spirit breaks down barriers and builds bridges**

The Holy Spirit breaks down barriers and builds bridges between God's people. I am convinced that the only grass-roots ecumenical movement in existence today is the charismatic movement. When Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists, etc. receive the pentecostal experience, their first impulse is to share their newfound joy with others. This sharing is often with people from other denominations who gather in prayer groups for fellowship and praise. As the Holy Spirit manifests himself in joyful praise and worship, consciousness of dogmatic differences fades in overwhelming adoration of Jesus Christ.

When a Christian is filled with the Holy Spirit, most of the barriers of suspicion and prejudice fall immediately as perfect love flows from heart to heart. This did not come about as a result of planning in some ecumenical boardroom but because of the sovereign will of God. This is not man-made ecumenicity but a Spirit-led coming together on the basis of a commonly-shared experience with the risen Lord.

Of course, many deep doctrinal differences remain between the various Catholic and Protestant denominational traditions. These differences will not disappear overnight just by our saying "praise the Lord" together. Yet our coming together in praise gives a different perspective to our differences and at least gives us an opportunity to have precious fellowship together in the Lord.

The past 500 years have not been hopeful ones for the cause of Christian unity. The present Pentecostal - charismatic movement appears to be the most hopeful breakthrough since the Reformation for true unity in the Spirit. May we all wait before the Lord "until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).

See also > *On the Growth of the Pentecostal, Neo-Pentecostal, and Charismatic Renewal Streams*, by Vinson Synan

Dr. Vinson Synan is one of the leading authorities on the history of Pentecostalism. Writing and editing more than 18 books in his lifetime, he has contributed works such as *The Holiness Pentecostal Movement in the United States, The Old-Time Power*, and his most recent major work, *The Century of the Holy Spirit*. In addition to these publications Dr. Synan released his memoirs titled *An Eyewitness Remembers the Century of the Holy Spirit in 2010*. His work and writings are authoritative resources on the history of Pentecostalism and various other topics in the church. In addition, he was one of the founders of the Society for Pentecostal Studies (SPS) in 1970.
David du Plessis (right) with Rev. Michael Harper

Mr. Pentecost

David du Plessis Was Called by the Lord to Be a Bridge Builder in the Charismatic and Ecumenical Movement

by Fred Lilly

“The purpose of the gifts is to help us to love, to forgive, to serve. And those are the things that most effectively lead people to a saving encounter with the baptizer, Jesus Christ.”

David du Plessis thought that Catholics today were too concerned with miracles and not concerned enough about forgiveness.

Rev. Du Plessis (1905 - 1987), recognized throughout the world as a prominent figure in the ecumenical movement, bases this opinion on 20 years of dealings with Catholics, ranging from top Vatican officials to members of small charismatic prayer groups. His ministry began in 1936 when Smith Wigglesworth, a British Pentecostal evangelist, prophesied that God would use Dr. Du Plessis as a bridge between the Pentecostals and other Christian churches.

"Miracles didn't persuade very many people that Jesus was God,” the 80-year-old evangelist says. "But when the Lamb of God, dying on the cross of Calvary, said, 'Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are..."
doing, the success of Christianity was assured. That miracle of forgiveness paved the way for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and the Spirit has led millions to belief in Jesus.

“When God sent me to speak to the leaders of various churches about the baptism in the Holy Spirit, he told me that I had to be forgiving. “Before you talk to one of them,” God told me, “make sure you haven't got a grudge against him for anything he teaches, preaches, or practices. Forgive totally.”

“I had to obey the God I had promised to serve, so I began to forgive the Protestants for expelling the Pentecostals from their churches. And I forgave the Catholics for everything that I had blamed on them.

“Forgiveness is unconditional.” he adds. “You can't really love anyone unless you are willing to forgive everyone. One of the reasons that there are so many divisions among Christians today is that very few of us have been willing to forgive.”

Rev. Du Plessis says that when he learned how to forgive, God opened many doors for him, doors that had been closed to Pentecostals for decades. During almost 50 years of ecumenical work he has been the most prominent figure in the movement to erect bridges between Pentecostals and various Protestant churches and between Pentecostals and the Catholic Church.

David du Plessis was born near Cape Town, South Africa, in 1905 and grew up in the fertile South African countryside. The du Plessis family, descended from French Huguenots, joined the Pentecostal movement when David was about nine years old. By the time David was 15 he was preaching at outdoor revival meetings in his hometown. A short time later he went to Johannesburg to serve as a printer's apprentice at a Pentecostal church headquarters.
Eventually he was ordained to the ministry, and he went on to become one of the most well known preachers in his country. His ministry became international shortly after the Smith Wigglesworth prophecy in 1936. He moved to the United States in 1947.

**The consequences of Pentecost**

A story that Rev. Du Plessis never tires of telling deals with one of his first conversations with Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, the Vatican official responsible for ecumenical discussions with leaders of other churches.

Dr. du Plessis met the Cardinal while attending the Second Vatican Council. One day while they were talking he said, “Tell me, Cardinal, who is the head of the church?”

“Certainly you know the answer to that,” the cardinal replied. “Of course I know, but I want to hear what you have to say.”

“Doesn’t scripture say that Christ is the head of the church?” *Yes,” Rev. Du Plessis answered. “I want to know if you Catholics believe it.”

“Of course we do.” “What about the pope?” “He’s only the vicar of Christ,” the cardinal said. “Christ is the head of the church.”

“Beautiful,” Dr. Du Plessis replied. “That solves my difficulties with Catholics altogether.”

"Why?” asked Cardinal Willebrands.

“Because I want you to know that for ages Catholics have not recognized the ministry of Christ as the baptizer. But if you recognize that Christ is the head of the church because the scriptures say so, then you also have to recognize that he is the baptizer, because the scriptures say that too.”

“We believe in baptism,” he replied.

“Yes, but that is the baptism of John. I am speaking of the baptism of Christ Jesus, what the scripture calls the baptism in the Holy Spirit.”

That conversation was the first of many between Vatican officials and Rev. Du Plessis and other Pentecostals. It took place in the 1960's, about the same time that Catholics the world over were beginning to experience the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Now, some 20 years later, Rev. Du Plessis is concerned that Catholics who have received this important blessing from God realize what their baptism in the Spirit requires of them.

“First of all,” he says, “we need to realize that it is incorrect to say that we receive the Holy Spirit. We don't receive the Spirit; the Spirit receives us. When Jesus was baptized at the Jordan he didn't receive the Spirit; the Spirit received him, and he said so: You are my beloved Son. On you my favor rests (Luke 3:22).

“The dove descended on him,” Rev. Du Plessis continues,” and not a feather got inside. The same kind of thing happened on the day of Pentecost. The fire of the Spirit descended upon them, and not a spark got inside. When the Bible says that they were “filled with the Spirit (see Acts 2:4) it means that they overflowed as the consequences of the Spirit receiving them.

“These consequences were speaking in tongues and boldly preaching the message of Jesus. I never call tongues “the evidence” of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Tongues is not evidence; it is a consequence.”

Rev. Du Plessis is deeply concerned that Christians today understand God’s intention for giving gifts like
tongues, evangelism, and the other “consequences” of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

“God wants to restore unity to Christian people,” he says, “And one of the things he is using is language, the very thing that has divided mankind since the tower of Babel. Tongues is a spiritual language, and it is uniting Christians from many different churches in many different lands. Once they’ve had the same experience of the Holy Spirit they begin to understand each other. Then they begin to find other ways to be united to each other. This is a wonderful thing, and I’ve seen it happen all over the world.”

If unity is a reason that God gives the gift of tongues, ministry is a reason for baptism in the Spirit. “Anyone who desires this baptism must be taught that the next thing God expects of him or her is to minister, because that is what Jesus did and that is what the apostles did. After the Spirit came upon Jesus he spent a short while wrestling with the devil in the desert, then he ministered.”

How did he minister? He taught them, he healed them, he delivered them from evil spirits, he loved them. That is also what the apostles did immediately after Jesus baptized them on Pentecost and that’s the ministry God calls us to today.

“We have to remember,” Rev. Du Plessis adds, “that the Spirit did not come on men alone. We know that Mary and some other women were present in the upper room, and the Spirit came on them just as he did on the men. On that day Jesus anointed all the people for ministry. He liberated women from the law that had excluded them from ministry. His intention is that men and women work together so that the kingdom will come.”

Rev. Du Plessis says that the baptism in the Holy Spirit enables men and women to communicate the gospel by means of teaching, preaching, healing, and the other gifts. But God’s purpose in this ministry is much deeper.

“The fruit of the Spirit is more important than the gifts,” he says. “The message of the thirteenth chapter of the first letter to the Corinthians is something that should ring in our hearts:

“If I speak with human tongues and angelic as well, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong, a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and, with full knowledge, comprehend all mysteries, if I have faith great enough to move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing” (2 Corinthians 13:1-2).

“God wants us to love. That is the basis for all ministry; that is real spirituality. Gifts like tongues and prophecy don't make us spiritual. It's the response to the gifts-love and the other fruit of the Spirit-that’s what God is really after.

“The purpose of the gifts is to help us to love, to forgive, to serve. And those are the things that most effectively lead people to a saving encounter with the baptizer, Jesus Christ.”

Rev. Du Plessis continues to travel throughout the world spreading the good news about Jesus the baptizer and building bridges of ecumenical cooperation. He says that he plans to continue his ministry as long as God gives him the health to carry on. Last year Fuller Theological Seminary, a leading Evangelical institution in Pasadena, California, established the David du Plessis Center to help him organize the papers he has collected during more than 60 years of ministry and to continue his work far into the future.

David du Plessis sees continued growth ahead for the Pentecostal revival and charismatic renewal. “The Spirit has been moving in the churches for most of this century,” he says. “But now the Spirit is moving ahead of the churches. There is a new wave of Holy Spirit revival all over the world, and I expect it to produce
dramatic changes, exciting changes, in the years ahead.”

He also foresees continued progress in the ecumenical discussions in which he has been involved. But, he says, if significant progress is to be made all churches are going to have to eventually allow non-members to receive Holy Communion.

“Jesus’ prayer for unity in the seventeenth chapter of John's gospel was prayed at the first Eucharist,” he says. “I hope that the day will come when all Christians can sit at the same table, worshiping the same Lord, and serving him in a united witness to the world.”

When that day comes a great deal of the credit will be given to David du Plessis. In the meantime, Christians on every continent continue to turn for guidance to the man who has been given the affectionate nickname of “Mr. Pentecost.”

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Century of the Holy Spirit

The Origins of the Pentecostal, Neo-Pentecostal, and Charismatic Movements

by Dr. Vinson Synan

[Note: Dr. Vinson Synan, in the first chapter of his book, *Century Of The Holy Spirit: 100 Years Of Pentecostal And Charismatic Renewal, 1901-2001*, describes the beginning of the early Pentecostal movement at the turn of the twentieth century.]

Introduction

The Pentecostal movement is by far the largest and most important religious movement to originate in the United States. Beginning in 1901 with only a handful of students in a Bible School in Topeka, Kansas, the number of Pentecostals increased steadily throughout the world during the Twentieth Century until by 1993 they had become the largest family of Protestants in the world. With over 200,000,000 members designated as denominational Pentecostals, this group surpassed the Orthodox churches as the second largest denominational family of Christians, surpassed only by the Roman Catholics. In addition to these "Classical denominational Pentecostals," there were over 200,000,000 "Charismatic" Pentecostals in the mainline denominations and independent charismatic churches, both Catholic and Protestant, which placed the number of both Pentecostals and charismatics at well over 420,000,000 persons in 1993. This explosive growth has forced the Christian
world to pay increasing attention to the entire movement and to attempt to discover the root causes of this growth.

Although the Pentecostal movement had its beginnings in the United States, it owed much of its basic theology to earlier British perfectionistic and charismatic movements. At least three of these, the Methodist / Holiness movement, the Catholic Apostolic movement of Edward Irving, and the British Keswick "Higher Life" movement prepared the way for what appeared to be a spontaneous outpouring of the Holy Spirit in America.

Perhaps the most important immediate precursor to Pentecostalism was the Holiness movement which issued from the heart of Methodism at the end of the Nineteenth Century. From John Wesley, the Pentecostals inherited the idea of a subsequent crisis experience variously called "entire sanctification," "perfect love," "Christian perfection," or "heart purity." It was John Wesley who posited such a possibility in his influential tract, A Plain Account of Christian Perfection (1766). It was from Wesley that the Holiness Movement developed the theology of a "second blessing." It was Wesley's colleague, John Fletcher, however, who first called this second blessing a "baptism in the Holy Spirit," an experience which brought spiritual power to the recipient as well as inner cleansing. This was explained in his major work, Checks to Antinomianism (1771). During the Nineteenth Century, thousands of Methodists claimed to receive this experience, although no one at the time saw any connection with this spirituality and speaking in tongues or any of the other charisms.

In the following century, Edward Irving and his friends in London suggested the possibility of a restoration of the charisms in the modern church. A popular Presbyterian pastor in London, Irving led the first attempt at "charismatic renewal" in his Regents Square Presbyterian Church in 1831. Although tongues and prophecies were experienced in his church, Irving was not successful in his quest for a restoration of New Testament Christianity. In the end, the "Catholic Apostolic Church " which was founded by his followers, attempted to restore the "five-fold ministries" (of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers) in addition to the charisms. While his movement failed in England, Irving did succeed in pointing to glossolalia as the "standing sign" of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, a major facet in the future theology of the Pentecostals.

Another predecessor to Pentecostalism was the Keswick "Higher Life" movement which flourished in England after 1875. Led at first by American holiness teachers such as Hannah Whitall Smith and William E. Boardman, the Keswick teachers soon changed the goal and content of the "second blessing" from the Wesleyan emphasis on "heart purity" to that of an "enduement of spiritual power for service." Thus, by the time of the Pentecostal outburst in America in 1901, there had been at least a century of movements emphasizing a second blessing called the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" with various interpretations concerning the content and results of the experience. In America, such Keswick teachers as A.B. Simpson and A.J. Gordon also added to the movement at large an emphasis on divine healing "as in the atonement" and the premillenial rapture of the church.

**Part One: The 19th Century Holiness Movement**

Since Pentecostalism began primarily among American holiness people, it would be difficult to understand the movement without some basic knowledge of the milieu in which it was born. Indeed, for the first decade practically all Pentecostals, both in America and around the world, had been active in holiness churches or camp meetings. Most of them were either Methodists, former Methodists, or people from kindred movements that had adopted the Methodist view of the second blessing. They were overwhelmingly Arminian in their basic theology and were strongly perfectionistic in their spirituality and lifestyle.

In the years immediately preceding 1900, American Methodism experienced a major holiness revival in a crusade that originated in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania following the Civil War. Begun in
Living Bulwark

Vineland, N.J., in 1867 as the "National Holiness Camp Meeting Association," the holiness movement drew large crowds to its camp meetings, with some services attracting over 20,000 persons. Thousands claimed to receive the second blessing of sanctification in these meetings. Leaders in this movement were Methodists such as Phoebe Palmer, (also a leading advocate of women's right to minister); John Inskip, a pastor from New York City, and Alfred Cookman, a pastor from New Jersey.

Thousands claimed to receive the second blessing of sanctification

From 1867 to 1880, the holiness movement gained increasing force within the Methodist churches as well as in other denominations. During this period, many holiness advocates felt that this movement might revive the churches and bring new life to Christianity worldwide. After 1875, the American holiness movement, influenced by the Keswick emphasis began to stress the pentecostal aspects of the second blessings, some calling the experience "pentecostal sanctification." An entire hymnody was produced which focused on the upper room and a revolutionary "old-time pentecostal power" for those who tarried at the altars. Practically all the hymns of the early Pentecostal movement were produced by holiness writers celebrating the second blessing as both a cleansing and an enduement of power.

The holiness movement enjoyed the support of the churches until about 1880 when developments disturbing to ecclesiastical leaders began to emerge. Among these was a "come-outer" movement led by radicals who abandoned any prospects of renewing the existing churches. Led by such men as John B. Brooks, author of The Divine Church, and Daniel Warner, founder of the "Evening Light" Church of God in Anderson, Indiana, this movement spelled the beginning of the end of the dream of remaking the churches in a holiness image. At the same time, other radicals began promoting such new teachings as "sinless perfection," a strict dress code of outward holiness, "marital purity," and a "third blessing" baptism of fire after the experience of sanctification.

The first Pentecostal churches in the world were produced by the holiness movement prior to 1901 and, after becoming Pentecostal, retained most of their perfectionistic teachings. These included the predominantly African-American Church of God in Christ (1897), the Pentecostal Holiness Church (1898), the Church of God with headquarters in Cleveland, Tennessee (1906), and other smaller groups. These churches, which had been formed as "second blessing" holiness denominations, simply added the baptism in the Holy Spirit with glossolalia as "initial evidence" of a "third blessing."

Pentecostal pioneers who had been Methodists included Charles Fox Parham, the formulator of the "initial evidence" theology; William J. Seymour, the pastor of the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles who spread the movement to the nations of the world; J.H. King of the Pentecostal Holiness Church, who led his denomination into the Pentecostal movement in 1907-08; and Thomas Ball Barratt, the father of European Pentecostalism. All of these men retained most of the Wesleyan teaching on entire sanctification as a part of their theological systems. In essence, their position was that a sanctified "clean heart" was a necessary prerequisite to the baptism in the Holy Spirit as evidenced by speaking in tongues.

Other early Pentecostal pioneers from non-Methodists backgrounds accepted the premise of second blessing holiness prior to becoming Pentecostals. For the most part, they were as much immersed in holiness experience and theology as their Methodist brothers. These included C. H. Mason (Baptist), of the Church of God in Christ, A.J. Tomlinson (Quaker), of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), B.H. Irwin (Baptist) of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church, and N.J. Holmes (Presbyterian) of the Tabernacle Pentecostal Church. In the light of the foregoing information, it would not be an over
Part Two: Origin of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements

Introduction: "The touch felt round the world"

The first "Pentecostals" in the modern sense appeared on the scene in 1901 in the city of Topeka, Kansas in a Bible school conducted by Charles Fox Parham, a holiness teacher and former Methodist pastor. In spite of controversy over the origins and timing of Parham's emphasis on glossolalia, all historians agree that the movement began during the first days of 1901 just as the world entered the Twentieth Century. The first person to be baptized in the Holy Spirit accompanied by speaking in tongues was Agnes Ozman, one of Parham's Bible School students, who spoke in tongues on the very first day of the new century, January 1, 1901. According to J. Roswell Flower, the founding Secretary of the Assemblies of God, Ozman's experience was the "touch felt round the world," an event which "made the Pentecostal Movement of the Twentieth Century."

As a result of this Topeka Pentecost, Parham formulated the doctrine that tongues was the "Bible evidence" of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. He also taught that tongues was a supernatural impartation of human languages (xenoglossolalia) for the purpose of world evangelization. Henceforth, he taught, missionaries need not study foreign languages since they would be able to preach in miraculous tongues all over the world. Armed with this new theology, Parham founded a church movement which he called the "Apostolic Faith" and began a whirlwind revival tour of the American middle west to promote his exciting new experience.

It was not until 1906, however, that Pentecostalism achieved worldwide attention through the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles led by the African-American preacher William Joseph Seymour. He learned about the tongues-attested baptism in a Bible school that Parham conducted in Houston, Texas in 1905. Invited to pastor a black holiness church in Los Angeles in 1906, Seymour opened the historic meeting in April, 1906 in a former African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church building at 312 Azusa Street in downtown Los Angeles. as yet to be fully understood and explained. For over three years, the Azusa Street "Apostolic Faith Mission" conducted three services a day, seven days a week, where thousands of seekers received the tongues baptism. Word of the revival was spread abroad through The Apostolic Faith, a paper that Seymour sent free of charge
to some 50,000 subscribers. From Azusa Street Pentecostalism spread rapidly around the world and began its advance toward becoming a major force in Christendom.

The Azusa Street movement seems to have been a merger of white American holiness religion with worship styles derived from the African-American Christian tradition which had developed since the days of chattel slavery in the South. The expressive worship and praise at Azusa Street, which included shouting and dancing, had been common among Appalachian whites as well as Southern blacks. The admixture of tongues and other charisms with black music and worship styles created a new and indigenous form of Pentecostalism that was to prove extremely attractive to disinheritated and deprived people, both in America and other nations of the world.

The interracial aspects of the movement in Los Angeles were a striking exception to the racism and segregation of the times. The phenomenon of blacks and whites worshipping together under a black pastor seemed incredible to many observers. The ethos of the meeting was captured by Frank Bartleman, a white Azusa participant, when he said of Azusa Street, "The color line was washed away in the blood." Indeed, people from all the ethnic minorities of Los Angeles, a city which Bartleman called "the American Jerusalem," were represented at Azusa Street.

The ethos of the meeting was captured by Frank Bartleman, a white Azusa participant, when he said of Azusa Street, "The color line was washed away in the blood."

The place of William Seymour as an important religious leader now seems to be assured. As early as 1972 Sidney Ahlstrom, the noted church historian from Yale University, said that Seymour was "the most influential black leader in American religious history." Seymour, along with Charles Parham, could well be called the "co-founders" of world Pentecostalism.

American Pentecostal Pioneers

The first wave of "Azusa pilgrims" journeyed throughout the United States spreading the Pentecostal fire, primarily in holiness churches, missions, and camp meetings. For some time, it was thought that it was necessary to journey to California to receive the "blessing." Soon, however, people received the tongues experience wherever they lived.

American Pentecostal pioneers who received tongues at Azusa Street went back to their homes to spread the movement among their own people, at times against great opposition. One of the first was Gaston Barnabas Cashwell of North Carolina, who spoke in tongues in 1906. His six-month preaching tour of the South in 1907 resulted in major inroads among southern holiness folk. Under his ministry, Cashwell saw several holiness denominations swept into the new movement, including the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), the Pentecostal Holiness Church, the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church, and the Pentecostal Free-Will Baptist Church.

American Pentecostal pioneers who received tongues at Azusa Street went back to their homes to spread the movement among their own people, at times against great opposition.

Also in 1906, Charles Harrison Mason journeyed to Azusa Street and returned to Memphis, Tennessee to spread the Pentecostal fire in the Church of God in Christ. Mason and the church he founded were made up of
African-Americans only one generation removed from slavery. (The parents of both Seymour and Mason had been born as southern slaves). Although tongues caused a split in the church in 1907, the Church of God in Christ experienced such explosive growth that by 1993, it was by far the largest Pentecostal denomination in North America, claiming some 5,500,000 members in 15,300 local churches. Another Azusa pilgrim was William H. Durham of Chicago. After receiving his tongues experience at Azusa Street in 1907, he returned to Chicago, where he led thousands of mid-western Americans and Canadians into the Pentecostal movement. His "finished work" theology of gradual progressive sanctification, which he announced in 1910, led to the formation of the Assemblies of God in 1914. Since many white pastors had formerly been part of Mason's church, the beginnings of the Assemblies of God was also partially a racial separation. In time the Assemblies of God church was destined to become the largest Pentecostal denominational church in the world, claiming by 1993 over 2,000,000 members in the U.S. and some 25,000,000 adherents in 150 nations of the world.

**Missionaries of the One-Way Ticket**

In addition to the ministers who received their Pentecostal experience at Azusa Street, there were thousands of others who were indirectly influenced by the revival in Los Angeles. Among these was Thomas Ball Barratt of Norway, a Methodist pastor later to be known as the Pentecostal apostle to northern and western Europe. Receiving a glossolalic baptism in the Spirit in New York City in 1906, he returned to Oslo where he conducted the first Pentecostal services in Europe in December of 1906. From Norway, Barratt traveled to Sweden, England, France, and Germany, where he sparked other national Pentecostal movements. Under Barratt such leaders as Lewi Pethrus in Sweden, Jonathan Paul in Germany, and Alexander Boddy in England were brought into the movement.

From Chicago, through the influence of William Durham, the movement spread quickly to Italy and South America. Thriving Italian Pentecostal movements were founded after 1908 in the USA, Brazil, Argentina, and Italy by two Italian immigrants to Chicago, Luigi Francescon and Giacomo Lombardy. Also, in South Bend, Indiana (near Chicago) two Swedish Baptist immigrants, Daniel Berg and Gunnar Vingren, received the pentecostal experience and felt a prophetic call to Brazil. Their missionary trip in 1910 resulted in the formation of the Brazilian Assemblies of God, which developed into the largest national pentecostal movement in the world, claiming some 15,000,000 members by 1993. Also hailing from Chicago was Willis C. Hoover, the Methodist missionary to Chile who in 1909 led a pentecostal revival in the Chilean Methodist Episcopal Church. After being excommunicated from the Methodist Episcopal Church, Hoover and 37 of his followers organized the "Pentecostal Methodist Church" which by 1993 grew to number some 1,500,000 adherents in Chile.

African Pentecostalism owed its origins to the work of John Graham Lake (1870-1935), who began his ministry as a Methodist preacher but who later prospered in the business world as an insurance executive. In 1898 his wife was miraculously healed of tuberculosis under the ministry of divine healer Alexander Dowie, founder of a religious community called "Zion City" near Chicago, Illinois. Joining with Dowie, Lake became an elder in the "Zion Catholic Apostolic Church." At one point, Lake testified to an instant experience of entire sanctification in the home of Fred Bosworth, an early leader in the Assemblies of God. In 1907, he received the Pentecostal experience and spoke in tongues under the ministry of Charles Parham, who visited Zion while the aging Dowie was losing control of his ministry. Out of Zion also came a host of almost 500 preachers who entered the ranks of the Pentecostal movement, chief of whom was John G. Lake.

_In 1898 his wife was miraculously healed of tuberculosis_

After his Pentecostal experience, Lake abandoned the insurance business in order to answer a long-standing
call to minister in South Africa. In April 1908, he led a large missionary party to Johannesburg, where he began to spread the Pentecostal message throughout the nation. Coming with him was his wife and seven children as well as Holiness evangelists Thomas Hezmalhalch and J.C. Lehman. Only Lehman had been to Africa before 1908, having served for five years as a missionary to the Zulus. Hezmalhalch, lovingly known as "Brother Tom," was born in England and was sixty years of age when he arrived in South Africa. Before the end of his first year in South Africa Lake's wife died, some believed through malnutrition. Lake nevertheless succeeded in founding two large and influential Pentecostal churches in Southern Africa. The white branch took the name "Apostolic Faith Mission" (AFM) in 1910, borrowed from the name of the famous mission on Azusa Street. This is the church that eventually gave David duPlessis to the world as "Mr. Pentecost." The black branch eventually developed into the "Zion Christian Church" (ZCC) which by 1993 claimed no less than 6,000,000 members and, despite some doctrinal and cultural variations, was recognized as the largest Christian church in the nation. In its annual Easter conference at Pietersburg, this church gathers upwards of 2,000,000 worshippers, the largest annual gathering of Christians on earth.

After his African missionary tour of 1908-1912, Lake returned to the United States where he founded churches and healing homes in Spokane, Washington, and Portland, Oregon, before his death in 1935. Throughout the rest of the century, Pentecostal denominational missionaries from many nations spread the movement to all parts of Africa. In addition to the AFM and ZCC churches, the Pentecostal Holiness Church in South Africa was founded in 1913 under the leadership of Lehman, who had come with Lake in 1908. In 1917, the Assemblies of God entered South Africa when the American church accepted the mission already established by R.M. Turney. The Church of God, (Cleveland, Tennessee) came to the country in 1951 through amalgamation with the Full Gospel Church. In retrospect, the work of Lake was the most influential and enduring of all the South African Pentecostal missions endeavors. According to Cecil Rhodes, the South African "Empire Builder," "His (Lake's) message has swept Africa. He has done more toward South Africa's future peace than any other man." Perhaps the highest accolade was given by no less a personage than Mahatma Ghandi who said of Lake, "Dr. Lake's teachings will eventually be accepted by the entire world."

Throughout the rest of the century, Pentecostal denominational missionaries from many nations spread the movement to all parts of Africa.

Soon after Lake returned to the United States, the movement reached the Slavic world through the ministry of a Russian-born Baptist pastor, Ivan Voronaev who received the Pentecostal experience in New York City in 1919. Through prophecies, he was led to take his family with him to Odessa in the Ukraine in 1922, where he established the first Pentecostal church in the Soviet Union. Although he was arrested, imprisoned, and martyred in a communist prison in 1943, Voronaev's churches survived incredible persecution to become a major religious force in Russia and the former Soviet Union by 1993.

Although he was arrested, imprisoned, and martyred in a communist prison in 1943, Voronaev's churches survived incredible persecution to become a major religious force in Russia and the former Soviet Union by 1993.

Neo-Pentecostals and Charismatics

This first wave of Pentecostal pioneer missionaries produced what has become known as the "Classical Pentecostal Movement" with over 11,000 Pentecostal denominations throughout the world. These continued to
proliferate at an amazing rate as the century came to an end. In retrospect, the pattern established in South Africa was repeated in many other nations as the movement spread around the world. That is, an enterprising Pentecostal pioneer such as Lake broke the ground for a new movement which was initially despised and rejected by the existing churches. This phase was followed by organized Pentecostal denominational missions efforts which produced fast-growing missions and indigenous churches. The final phase was the penetration of Pentecostalism into the mainline Protestant and Catholic churches as "charismatic renewal" movements with the aim of renewing and reviving the historic churches.

Strangely enough, these newer "waves" also originated largely in the United States. These included the Protestant "Neo-pentecostal" movement which began in 1960 in Van Nuys, California, under the ministry of Dennis Bennett, Rector of St. Marks Episcopal (Anglican) Church. Within a decade, this movement had spread to all the 150 major Protestant families of the world reaching a total of 55,000,000 people by 1990. The Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement had its beginnings in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1967 among students and faculty of Duquesne University. In the more than thirty years since its inception, the Catholic movement has touched the lives of over 70,000,000 Catholics in over 120 nations of the world. Added to these is the newest category, the "Third Wave" of the Spirit, which originated at Fuller Theological Seminary in 1981 under the classroom ministry of John Wimber. These consisted of mainline Evangelicals who moved in signs and wonders, but who disdained labels such as "pentecostal" or "charismatic." By 1990 this group numbered some 33,000,000 members in the world.

In summary, all these movements, both Pentecostal and Charismatic, now number over 640,000,000 and have come to constitute a major force in Christendom throughout the world with explosive growth rates not seen before in modern times. In 2010, these groups united together to form Empowered21 which will continue to focus on the growth of the movement in the 21st Century.

[Excerpt from The Origins of the Pentecostal Movement, 2015 (c) by Vinson Synan, Ph.D., source: http://empowered21.com/about/history/]

Dr. Vinson Synan is one of the leading authorities on the history of Pentecostalism. Writing and editing more than 18 books in his lifetime, he has contributed works such as The Holiness Pentecostal Movement in the United States, The Old-Time Power, and his most recent major work, The Century of the Holy Spirit. In addition to these publications Dr. Synan released his memoirs titled An Eyewitness Remembers the Century of the Holy Spirit in 2010. His work and writings are authoritative resources on the history of Pentecostalism and various other topics in the church. In addition, he was one of the founders of the Society for Pentecostal Studies (SPS) in 1970.

A definitive history of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement and an intriguing reference for persons outside the movement, The Century of the Holy Spirit details the miraculous story of Pentecostal / Charismatic growth around the world. This book features five chapters by the premier Pentecostal historian, Vinson Synan, with additional contributions by Pentecostal/Charismatic authorities--David Barrett, David Daniels, David Edwin Harrell Jr., Peter Hocken, Sue Hyatt, Gary McGee, and Ted Olsen.
50th Anniversary of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Pope Paul VI meets with Charismatic leaders at the Vatican in 1973

Early Growth and Development of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

by Fr. Pat Egan

Introduction
The Spirit comes with long preparation and lasting effects, but on occasion he arrives at a dramatic moment that can be set down precisely.

His coming on Pentecost, with rushing wind, tongues of fire, and gifts of praise and preaching, occurred at just 9:00 a.m.

The modern Pentecostal movement was launched at Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas, on the evening of January 1, 1901, when Annie Ozman began to praise God in an unknown tongue. The birth of the contemporary charismatic renewal in the Catholic Church can be as precisely dated to the evening of Saturday, February 17, 1967.

The Duquesne Weekend Retreat
Two theology professors at Duquesne University, in Pittsburgh, and students in a Christian "study and action" group gathered for a retreat that February weekend. The professors had experienced a release of the Holy Spirit after reading The Cross and the Switchblade, a first-person story by Pentecostal minister David Wilkerson, and through the prayers of some Episcopalians, but they had not described this to the students. Student speakers came with notebooks crammed with comments on the Acts of the Apostles - the text for the retreat - but no idea of an experiential encounter with the Holy Spirit.

That, however, was exactly what God had in mind. Speakers found themselves making statements about the power of the Spirit that went beyond anything in their notes. One speaker was interrupted several times by...
prayer and praise, and began praying in tongues during the applause and worship that broke out at the end of her presentation.

The well at the retreat-house stopped working on Saturday morning, almost forcing an early end to the retreat. But it started again in the afternoon after prayer. The young man who discovered that the water was running rushed to the chapel to thank God, where he found himself overwhelmed-literally prostrated-by the presence of God.

That evening students came one by one to the chapel and unexpectedly experienced the reality of God's love for them. To some the chapel seemed to grow brighter, to others hotter. The young people knelt, saying over and over, "Yes, Lord," Of, "I love you, Jesus." Praying for one another and worshiping on their knees, singing and worshiping in tongues, they remained in the chapel until 3:00 a.m.

Without any human design, the Catholic Pentecostal movement had begun.

After the weekend, the participants found themselves in a new dimension of spiritual power. They continued to experience a sense of God's presence, gifts of tongues, prophecy, and healing, a thirst for prayer and scripture, an effectiveness in telling others about Christ. Some of the participants in that 1967 weekend began lives of serious Christian service which have continued to the present day.

From this beginning at the "Duquesne Weekend" Pentecostal renewal has spread around the world to millions of Catholics. [Current estimates are some 120 million Catholics in 235 countries around the world.]

Since the Duquesne weekend Pentecostal renewal has brought nominal Catholics to personal faith in Christ and serious Catholics to new depths of fervor and service. It has stimulated personal prayer and evangelism and has brought a new liveliness to corporate worship, sacred music, and Bible reading. This renewed personal faith has led to increased ecumenical awareness among Catholics and the growth of countless local groups, regional centers and communities, and the reappearance of spiritual gifts on a wide scale in the Catholic Church.

The influence of the Cursillo on the charismatic renewal
The movement is one of the wonders of God in our day. How has it achieved such remarkable growth?

Among the original group of students and recent graduates baptized in the Holy Spirit in February 1967 were some already passionately involved in evangelism and church renewal, notably in the Cursillo movement, an evangelistic movement begun in Spain after World War II. Not only were they keen and zealous; they had established networks with other young Catholic leaders of similar outlook, especially students at Notre Dame University, in South Bend, Indiana, and recent graduates. Among these were Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, Stephen Clark, Ralph Martin, Bert and Mary Lou Ghezzi, Philip O'Mara, George and Mary Martin, and Kerry and Barbara Koller.

These young men and women were well-educated, intelligent, deeply committed Christians, loyal to their church. They formed the matrix in which charismatic renewal spread rapidly among Catholics and developed into a movement seeking to be a force for renewal within the Catholic Church rather than apart from it.

Their deep desire for integration in the wider Catholic Church was soon reciprocated by Catholic authorities who moved from suspicion to watchfulness to cautious acceptance, and, in some cases, to personal endorsement and even vigorous approval.

Many times God acted powerfully and in startling ways to win approval for the fledgling movement. Just as
God had once inspired both Peter and Cornelius in order to open the church to gentiles, so now he worked simultaneously in the hearts of high ecclesiastics and these young lay leaders. Vigorous leadership by Bishop Joseph McKinney, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Cardinal Leo-Joseph Suenens, of Malines-Brussels, Belgium, and powerful friends in Rome soon won the support of many bishops and gave the new movement world-wide credibility.

**Favorable factors for rapid growth**

The Catholic charismatic renewal turned out to have been launched at a strategic time and place. Just as the *pax romana* contributed to the spread of the New Testament church, so many modern factors contributed to the spread of Catholic charismatic renewal from the United States in 1967: the wide diffusion of the English language and American influence; the Catholic Church's openness to change after the Second Vatican Council; the evident weakness of current Catholic pastoral methods in the face of secular culture; a new Catholic ecumenical spirit; a significant clericalization and democratization in the Catholic Church; the accessibility of the media to Christians in the United States. This unique combination of favorable factors enabled the Catholic Pentecostal renewal to expand with astonishing speed.

But even these are not explanations enough. When he convened the Vatican Council in 1961, Pope John XXIII asked Catholics all over the world to pray for "a new Pentecost in our day and a renewal of faith, with signs and wonders." Catholic charismatic renewal is best understood as God's wonderful answer to that prayer.

**The 1970s: brushfire growth**

The late 1960s and the 1970s were a time of rapid growth for the Catholic charismatic movement in the United States, evidenced by the appearance and expansion of conferences and publications. The hub of early activities was Indiana and Michigan. In September 1967 a meeting of 50 people was held at Notre Dame University, which became an annual national conference, continuing to the present. The annual conferences at Notre Dame drew 5,000 participants from 10 nations, including 3 bishops and 23.0 priests, in 1971; and to 11,000 participants, including 6 bishops and 400 priests, in 1972. By the following year, when attendance reached 20,000, participants came from all 50 states and 25 foreign nations.

The spectacle of supposedly staid Catholics enthusiastically expressing their faith and love of God intrigued the media, who followed these annual conferences closely. The rallies received extensive and generally sympathetic press coverage; front page pictures impressed the imagination of many Catholics.

May 1968 saw the first national leaders conference at Ann Arbor, Michigan. These continued for several years afterwards at New Year's, beginning with 53 attendees in 1969 and increasing to 500 by 1971.

A stenciled *Pastoral Newsletter* for leaders in the movement was begun in Michigan in May 1969. In June 1970 it became an eight-page printed publication, which climbed to a circulation of 1,200 in the United States and abroad. Renamed *New Covenant* in July 1971, the periodical became a 64 page popular monthly, which reached a circulation of over 70,000 subscribers in more than 100 nations in the mid 1980s.

To facilitate the spread of the renewal plans were made in the spring of 1969 for a national communication center, which was set up in South Bend and later evolved into the present *Charismatic Renewal Services*. By the beginning of the 1980s *CRS* was shipping more than a ton of books and other materials a day.

By the end of the 1970s the period of most rapid, visible growth in the movement in the United States seemed to be coming to an end. The circulation of New Covenant stabilized.

The largest annual charismatic renewal conference at South Bend took place in 1976, drawing 30,000 participants. After this the total number of people attending regional and city-wide conferences across the
country continued to grow, but the sense of constant vigorous expansion in the movement faded. The largest Catholic charismatic renewal conference took place during this period, in 1977, when a regional conference in Atlantic City, New Jersey, brought together 35,000 Catholics.

**Recognition**

In 1970 a "service committee" of six laymen and two priests was formed to take responsibility for the communication center, the national conferences in South Bend, the leaders' conferences in Ann Arbor, and the beginnings of *New Covenant*. Soon, an Advisory committee" of 26 members was also formed to help guide the service committee's work. The *National Service Committee*, which was renamed *Chariscenter USA*, has not attempted to direct the Catholic charismatic renewal but to strengthen it by offering conferences, publications, and counsel.

Bishop Alexander Zaleski, of Lansing, Michigan, in whose diocese much of the early activity was taking place, recommended to the national assembly of Catholic bishops that the movement be received with cautious approval and that the bishops assist it by providing it with the leadership of wise and experienced priests. This essentially foreshadowed the approach taken by the assemblies of Catholic bishops in the United States and other countries, and by the Vatican.

An important aspect of the Chariscenter's work has been to develop lines of communication between the movement and the bishops and clergy. An early meeting was held with a bishops' working group in March 1971. Individual contacts with local bishops followed, leading to the appointment of priests as liaisons in most dioceses to facilitate communications between the bishop and the movement in each diocese. These liaisons, in nun, have formed a national association for communication among themselves. The bishops as a body have also established a standing committee to relate to the overall charismatic renewal.

**Initiation and expansion**

One of the major achievements of the group of early leaders was to discover how to introduce Catholics in a stable and enduring way to new life in the Holy Spirit, with its personal relationship to Jesus, expectant faith, and empowerment for witness. How could this new life be sustained after the initial emotion of Pentecostal conversion faded? The "Life in the Spirit Seminars," which used a catechumenate method for Christian initiation and incorporated the newcomer into an active fellowship of believers, provided this for thousands, perhaps millions, of Catholics in many different parts of the world.

In the seventies, shaped by its capable and methodical North American leaders, the Catholic charismatic renewal expanded outside the United States. Through North American missionaries who met the renewal while on home leave, or as guests of prayer groups and renewal communities, the movement spread quickly, first to Canada and France, then all around the world.

Major theologians soon realized the potential of the movement, among them Avery Dulles and Kilian McDonnell in the United States, Heribert Muehlen in Germany, and Louis Bouyer in France. Their interest led others to take the movement seriously.

In 1973, at Cardinal Suenens's urging, the first international leaders conference was held in Rome, where several prayer groups had already been established by North American students in the theology schools. As time went by, Italian, French, and Spanish-speaking prayer groups developed among theology students in Rome, who spread charismatic renewal as they returned home on graduation. The international leaders meeting in Rome in 1973 brought together 120 men and women from 34 nations. Thirteen leaders at this conference were invited to meet Pope Paul VI, and his address of welcome was printed in full in *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican's official newspaper, with a worldwide circulation.
Contacts like these made possible a great Rome conference in 1975, when 7,000 Catholics, led by Cardinal Suenens, descended on the city. At the conclusion of the conference Pope Paul offered Cardinal Suenens the privilege of using the papal altar, and so the closing liturgy was celebrated at St. Peter's itself. There the closing prophecies of the conference were given and the Pope addressed the participants. The pictures of this event showed that Catholic charismatic renewal had indeed arrived!

Pope Paul VI had responded to the movement's desire for official approval by giving it his blessing. Now many influential churchmen followed suit, among them Cardinals Miguel Miranda in Mexico, Basil Hume in London, and Reginald Delargey in New Zealand.

In the same year [1975] the International Communication Office moved from Brussels to Rome, where it is now housed in offices belonging to the Vatican. By the end of the 1970s, then, in the United States and around the world, ecclesiastical approval had been sought and had been received, lines of communication were in place, and the time had arrived for charismatic renewal to flower in the Catholic Church, especially in Latin America and Africa.

In 1977 more than 50,000 people from over a dozen Christian traditions in the U.S. gathered in Kansas City, Missouri, for the first ecumenical charismatic conference. Ecumenism was highlighted as a major thrust of the charismatic renewal.

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Sources on early history and development of Catholic Charismatic Renewal:

1. Before Duquesne: Sources of the Renewal, by Jim Manney: This is a fuller description of the antecedents of the charismatic renewal, written soon after the movement began (1973) and written by someone who knew the chief events and leaders. From New Covenant Magazine, February 1973.

2. It Was the Time and Place, by Steve Clark: This is a “testimony” requested by Patti Gallagher Mansfield for the second edition of her book As By a New Pentecost. It is perhaps the best place to begin, because it gives an overview in somewhat short form, both of the antecedents and the continuation afterwards.

3. The Beginnings of the Life in the Spirit Seminars, by Steve Clark: From the fiftieth anniversary issue of Pentecost Today, a short description of the beginnings of the Life in the Spirit Seminars, one of the more important instruments for developing the charismatic renewal from the beginnings.


Fr. Pat Egan is a Priest-Sociologist and Chaplain to the Ave Maria Foundation and a regular broadcaster on scripture on WDEO and its affiliate, located in Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA. He was ordained in London, England, and since 1980 he has been active in Catholic charismatic renewal, ecumenism, and in lay movements in the United States and abroad. He is the founder of the Ann Arbor Catholic Men's Movement and has served as liaison for the national Catholic Men's Movement and Promise Keepers.
Some of the Early Pioneers from Cursillo and the Charismatic Renewal

edited by Don Schwager

**Early Cursillo renewal roots at Notre Dame and Duquesne Universities**

The impact of the Cursillo movement on lay Catholic leaders in the United States was a key factor for the rapid growth and development of the Catholic charismatic renewal movement in North America and around the world. The charismatic renewal among Catholics began with a group of lay Catholics who were involved in the Cursillo movement at Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana and at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. *(notes 1, 2, 4, 5 below)*

Some of the key Cursillo leaders who received prayer to be baptized in the Holy Spirit in the early stages of its development were Steve Clark, Ralph Martin, Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, Bert Ghezzi, Jim Cavnar, and Gerry Rauch.
The strategy of the Cursillo founders was to form a body of mature Christian men who would be able to influence their environments, reach out and draw others to Christ, and thereby create a movement which could strengthen and restore vitality in the Church. The founders' method was to draw men to a compelling vision of the Christian ideal during a three-day weekend and then to sustain and nurture their faith through Christian community afterwards. The three-day weekend was a comprehensive and highly structured presentation of a scriptural Christianity using a sophisticated understanding of group dynamics. The whole strategy was aimed towards the formation of leaders, both in the choice of candidates before the weekend, and in the follow-up afterwards.¹

Steve Clark

Steve Clark's role was foundational for developing a close network of relationships among lay Catholic leaders in the Cursillo movement at Notre Dame, Duquesne and other universities.⁵ Steve had converted to Christianity and became a Catholic during his undergraduate years at Yale University in the early 1960s. In the autumn of 1963 Steve decided to pursue a doctorate at the University of Notre Dame, in South Bend, Indiana. There, he connected immediately with the Cursillo Movement, a retreat-based renewal movement he had previously encountered as a summer missionary in Latin America. Cursillo seemed like it might be a vehicle for forming mission communities with an evangelical focus.

At that time Cursillo was only beginning in the United States and according to Cursillo’s rules, Steve was still too young to attend or lead a retreat. Nonetheless, he attended one in East Chicago, Indiana. Two months later he organized the very first Cursillo retreat to be held in South Bend. In less than two years he was asked to give the opening address at the National Cursillo Convention in Kansas City and to serve on the National Secretariat in East Lansing.

Steve and the other young leaders of Cursillo were also curious about the apparent spiritual power found in Pentecostalism. They decided to read The Cross and the Switchblade and They Speak with Other Tongues, and so were prepared by the Lord for what he was about to do in pouring out his Spirit anew.²,⁵

Steve has described in his own words both the impact of Cursillo movement and the impact of reading about Pentecostals who were involved in evangelism and social action in New York City. This led to a number of lay Cursillo leaders making direct contact with Pentecostals to understand the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" and the
My first acquaintance with charismatic things [in 1966] began with reading *The Cross and the Switchblade*, a very influential book in the beginnings of the Renewal. Paradoxically enough, it was given to me by a Campus Crusade staff member who also worked at Michigan State University. At that time Campus Crusade was negative on 'Pentecostalism' (the word that was used for charismatic movements), but the staff member did not seem to realize that she was in fact promoting Pentecostalism by passing on the book. Like her, I was impressed with what I could read about what happened to people when they were baptized in the Spirit. I was even more impressed, because I had worked with young people in a New York neighborhood like the one described in *The Cross and the Switchblade* and knew how hard it was to get them to change for the better.

That event has a certain symbolism. It is symbolic first of how many have been impressed with the effects of being baptized in the Spirit. It is also symbolic of the ecumenical origins of the Charismatic Renewal and of the Duquesne Weekend itself. Some have described the Duquesne Weekend as if it was a Catholic devotional experience - a group of Catholics praying to renew their Baptism and Confirmation or a group of Catholics praying before the Blessed Sacrament and experiencing grace. However, those who were there make it clear that the Duquesne Weekend would not have happened without the input of various non-Catholic Pentecostals, and of the Pentecostal movement as a whole, and without the message of baptism in the Spirit, in whatever terminology it was presented. We Catholics should be grateful to the Pentecostals, as Pope Francis recently said.

History also makes something else dear - the Charismatic Renewal and the Duquesne Weekend did not humanly come out of nowhere, but it began with a group of people who were seeking to serve the Lord and who were working together to evangelize and bring renewal to the church. That group had grown out of the Cursillo Movement, at that time somewhat new in the United States. Its origin was at Notre Dame University in the early sixties and many of those involved in it worked on the Antioch Weekend movement, an offshoot of the Cursillo. The first Antioch Weekend held at Duquesne was something of a pre-cursor of the Duquesne Weekend. The group that worked on the Antioch Weekend and in the Cursillo Movement was not a formal organization, but there was a conscious bond among them that came from working together.

Some have said that the Charismatic Renewal did not have a founder as other movements have. That is partly accurate. But it did have a founding group that provided the leadership for the beginnings of the Charismatic Renewal, including the Duquesne Weekend and its follow-up.

In the autumn of 1967 Steve, together with Ralph Martin, Gerry Rauch, and Jim Cavnar, moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan where the University of Michigan was located. It was there that the first charismatic covenant community emerged. These four began a charismatic prayer meeting that met on Thursday night in an apartment above Campus Corner Drug Store with a dozen people attending. Within weeks, more than one hundred people were attending, so they moved the prayer meeting to the basement of St. Mary’s Student Chapel. People began coming from all over the American Midwest, some driving four hours each way to learn more about the work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul Dinolfo, a senior leader in charismatic renewal and ecumenical covenant communities in North America, has worked closely with Steve Clark since the early development of charismatic renewal and covenant.
communities. Paul sees Steve's contribution to charismatic renewal as foundational for its early development and subsequent growth:

Since his conversion to Christianity, Steve has combined a strong commitment to his own church, the Catholic Church, with an openness to Christians from other church communions. His openness to Pentecostals helped prepare the first Catholics to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. His commitment to the Catholic Church helped shape the Catholic charismatic renewal so that it did not become a divisive movement as it had in so many other church communions prior to 1965. Subsequently the Catholic charismatic renewal became a model for the charismatic renewal. I believe this contributed greatly to the subsequent success of the charismatic renewal movement.

As Christians from many different church communions began coming together in Ann Arbor, Steve recognized the hand of God and saw what was happening as an answer to the ecumenical vision of Vatican II. Steve embraced this grass roots, daily-life ecumenism and developed the theological and practical teaching to support it. He developed the main outlines of our understanding of cooperative ecumenism, convergent ecumenism, and our ecumenical approach. Steve pioneered the development of the first ecumenical covenant community. There are currently nine fully-developed ecumenical communities in the Sword of the Spirit. Steve has been directly involved in the formation of seven of them.

In this regard it is also important to note the ecumenical impact of all of Steve's teaching. It is always deeply grounded in Scripture. Steve has influenced the Sword of the Spirit so that our teaching is likewise grounded in Scripture. This makes the Sword of the Spirit accessible to Christians from all church communions.5

Steve was among those first Catholics to be “baptized in the Holy Spirit.” He became one of the renewal’s leading spokesmen and authors, writing Baptized in the Spirit and Spiritual Gifts, Finding New Life in the Spirit, Growing in Faith, and Knowing God’s Will, Building Christian Communities, Man and Woman in Christ. Steve is past president of the Sword of the Spirit, an international ecumenical association of covenant communities worldwide. He is the founder of the Servants of the Word, an ecumenical international missionary brotherhood of men living single for the Lord.

Ralph Martin
Ralph Martin was one of the first Catholics to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and a key Cursillo leader in the development of the Catholic charismatic renewal movement. Ralph describes his involvement in the Cursillo movement both at Notre Dame and at Duquesne and his experience of being baptized in the Spirit in 1966:

The Cursillo Movement was a significant factor in my own life and in some ways became the seed-bed out of which the Charismatic Renewal blossomed. While a student at Notre Dame in the sixties, despite a solid Catholic upbringing in New Jersey, I got caught up in the intellectual and moral confusion of the times. It wasn't until three months before graduating that things turned around. A friend invited me to make Cursillo No. 2 in South Bend, Indiana, held at Fatima Retreat House on the campus of the University of Notre Dame. Very reluctantly and skeptically; I went.

There I heard impressive presentations that forced me to think about the purpose of life and reconsider the beauty and truth of Christianity. There also I encountered in prayer, in the Word,
in the Blessed Sacrament, in the community, and in the silence of my soul, the gentle but clear invitation from Jesus himself to recognize him for who he was and surrender my life to him. It was a struggle, but thanks be to God, I was able to respond to the grace to recommit my life to Christ and make a firm decision to follow him.

At the very end of the Cursillo [retreat], I experienced an overwhelming flood of God's love and mercy entering my soul and igniting in me a fervent desire to love him and help others love him. I got up to testify to that publicly and that is what I have tried to live out to this very day. I think I was actually baptized in the Spirit at that point and a month later I found myself making strange sounds in prayer that worried me, so I stopped. I think that was the beginning of speaking in tongues; although, not having any concepts to understand it at the time, I stopped.

It was relationships through the Cursillo Movement that led to our first visit to Duquesne University in 1966. Steve Clark and I were working together in East Lansing, Michigan, for the National Cursillo Office and also doing campus ministry at St. John's Student Parish at Michigan State University. We received an invitation from some theology professors at Duquesne, who were also involved in the Cursillo Movement, to lead a retreat there, which we did. It was the following year that the famous retreat took place, led also by the same theology professors, that was the start of the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church.

A short time after the Renewal broke out in Pittsburgh, we went to visit to see what was happening. It was there that I met some who have become lifelong friends and companions in the Gospel, Patti Gallagher Mansfield and Dave Mangan. It was there also that I received prayer for more of the Holy Spirit, and recognized that what I had experienced at the end of that Cursillo a few years previously was the same experience that was now becoming widespread through what has come to be known as Charismatic Renewal. The visit to Duquesne also gave me confidence to trust what I had experienced, and provided an environment and theological and scriptural understanding that enabled me to proceed with confidence sharing this great grace with everyone I could.

Since its inception, Ralph has been a key leader in the development of the Catholic charismatic renewal on the national and international level. He was the founding editor of *New Covenant Magazine*, as well as the founding director of the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Office, currently located in Rome. Ralph is president of *Renewal Ministries*, an organization devoted to Catholic renewal and evangelization. Ralph also hosts *The Choices We Face*, a widely viewed weekly Catholic television and radio program distributed throughout the world. Renewal Ministries is also actively involved in assisting the Church in more than 30 different countries through leadership training, evangelistic conferences and retreats, and the publication and distribution of Catholic resources.

Ralph is the author of a number of books, including *A Crisis of Truth, Hungry for God, Fire on the Earth, Will Many Be Saved?*, and more recently, *The Urgency of the New Evangelization: Answering the Call, What Vatican II Actually Teaches and Its Implications for the New Evangelization*. He and his wife Anne have six children and sixteen grandchildren and reside in Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.

**Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan**

Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan were actively involved in the Cursillo movement at Notre Dame and they are among the first group of Cursillo leaders to be baptized in the Holy Spirit in early 1967. Kevin explains his
encounter with the baptism in the Holy Spirit:

One snowy day in January 1967, my wife Dorothy and I met our friend, Bert Ghezzi, outside the Notre Dame library. Bert told us the surprising story of some of our mutual friends who were faculty members at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. They had just prayed to receive a Baptism in the Holy Spirit at a home prayer meeting, whose members were, for the most part, Episcopalians and Presbyterians. Prior to that they had been studying and praying about the stories of Pentecostal and charismatic Christians, also baptized in the Spirit, who experienced spiritual gifts such as healing, prophecy, praying in tongues and others. As Bert told us the story, we heard of their increases in faith, the growth in their prayer and understanding of Scripture, and the effectiveness of their witness...

Dorothy and I then embarked on a six week journey of prayer, study and questioning. Could these stories be true? Did they have a basis in Scripture and the tradition of the Church? What, if anything, did the Second Vatican Council have to say on the subject? Could this Pentecostal-charismatic thing be part of the renewal of the Catholic Church? Could it have a place in our own lives? Over the course of these weeks we came to a number of conclusions. Here are some of them.

The New Testament is replete with examples of visions, spiritual dreams, miraculous healings, prophecies, speaking in tongues, casting out of evil spirits, inspired preaching, etc. This is true in the life of Jesus and in the church life recorded in Acts. In fact, Jesus said that the things he did we also would do. These spiritual gifts continued throughout church history at different times and places and with different people. The Church understands that the presence, action and grace of the Holy Spirit is not limited to the sacraments. Pope St. John XXIII had the whole church pray explicitly for a renewal of the wonders of Pentecost in our day. Finally, the Second Vatican Council's dogmatic constitution on the Church taught that the charismatic gifts of the Spirit, ordinary and extraordinary, are to be expected and encouraged as part of the normal life of the Church.

At the same time we were beginning to learn that this pentecostal spirituality was not strictly speaking limited to Pentecostals. Since the early 1960's, hundreds of Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans and many others had been baptized in the Holy Spirit and had begun using the spiritual gifts. In terms of religious culture and practice, they were much closer to us than the still mysterious Pentecostals. This quelled our fears that we might be moving towards the edge of a spiritual cliff...

Interested in learning more about the charismatic gifts, we contacted the president of the local chapter of the Full Gospel Businessmen and asked to meet him. Ray Bullard invited us to his home where we met him and a number of Pentecostal pastors eager to meet these Catholics who said they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. They would later say they were somewhat sceptical, but after some conversation they began to pray with us with the laying on of hands. Within just a minute or two, almost all of the nine of us there that night were praying in tongues. Some of us prayed loudly, some of us softly. It was just wonderful. And again, the experience that had begun for me the week before, and that had endured, was intensified. Jesus was with me...

Soon our home and campus charismatic prayer meetings began. People came by the tens, scores and hundreds. Within a year Notre Dame had become a major center of the spread of baptism in the Spirit in the Catholic Church worldwide.6
Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan wrote *Catholic Pentecostals* in 1969, the first book detailing the history of the Catholic charismatic renewal movement and articulating its theological implications. Kevin was ordained a deacon in 1973. He is a founding leader of the People of Praise, an ecumenical covenant community in South Bend, Indiana. He joined the United States National Service Committee for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal for 15 years, and for 11 years was its executive director. He has been a principal organizer of national and international conferences, especially the 1975 Catholic Leaders Conference in Rome, and the 1977 Ecumenical Conference in Kansas City. Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan have six children and twelve grandchildren.

Jim Cavnar

In the summer of 1966, Jim Cavnar lived with Steve Clark and Ralph Martin in East Lansing, Michigan. Steve and Ralph were on the staff of the National Cursillo Secretariat headquartered nearby. Jim knew both of them through the Cursillo Movement at Notre Dame. Jim hoped to work with them after graduation from Notre Dame in the spring of 1967. That summer Steve visited with another Notre Dame alumnus and cursillista, Peter Collins. Peter described his remarkable encounter that summer with a small Pentecostal church in Toronto. He excitedly described his visits to the church where he had witnessed lively worship and heard stories of miraculous healings. Peter then gave Jim a copy of an influential book, *They Speak with Other Tongues*. Jim explains the impact of Peter's visit and then reading the book:

> We read the book quickly, our doubt and skepticism restrained by the first-hand accounts of a trusted friend corroborating the tales in the book. Such things had happened in the lives of the saints, I reasoned, why not now? It seemed possible, even likely, that these accounts were real. I was prepared to accept them and hoped that someone (else!) would investigate.

At the national Cursillo convention that August, 1966, Steve and Ralph gave copies of the book to two professors from Duquesne University. They were more daring than we. After reading the book they made contact with a prayer group in Pittsburgh attended by Presbyterians and other mainline Protestants. They attended for a while and then asked to be prayed with to be baptized in the Spirit.

Soon word had filtered back to us at Notre Dame through mutual friends that something dramatic had happened to them through their contact with the group. We got wind of remarkable happenings at a retreat they had led at Duquesne. In a letter, one of them wrote, 'I hope all this doesn't sound too enigmatic, but the whole experience has been rather like having all our suspicions about the truth of Christianity confirmed.' We were intrigued. One of the men was coming to our campus shortly, he said, so he would tell us the whole story then.

When he arrived, about twenty of us gathered in the living room of Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, not far from the Notre Dame campus. There we sat in amazement as we heard stories of the extraordinary events of the Duquesne Weekend. Students had been baptized in the Spirit. Some had spoken in tongues. They had prayed for hours, even days, in fervent ardor. Healings had taken place and even miraculous answers to prayer. The man who related these events was obviously himself 'on fire' with the Spirit and bold in faith... At the end of the evening he closed with a prayer for us. As he began I was struck by the power and conviction of his prayer. 'Here/ I thought, 'is a man who speaks with authority. This must have been the quality people saw in Jesus.' I struggled to respond.

As he prayed I repeated each word in my mind slowly and deliberately. He prayed for two
things: first, that we would all be free from the influence of Satan, and, second, that we would be filled with the Holy Spirit. It couldn't have taken more than two minutes.

I awoke the next morning feeling like a different person. The strain of the last two months was entirely gone. I felt cheerful and buoyant, full of faith in God. The conflicting feelings of the night before had fled and I was eager to pursue further this experience of the Holy Spirit. Above all, I felt that a change had taken place in me through some action of God. Later that evening I found out what had happened...

With Baptism in the Spirit a revolution took place. Suddenly we were experiencing God's action as the primary dynamic. We were now in the position of trying to cooperate and respond. Steve Clark once compared this shift to the experience of trying to push a car uphill. As long as you kept pushing, the car would keep moving. But as soon as you let up for a moment the car would roll back down to the starting point. Such was much of our experience of Christian ministry. The forward momentum seemed dependent on our own continual effort. Now, it seemed, the car was rolling downhill with a momentum of its own, gathering speed as it moved. We were no longer pushing, we were being carried along at an accelerating pace, hanging on for dear life. The Holy Spirit was now the source of dynamism beyond anything we had experienced before.6

Jim has served in leadership in the charismatic renewal since its inception in 1967. He wrote *Participating in Prayer Meetings* in 1974, published by Servant Books in Ann Arbor. He was a worship leader for many years and led the music group for The Word of God community in Ann Arbor for many years. Jim and the Word of God music group produced a series of *Songs of Praise* music books and audio cassettes (Servant Publications) which circulated widely throughout the charismatic renewal worldwide. Jim is President of Cross International, a Christian ministry that serves the poorest of the poor internationally by channeling aid through existing churches or church-based ministries. Jim and his wife Betsy have five children.

**Gerry Rauch**

Gerry Rauch joined the Cursillo movement during his academic years at Notre Dame University. During his senior year, some friends from Duquesne University wrote him about their experiences with the Holy Spirit during the Duquesne Weekend retreat (February 17-19, 1967). Gerry explains the impact the letter had on him and his Cursillo friends at Notre Dame:

The report was dramatic and riveting: our mysterious and transcendent God again coming to people today, people we knew. As the letter was being read, I remember becoming afraid. In my imagination, this all could mean I should immediately leave School and become a street preacher, standing like some wild eccentric on a Soapbox, haranguing people that Jesus Saves'. I did not want to be like that. In the end, that's not what happened, but I was Sensing Something accurately - that this news meant my life was no longer going to be in my own hands. Those feelings of fear were real, but thankfully short-lived.

A few days later a visitor from the Duquesne weekend retreat came to Notre Dame to meet with Gerry and a few other Cursillo members at Bert Ghezzi's apartment. When they heard the account of the Holy Spirit being poured out on the group of students who attended the Duquesne retreat, they were astounded and eager for the same thing to happen to them. They then asked the visitor to pray with them to be baptized in the Holy Spirit'. Gerry remarked that he did feel any significant change or spiritual experience at that moment. But the next day Gerry and his friends did notice that something spiritually significant did take place. Gerry writes,
Outwardly, it seemed like others present were also unmoved - although later they explained that they were experiencing dramatic interior workings of God. By the next day I was too. The biggest change for me had to do with reading scripture. Every word of the Bible was now full of power. I found it hard to stop reading and pay attention to anything else. Other parts of life also began to unfold in new ways. Visitors came at every time of day and night, wanting to talk about what was going on. Reporters interviewed us, and usually got the story distressingly wrong. Still their reports brought out more people who wanted to hear. And we were experiencing plenty to share: praying in tongues, interpretation of tongues, physical healings, deliverance from evil spirits - true "Acts of the Apostles' scenarios.

My new gift to read the scriptures as words of life and power has remained with me over a lifetime, and turned out to be key to my eventual career - with charismatic covenant communities and Catholic media, with Cardinal Suenens in Belgium and at the Vatican, with three seminaries, teaching future priests how to use the scriptures in ministry. It did turn out to be true that my life was no longer in my own hands, but that meant it was full of marvels, not something odd-ball and eccentric.

Over the years, I have to say growing in Christ came slowly in the ways that matter most. I thank God though, because the Charismatic Renewal also meant that he gave marvellous comrades to me' to help me along the way - from those earliest days of the renewal Steve Clark, Jim Cavnar, Ralph Martin, Fr. Charles Harris, Bruce Yocum, and my eventual wife, Marla Olmsted. She came to the Charismatic Renewal by her own path of the wondrous deeds of God, and wanted to love him in return as much as I did. Over the years, so many others have been dear and supportive friends in Christ...

How could this have happened without God bringing us together first, to be ready to receive these graces of the Holy Spirit? Having ventured out, we saw the Renewal become a worldwide phenomenon with spiritual benefits no one could number. We have continued in it together with the Holy Spirit crying out in our hearts, 'Come, Lord Jesus!'

Gerry Rauch graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 1967. He and his wife Marla live in Ypsilanti, Michigan. They have six children and ten grandchildren. Gerry is a member of the Pauline Holy Family Institute, and works in the formation of future priests at three Catholic seminaries. He is President of Annunciation Institute, a non-profit organization that provides resources for ministry of the word and for growth in the theological and cardinal virtues.

Sources on early history and development of Catholic Charismatic Renewal:

1. Before Duquesne: Sources of the Renewal, by Jim Manney: This is a fuller description of the antecedents of the charismatic renewal, written soon after the movement began (1973) and written by someone who knew the chief events and leaders. From New Covenant Magazine, February 1973.
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3. The Beginnings of the Life in the Spirit Seminars, by Steve Clark: From the fiftieth anniversary issue of Pentecost Today, a short description of the beginnings of the Life in the Spirit Seminars, one of the more important instruments for developing the charismatic renewal from the beginnings.
4. A Collection of Important Source Documents for the Beginnings of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, including: Early

Don Schwager has been actively involved in service for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal since January 1969 and has been a member of the Servants of the Word since 1970. He worked for a few years with Ralph Martin as managing editor for New Covenant Magazine when it began in 1970 until 1975, and also worked with the development of Servant Publications between 1975 and 1990, and with community building work for the Sword of the Spirit since 1980. He is editor for *Living Bulwark* and author of DailyScripture.net.
Looking Back and Looking Forward in the Spirit

50 years Ago a Duquesne Weekend Retreat Ignited the Beginning of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

by Dave Mangan

Introduction

Most baseball fans know that if a batted ball hits a base runner he is automatically out. The fielder who happens to be closest to the runner at that time gets the credit for tagging him out even though he may have done absolutely nothing. That is how I feel about the Duquesne weekend. It certainly wasn't the first time the Holy Spirit moved on Catholics, yet that weekend is significant because that's where God began a unique work that has since been called the Catholic charismatic renewal.

When God moved in this way, by his grace, I happened to be standing nearby. Like the baseball player who gets a putout for just standing there, I sometimes get credit for something I didn't do. This, in itself, is a good lesson. Standing with God really pays off.

What actually happened at Duquesne University? How did God begin this work among a small, insignificant group of Catholics - a work that has had such a profound impact on the lives of thousands of people from many denominations?

A weekend retreat on the theme of the Holy Spirit

A group of Duquesne undergraduates planned to have a weekend retreat on the theme of the Holy Spirit. I had already graduated the previous year, but I was invited back to participate. At the time I was a 22-year-old graduate student, active in teaching CCD in my parish. I remember putting off preparing my CCD lesson on the Holy Spirit until after the weekend, because I hoped to learn something that might help me teach it a little better.

In truth, I knew very little about the Holy Spirit, I figured I could say it all in about three sentences that I
remembered from the *Baltimore Catechism* we were all asked to do some reading in preparation for the weekend the first four chapters of Acts and *The Cross and the Switchblade* by David Wilkerson. I must admit that nothing about the Holy Spirit or charismatic gifts made any impression on me at the time.

Some of the people attending the retreat had a hunger for God and expressed a heartfelt need for more of him. Others were in a crisis of faith. Some were thinking about leaving the church. I didn't realize any of this until after the retreat was over. When I did discover these things it helped me to realize how generous God was to me with his grace.

I approached the weekend with the simple faith I had learned as I was growing up. I just figured that if anything was missing in my life, it wasn't because God had failed to act—it was that I had failed to respond. So when I encountered any lack in me that weekend, I asked God to give me what I had failed to respond to before. It wasn't until much later that I began to realize what a great gift faith is.

We began each session on the weekend by singing the hymn "Come Holy Ghost" in Gregorian chant. The first talk really struck me. (I had been asked to give this talk before the weekend and had wisely bowed out of it.) The speaker quoted Acts 1:8: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." He said that the original Greek word for power meant something like "dynamite." I knew that I had been trying to love and serve God for a long time, but I could hardly characterize my life as “dynamite.” I concluded that I had another thing to ask God for.

The second talk, I thought, was rather disappointing. The speaker talked for only about 15 minutes, reading the Acts 2 account of the day of Pentecost and saying, "This still happens today." As students, we were used to deeper explanations, and this was just a simple idea. I thought, "There's more to this than what she is saying.” So in my notebook I wrote, "I want to hear someone speaking in tongues – ME."

**Where is the power of the Holy Spirit?**

As I considered all of this I reasoned that since I had already received the sacrament of confirmation, I had received the Holy Spirit in power. So where was the power? It seemed to me that I needed to renew my confirmation.

When I was confirmed I am sure God did his part and the bishop did his part, but I am not too sure that I did my part. In fact, as I look back on it, the high point of confirmation for me was getting a gift from my sponsor. Since we renew our baptism at the Easter vigil, I thought it was a good idea to renew our confirmation when we were more able to respond in faith.

I proposed this to the whole group, but it was not well received. So I decided to do it by myself. I was going to ask God to give me what I didn't respond to when I was confirmed.

It wasn't very long before God took me up on my offer.

**Praying with expectant faith**

Shortly afterward, as I entered the retreat house after a walk, I was told that the pump that supplied water to the house was broken, and no workman could come to fix it until Monday. This could mean that our retreat was going to end early. One of the leaders of the retreat suggested to those of us who were standing around that we go to the chapel and pray for water so we could complete the retreat.

Even though I prayed regularly, I had never prayed for anything that needed a specific answer on the spot. As we prayed, I had an unusual experience, I started to thank God for the answer to the prayer, because I had a very strong sense that it was answered. After we finished praying I headed straight for the kitchen and turned
on the water faucet. Sure enough, water come out with (what seemed to me) more force than before.

I was so excited that I went right back up to the chapel to give thanks for the answered prayer. I was not prepared for what was about to happen. As I entered the chapel I sensed the presence of the Lord so powerfully that I ended up prostrate on the floor. To this day I am not sure whether I put myself on the floor or the Lord put me there. In any event, it seemed the only sensible place to be. I then entered into a depth of worship that I had never known before.

After a while, I got up and left-overwhelmed and a bit wobbly-legged from the impact of this encounter with God. I went to join the others and just barely made it down the stairs without falling. Then I started to doubt it all, so I decided to go back up to the chapel to see if it was real.

I'm not sure what I expected. I re-entered the room, and wham! I hit the floor again. I knew I was in the presence of God.

**Receiving the "dynamite" power of the Spirit**

Afterward I sat up (I was a little afraid to stand) and continued to pray, realizing that this was the answer to my prayer about renewing my confirmation, and receiving the "dynamite" I had heard about. As I left the chapel I doubted again. Again I returned to the chapel where I received another dose of the same thing.

I didn't know how to understand what was going on, but I sure knew it was real.

One thing worried me a little, though. Was I alone in this experience? Many of the retreatants seemed to act as though nothing had happened. But as I was walking around a little later I saw Patti Gallagher (now Patti Mansfield) coming down the stairs, and I was going to tell her about it. As I looked at her I saw this strange smile and glow on her face. "You too?" I asked. "Yeah, me too," she said. That's all we said, but I knew I wasn't alone.

I told one of the leaders of the retreat what had happened to me, and he asked if I had spoken in tongues. "What's that?" I asked. He explained it a little, and I remembered that I had started to say something that wasn't English. I had stopped because it didn't seem to make any sense.

My friend assured me that this gift was something scriptural, and I should yield to it if I had the impulse again. I experienced it again fairly soon. This time I let her rip!

**God acted sovereignly**

I was just standing there on February 18, 1967. The Spirit of God showed up in power, and I have never been the same. Looking back, I'm amazed at how sovereignly and generously God acted. At the time, confusion seemed to reign. About 30 people went on a retreat. About half of them were baptized in the Holy Spirit at that time. Some of the others thought we were crazy. (I can't say I blame them. We were acting pretty strange.) Some left the charismatic renewal early on. I think that even though a great thing happened on that weekend, it's important not to romanticize it. In many ways, the experience and its immediate aftermath were very difficult. Only later did we understand what had happened to us.

I was on a high for nine months to a year. I didn't think I'd ever come down, but I did, just like everyone else. When I did, I was still convinced that I had had a genuine encounter with God. This conviction was set deep within me. I knew I was to dedicate myself to a life of prayer and service under the lordship of Jesus Christ; I needed to embrace the joy and the pain of discipleship and move on.

I had a few basic fears to deal with immediately after the weekend. I knew I wasn't alone, but was I just one of
a small strange group? What would people think of me? Could I remain in the Catholic Church? I soon found out that I had lots of company. Other Catholics like me were beginning to experience God's presence and power, and the numbers have grown phenomenally since then.

With grace, I was able to let go of what others might think of me—the lordship of Jesus Christ became all that mattered. I'm still working on this lesson, though. I'm still learning not to be intimidated by what people think of me, learning to stand strong in the Lord, launching out where he says, finding out what God is doing in my life and following it. That's the way I want to live my life.

I also found out that God was not asking me to leave the Catholic Church. It was here that I was formed and led to the response I was able to make on that weekend. This was the answer to my prayer about renewing my confirmation. It was dealing with these challenges that helped me greatly to embrace the church as an adult, not only as a Catholic by birth, but also by choice.

In the early years, numerous prayer meetings sprang up. Most died off. We later realized that we had sapped our strength in the proliferation of prayer meetings; we should have encouraged slower, more solid growth and unity. We learned through trial and error; through successes and excesses. We learned about obedience and faithfulness to God, about practical leadership and evangelism, and much more.

**Focus on the Giver - not the gifts**

There were several learning phases. One phase was learning how to relate properly to the spiritual gifts. While praying in tongues, we had frequent experiences of the language being recognized and identified. Once as I was praying in tongues over someone, the person recognized that I was praying in an archaic form of French that was no longer spoken. We would receive messages in tongues that were interpreted prophetically through the Spirit, and someone else present would confirm the accuracy of the interpretation through his knowledge of that particular obscure language.

Our response was like a child saying, "That's fun. Let's do it again." The trouble was that we forgot the message, because we got caught up in the fascination with the gift. We forgot that it was given to us to glorify the Lord Jesus and to build up his people. We had to learn not to be so fascinated with the gifts but rather to be fascinated with the giver, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Nowadays we have to be careful about the opposite danger. Sometimes we take spiritual gifts for granted, treating them with less value than they deserve.

**God tells us that HE LOVES US**

For example, one of the most common prophecies I hear has to do with how much God loves us. This is often greeted with, "That's nice," or "There goes that 'I love you' prophecy again." But this is a precious truth that we need to embrace. I think God says it so often because we don't really believe it.

Some groups hardly experience spiritual gifts at all any more. Have we quenched the Spirit by failing to respond and to value the gifts of God? Have we wanted God to act according to our agenda, and thus blocked his action?

God has renewed these gifts among us because they are needed in the church. They are not just extras, nor for decoration only. If the apostles and the early church needed them, so do we, not her learning phase had to do with deliverance. We've gone through the one extreme of seeing demons behind every sin and difficulty in our lives and the other extreme of denying their reality or the possibility of their influence over us. Balance is important in this area. We have a despicable enemy in Satan who would destroy us if he could. We would be foolish to ignore this, but there is also our flesh and the world to deal with.
The area of healing is one that many are still learning about. As believers we are people who believe in answers to prayer. This and the myriad of examples of healing in Scripture amply confirm the call for us to pray for healing. When we do, healing does occur—but not always. This sometimes discourages people from continuing to pray for healing, but I don't think it should. There are many possible reasons why a person may not get healed, and we may not be able to figure it out. I don't think we should get too bogged down in trying to figure out why. Some things are just beyond us. We should act with the faith God has given us and then leave the results to him.

Another area of growth over the years has been in exercising leadership and committed relationships. At first, we considered almost any direction or leadership as hindering the Spirit. We soon learned that failure to lead when necessary could quench the Spirit faster than anything else. We came to honor the proper exercise of leadership and to value committed relationships. When you knew you could depend on the people around you, it became a lot easier to make yourself more available for God's service.

**A mighty work of God**
The charismatic renewal is a mighty work of God. This doesn't mean that everything associated with it has been God's will. But God doesn't abandon us when we fail. He is constantly showing us his mercy and leading us on. We should not look back and disdain what God has done or how he has done it. God used what he had to use-us. We should treasure that.

We learned many things through experience, and even though experience may be the best teacher, it has a high tuition pain and sorrow. Now I try to learn as much as I can from others. If God is asking me to do something and someone else is already doing it, I try to learn from them. That way I save a lot of time and need for healing, and God is usually better served. In humility, learn from the people who have gone before you. Learn too by modelling. That was Jesus' principle. He took the disciples and had them live with him, and they became like him. Find people that you want to be like, and learn from them.

I treasure what God did in the early days of the renewal, but I have no desire to go back. The "good old days" are right now, the present is always the time when God is acting. The reason we look back is to find out where to go, to learn. But I have no desire to remain here either. Tomorrow God will have moved on. I want to be in touch with him and to go where he is going. We've got to keep moving. God is dynamic!

In the final analysis, our criterion for evaluating the charismatic renewal is love of God and love of neighbor. Has the charismatic renewal helped us to grow in love for God? In loving our neighbor? If not, it might have a lot of flash and dash, but it is not doing what God wants it to do. God is building a people who love him and who love each other. That's the way well win the world.

[This article was first published in New Covenant Magazine, February 1992]

See also > Patti Gallagher Mansfield's personal account of the Duquesne Weekend Retreat

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[top photo above, (c) by John Franko]
50th Anniversary of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Patti Gallagher Mansfield with Pope France at Rome Charismatic Renewal Conference

“Come Creator Spirit”

50 years Ago a Duquesne Weekend Retreat Ignited the Beginning of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

a personal testimony

by Patti Gallagher Mansfield

Introduction

People frequently ask me if I ever get tired of telling the story of the Duquesne Weekend. I never do, because it’s a love story – the story of God’s gracious and extraordinary response to the prayer of some very ordinary people.

In Luke 11 Jesus says, “Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you. If you who are evil know how to give your children good things HOW MUCH MORE will the Heavenly Father GIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT to those who ASK HIM.”

Here is an unfailing principle: From the first Pentecost on, the Holy Spirit has always come in response to fervent prayer... to prayer that is hungry and thirsty for more of God...to prayer that asks, seeks, and knocks. I describe in my book, As By A New Pentecost, how the entire twentieth century was dedicated to the Holy Spirit in a special way.

Blessed Elena Guerra, at the turn of the twentieth century, urged Pope Leo XIII to call the entire Church to pray more fervently to the Holy Spirit...to be, as it were, a permanent Cenacle of prayer. And of course you
remember the prayer to the Spirit we prayed for the Second Vatican Council: “Divine Spirit, renew Your wonders in this our day as by a new Pentecost.”

**Asking, seeking, knocking**
In the Spring of 1966, two Duquesne University professors were ASKING, SEEKING, and KNOCKING. They had pledged themselves to pray daily for a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their lives using the beautiful Sequence Hymn of Pentecost. In the midst of this time of prayer, some friends gave them two books: The Cross and the Switchblade and They Speak With Other Tongues. Both books describe the experience of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. The men from Duquesne realized that this Baptism in the Spirit was precisely what they were searching for.

In January 1967, four Catholics from Duquesne attended their first interdenominational charismatic prayer meeting – the Chapel Hill meeting – in the home of Miss Flo Dodge, a Spirit-filled Presbyterian. Interestingly enough, a few months before these Catholics came, the Lord led Flo to read Isaiah 48 where He announces that He is about to do “a new thing”.

Indeed, God was about to do a new thing among Catholics as a result of the prayer meeting. The people from Duquesne were impressed with what they witnessed there. On January 20, two of the men returned. They received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and began to manifest charismatic gifts. They returned home to pray with the other two who had not attended that night.

**The Duquesne weekend retreat theme on the Holy Spirit**
At this time I was a member of the Chi Rho Scripture Study group that met on the Duquesne campus. Two of these professors served as moderators of Chi Rho, and although they did not tell us outright about their charismatic experience, those who knew them well noticed that they radiated a new joy. We were planning for our retreat in February and the professors suggested a new theme: “The Holy Spirit.” In preparation for the retreat, they told us to pray expectantly, to read The Cross and the Switchblade, and to read the first four chapters of the Acts of the Apostles.

A few days before the retreat, I knelt in my room and prayed, “Lord, I believe I’ve already received your Spirit in Baptism and Confirmation. But if it’s possible for your Spirit to be more at work in my life than He’s been up until now, I WANT IT!” The dramatic answer to my prayer was soon to come.

**We sang “Come Creator Spirit”**
On February 17 about 25 of us left for The Ark and The Dove Retreat house on the outskirts of the city. As we gathered for each session, our professors told us to sing as a prayer the ancient hymn, Veni Creator Spiritus, “Come Creator Spirit”. On Friday night there was a meditation on Mary. Then we had a Penance Service. In John’s Gospel we read that when the Holy Spirit comes He will convict the world of sin. That’s what happened among us as we repented in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

On Saturday a member of the Chapel Hill Prayer Group came to speak on Acts, chapter 2. All we were told was that she was a Protestant friend of our professors. Although her presentation was very simple, it was filled with spiritual power. She spoke about surrendering to Jesus as Lord and Master. She described the Holy Spirit as a Person who empowered her daily. Here was someone who really seemed to know Jesus intimately and personally! She knew the power of the Holy Spirit like the Apostles did. I knew I wanted what she had and I wrote in my notes, “Jesus, be real for me.”

In the discussion following her talk, David Mangan proposed that we close our retreat by renewing our Confirmation...that we, as young adults, say our personal “yes” to the Holy Spirit. I linked my arm through his and said, “Even if no one else wants to do this, I do.” Then I tore out a sheet of paper and wrote, “I want a
miracle!” and posted it on the bulletin board.

**Surrendering myself unconditionally to God**

Saturday night a birthday party was planned for a few of our members, but there was a listlessness in the group. I wandered into the upstairs chapel...not to pray but to tell any students there to come down to the party. Yet, when I entered and knelt in the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, I literally trembled with a sense of awe before His majesty. I knew in an overwhelming way that He is the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords. I thought, “You had better get out of here quick before something happens to you.” But overriding my fear was a much greater desire to surrender myself unconditionally to God.

I prayed, “Father, I give my life to you. Whatever you ask of me, I accept. And if it means suffering, I accept that too. Just teach me to follow Jesus and to love as He loves.” In the next moment, I found myself prostrate, flat on my face, and flooded with an experience of the merciful love of God...a love that is totally undeserved, yet lavishly given. Yes, it’s true what St. Paul writes, “The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.” My shoes came off in the process. I was indeed on holy ground. I felt as if I wanted to die and be with God. The prayer of St. Augustine captures my experience: “O Lord, you have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.” As much as I wanted to bask in His presence, I knew that if I, who am no one special, could experience the love of God in this way, that anyone across the face of the earth could do so.

I ran down to tell our chaplain what had happened and he said that David Mangan had been in the chapel before me and had encountered God’s presence in the same way. Two girls told me my face was glowing and wanted to know what had happened. I wasn’t familiar enough with the Scripture to know that passage in 2 Corinthians where it describes Moses whose face shone when he returned from the mountain. St. Paul writes: “All of us, with unveiled faces, beholding the beauty of the Lord are being transformed from one degree of glory to another.” I led these two students into the chapel and began to pray, “Lord, whatever you just did for me, do it for them!” That was probably the shortest Life in the Spirit Seminar on record!

**Several retreatants were sovereignly baptized in the Holy Spirit**

Within the next hour God sovereignly drew many of the students into the chapel. Some were laughing, others crying. Some prayed in tongues, others (like me) felt a burning sensation coursing through their hands. One of the professors walked in and exclaimed, “What is the Bishop going to say when he hears that all these kids have been baptized in the Holy Spirit!” Yes, there was a birthday party that night, God had planned it in the Upper Room Chapel. It was the birth of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal!

When we returned to campus, we created quite a stir. One friend told me, “Patti, if I didn’t know you better, I would say you were drunk!” Like the Apostles after Pentecost, we couldn’t help but speak of the things we had seen and heard. We literally stumbled into charismatic gifts like prophecy, discernment of spirits, and healing. One of our professors witnessed to his friends at Notre Dame and Michigan State University in these words: “I no longer have to believe in Pentecost; I have seen it!” In the past 40 years the grace of this new Pentecost has spread from a handful of students on the Duquesne Weekend to millions of Catholics around the world. Why? Because God is determined to send forth His Spirit to renew the face of the earth!

**Mary was in the upper room at Pentecost**

One final word: In his foreword to my book, *As By a New Pentecost*, Cardinal Suenens wrote that “Jesus Christ continues to be born mystically of the Holy Spirit and of Mary,” and that we should never separate what God has joined together. If we in the Renewal want to proclaim Jesus to the world, we need the Holy Spirit and we need Mary, the Mother. Just as Mary was in the Upper Room at Pentecost, she is with us whenever we return to the Upper Room. If only we would welcome her as Mother as did the beloved disciple John, she will teach us: how to surrender to the Father’s will, how to be faithful to Jesus unto the Cross, how to pray with a
humble, pure and docile heart for more of the Holy Spirit, how to be one family. She is the Spouse of the Holy Spirit and she knows better than anyone else how to yield to Him. And so, echoing Mary’s Magnificat, I want to proclaim that, “God who is mighty has done great things for us, and holy is His name!” AMEN!


See also > Dave Mangan's personal account of the Duquesne Weekend Retreat

Sources on early history and development of Catholic Charismatic Renewal:


2. *Before Duquesne: Sources of the Renewal*, by Jim Manney: This is a fuller description of the antecedents of the charismatic renewal, written soon after the movement began (1973) and written by someone who knew the chief events and leaders. From New Covenant Magazine, February 1973.

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Return to Table of Contents or Archives • (c) copyright 2017 The Sword of the Spirit
Perspective: Ecumenism and Charismatic Renewal

by Steve Clark

Note: This article was part of a regular Perspective column series for New Covenant Magazine, a monthly publication which served the Catholic charismatic renewal for many years. While the article is addressed to Catholic charismatics in 1979, its message is still very relevant and timely for Christians today.

Ecumenism has become a matter of renewed interest in the Catholic charismatic renewal. Cardinal Leo Joseph Suenens last year made ecumenism the subject of a second Malines Document, Ecumenism and Charismatic Renewal: Theological and Pastoral Orientations. [An excerpt from this document appears on pages 4-8.] This document provides valuable direction for the Catholic charismatic renewal in its ecumenical activities. At the same time Fr. Kilian McDonnell, an ecumenist and theologian long associated with the movement, published The Charismatic Renewal and Ecumenism, an important theological study of the subject.

Also, last Pentecost Sunday 55,000 Catholic and Protestant charismatics participated in an East Rutherford, New Jersey, rally which was sponsored by Catholic and Protestant leaders of the renewal. Among the church leaders attending were Cardinal Terence Cooke of New York and Archbishop Peter Leo Gerety of Newark. The rally not only demonstrated the great desire of many Christians for unity, but showed that this desire is closely linked with a strong concern to reach out to others with the gospel message.

These events illustrate the value placed on ecumenism in the charismatic renewal. As Cardinal Suenens in his new book, and Archbishop Gerety in his talk at the Pentecost rally, make clear, Catholic leaders are encouraging the church to respond to the Holy Spirit’s call to work for unity among Christians. Both men indicated that the charismatic renewal has something special to contribute as we respond to this call to be one.
This concern for ecumenism is an integral part of our commitment to the renewal of the church. As we have long recognized, the Lord is at work through the charismatic renewal not simply in individual lives but in the corporate life of the church. The Second Vatican Council states clearly that genuine renewal of the Catholic Church in the 20th century must address itself to the question of Christian unity.

Some Catholics today are confused on this point. For example, a charismatic publication recently suggested that many leaders of the renewal are interested in ecumenism rather than church renewal. It is a mistake to place these concerns in opposition. Ecumenism is part of church renewal. In fact, those working for the full range of church renewal sooner or later must become concerned with ecumenism if they are to be authentically Catholic.

Some have thought it incompatible for many groups in the charismatic movement to be active in parish renewal and ecumenism at the same time. This would be true if being active in both were such a strain on a group’s resources that it could do neither well. Yet, as Cardinal Suenens points out in his document: “Homogeneous Catholic prayer groups should operate on the principle that to be Catholic is to be ecumenical, in accordance with the intention of Vatican Council II: all Catholics should exhibit an ecumenical concern and openness.”

In recent discussion on ecumenism, an important distinction has been emphasized between groups and activities that have a nondenominational orientation and those that are explicitly ecumenical. The nondenominational approach is to concentrate only on what unites us, as if there were no important differences between some of our Christian beliefs. According to this view we should not emphasize our Catholicism or Lutheranism or evangelicalism, but simply recognize one another as Christians. While Catholics can, as Cardinal Suenens indicates, participate in nondenominational events as long as those events do not promote religious indifferentism, it is not ideal for the nondenominational approach to predominate.

By contrast, the ecumenical approach recognizes and deals directly with the fact that we do belong to distinct churches and that there are some important beliefs and practices we do not hold in common. Catholics who are authentically Catholic do not have to hide their denomination identity; rather, they share with other Christians as Catholics.

In other words, ecumenism is based both on the things that unite and the things that divide. To be sure, what unites us—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is more important than our divisions. Yet, if we are to be faithful to Christ, each of us has to be faithful to his convictions where they diverge from those of our fellow Christians. We need to be loyal to our churches and the relationships we have there.

It is sometimes not seen clearly enough, however, that the ecumenical approach works out differently depending on the reason why a denominationally-mixed group is together. Cardinal Suenens makes some helpful distinctions in this regard. He points out that interdenominational groups of Christians can engage in ecumenical action of two major kinds: “activities with a ‘church unity’ focus” and “activities with a stress on ‘common mission and service.’” “Those who are involved in the first kind of ecumenical action “focus on their divisions and differences in order to overcome them.”

The second form of action is directed to a common goal of service or renewal, such as evangelism, social action, spiritual renewal, or catechesis. “Here the participants come together primarily as brothers and sisters in the Lord. . . but with freedom to be genuinely what they are in an ecumenically sensitive way.” They need to understand their denominational differences and support each person in his church relationship. The various activities they undertake should also be integrated with the life of their respective churches. Their focus, however, is not upon their differences, but upon their common goal of service and what allows them to work
Questions of identity are important. Part of having an ecumenical approach is being true to our identities and maintaining them. While we always knew this from the early days of the charismatic renewal, we had difficulty in learning how to safeguard our church identities effectively.

Some of us wanted to have the renewal be primarily an ecumenical movement for church renewal, with some aids for Catholics and members of other denominations. Others insisted that we had to start with a specifically Catholic movement out of which ecumenical activities and groupings could grow. They said that in order for Catholics to become charismatic, the movement needed to support their Catholic identity. The new elements coming from their participation in the charismatic renewal could then be integrated into Catholic tradition and church life. I have come to see that this latter group was in large part right. Catholics need to have a place where they can take in the new dimension as Catholics.

To apply this more broadly, what good would it do in terms of promoting church unity for Christians seeking unity to lose their denominational identities and thus lose meaningful contact with their churches? They would no longer be able to form unifying bridges among the churches. Many movements for unity which have not taken a genuinely ecumenical approach have simply resulted in new religious groupings, hence complicating the problem of disunity. It is only when faithful Catholics, Presbyterians, Baptists, and others can come together as what they are, and be united on that basis, that they can foster real unity among Christians. The ecumenical developments in the Catholic charismatic renewal this past year likewise focused attention on the significance of the charismatic renewal for what could be called grass-roots ecumenism.

A document on local ecumenism released by the Vatican in July 1975 describes grass-roots ecumenical action in the following way: “A growing number of Christians in certain parts of the world seem to prefer to engage in local action which is ecumenical by means of informal groups of a spontaneous kind. These people are often motivated by renewed appreciation of the word of Christ: ‘... may they be one in us,... so that the world may believe it was you who sent me’ (John 17:21)...”

“It is the kind of activity which springs up in a com—mon environment or in a common social condition. Or it may arise in response to a common task or need. The result is a large number of highly diverse groups: action groups, prayer groups, community-building groups, reflection and dialogue groups, and evangelizing groups.

“A number of groups are made up of Christians who are rediscovering central Christian truths out of their confrontation with a surrounding world which appears de-Christianized and depersonalized.”

It once could be almost taken for granted that most Catholics in the United States spent the bulk of their time—in school, in the neighborhood or social group, often even at work—with other Catholics. But today virtually the opposite is true: Catholics are spending increasingly less time in all-Catholic groups or situations. Indeed, many of their most frequent everyday contacts are with non-Christians. So when many Catholics experience the need to join together with committed Christians in their daily lives, they reach out to those who share a similar need for fellowship and support in the midst of a de-Christianized and depersonalized society. And these Christians are just as likely to be Reformed, Lutheran, or Methodist as they are to be Catholic. As the Vatican text on local ecumenism goes on to point out, this grass-roots thrust should be both encouraged and linked properly to the churches.

We should gratefully recognize the significance of the ecumenical action taking place among charismatics in some sections of the world, most notably in the United States, the British Commonwealth countries, and a num—ber of other countries. Events like the Pentecost rally and the 1977 Kansas City conference show the vitality of grass-roots ecumenism in the renewal. At a time when many have felt the ecumenical movement has
been losing strength, we see that a hunger for greater unity still exists among thousands of Christians.

Even though the charismatic renewal as a whole is not entered primarily on matters of church unity, it does seem to be in a position to make a significant contribution to the spirituality and vitality of the ecumenical impulse in the churches.

Great effort has been expended by the churches in dialogues and official discussions aimed at overcoming differences and reaching greater unity and communion. Suppose those dialogues succeeded completely on the official level in the next five years. Suppose agreements satisfactory to all the competent church authorities were reached. Would we then be close to real unity among the Christian people? Not without a concrete growth in brotherliness and committed relationships among Christians at all levels of the church. The whole church has to cooperate with the efforts of its leaders in order for the movement toward church unity to process.

At the moment few groups seem able to make the kind of contribution in this area that is being made by the charismatic renewal. While ecumenism can rarely be the first priority for us, we do seem to be experiencing a movement of the Spirit, a call of the Lord, to make e contribution that we, as a renewal, can make to the unity of God’s people.

See related article > Orthodox, Protestants, Roman Catholics: What Basis for Cooperation? by Steve Clark

[This article was first published in New Covenant Magazine, July 1997. Used with permission.]

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Steve Clark has been a founding leader, author, and teacher for the charismatic renewal since its inception in 1976. He has authored a number of books, including Baptized in the Spirit and Spiritual Gifts, Finding New Life in the Spirit, Growing in Faith, and Knowing God’s Will, Building Christian Communities, Man and Woman in Christ. Steve is past president of the Sword of the Spirit, an international ecumenical association of charismatic covenant communities worldwide. He is the founder of the Servants of the Word, an ecumenical international missionary brotherhood of men living single for the Lord.
Rediscovering the Vitality of Christian Roots through 500 Years of Reformation Spirituality

This year, 2017, presents a unique opportunity for Christians to participate in an Ecumenical Commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation. A number of Churches are holding ecumenical services for common prayer for renewal and reconciliation and a common witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ who is the center of their common faith, and a commitment to continue the journey to unity.

This issue (February/March) and the next one (April/May) will present some of the distinguishing features of reformation spirituality and the growth of renewal movements over the course of the past five centuries.

Five key themes:

1. Being rooted and nourished in the Word of God (centrality of Scripture in reformation spirituality)
2. Increasing in faith and abounding in the grace of Jesus Christ (biblical rediscovery of the gift of God)
3. Excelling in Love and Holiness (holiness movement and impact of Wesley, and others)
5. Striving for Unity in Common Witness of the Gospel, Sharing Common Life and Mission Together as Brothers and Sisters in Christ (ecumenical movement and Sword of the Spirit network of ecumenical communities)

Links to articles on Reformation Spirituality

- An Introduction to the Age of the Reformation, by Timothy George
- Roots that Refresh: The Vitality of Reformation Spirituality, by Alister McGrath
- Reading Scripture with the Early Reformers
- Your Word is Truth: Statement of Evangelicals and Catholics Together
An Introduction to the Age of the Reformation: A Time of Transition and Revolutionary Change

by Dr. Timothy George

A "new world" in the making
The age of the Reformation was a time of transition, vitality and change that gave us the compass, the printing press, the telescope, gunpowder, the first map of the New World, the revival of the visual arts and letters (Michelangelo and Shakespeare), widespread inflation, the rise of the modern nation-state, wars of religion - and a word to describe all of this, revolution, from Nikolaus Copernicus's famous work, *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (1543).

A return to Scripture and the historic faith of the early church
The Protestant Reformation was a revolution in the original scientific sense of that word: the return of a body in orbit to its original position. It was never the desire of Luther to start a new church from scratch. He and the other reformers who followed in his tracks wanted to re-form the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church on the basis of the Word of God and to do so by returning to the historic faith of the early church as they found it set forth in the pure teachings of the Scriptures.

A revolution in religious life
This led to a fundamental reorientation in Christian theology. Luther's rediscovery of justification by faith alone, Zwingli's insistence on the clarity and certainty of the Bible, Calvin's emphasis on the glory and sovereignty of God and the Anabaptist quest for a true visible church all found expression in numerous new confessions, catechisms, commentaries, liturgies, hymns, martyrologies and church orders.

Like a great earthquake that continues to generate seismic aftereffects long after the first shock is over, the Reformation set in motion a revolution in religious life the effects of which are still being felt half a millennium later.

Excerpted from *Reading Scripture with the Reformers*, by (c) Timothy George, 2011.

Dr. Timothy George (Th.D., Harvard University) is a renowned Reformation historian and author of *Theology of the Reformers*, as well as many other theological and historical works. He is the founding dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama, USA. He is a member of the advisory council for *First Things*. He is the general editor of the *Reformation Commentary on Scripture* series from InterVarsity Academic.
Author, professor, and well-known Reformation church historian, Timothy George, has provided the church with an excellent introduction to Reformation-era principles of biblical interpretation, preaching, and commentary writing... George's volume is especially helpful in analyzing the way in which the Reformers read and interpreted Scripture and why their approach is of continuing benefit to the spiritual life of the contemporary church."

- review by James M. Garretson

G.R. Elton, an esteemed historian of an earlier generation, once wrote that "if there is a single thread running through the whole story of the Reformation, it is the explosive and renovating and often disintegrating effect of the Bible."

This book is the story, or at least part of the story, of how the Bible came to have a central role in the sixteenth-century movement for religious reform that we call the Protestant Reformation.

There had been many Bible-based reform movements throughout the history of the church, beginning with monasticism, in which the Scriptures had a prominent place in the daily liturgy of the hours. Closer to the Reformation, the Bible had also been championed by late medieval movements of dissent—the Lollards in England, the Hussites in Bohemia and the Waldensians spreading from the Italian Alps to every corner of Europe. There were the Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life who copied, read and taught the Bible in their many communities throughout Germany and the Low Countries. The old myth that there was complete ignorance of the Bible between the death of Augustine and the birth of Luther has long been exploded.

- quote from the Preface
Light is a symbol of hope. In the late summer of 1914, it seemed to many Europeans that this light was about to be extinguished as its greatest nations stood poised on the brink of war. Viscount Grey, then British Foreign Secretary, captured this somber mood as he stood looking out of his windows upon London’s Whitehall on 3 August 1914, and reflected upon the implications of that summer’s grim events. The lamps are going out all over Europe. We shall not see them lit again in our lifetime. ‘A light flickering, finally to go out, symbolized the end of an era of hope as the shadows lengthened before the darkness.

Precisely the opposite sentiment prevailed four hundred years earlier. In the year 1535, after many years of struggle for independence, the city of Geneva finally gained its freedom from the powerful Duchy of Savoy. The newly independent city decided to make a break with both the political and the religious past, and align itself with a major new religious force now sweeping through Europe - the Reformation. During the following year, John Calvin would arrive to give Genevan Evangelicalism a much-needed sense of direction and purpose. As early as 1535, however, the city council decided to signal its decision to align itself with the forces of the future. It chose a motto for the city which would henceforth resonate throughout history: post tenebras lux - after the shadows, light! A new era of hope seemed to have dawned.

Geneva’s decision to adopt the Reformation followed a pattern set by the majority of the great cities of northern Europe. Yet it was more than a new political order that was dawning in the cities of Europe at this time; a new Christian spirituality was being created and developed, faithful to Scripture and deeply rooted in the Christian tradition on the one hand, yet capable of meeting the needs and opportunities of the modern age and its cities on the other. It is this spirituality which is the subject of the present book.

To study the spirituality of the Reformation is not to luxuriate in romanticism. It is not to look back in nostalgia, like some old-timer hankering after the good old days when everything was better than it is now. It is not like the sentimental scrutiny of sepia-tinted photographs, nor the wistful recollection of days of lost innocence, a longing for a bygone period and its security. Rather, it is a hard-headed examination of past
events, individuals and ideas, with a view to exploiting their present potential. It is to reach into our Christian past, and recover some of its riches. It is a critical awareness that not everything in the Christian present is quite what it could be, linked with a willingness to consider alternative possibilities - an attitude with a distinguished history of use within the Christian tradition. The Reformation witnessed the birth of classic Evangelical spirituality; the modern period needs to know about and benefit from it.

A Spirituality for the Modern Age

Historians find it convenient to give names to periods of history. The Reformation is generally agreed to stand at the dawn of the ‘early modern period’. Time and time again, the Reformation marks the junction of the medieval and modern eras. It represents a parting of the ways - the dying world of the Middle Ages, and the emerging world of modernity. Many religious, social, political and economic developments which we take for granted in the modern world owe their origins to the European Reformation. Equally, of course, there are many important developments which took place much later than the sixteenth century, tracing their origins to the Enlightenment or the French Revolution. The Reformation does not anticipate each and every aspect of modern life.

Nevertheless, there are important and vital points at which the Reformation makes contact with our modern situation. Time after time, the reformers are seen to link in with concerns, anxieties and aspirations which we can recognize as being our own. At point after point, there is a surprisingly contemporary feel to the writings of the period. Historically, this is precisely what we should expect. The Reformation had to develop forms of Christian thought and action capable of relating to the new age which dawned with the collapse of the Middle Ages. Medieval forms of spirituality were, in general, simply not capable of relating to the new needs and concerns of the modern world. They had to be replaced. The Reformation may be regarded as a necessary, and perhaps an overdue, attempt to relate the gospel to the new world of the cities, in which the laity were increasingly playing a dominant role.

In that seminal aspects of modern western society trace their origins to Europe at this time, it is to be expected that Reformation spirituality - developed with the needs of this new social order in mind - should prove capable of relating directly to our own day and age. Modern western society may have moved on far from its origins in sixteenth-century Europe - but time after time, the connections are seen to remain. To study Reformation spirituality is to study forms of spirituality which still connect up with the social, personal and existential concerns of modern western humanity. That they do not link up with every aspect of modern life is only to be expected; history has, after all, moved on. But vital connections remain, awaiting discovery and use by the believers of today.

Caricatures die hard, and perhaps one of the most influential caricatures of Christian history lies in the nineteenth-century suggestion that the Reformation and its inheritance were devoid of any spirituality. The very phrase ‘Reformation spirituality’ was alleged to be an oxymoron, a blatant self-contradiction. It is a pleasure to be able to write this book in the knowledge that this crude stereotype is in what one hopes to be irreversible decline. Recent scholarship has revealed many of the leading figures of the Reformation as individuals with a passionate concern for the pastoral, spiritual and social well-being of their people - men who were concerned to ground their theologies firmly in the usually humdrum, yet occasionally terrifying, realities of everyday life. Their search for an authentically Christian spirituality was grounded in their belief that true knowledge of God was transformative, capable of deeply changing the mental, experiential and social worlds of those who grasped it. In undertaking that same quest for a renewed and authentic Christian spirituality today, we could do far worse than engage in dialogue with such figures as Luther and Calvin.

Furthermore, recent scholarship has largely discarded the obsolete polemics of earlier periods. For example, Roman Catholic writers are increasingly viewing the reformers as writers and preachers concerned with the
creative restatement and application of the Christian faith in a period of exceptional difficulty and instability. There is growing sympathy for the suggestion that it was not so much the reformers, but rather political and social currents in the late Renaissance, which split the medieval church asunder, destroying its unity. The rise of nationalism and increasing trends towards political absolutism in Europe are among the more obvious currents of this type. Indeed, it is possible to argue that the Reformation provided a vital check upon the scope of such developments, by preventing the secularization of the church being extended to the secularization of the Christian faith itself.

There is now an increasing willingness on all sides to regard the reformers as individuals who were passionately and responsibly committed to the well-being of the church; as people who were obliged to break with the church of their day not because their ideas were heretical, but on account of the obstinacy of the late medieval church. The old wineskins could not cope with this potent new wine. With the welcome benefit of hindsight, we are increasingly viewing the reformers as individuals who developed new ideas and reclaimed old ideas which the church desperately needed to hear and act upon if it was to meet the new challenges and opportunities of the period. That the Reformation ended up dividing the Christian church is a fact of history; it is equally a fact of history that the reformers did not intend this to take place, and took no pleasure in seeing it happen. One of the greatest tragedies of the sixteenth century is that individuals and groups, possessed of a vision to renew and revitalize the church from within, were forced out of that church largely, it seems, by sheer intransigence and a lack of vision on the part of its leaders. The distinguished Luther scholar Heinrich Bornkamm has brilliantly described the dilemma in which Luther found himself, as his pleas for renewal of the church seemed to fall on deaf ears:

Luther was excluded from his church because of his criticism of the theology and the ecclesiastical conditions of his time. It was his church from which he was excluded, for it was for no other church that he uttered his fervent pleadings and prayers, and his painful laments and angry indictments. Everything he did and said and wrote was not against it, but for it, for its sake, not in order to establish a new church. It was because his church, the Roman church of that time, excluded him that an inner reform, which had often taken place before, became something new, outside of the existing church.

The Reformation, which was primarily conceived as a renewal of the church from within, thus ended up becoming something significantly different.

Recognition of this point goes some way towards explaining why there is currently renewed interest in and sympathy towards Evangelical spirituality within the modern Roman Catholic church. To make use of this classical Evangelical spirituality does not necessarily entail ceasing to be a Roman Catholic. The early sixteenth century bears witness to countless individuals within the Catholic church in Italy, Spain and France who adopted Evangelical spiritualities, yet remained within the Catholic church - often in very senior positions. Polarisation of the situation made it impossible to be both a Catholic and an Evangelical, forcing those unfortunate Catholic Evangelicals to make some very difficult decisions. But those days are firmly behind us. There is every indication that Evangelicalism is becoming increasingly acceptable and influential within the modern Roman Catholic church, recognized as a legitimate, workable and exciting option for the modern church. This need not be seen as an abandonment of Catholicism; rather, it should be seen as an overdue reclaiming of a classic form of Christian spirituality which the political atmosphere of the sixteenth century made a practical impossibility for Catholics. Evangelical spirituality is not divisive; it only became so on account of the power politics of a bygone age.

As his writings of the period 1513-19 make abundantly clear, Luther had no intention of founding a separate church. He had no thought of founding ‘Lutheranism’ as a body apart from the universal body of Christ. His
aspiration was to recall the one church, of which he was a member, to renew its Christian vision and vocation from within. The idea of anyone calling themselves ‘Lutheran’ was anathema to him.

I haven’t been crucified for anyone! . . . How can I - poor, wretched corpse that I am - come to allow people to call the children of Christ by a name derived from my worthless name? No! No! No! My dear friends, let us call ourselves Christians, after the one whose teachings we hold fast to.

Reformation spirituality is nothing other than Christian spirituality, forged into new forms appropriate for the needs of the new age then dawning in western culture.

This reforging was urgently needed, if Christianity was to continue as a living option in modern Europe. During the Middle Ages, it had become as increasingly isolated from ordinary people as it had become increasingly firmly wedded to the fading medieval world. Ernst Curtius is one of the many scholars who have emphasised that it is a conveniently neglected matter of historical fact that much of what we refer to as ‘medieval Christianity’ or ‘medieval spirituality’ is actually virtually totally monastic in its character and origins. Sadly, historical realism dictates that we recognize that these medieval forms of spirituality had a strictly limited impact outside the monasteries – even upon the clergy. The everyday life of the laity was often left virtually totally untouched by the spiritual riches being developed behind monastic walls. Monastic spirituality was fashioned with the monastic situation in mind, envisaging a lifestyle and outlook quite alien to lay people. With the Reformation, the formative centers of spirituality gradually shifted from the monasteries to the market place, as the great cities of Europe became the cradle and crucible of new ways of Christian thinking and acting. Spirituality was not merely brought to the people; new forms of the spiritual life were created, with their needs and situations firmly in view.

Mirrored in this shift may be seen the political, social, economic and religious changes which lie at the heart of the formation of modern western culture. From its outset, Reformation spirituality represented ideas with a future, possessing a high coefficient of relevance to the emerging needs of modern western society. The waning of the Middle Ages inevitably entailed a diminishing of the potential of medieval forms of spirituality, which were generally linked with specifically medieval ideas and institutions. With the birth of the new era in human history which historians now designate the ‘early modern period’, it was essential that new ways of conceiving and acting out the Christian life should develop, unless Christianity were to be seen as moribund, linked to the dying world of the Middle Ages. The old religion was simply not capable of coping with the unprecedented pressures and challenges of the new age.

The Reformation represented a sustained attempt to relate the Christian faith to the conditions and lifestyles of this new era. The spirituality of the Reformation was so deeply rooted in the Christian tradition that it can justly be described as ‘classic’ - yet it was sufficiently responsive to the new situations then developing that it can equally be described as ‘modern’. Mingling the classic and the modern, the Reformation is thus well placed to address the needs of our own day and age, where a consciousness of modernity is often tempered with an awareness of the need for stability and continuity with the past - a point which merits consideration in more detail.

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- Reading Scripture with the Early Reformers
- Your Word is Truth: Statement of Evangelicals and Catholics Together

more topics come in the April/May issue

Alister E. McGrath, born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, holds the Chair in Theology, Ministry and Education at King’s College London. He was previously Professor of Historical Theology at Oxford University and Director of the Oxford Center for Christian Apologetics.

Originally a student of science, in 1977 McGrath was awarded a PhD in Biochemistry from Oxford University for his work on molecular biophysics. Following his conversion from atheism to Christianity, he studied divinity at St. John's College at Cambridge (1978-80). It was during this time that he studied for ordination in the Church of England. McGrath was elected University Research Lecturer in Theology at Oxford University in 1993, and also served as research professor of theology at Regent College, Vancouver, from 1993-9. He earned an Oxford Doctorate of Divinity in 2001 for his research on historical and systematic theology.

McGrath has written many books on the interaction of science and faith and is the producer of the 'Scientific Theology' project, encouraging a dialogue between the natural sciences and Christian theology. McGrath is a strong critic of Richard Dawkins, Oxford biology professor and one of the most outspoken atheists. He has addressed Dawkins' criticism of religion in several of his books, most notably in Dawkins Delusion published in 2007 by SPCK and IVP.

The Vitality of Reformation Spirituality

Rooted and Nourished in the Living Word of God

“We wish to be men and women who are formed in all things by the word of God”

prepared by Don Schwager

Passages for reflection / meditation:

- Colossians 3:16 *Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly. John 1:14, 16: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full and grace and truth. And from his fullness we have all received grace upon grace.*
- Romans 15:4: *For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.*
- Luke 24:32: *They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?"
- Luke 24:44-45: *44 Then he said to them, "These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures.*

Reading Scripture with the Reformers,
by Timothy George

The reformers of the sixteenth century shared with ancient Christian writers and the medieval scholastics who came before them a high regard for the inspiration and authority of the Bible. Already in the New Testament the writings of the Hebrew Bible, which Christians would later come to know as the Old Testament, are regarded as divinely inspired, God-breathed (2 Tim 3:16). On more than one occasion, Paul identified the Scripture with God's own speaking (see Gal 3:8; Rom 9:17; 10:11). It is God who speaks in the Scripture, and for this reason it has an unassailable validity for the
people of God. What J. N. D. Kelly wrote about the early church is equally true for biblical exegetes in the medieval and Reformation eras: "It goes without saying that the fathers envisaged the whole of the Bible as inspired."

There were many debates about the Bible in the sixteenth century: Should it be translated and, if so, by whom and into which languages? What is the extent of the canon? How can one gauge the true sense and right interpretation of Scripture? How was the Bible to be used in the preaching and worship of the church? What is the relative authority of Scripture and church tradition? These and other questions about the Bible were debated not only between Catholics and Protestants but also among scholars and theologians within these two traditions. Such disputes should not be minimized, for some of them proved to be church-dividing. But it is also important to recognize that the exegetical debates of the sixteenth century were carried out within a common recognition of the Scriptures as divinely given. Referring to the books of the Old and New Testaments as "sacred and canonical," the First Vatican Council (1869-1870), looking perhaps backward more than forward, summarized the Catholic view of the Bible in words that would have been warmly embraced by both Protestant and Catholic reformers in the sixteenth century:

These books are held by the Church as sacred and canonical, not as having been composed by merely human labour and afterwards approved by her authority, nor merely because they contain revelation without error, but because, written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their author.'

“It was a core conviction of the Reformation that the careful study and meditative listening to the Scriptures, what the monks called lectio divina, could yield a life-changing result. For the reformers the Bible was a treasure trove of divine wisdom to be heard, read, marked, learned and inwardly digested, as the Book of Common Prayer's collect for the second Sunday in Advent puts it, to the end that "we may embrace, and ever holdfast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou has given us in our Savior Jesus Christ."

In his commentary on Hebrews 4:12, "The Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword," Calvin declared, "Whenever the Lord accosts us by his Word, he is dealing seriously with us to affect all our inner senses. There is, therefore, no part of our soul which should not be influenced." The study of the Bible was meant to be transformative at the most basic level of the human person, coram deo. It was meant to lead to communion with God.”

Quotes from Martin Luther on The Word of God

“In the end, only the Holy Spirit from heaven above can create listeners and pupils who accept this doctrine and believe that the Word is God, that God’s Son is the Word, and that the Word became flesh” (22.8). The Word of God that forms the content of faith comes to the individual from outside, proclaimed by another or read in Scripture; but conviction of the truth of this “external Word” comes from the inward working of the Holy Spirit” (23.94; 38.87; 40.146).¹⁸

“What means does [the Holy Spirit] use and what skill does he employ thus to change the heart and make it new? He employs the proclamation and preaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . But in addition to what is thus preached, something else is needed; for even though I hear the preaching, I do not at once believe. Therefore, God adds the Holy Spirit, who impresses this preaching upon the heart, so that it abides there and lives.” (CS 2.1.278- 79)

“The Word comes first, and with the Word the Spirit breathes upon my heart so that I believe. Then I feel that I have become a different person and I recognize that the Holy Spirit is there.” (54.63)

“The Word I receive through the intellect, but to assent to that Word is the work of the Holy Spirit.” (17.230)

“I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and kept me in true faith.”

John Wesley’s Guidelines for Reading Scripture

http://www.swordofthespirit.net/bulwark/february2017p15.htm (2 of 3) [10/02/2017 15:43:42]
Our gracious and loving God, we thank you that you have been touching our lives: illuminating us; opening us at deep levels of our being; stretching us at points of our narrowness; confronting us where we are distorted; challenging us to become the word you speak us forth to be; but in every way working in it all for your good purposes in our lives. As we begin to consider ways of coming to scripture that will enable it to become your living Word in our lives, help us, God, to remain open to the guidance of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

This is the way to understand the things of God: “Meditate thereon day and night;” so shall you attain the best knowledge, even to “know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent”. And this knowledge will lead you “to love Him, because He hath first loved us;” yea, “to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength”... And in consequence of this, while you joyfully experience all the holy tempers described in this book [being], you will likewise be outwardly “holy as He that hath called you is holy, in all manner of conversation” [doing that flows from being].

Some questions for reflection / meditation:

- Am I faithful and disciplined in the daily practice of Scripture meditation and the regular study of Scripture? Review how it has worked for you and where you might need to improve or find help and encouragement.
- Do I ask the Lord to “open the Scriptures” for me so that I might hear and understand what the Lord wishes to show me through his word?
- Do I listen / read attentively and free myself of idle thoughts and distractions?
- Do I stir up the gift of the Spirit so that I might grow in my love for God’s word and find time to return to his word throughout the day and evening?

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The Vitality of Reformation Spirituality

Your Word Is Truth
A Statement by Evangelicals and Catholics Together
August 2002

In the spring of 1994, a group of Roman Catholics and evangelical Protestants issued a much-discussed statement, “Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium” (FT, May 1994). That statement, commonly referred to as “ECT,” noted a growing “convergence and cooperation” between Evangelicals and Catholics in many public tasks, and affirmed agreement in basic articles of Christian faith while also underscoring the continuing existence of important differences. The signers promised to engage those differences in continuing conversations, and this has been done in meetings of noted theologians convened by Mr. Charles Colson and Father Richard John Neuhaus. At a meeting in the fall of 1996, it was determined that further progress depended upon firm agreement on the meaning of salvation, and especially the doctrine of justification. After much discussion, study, and prayer over the course of a year, the statement “The Gift of Salvation” was agreed to at a meeting in New York City in October 1997, and published in the January 1998 issue of this journal. The next question taken up by ECT participants was the relationship between Scripture and tradition. The following statement, “Your Word Is Truth,” is the product of intense and extended deliberation and was first published this summer by Eerdmans in a book by the same title. The participants express the hope that those responding with critical evaluations of the statement will consult the scholarly papers prepared for their deliberation and to be found in the book. The ECT project continues and is currently studying Roman Catholic and evangelical Protestant understandings of “the communion of saints” (communio sanctorum).”

- The Editors

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ prayed for his disciples: “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.... I
do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (John 17:17,20-21).

We thank God for the years of prayer, study, and conversation in the project known as “Evangelicals and Catholics Together.” Among the many blessings resulting from this cooperative effort, we note especially our common affirmation of the most central truths of Christian faith, including justification by faith, in the 1997 statement, “The Gift of Salvation.” From the beginning of this venture, and at each step along the way, we have insisted that the only unity among Christians that can be pleasing to God is unity in truth. Therefore, we have understood it to be our duty to note, carefully and clearly, matters both of agreement and of disagreement between Evangelicals and Catholics.

Among matters of utmost importance, and involving both agreements and disagreements, is the question traditionally framed as the relationship between Scripture and tradition. As we have together explored this question, we have prayed for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and we believe that prayer has been answered. We respectfully submit the following considerations and conclusions to the ecclesial communities and transdenominational fellowships of which we are part, with the hope that they will be received and examined as possible contributions to our better understanding of one another and our greater unity in Christ’s truth.

From before the foundation of the world, God has desired a people to share forever in His life and love (Ephesians 1:4). To that end, God disclosed Himself and His loving intention by a sequence of revelatory and redemptive acts that involved the uttering of verbal messages and the producing of written records (Hebrews 1:1). He created a world that bears witness to His glory (Psalm 19:1-6), and when humanity sinned against His purpose, He chose Israel to be instructed by word and deed in the ways of covenant fidelity in order to become a light to all the nations (Genesis 12:1-3; Deuteronomy 4:1-8). To this people He promised a Savior, who is Jesus the Christ, the very Word of God who was in the beginning with God, and who is to be recognized and confessed as the Son of God (John 1:1-14). The God of Israel is the One whom Jesus calls Father and teaches us to call Father (John 17:1-5; Matthew 6:6-13). To Jesus’ disciples, and to those who would become disciples through their word, he promised the Spirit to guide them into all truth. Thus the new Israel worshiped, obeyed, and proclaimed the one true God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—in faith-filled anticipation of participating in the divine life forever (Hebrews 12:18-24; John 16:3; Acts 1:8). Already now, God’s promised redemption is fulfilled in the mediatorial ministry of Jesus Christ that is centered in his cross, resurrection, ascension, present reign, and assured return in glory to establish his eternal kingdom (2 Corinthians 1:19-20).

God gives His people full and final knowledge of His plan of salvation through Jesus Christ. “In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days He has spoken to us by a Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world” (Hebrews 1:1-2). The Son sent and sends the Holy Spirit who, bestowing the gift of faith, creates the community of faith for whose unity Jesus prayed. Christ himself is the head and cornerstone of His Church, which is built on the foundation of apostles and prophets. In its understanding, believing, celebrating, living, and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Church is guided by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:19-22).

Both Evangelicals and Catholics affirm the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, as set forth in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, but they define the Church and its attributes in distinctive ways. Evangelicals stress the priority of the gospel over the Church whose primary mission is to herald the good news of God’s salvation in Christ. For Evangelicals, the Church as the one body of Christ extending through space and time includes all the redeemed of all the ages and all on earth in every era who have come to living faith in the body’s living Head. Everyone who is personally united to Christ, having been justified by faith alone through his atoning
Living Bulwark
dead, belongs to his body and by the Spirit is united with every other true believer in Jesus. Evangelicals maintain that the one Church becomes visible on earth in all local congregations that meet to do together the things that, according to Scripture, the Church does.

Catholics hold that the Church is the body of Christ, a sacramental and mystical communion in which Christ is truly and effectually present and through which his justifying and sanctifying grace is mediated. While Christ is the unique mediator of salvation for all humanity, the Church of Jesus Christ “subsists in” and is most fully and rightly ordered in the Catholic Church, meaning the Church governed by the bishops in communion with the Bishop of Rome, the successor of Peter. Although there have been variations through history in the exercise of that governance, and may be further variations in order to accommodate a fuller expression of Christian unity, Catholics believe that Christ has endowed the Church with a permanent apostolic structure and an infallible teaching office that will remain until the Kingdom is fully consummated.

While Catholics and Evangelicals have not been able to reconcile these different views of the Church, with both communities finding serious aberrations in the ecclesial understanding of the other, as individual believers we do recognize in one another, when and where God so permits it, the evident reality of God’s grace expressed by our trust in Jesus himself as Master and divine Savior. All who truly believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are brothers and sisters in the Lord even though they are not in full ecclesial fellowship.

In communion with the body of faithful Christians through the ages, we also affirm together that the entire teaching, worship, ministry, life, and mission of Christ’s Church is to be held accountable to the final authority of Holy Scripture, which, for Evangelicals and Catholics alike, constitutes the word of God in written form (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:21). We agree that the phrase “word of God” refers preeminently to Jesus Christ (John 1:1,14). It is also rightly said that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the word of God, as is the faithful preaching of the gospel (Acts 6:7; 8:4). Then the canon, the listed set of writings making up the Bible, is recognized by the community of faith as the written word of God, possessing final authority for faith and life. On the extent of the canon we do not entirely agree, though the sixty-six books of the Protestant canon are not in dispute. In every form—the gospel, the preaching of the gospel, and the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments—the word of God is in service to Jesus Christ, the Word of God preeminent.

The divinely inspired writings of the New Testament convey the apostolic teaching, which is the authoritative interpretation of God’s revelation in Christ. The early Christian community recognized the authority of the first apostles who planted local churches and urged them to be faithful to the teaching they had received. Still today we possess that apostolic teaching in the New Testament, which, together with the Old Testament of which the New is the authoritative interpretation, is the written word of God. This entire process of the reception and transmission of God’s revelation is the work of the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

Evangelicals and Catholics alike recognize the promised guidance of the Spirit in the elucidation and unfolding of apostolic teaching that took place as historic Christian orthodoxy emerged. This continuing work of the Spirit is evident in, for instance, the formulation of the Apostles’, Nicene, and Athanasian creeds, and in the conciliar resolution of disputes regarding the two natures of Christ and the triune life of God. Such development of doctrine, typically in response to grave error and deviant traditions built upon such error, is to be understood not as an addition to the apostolic teaching contained in Holy Scripture but as Spirit-guided insight into the fullness of that teaching. In this way, the Lord has enabled faithful believers both to counter error and to make explicit what is implicit in the written Word of God.

In the course of that same history, and in the context of crises posed by philosophical and cultural changes as well as manifest ecclesiastical corruptions, the question of how to determine authentic apostolic teaching came into intense dispute. The mainline Reformers of the sixteenth century posited what is called the “formal
principle,” which holds that the Scriptures are (in the words of the 2000 Amsterdam Declaration) “the inspired revelation of God . . . totally true and trustworthy, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice.” The Reformers vigorously protested what they viewed as deviations from biblical teaching, but they never used Scripture to undermine the Trinitarian and Christological consensus of the early Church embodied in the historic creeds that had come down from patristic times. The Reformers stoutly resisted the charge of innovation: they did not seek to found new churches but sought simply to reform the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church on the basis of the word of God.

We who are Evangelicals recognize the need to address the widespread misunderstanding in our community that sola scriptura (Scripture alone) means nuda scriptura (literally, Scripture unclothed; i.e., denuded of and abstracted from its churchly context). The phrase *sola scriptura* refers to the primacy and sufficiency of Scripture as the theological norm—the only infallible rule of faith and practice—over all tradition rather than the mere rejection of tradition itself. The isolation of Scripture study from the believing community of faith (nuda scriptura) disregards the Holy Spirit’s work in guiding the witness of the people of God to scriptural truths, and leaves the interpretation of that truth vulnerable to unfettered subjectivism. At the same time, we insist that all Christians should have open access to the Bible, and should be encouraged to read and study the Scriptures, for in them all that is necessary for salvation is set forth so clearly that the simplest believer, no less than the wisest theologian, may arrive at a sufficient understanding of them.

We who are Catholics must likewise address the widespread misunderstanding in our community that tradition is an addition to Holy Scripture or a parallel and independent source of authoritative teaching. When Catholics say “Scripture and tradition,” they intend to affirm that the lived experience (tradition) of the community of faith through time includes the ministry of faithful interpreters guided by the Holy Spirit in discerning and explicating the revealed truth contained in the written Word of God, namely, Holy Scripture.

Together we affirm that Scripture is the divinely inspired and uniquely authoritative written revelation of God; as such it is normative for the teaching and life of the Church. We also affirm that tradition, rightly understood as the proper reflection of biblical teaching, is the faithful transmission of the truth of the gospel from generation to generation through the power of the Holy Spirit. As Evangelicals and Catholics fully committed to our respective heritages, we affirm together the coinherence of Scripture and tradition: tradition is not a second source of revelation alongside the Bible but must ever be corrected and informed by it, and Scripture itself is not understood in a vacuum apart from the historical existence and life of the community of faith. Faithful believers in every generation live by the memories and hopes of the *actus tradendi* of the Holy Spirit: this is true whenever and wherever the word of God is faithfully translated, sincerely believed, and truly preached.

We recognize that confessing a high doctrine of the nature and place of Scripture is insufficient without a firm commitment to the intense devotional, disciplined, and prayerful engagement with Scripture. We rejoice to note that in our communities, and in joint study involving people from both communities, such engagement is increasingly common. In this engagement with Scripture, Evangelicals and Catholics are learning from one another: Catholics from the Evangelical emphasis on group Bible study and commitment to the majestic and final authority of the written word of God; and Evangelicals from the Catholic emphasis on Scripture in the liturgical and devotional life, informed by the lived experience of Christ’s Church through the ages.

There always have been, and likely will be until our Lord returns in glory, disputes and disagreements about how rightly to discern the teaching of the Word of God in Holy Scripture. We affirm that Scripture is to be read in company with the community of faith past and present. Individual ideas of what the Bible means must be brought to the bar of discussion and assessment by the wider fellowship.

“The church of the living God is the pillar and bulwark of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15). Because Christ’s
Church is the pillar and bulwark of truth, in disputes over conflicting interpretations of the Word of God the Church must be capable of discerning true teaching and setting it forth with clarity. This is necessary both in order to identify and reject heretical deviations from the truth of the gospel and also to provide sound instruction for passing on the faith intact to the rising generation.

Evangelicals and Catholics alike are concerned with these questions—What does the Bible authoritatively teach? And how does Christ’s Church apply this teaching authoritatively today? Catholics believe that this teaching authority is invested in the Magisterium, namely, the Bishop of Rome, who is the successor of Peter, and the bishops in communion with him. Some Evangelicals see the communal office of discerning and teaching the truth in the covenanted congregation of baptized believers, while others see it in a wider synodical or episcopal connection. In either case, however, Evangelicals believe that a true understanding of the Bible is achieved only through the illuminating action of the Holy Spirit. For this reason, all attempts at discernment and teaching must rely on prayerful attentiveness to the guidance of the Spirit in the study of Scripture.

While Catholics agree that the entire community of the faithful is engaged in the discernment of the truth (sensus fidelium), they also believe that Evangelicals have an inadequate appreciation of certain elements of truth that, from the earliest centuries, Christians have understood Christ to have intended for his Church; in particular, the Petrine and other apostolic ministries. While Evangelicals greatly respect the way in which the Catholic Church has defended many historic Christian teachings against relativizing and secularizing trends, and recognize the role of the present pontiff in that important task today, they believe that some aspects of Catholic doctrine are not biblically warranted, and they do not accept any claims of infallibility made for the magisterial teachings of popes or church councils.

With specific reference to the subject of the present statement, we are not agreed on the exercise of teaching authority in the life of Christ’s Church. To Evangelicals it appears that, in practice if not in theory, the Catholic understanding of Magisterium, including infallibility, results in the Roman Catholic Church standing in judgment over Scripture, instead of vice versa. Catholics, in turn, teach that the Magisterium exercised by the successors of the apostles—which they believe is intended by Christ, is guided by the Holy Spirit, and is in clear continuity with the orthodox tradition—enables the Church to explicate the truth of Holy Scripture obediently and accurately. We both recognize that judgments must be made in the life of Christ’s Church as to what is and what is not scriptural truth. We are not agreed on how such judgments are to be made, nor can either group accept all the decisions that have resulted from what they regard as a flawed way of deciding.

Among the Catholic teachings that Evangelicals believe are not biblically warranted are the eucharistic sacrifice and transubstantiation of the elements, the doctrine of purgatory, the immaculate conception and bodily assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the claimed authority of the Magisterium, including papal infallibility. Catholics, on the other hand, believe that Evangelicals are deficient in their understanding of, for instance, apostolically ordered ministry, the number and nature of the sacraments, the company and intercession of the saints, the Spirit-guided development of doctrine, and the continuing ministry of the Petrine office in the life of the Church. On these and other questions of great importance, we are not agreed. Nor do we agree on how we view our differences. Catholics view Evangelicalism as an ecclesially deficient community that needs to be strengthened by the full complement of gifts that they believe Christ intends for his Church. Evangelicals see Catholicism as centering upon an idea of the Church that clouds the New Testament gospel, and so needs to be brought into greater conformity with biblical teaching. The contrast here is far-reaching and goes deep.

At the same time, we recognize that, during the past five hundred years, the Holy Spirit, the Supreme Magisterium of God, has been faithfully at work among theologians and exegetes in both Catholic and Evangelical communities, bringing to light and enriching our understanding of important biblical truths in such
matters as individual spiritual growth and development, the mission of Christ’s Church, Christian worldview thinking, and moral and social issues in today’s world. We praise God for His faithful work within each community as He has provided instruction and guidance in these and other important areas of Christian faith and life.

As Evangelicals and Catholics we are agreed on what we have said together in the statement “The Gift of Salvation” and on what we have been able to say together in the present statement on Scripture and tradition. The theological disagreements that still separate us are serious and require prayerful reflection and sustained mutual engagement. But in the face of a society marked by unbelieving ideologies and the culture of death, we deem it all the more important to affirm together those foundational truths of historic Christian orthodoxy that we do hold in common.

We are confident that the Lord is watching over His gospel and over those who have been called by the gospel, and we are sure that the forces of hell will not be able to thwart His divine purpose. By God’s grace, we will continue to pray for one another, to seek greater mutual understanding in continuing conversations, and, in accordance with our deeply held convictions, to work together to bring the love and light of Christ to all persons everywhere. We earnestly invoke the Holy Spirit’s continuing guidance in further establishing and making manifest our unity in the truth of Jesus Christ, so that the world may come to believe (John 17:21). In union with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we together pray, “Sanctify us in the truth; Your word is truth” (John 17:17).

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CHALLENGES IN LIVING TOGETHER AS COMMUNITY

Burning Your Boats

by Tom Caballes

"But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

- Philippians 3:13-14 ESV

Legend says that in 1519, an explorer, Hernando Cortes, led 11 ships with around 600 men and was headed for Mexico to take the world’s richest treasures known during that time. But there was one problem – a strong army had been guarding the treasure, and no one has ever defeated them, though many others tried. As they landed, Cortes commanded one thing – “Burn the boats!” His men obeyed. His men had only two choices: win the battle - or die. Because his men did not have any chance to retreat or escape, they fought the bravest combat of their lives – and they won. They were victors, and they had all the riches beyond what they can use in a lifetime. Our walk with God is very similar – sometimes we have second options or plans in life that are not in line with God’s will. Do we compromise our faith in God? What are the boats in your life that you need to burn so that you can be fully dead-set in following God?

**So How Do You Burn Your Boats in This Life?**

1. You need to cut off your ties with your old sinful patterns. There should be no looking back. Live as a new creation [2 Corinthians 5:17]. Live with ‘no strings attached’ with our old way of thinking, relating, and behaving. So, if something causes temptation in you, do something to get rid of it.
2. Surrender your ambitions and plans to God – they should all come secondary to following and obeying God. Your primary goal is to do God’s will and please Him. Is God first in your life or just secondary?

3. Be willing to experience suffering and pain for the sake of following God – it may come through serving God, sharing the Gospel with others, standing up for what is right or in other ways and means.

4. You need to radically live your life for God – not with complacency, timidity or half-heartedness. You need to be on fire for God! Be single-hearted for God and His Kingdom. Like the man in Jesus’ parable, sell all you have in exchange for the greatest pearl of no equal.

5. No giving up and no turning back on your walk with God. No daydreaming in the “what ifs” of life.


7. Fix your eyes on the reward - the truth is, if you give your all to God, you will be well-rewarded. What is there to compare living eternally with God? Think about it – often!

Other Scripture passages:

1. Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." [Luke 9:62 ESV]

2. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. [Romans 8:18 ESV]

3. … I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ. [Philippians 3:8 ESV]


For personal reflection or group sharing

1. When life gets tough, do you have an ‘exit strategy’ or a fail-safe plan so you can save your own skin, name, comfort, or convenience?

2. Would you prefer to reach heaven with just barely doing so, or with ‘flying colors?’

3. Are you giving your all to God or are you holding anything back? What is your ‘boat’ that you need to burn?

Tom Caballes is the National Senior Administrator and a National Coordinator of the Lamb of God, a community of the Sword of the Spirit with 7 branches located throughout New Zealand. Tom also leads Kairos New Zealand, an outreach program for high school, university, and post-university aged people.

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“Tu Momento”: Kairos Youth Conference in Central America

by Daniela Díaz

This past January 2017, 235 young people and 116 youth leaders from Latin America’s Central Zone of Kairos were gathered in Tegucigalpa, Honduras to take part on the third Youth Conference titled: Tu Momento (Your Time) 2017.

The venue was Campus el Tabor, Valle de Ángeles’, the same one used for the conference in 2013. Young people from Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala were gathered.

The event, that lasted four days, invited the young people to take action and to be a part of God’s mission not only in their own personal lives but in the broader mission of the Sword of the Spirit from this early time, to make the most of their youth to serve Him. God told them” This is your time”.

There were three simultaneous events: a conference for the 15-18 year olds and two camps (one for the boys and one for the girls) for the 12-14 year olds.

The event was led mainly by university students that have given their lives to God and are serving the young people for him. Pablo Madrigal and Daniela Bravo were in charge of the conference. The speakers were Lester Lacayo, César Corrales and Horacio Vega from the community Ciudad de Dios (Nicaragua), Sara Fonseca, Marco Madrigal and Miguel Vargas from the community Árbol de Vida (Costa Rica) and Melina Montero from the community Fuente de Vida (Costa Rica).

During the conference, the young people were encouraged to set a personal goal for themselves, and they also committed to organizing a group project, by local communities, that they will run during this year. There was also time for recreation and games.
Current topics

Each of the five sessions had a main theme. Each of the sessions included a talk, a prayer time, and some other activities like workshops, discussion groups and games. The young people could choose between three workshops of 3 sessions each: 1. sexuality, 2. social media and 3. relationships & decision making.

The first theme was The time we were assigned to live in. It was about them living in a time full of opportunities, a time when they have more career options than ever before, when women have rights, when people have access to a large amount of information because of technology and that information obliges them to take stands and define what they believe in. But they also live in a contradictory world, full of wars and crises. All this helped them understand that it is in their hands to seize the opportunities and advantages, confront the crises and accept the time that is theirs to live and to do something with it. This session also invited the young people to lay aside all material things, relationships and other things that may hinder them from moving forward.

The second talk was titled The Power of Being Young and the speaker gave some examples of young people who have done great and impressive deeds in their youth. They achieved that because they made the key decisions in a key time. The world has a stereotype of young people but that doesn’t mean we have to be like the stereotype, we can decide to be different. It was also mentioned that the advantages of being young are infinite but they won’t last forever, they have to be used now! This talk called the young people toward excellence, because they do things for God and he is excellent.

The third session was called Shalom Project. It was about God calling each and every one of the young people there – at that very moment. It was not a coincidence that they were there. They all have a call to live community and engage in the vision that they all belong to a great wall, the bulwark to strengthen God’s people, and that they have a place in that bulwark that no one else can fill.

The fourth session, Your Time was a very powerful prayer meeting divided up into men and women. The Lord healed many wounds and called people to take their place in the bulwark personally, and to respond, each from their own place.

The last one was called The Day after Tomorrow. The speakers talked about how God had acted throughout the conference and how he had renewed hearts, but that God did not want all this to be just a memory, but a in their lives. That when they get home they would continue striving in his power against the evil in the world. The speakers also encouraged them not to forget all that they experienced and all that they received. There were many examples of words spoken by God to young people like Jeremiah, Joshua and Timothy.

There was one extra session where the young people had a space to devise ways to improve the youth groups and outreaches in their local communities. It was an extended time where they got together with a leader to help them to express their ideas better.

The Lord has done great things for the young people of our communities and they left the conference with new gifts, encouraged and equipped with the weapons of God!
Testimonies

Gabriel Pinel, Victoria de Dios, Honduras.

Without a doubt, God has a perfect plan for our lives. When I was invited to the “Tu Momento” Conference I wasn’t planning on going. I didn’t feel like it and had a sense of unworthiness. However, the day before the conference I changed my mind and I said ‘yes’ to the Lord.

Four days had passed and I still didn't have the answer I was looking for. There was a prayer time where men and women were set apart and it was then that God, through my brothers and my own prayer, gave me the answer I had been looking for, for more than two years. I realized that we need to trust the Lord with all of our lives and say ‘yes’ to him with certainty that it is the only way he can direct our lives perfectly. Every morning, when I wake up, I thank God for changing my mind and giving me the strength to give him my firm ‘yes’.

Maria Angelica Garay, Ciudad de Dios, Nicaragua.

We were in a prayer time and I wasn’t feeling anything. I could see many people crying or slain in the spirit and I asked the Lord to feel something special. I asked the Lord for a specific sign and he granted it, in that moment I felt a tingling in my back and it was very clear that God gave me that sign not to prove that he was there, but to remind me how special I am to him because I am his daughter and he loves me.

The conference was a great experience. It wasn’t until this moment that I understood that God had saved me from a life in the world and that he wants my ‘yes’ to be able to do great things with me. If I give my ‘yes’ to him, it will be the best decision of my life.

I hope to be able to share this treasure with my friends to let them know how great the Lord is and that if they join his plan, they will lack nothing in the world.

Aldo Arana, Ciudad de Dios, Nicaragua.

The conference in Honduras was a life-changing experience. I would live it a thousand times again without a doubt because I experienced the Lord in an incredible way.

I thank God for all the experiences, for all the people I met who helped me get closer to the Lord throughout the conference, for all the talks and games that helped me getting to know more people. All these highlighted the fact that following Christ is worth it, and that we must not surrender in the race of life whose goal is heaven, and that we need to be the light of the world to be an example of radical Christians, active people who give it all to follow Christ.
**María Paula Brenes, Árbol de Vida, Costa Rica.**

I was delighted by the prayer times, they were very powerful and God spoke to me quite a lot through them. The Holy Spirit was present giving many gifts, and we prayed over one another.

I remember feeling God asking me to pray for people, so I began looking carefully and when I saw someone and my heart would beat harder I felt I needed to pray for that person, and I did. I repeated this several times.

In one prayer meeting, the Lord gave me a word saying, “You were meant to be together. Listen how you clap and sing together as one person. Have no doubt that you are part of my people and this is a people I made to stay together.”

The Lord changed my heart. Now I do something I was struggling a lot to do: I am praying every day.

**Mario Rietti, Victoria de Dios, Honduras.**

The conference was striking because I held a grudge in my heart. Each talk made it clearer that I must never give up, that I have to be a radical man, that I have to make a commitment to the bulwark and to myself, and stay faithful in the battle.

The most shocking moment for me was the men’s prayer time because it was in that moment that all my brothers were on fire, enjoying the presence of the Lord.

**Esteban Brenes, Árbol de Vida, Costa Rica.**

This ‘Tu Momento’ Conference was that “breakthrough moment” everyone always talks about in their testimonies. I saw and felt the Lord working strongly, not only in me, but in the unity of my group of friends.

Daniela Díaz is a young person from the Arbol de Vida Community in Costa Rica. Photographs courtesy of the event’s organizers.

[This [article](http://www.swordofthespirit.net/bulwark/february2017p18.htm) was originally published in the [Sword of the Spirit](http://www.swordofthespirit.net) web site. Used with permission.]
The River Flows

song by Ed Conlin

From the throne of God and from the Lamb the river flows.
Life redeeming, ever healing, age to age it goes.
No more sun, the Holy One - our light that ever shines.
Crystal clear, the river here, will swell our hearts to join the cry!

Awake, O sleeper, rise to life, and Christ will give you light!
Lift your head - behold the river.
He mounts his throne to shouts of praise; be opened heaven's gates.
"Enter in, O King of Glory!

"Come!" the Spirit calls, and with the bride the Spirit cries:
Souls that thirst can drink their fill of water without price.
Blest are those who wash their robes to gain the tree of life.
Face to face with endless grace, lift up your hearts to hear the cry!"

Awake, O sleeper, rise to life, and Christ will give you light!
Lift your head - behold the river.
He mounts his throne to shouts of praise; be opened heaven's gates.
Enter in, O King of Glory!

Ed Conlin is a member of the Servants of the Word, a missionary brotherhood of men living single for the Lord. He lives in community in the inner city of Detroit, Michigan, USA, and works as a licensed substance abuse counselor and chaplain with the Capuchin Franciscan Ministries in Detroit.

_Sixteen scriptural based songs marked by reverence and joy, that will inspire worship in Spirit and truth_

In an effort to encourage song writers in the Sword of the Spirit to use their talents for the Lord's work, a music CD was been produced with 16 new songs, all written by members of the Sword of the Spirit in the North American communities, and performed by talented musicians of the various university outreaches (many of whom wrote songs for the project as well). To learn more about "in Spirit and Truth" visit their website at: http://www.inspiritandtruth.ucoweb.org/index.html

To listen to a short mp3 audio sample of the songs, visit:
Most of my life I failed to appreciate beauty. Oh, I loved the look of sails on the sea and snow on the mountains, but mostly I liked sailing those sailboats and skiing those slopes.

Fifteen years ago, I learned to scuba dive. On our first dive, my sons and I wobbled our way to the sea in unwieldy gear, inserted our mouthpieces, lowered our heads beneath the waves, and dived. In fifteen feet of water, we entered a cloud of thousands of small yellow and white, black-striped fish. We could see nothing but a beautiful gallery of sparkling fish.

And the beauty of their colors, and the shimmer of their glory, delighted and enthralled me.

Yesterday I joined two friends to talk with a woman about her calling. And she talked only of beauty. She shared the glory of seeing a sunrise, and sparks of hope in the cracks of a frozen harbor, and satisfaction in a sunset-pond. And she spoke of the healing wholeness of beauty.

Hearing her reminded me of the first time I was captivated by beauty.

This morning I read Psalm 27 as part of my Scripture meditation. When I read verse 4, something again was awakened.

One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after:

... to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord....
And I wondered, “What the heck does it mean to gaze on the beauty of God?”

**It’s Not Escape**

The verse before David’s puzzling gaze-phrase describes enemies who wish to “eat up my flesh” and “war rising against me,” and the verses after it speak of enemies who “surround him” and false witnesses who “breathe out violence.” And later, parents who “forsake” him.

David longs to “gaze on the beauty of the Lord” in the middle of horrific suffering and threats. Ernest Becker (in his Pulitzer Prize book, *Denial of Death*) said it this way:

> Taking life seriously means that whatever you do must be done in the lived truth of the evil and terror of life, of the rumble of panic underneath everything.

David’s longing for the beauty of God is neither an *escape* from that terror of life, nor a mere means of *coping* with the rumble of panic beneath everything.

This longing means we can *triumph* amidst the evils of life, simply by fixing our eyes on the beauty of God.

**It’s Not Exploitation**

I love snowcapped mountains and sea-bound sailboats because I use them for skiing and sailing. Sure, I like to look at them, but even more, I like to use them.

God’s nature is incredible, but too often I just want to use it: I love his power because I can ask of him, or his justice because I can appeal to him, or his righteousness because he gives it to me. Even his fatherhood, because he adopted me.

But for me to appreciate his beauty means I value him just for who he is, no requests, no exploitation, no “using” him to further a ministry or a good cause.

Just to gaze on him and say “In seeing you, I have all that I need.” It means to be overwhelmed with the beauty of God. To be satisfied with him alone.

His Spirit in us sees his beauty, and we worship.

Sam

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Sam Williamson has published numerous articles and has written two books. He has a blog site, www.beliefsoftheheart.com, and can be reached at Sam@BeliefsoftheHeart.com.

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New book by Sam Williamson

> See book review by Don Schwager

Photo of scuba diver and school of french grunts (top), copyright by Brian Lasenby at Bigstock.com
New Springs Rise

poems by Ana Teresa Perrem

Trees by the Stream

See the dry land, so thirsty,
A lifeless place without water?
See how the people look for truth,
Moving blind in the darkness?
They know no light.

Know that old things will pass
All is made new,
And He will make new springs rise
Gushing forth fresh water
For the peoples in need.

They will seek, and ask, and knock.
We have been planted here
To give them fruit, to stand as signs,
To guide men to the Light.
May we be deeply rooted, and shine.
Stephen
(A garland)

His blood fell
Like the first drops of paint
On the white canvas.
Witness witnessing,
Because he had seen
First jewel of the crown.

And life kept dripping, mixing, creating
Of colours and shapes,
Of light and of shade,
Beauty.
And what you and I do, today, and tomorrow —
We paint;
Because we have seen,
Witnesses witnessing,
Living or dying, we paint
New jewels of the crown.

Anna Perrem and her husband Dominic are members of the Community of Nazareth in Dublin, Ireland. They have four children.
Some Spiritual Reading Resources for the Forty Days of Lent

- **God Has Reigned from a Tree**: Meditations on the Cross of Jesus Christ
- **Ecce Homo! - Behold the Man!**, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- **He Bore Our Pride In His Body on the Cross**, by Raniero Cantalamessa
- **What Happened on the Cross**, by the early church fathers
- **The Cross - the One True Glorification of God**, by Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI
- **Emptied for Our Sake**, by Bernard of Clairvaux
- **Worship at the Cross**, by Charles Simpson
- **The Holy Spirit Reveals the Merciful Father**, by Raniero Cantalamessa
- **God Calls Sinners to Make Them Saints: Simon Peter's Story**, by Jeannine Kun
- **Whose Side Are You On – Witnesses of the Passion**, by Carlos Mantica
- **The Prodigal Son** by Rembrandt - Master Painter and Storyteller
- **The Great Downfall**, by Steve Clark
- **A Mirror to see Inside Ourselves**, by Gregory the Great (540-604 AD)
- **The Mountain of Your Sins Will Never be too High**, by Cyril of Jerusalem (349-386 AD)
- **Why Does God Allow Temptation?** by Maximus the Confessor (580-662 AD)
- **Dead to Sin**, by John Chrysostom (349-407 AD)
- **Discipleship: “Take Up Your Cross and Follow Me,”** by Jeannine Kun
- **The Readiness to Change**, by Dietrich von Hildebrand
- **Surrender to God**: An orientation to Lent, by John Henry Newman
- **Focus for Fasting: Pursuing our higher calling to serve and worship Christ**, by Jerry Munk
- **Fasting and Feasting**: A selection of readings for Lent from the early fathers
- **Conquering Ourselves and Overcoming the Evil One**, wisdom from early fathers
- **Walking in the Light**, by Gregory of Nyssa
• The Ladder of Divine Ascent: spiritual wisdom from John Climacus
• Christ Calls Us Deeper Still by John Henry Newman

• It's Not About You! by Bob Tedesco
• Pursuing Holiness in an Unholy World, a strategy for winning, by Tom Caballes
• He Must Increase: Finding Our Identity in Jesus Christ, by Jan Munk
• Purity of Heart Is To Will One Thing, by Soren Kierkegaard
• True Holiness, by Bruce Youcum

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• The Fall and Rise of David, by Patrick Henry Reardon
• Exiled from Eden, by Jeanne Kun
• Jesus: A Portrait of Obedience, by Jeanne Kun
• Christ's Humility and Victory by Steve Clark
• The Obedient Son: the humility of the Son of the King, by Steve Clark
• The Redeemer Who Died, by Steve Clark

• Salt and Light: Our Vocation to Holiness, by Donald Bloesch
• Why the Church Needs Saints, by W.E. Sangster
• On Saints and Saintliness, by John Henry Newman
• The Agony in the Garden: Love's Surrender, by Jeanne Kun

• Confessions: Excerpts from Augustine of Hippo's autobiographical book (354-430 AD)
• Prayer of Augustine, song by Ed Conlin
• My Confession, by St. Patrick of Ireland (389-461 AD), and Song of Patrick, by Ed Conlin

• The Lavish Love of the Prodigal Father: reflection by Don Schwager
• Countering Vice with Virtue: Part I – Faith and Virtue, by Don Schwager
• Attaining True Greatness - Humility versus Pride, by Don Schwager
• Prayer Shaped by the Word of God: hungering for God's word, by Don Schwager
• With Jesus in the Wilderness for Forty Days, by Don Schwager
• The Ten Plagues: Spiritual Lessons for us today, by Don Schwager