

**"I must  
proclaim the  
good news  
of the  
kingdom  
of God"**

**Catholic Charismatic Renewal  
serving the church**

# Good News



**The newsletter of the  
Catholic Charismatic Renewal.  
Melbourne, Australia.  
[www.ccr.org.au](http://www.ccr.org.au)**

## The Jubilee Cross

By LENYCE WILLASON



Jim Murphy carrying the Cross  
over America.

What an exciting year stands before us! A Jubilee Year – a time which we are told means a year of freedom and of celebration. Yet, along with the Psalmist we say, *What shall I return to the LORD for all his goodness to me? (us) (Ps 116:12)*

God has bestowed so much grace on the Charismatic Renewal over the last fifty years. There have been many Prayer Groups opened right across Australia; a religious order and Seminary has been founded along with an International Office in Rome. We have been blessed with fifty years of being submerged in the Holy Spirit and his life transforming power.

We believe that the sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit in any community is unity and love. Hence we felt that we must express this unity by calling on all streams belonging to CCR Melbourne to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the worldwide Catholic Charismatic Renewal together in 2017. Firstly, after many months of prayer and meetings with the Leaders of the different Multicultural Catholic Charismatic communities the Lord began to reveal his wishes through differing people and from that a motif evolved, which is:

**To celebrate the great gift of the Holy Spirit the Cross will be carried to 40 parishes in 40 weeks to show God's love for ALL people.**

This statement says clearly what we are doing and why we are doing it. The times in which we are living need the Cross of Christ to be lifted high over our Cities and in doing so we are remembering that Jesus said *when I am*

*lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself (Jn 12:32 NLT)*. The year of Jubilee is a time of restoration and our families and cities certainly are in need of renewal.

The Jubilee will be launched at a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Hart on Sunday 26 February 2017 at St Patrick's Cathedral, 2pm. We would like to invite all prayer group members, past and present, to come along and celebrate. The Archbishop will bless the Cross and then it will begin its journey through the Dioceses of Victoria. Anyone who wishes to place a prayer request into the base is welcome to do so. When the Cross is finished moving around one region there will be a Mass celebrated by the regional Bishop at which the petitions will be carried to the Altar with the offerings. At the end of the year, November 2017, there will be a Big Praise Day, where praise and prayer will be continuous throughout the day. This will be an Ecumenical Event with our brothers and sisters in Christ being invited to join with us in our praise of God. They will also be invited to field music groups to maintain the praise. The venue for this event has not been finalised as yet – we are expectant that the Lord will provide the funds for us to fill the MCG or Etihad Stadium!

We invite each and every one to begin praying that God will bless our endeavours in his name as we hold him up for the world to see. What a great opportunity to evangelise!





For enquiries about Catholic Charismatic Renewal, its events or prayer groups visit the:

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## Good News

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**The deadline for the next issue of Good News:  
27 January 2017.**



***The glory of young men is their strength,  
but the splendour of the old is their grey hair.***

(Proverbs 20:29)

Recently the Australian Bishops published their Social Justice Statement for 2016. It was called A Place at the Table: Social Justice in an Ageing Society. If you haven't read it, I would recommend you do so because it challenges us to recognise and value the dignity of older people. It came into my hands as I was preparing this edition of Good News and had already selected two wonderful articles on ageing which highlight that if it is properly embraced, ageing is one of the most natural and effective ways for God to complete our spiritual growth.

Speaking of old age at a general audience in St Peter's Square in 2015, Pope Francis said that "old age is a vocation. It is not yet time to 'pull in the oars'. This period of life is different from those before, there is no doubt; we even have to somewhat 'invent it ourselves' because our societies are not ready, spiritually and morally to appreciate the true value of this stage of life."

It is very encouraging to note the Bishops' call to young people to learn from the aged. "To all young people: we invite you to think about how you can make connections with older members of your communities" challenge the Bishops.

As parents who have been encouraging their children not to give up on their faith, we all need to pray that this challenge is heeded by both the young and the old. Over the last two years it has been very heartening to be a first hand witness of the events ONE has organised. The praise and worship of our young, coupled with their search for confidence and identity, have been a great grace and privilege for me. There is a hymn: "In every age, you have been our refuge; in every age you have been my hope." I know this to be true.

The society in which we live tends to value what we can produce - driven by performance, and not on WHO we are - valued because we exist. Having lived more than half of my life believing I was acceptable only for what I could do or achieve, it was like a breath of fresh air to my spirit when I discovered that God loved me for who I was, not for what I could do. Unravelling the behaviours attached to performance has been a large part of my own healing: learning to stop trying and start trusting. The words of the prophet Isaiah ring true when we believe that God is faithful to his word: *Even to your old age I will be the same, and even to your greying years I will bear you! I have done it, and I will carry you; and I will bear you and I will deliver you.* (Isaiah 46:4)

After fifty years of the grace of Charismatic Renewal and learning to know the Holy Spirit we recognise that we are all getting older, but does that mean we are any less enthused about praising God or amazed at the many miracles we witness in our lives and the lives of those we love? I think not. In fact the more we read the scriptures it would seem that it is in the maturing years that God's plans enter more easily into our willingness and we begin to serve him because we know to whom we belong.

Scripture is encouraging when it declares: "They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing" (Psalm 92:14).

May you be expectant of Gods surprising love and blessings this Christmas.

*Lenyce Willason*

# HOW TO PRAY FOR AGING

By FRANCIS MACNUTT

As a practical follow-up to the articles on aging in this newsletter, I want to share some ideas on what you can actually do about this universal problem.

In the first place, if the elderly are suffering from sickness, such as cancer, you can do what you have already learned to do: namely, you can pray for healing.

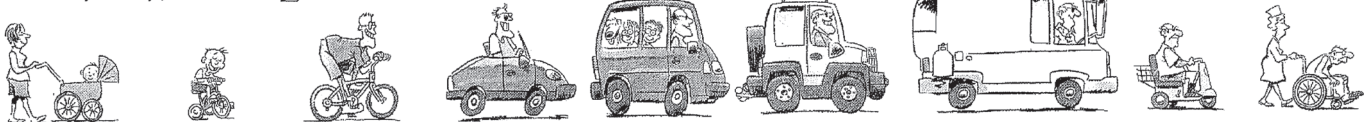
The new insight we are discovering, however, is that we can be basically healthy, yet suffer like the sick. We are not exactly sick, but the joints ache and we start to bend over as the forces of life gradually lessen. It's like the law of entropy, which describes how energy continually sinks to a lower level. We can also compare it to driving a good used car; there will always be wear and tear no matter how well we take care of the car. Just as sludge builds up in our car's motor, globules of fat clog the veins and arteries, it's just a law of nature. Our "tent" as Paul says, is eventually folded up and taken down.

even more faith than when we pray once for someone who suffers from a terminal illness. Aging is terminal too, but there is nothing dramatic in slowing it down.

What a wonderful thing it would be if Christians in nursing homes could learn to pray for one another. Judith and I try to pray five minutes of soaking prayer for each other every morning. It's very quiet, very peaceful – nothing dramatic, yet we always wish it would never end. In a way, it's a perfect beginning and the best part of our day. Since I haven't read anything about this kind of prayer (so I have no book to recommend), I think that we are really on to something. See what you think about this kind of prayer. Try it.

Something you can tell though is whether or not the aches and pains you may have been suffering lessen or even disappear. Also, the swelling that some experience from the grinding of bone upon bone may gradually lessen. When that happens you should be able to tell a difference.

## The Wheels of Life



What we find is that this is a battle, a struggle, which goes on every day. It's not like praying for a disease or a tumour, which Jesus can dissolve in one prayer. When a disease is healed, it's all over and done with, and you praise God. The forces of dissolution are at work every day: a struggle goes on all the time between the energy of life and the opposing forces of weakness and infirmity.


We are reminded of that part of the Lord's Prayer which asks God to give us this day our daily bread and deliver us from evil. We pray not once but continually every day.

So, since the possibility of an advanced and healthy old age is a blessing held out to us in scripture, and is a wider application of what we believe about Jesus' general desire to heal, I propose that we pray for the elderly, with the laying on of hands, every day. We can pray to strengthen the forces of life both in our minds and our bodies. (By the way we recently heard that a friend, whose wife has long suffered from Alzheimer's disease, and who has been praying for her for years, now tells us that his wife is recovering her mental health!)

Clearly this kind of frequent, if not daily, prayer is not emotionally exciting. We are praying to stop the slow advance of aging, and we can't actually see this take place. If a glacier slows down, how can you tell? At the end of the year you say, "Thank God, my husband – my wife or my friend – is still in pretty good shape". To be in the same physical and mental condition at the end of your 70th year as you were on your 60th birthday is a triumph, isn't it? But you don't actually see it taking place. Fidelity to this kind of prayer takes patience and resolve. It probably shows

Another suggestion: since making up a new prayer every day can become tiresome, you might try praying in English once a week, then praying in tongues on the other days of the week. In that way you can practice the presence of God and gently rest in God's presence.

Let us know what happens (or perhaps it's what doesn't happen). The prayer may not be all that exciting, but this discovery is in itself, I think, very exciting.



*And the angel said to them,  
"FEAR NOT, FOR BEHOLD,  
I BRING YOU GOOD NEWS OF GREAT  
Joy that will be for all the people."*  
Luke 2:10

*May the joy of Christmas  
bring peace and happiness to all.  
Wishing you a very Happy and Holy Christmas.*

*The Coordinators of CCR Melbourne*



*“Leadership ultimately flows from responding to God’s call.. it enables a leader to persevere even in difficulties.”*



Michelle Moran

# Disappointment in Leadership

BY MICHELLE MORAN

Many of the most popular movies are stories of heroes, supermen or women who triumph over difficulties and challenges. Eventually everything works out well and there is a happy ending. It would be wonderful if this was the reality of our lives, unfortunately, things are a little more complex. For those of us who are seasoned leaders, we know that amidst the blessings there are often problems, disagreements, divisions and disappointments. Clearly, it is impossible to totally avoid disappointment, however, I want to suggest some ways in which we can avoid or overcome discouragement and seeming failure.

## **Invest in the future**

I was recently in conversation with a young leader who began by telling me that she wasn't a very good leader and she wanted some ideas about how to improve. I began by asking her what was it that made her think that she wasn't a good leader. She said that when she compared herself to the main leader of the group, she felt very inadequate and ineffective. She said that her leader was someone totally committed to the Lord, a person of great prayer and integrity who worked so hard that she sometimes didn't have time for herself. She described the leader as a courageous risk taker who was willing to take on projects that were big and demanding but in the end she was always able to get the results by encouraging people to work together.

When I asked how long this senior leader had been leading, the young leader replied 20 years. Certainly, the senior leader was a woman of good spiritual character and temperament. She was able to draw the team together and get the desired results. However, it would seem that too many things were dependent upon the leader. Unless we as leaders invest in the future many good works of the Spirit eventually flounder and die leaving people disillusioned and disappointed. Obviously, the experienced leader was a good role model but her leadership style was perhaps lacking in the area of identifying, investing in and empowering the next generation of leaders. The senior leader had a 'Timothy' by her side who was keen to learn. Yet the potential of the young leader had not been recognised. She was not being mentored.

## **Succession planning**

Groups and communities flourish with good leader ship. However, wise leaders are not only focusing on the present, they are looking to the future and planning ahead. Times of change and transition in leadership bring a natural sense of insecurity. Leadership succession needs to be planned. It can be very disappointing for established leaders to see so many of the things they have worked very hard at establishing not flourishing when there is new leadership.

There needs to be a healthy continuity in leadership and this happens when key leaders pay attention to and invest in the next generation.

## **Be yourself - lead as the person who you are**

My advice to the young leader was to affirm her as the unique person that God has created her to be, as *Psalms 139* says, we are 'wonderfully made'. Clearly she admired her leader and could learn a lot from her. However, some leaders make the mistake of trying to lead like other people, particularly leaders they admire and respect. This inevitably leads to disappointment and often failure because we can only lead as the people who we are and this is, in fact, our unique gift. Obviously, we can learn from other people but we have to be prepared to grow in our own

particular leadership gifts and to not always be comparing ourselves to others. My golden rule for leaders is to grow in self-knowledge to “know yourself and lead as the person that you are”. It is also important to recognise that other people are not always the same as we are, they have different personalities, gifts and skills. We can have false or unrealistic expectations of others and this can often lead to frustration and disappointment.

### **Trust in the Lord**

Leadership ultimately flows from responding to God's call. Indeed it is the sense of calling that enables a leader to persevere even in difficulties. The famous leaders in scripture such as Moses, Jeremiah, Jonah, Peter and Paul, all had their own particular leadership gifts alongside their personality defects. All of them were lacking in certain skills. However, they were prepared to trust in the Lord, knowing that God who had called them would not fail them. Rather than fearing their own weaknesses and imperfections, in faith, they believed in God's ability to succeed. Too many leaders act as if everything is dependent upon them. Leadership then becomes a human enterprise and when there are difficulties and challenges the temptation is to quit. Those who learn to trust in the Lord are able to endure. Their strength is renewed (*Isa 40:28-31*).

### **Trust others**

One of the biggest pitfalls in leadership is when the leader thinks that they have to do all the tasks themselves. This can stem from insecurity or a distorted sense of what it means to be hardworking and diligent. Ultimately it leads to burnout or inefficiency. Leaders can become discouraged or fail simply because they tried to do too much. Jethro had to help Moses learn the important skill of delegation. He said; “it is not right to take this on yourself. You will tire yourself out, you and the people with you. The work is too heavy for you. You cannot do it alone” (*Ex 18:17*). Notice how the weakness or short-sightedness of the leader impacts the whole group. Thankfully Moses took the advice of his father-in-law. As a result, the whole community was empowered and there was a sense of corporate leadership (*Ex 18:25-6*).

Several of the biblical leaders also learned that it isn't necessary for one leader to possess all the leadership gifts. There can be a wonderful leadership dynamic and synergy when leaders work with others in a complementary way. So Moses and Aaron were a perfect team and Paul and Barnabas were, for a time, a dynamic duo. They lived together in Antioch for a year (*Acts 11:26*), they were set apart by the Spirit for mission (*Acts 13:4*), they experienced persecution (*Acts 15:50*), and won respect from all. Unfortunately, despite all their missionary zeal, endurance and fruitfulness in ministry, after “a violent quarrel they parted company” (*Acts 15:39*). A seemingly trivial disagreement led to the separation of one of the most dynamic missionary pairings that the Church had ever seen.

### **Be on your guard**

Here we encounter one of the most painful leadership areas, relationship breakdown and division. This not only affects those directly involved, it also impacts the whole community. Infighting, unresolved conflict and

tension drains a group and robs them of their spiritual vibrancy. Sadly, some people end up leaving their groups or ministries because they are so disillusioned and disappointed in their leaders behaviour or in the leaders inability to resolve or manage conflict.

*John 10:10* says; “the thief comes only to rob, kill and destroy”. Certainly the enemy seeks to strategically attack leaders. There is a proverb that says, “if a wolf attacks the flock he gets a sheep. If he attacks the shepherd he gets the whole flock”. St Paul said in his final exhortation to the leaders in Ephesus; “be on your guard for yourselves and for the whole flock which the Holy Spirit has made you the overseers”. Leaders therefore need to be alert and attentive engaging in spiritual warfare for themselves and their people. They need to have the insight and courage to try and resolve conflict when it arises. Obviously not every disagreement is a crisis, wisdom is needed in order to discern when ‘unhealthy tension’ is developing in the group. Undoubtedly, if this is not dealt with it will eventually erupt like a volcano and everyone will be injured.

### **Trials lead to triumph (Rom 8:37)**

Sadly, because of our human and sinful disposition, conflicts and divisions are inevitable. During these difficult times, the leader in their natural disappointment has to draw upon the grace of leadership, in order to lead the whole flock through the difficult phase. This is not easy, it is only by God's grace that we are given the ability to remain steadfast under pressure.

Paradoxically, we often learn the most profound lessons at times of seeming failure or defeat. Jacob wrestled with God (*Gen 32:26*) the Lord needed to show Jacob that real strength comes only through trust and surrender. Every seasoned leader goes through their own time of trial and disappointment. It is important to remember that; “we are only the earthenware jars that hold the treasure... that power comes from God and not from us” (*2 Cor 4:7-8*). We do not know the details of Paul's ‘thorn in the flesh’ (*Cf. 2 Cor 12:7*) but we know it was something sent by the Lord to prevent him getting too proud. The Lord wants to break through our self-reliance and teach us to rely upon him. “My grace is enough for you: my power is at its best in weakness” (*2 Cor 12:9*). Paul showed us that through his own difficulties he got in touch with his personal weakness and then, by the grace of God, his weakness became his strength; “For it is when I am weak that I am strong” (*2 Cor 12:10*).

Hopefully this word will console all of us in our leadership challenges. It will encourage us to endure and keep moving forward despite the difficulties.

Thankfully, as we learn to lead in the power of the Holy Spirit we recognise that everything is not dependent upon us. We need embrace our leadership calling and aim to do our best and then surrender and trust in the Lord. Paul certainly learned this lesson when he shared this beautiful prayer with the Ephesians; “glory be to him whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine” (*Eph 3:20*).

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# WHY BEING MY HUSBAND'S CARER IS A GIFT

By ROS POWELL



## **Ros Powell shares the pain and beauty that has come with her husband's dementia.**

In 2009 my beloved husband Freddie was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Being a person who always tries to count my blessings my initial reaction was 'Well, he's not that bad, with God's grace we can cope'.

But nothing prepared me, and our grown up children, for the days ahead when the person we love didn't know who we were, his body was there but his mind wasn't. It was only my love for him and my faith in God that kept me going.

There were days when the burden of caring for him went beyond my human strength, but I know that God "never crushes a bruised reed" (*Isaiah 42:3*) and I clung on to the fact that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (*Philippians 4:13*).

### **From atheism to faith**

For most of his life Freddie was a professing atheist, and then one morning in 2011, when the Alzheimer's was just starting to manifest itself, he awoke and announced that he had had a dream.

He explained that in the dream he was taken back in time to the age of 11, and he could see his mother and father. His mother, he remembered, was a good and holy lady who taught Sunday school, and his father was an atheist. He told me that as he glanced at them in the dream he made a decision, "I don't want to be an atheist like my father any more, I want to be a Christian like my mother".

After explaining the dream he turned to me and said "Can you help me?" (Is the Pope Catholic?!)

So I took him to Holy Mass that morning and introduced him to my parish priest. As a consequence after instruction he was received into the Catholic Church. All of our married life (over 33 years) I had prayed for his conversion and overnight my prayers were answered in an instant!

God's timing was perfect for shortly after his conversion his sense of reasoning and his speech declined to the point where it was difficult for me to understand what he was trying to say... but here is the miracle - he prays in the gift of tongues fluently!

I stand in awe of God's presence flowing through his smile and the peace that flows through him for all to see.

## **Healing for me**

Over the last seven years the Lord has used Freddie's illness to heal and soften me in so many ways.

I remember one day going to confession and pouring out to my priest the difficulty I had trying to be a good carer especially in dealing with the area of Freddie's incontinence for it repulsed me. He told me a story about St Francis who had a similar problem with lepers.

St Francis prayed to the Lord and was able to then carry out the tasks that he found repugnant. Father prayed for me in the confessional and with the help of St Francis' intercession my healing in that area began.

I found that the Lord gave me the gift of loving no matter what. Although the man I had fallen in love with and married - who had looked after me and the children - had gone, I was able to love the person he had become - a different way to love, but just as deep.

Mother Teresa in the book 'No Greater Love' wrote about bearing the fruit of mercy and the difficulty of bearing this fruit, she said... Our love and our joy in serving must be in proportion to the degree to which our task is repugnant".

## **Surrendering the struggle**

For each one of us "the trial of our faith is more precious than gold" (*1 Peter 1:7*). The more I surrender all to the Lord in difficult situations and take one step at a time, the more I realise that mine and Freddie's future is in God's hands.

In June 2015 Freddie went into full-time care for he had reached the stage where he needed professional help. It was such a difficult emotional time for both of us and I had to surrender all to the Lord and totally rely and lean upon him. He was with us every step of the way and we found a wonderful privately run home. Freddie is happy and content as his every need is catered for. The Lord help each of us to fully surrender all to you. Help us to be child-like living in the present moment, as it is not for us to know the future.

Our days are in the Lord's hands and it is our challenge to trust him completely - he gives us only good gifts, and I can now see that caring for Freddie was God's gift to me.

*Ros Powell is a Christian Evangelist. You can find out more about her work at [www.rospowell.com](http://www.rospowell.com)*

*Used with permission [www.ccr.org.uk](http://www.ccr.org.uk)*





## **Old age is often feared and despised rather than honoured in Western culture.**

Sixty might be the new 40 for those with good genes, energy and money, but we can't forever stave off the process of ageing - whether it is the diminishment of our health, our memory or our energy.

In a society where you are defined by your job, your looks, your status or your money, it can be difficult to hold on to your sense of self-worth and self-esteem when these seem to be dwindling.

Hopefully as Christians we have a different perspective. If not, God can often use the ageing process to teach us valuable spiritual lessons.

Old age then becomes part of God's process of preparing us to leave this world and to be ready for the next rather than something to run away from or fear. Part of this preparation is simply that life here often becomes less agreeable.

If you are in constant pain or bedridden, if most of your friends have died, if you can't eat the food you like, and your hearing or eyesight has gone and you can't do the things you have always enjoyed doing, the desire to stay becomes less strong and heaven becomes more appealing.

## **He witnessed that death was something to embrace without fear**

In Good News last year, we had a wonderful article from Pat Brown about journeying with her husband in the last year of his life, as his health got worse and worse, and she wrote about the many graces they experienced together during this difficult time.

More recently I spoke to another friend, Frances, whose husband Bernard died recently. Frances was full of joy about the last three months of his life and the beautiful way her husband had died. Surrounded by his children and grandchildren, he had witnessed to them that death was something to embrace without fear. In the way he died, he reaped the reward for a lifetime of service to his family and others.

We can be sure that it will be the same for all those who have served the Lord. They will not be abandoned at the end either. Jesus himself promises us this when he says, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be." (John 14:3) Before we get to that final moment of death, however, the ageing process helps to remind us

that this world is not our permanent home and it helps prepare us for the new life awaiting us. It also helps us to grow in humility and poverty.

Our society encourages us to be self-sufficient. When you get old, however strong you might have once been, you start to need others more.

This can make one feel vulnerable but it is also an opportunity to grow in dependence on God and for charity to be stirred in others and for community to grow.

To be dependent on others can be hard as it can make one feel worthless or a burden. Yet this is all part of God's providence too, as God is not only working in our lives, but using our situation to work in the lives of those around us and bringing His Kingdom. He is teaching us that whether we are receiving or giving, everything is God's grace, and we shouldn't feel superior if we give and inferior if we receive!

## **Where once you were at the hub... now you are on the periphery**

Those who have been powerful or influential can find it particularly difficult to cope with old age and the changes that this can bring. Where once you were the hub around which everything and everyone revolved, now you are on the periphery. It doesn't matter if you have been a busy mother or the MD of a multi-national, old age, often sees a move away from the centre of power which can be difficult to cope with. The challenge is accepting this and not trying to maintain your position, which is no longer appropriate.

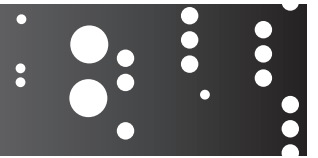
Grandparents often have to learn this when they see things going on in the homes of their children that they would never have allowed or permitted.

There is a big difference between the old granny who makes her family's life a misery because of her views and demands, and insists on things being her way, the "right way" compared to the older person, to whom everyone naturally turns for compassion and sympathy because of her life experience and wisdom.

Why is it that we are attracted to some old people and not to others? I realise it is often because they are always so interested in you and want to know what you have been doing, rather than insisting on telling you a catalogue of their doings - often at this stage a list of hospital appointments or aches and pains! We all like being listened to, as it makes us feel loved and affirmed but whereas in charity we might listen to the woes of an elderly person, it's the one who listens and who is interested in us to whom we are naturally attracted.

## **Be part of the appreciative audience in someone else's life**

When I give talks I often tell what I hope are insightful or entertaining stories which are usually well received. I realise in this lies a danger for me, however, as I can seek to transfer this privileged position to my private life



too. I can presume that those around me will be equally interested in what I have to say, rather than me wanting to know more about what they have been up to.

Instead of insisting on remaining centre stage how much better to be part of the appreciative audience in someone else's life, rejoicing in their achievements rather than keeping them abreast of my own.

Yet I know I often feel the need to entertain, rather than listen, to impress rather than be impressed.

The good news is that if we don't voluntarily learn to take a back seat, God ensures that biology helps us to embrace this whether we like it or not. Yet old age because of life experience brings wisdom that can be very useful for others.

Wisdom takes a lifetime to acquire and it is interesting that when one looks in the bible, how often characters didn't begin their major work for God, until they were quite old, and seasoned in the ways of the Lord.

One only has to think about Moses, who had to spend 40 years at Pharaoh's court followed by 40 years as a herdsman in the wilderness of Midian, before he was ready to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt to the Promised Land.

Sometimes we can dismiss old people and not think about asking their opinion, but I know I have been amazed at times at the wisdom of my 84 year old mother, when I think to ask her advice.

### **God had other plans**

One of the most difficult things to cope with as an older person is losing one's health and energy. But there can be a blessing too in this.

I remember Fr Tom Kenny, from Wakefield, who died in May this year. He was a very dynamic and active parish priest with a passion for evangelisation. When he retired from parish work, his intention was to spend the rest of his life developing and promoting evangelisation, particularly the Alpha course.

However, God had other plans, and instead of being on the road evangelising, he spent the last ten years of his life in and out of hospital, struggling with ill health following a knee operation that went wrong. I wondered how he would cope. But he took it like the warrior he was and instead of turning in on himself and becoming frustrated and resentful he became mellow and gentle even mastering his famous temper!

He died a happy man, still serving the Lord, even if this meant celebrating Mass in his bedroom for a few people rather than preaching in front of thousands.

In old age when we are stripped of our positions and status, it is often then that our true wisdom and character is revealed.

One of the most encouraging people I have ever met

is Dom Benedict Heron OSB, who is now in his 90s and lives in a care home in North London. Once very active, he was like a bee buzzing around, finding delight everywhere. His achievements have been many. He has written best selling books, worked for ecumenism and been one of the great pioneers of the Charismatic Renewal in this country.

Because of his limited health these days, however, he doesn't go anywhere much now. But it is not his achievements that still draw people to seek him out and visit him, but the love and encouragement that he has sown over the years. Despite his infirmity, he radiates joy and enthusiasm and continues to minister from his sick bed, still praying for healing and encouraging others.

### **I did not know how to live without all my achievements**

I remember some years ago being very struck by a sharing by Dominique Ferry, who had had a very successful career in business before he joined the Chemin Neuf Community where he ended up with an equally high profile. He told us about a powerful image he received about himself whilst on a retreat.

In his mind's eye he saw himself confidently arriving at the border of the Kingdom of God, driving a huge container lorry filled with all his considerable achievements. To his horror it was explained that he couldn't bring the truck in with him. He had to just walk in himself.

He was terrified and realised that "Every single grace that I had received from the Lord, I had stolen some of the glory to build up my own ego. Every gift of God to me had become an occasion of sin and pride. I realised I could not enter the Kingdom of God with it all, yet I did not know how to live without all my achievements. I was frightened to be vulnerable."

Over the years I have come to realise that all my projects and the work that God has asked me to undertake, however laudable, are actually there for my personal spiritual growth rather than as things to "succeed" in or achieve.

God is more interested in whether I have grown in love and faith than how many people showed up for a talk or enjoyed an article I wrote.

And ageing for all its pains, if it is properly embraced is one of the natural and most speedy ways for God to complete our spiritual growth.

This is to make us ready for heaven, where we certainly won't be the centre but will be worshipping Him for eternity.

*Used with permission [www.ccr.org.uk](http://www.ccr.org.uk)*

**The next Open House Healing Prayer day  
will be Saturday 26 November 2016.**



# AFTER LEADERSHIP - WHERE TO FROM HERE?

By ALLAN PANOZZA



My wife Carmel and I were led into the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in February 1978. We had been invited to attend the prayer meeting held weekly at a Carmelite Monastery in the Melbourne suburb of Donvale, and it also happened to be the first night of an introductory course of eight weeks known as a Life in the Spirit Seminar. That seminar was the beginning of a new phase in my life, beginning with the moment that a small group of people laid hands on me - and prayed that I would receive what they called Baptism in the Holy Spirit. In their prayers, I heard them asking God to pour out His Holy Spirit upon me as happened when St. Paul encountered the risen Christ on his journey to Damascus. As they continued to pray and lay hands on me, I also encountered the person of Jesus in a new experience of His presence, and I remember silently saying to God - and really meaning it - "I give you my life." At that moment, I found myself praying aloud and praising God in what they called "the gift of tongues." From that day forward my life began to change. I found a new relationship with Jesus, in that previously I would have said that I knew about Him, but now I could say with absolute conviction that "I knew Him."

In dealing with the role of leadership, I should first highlight what it meant to me during my almost thirty years of active participation in leadership in my local, national, and international experience. At the time when we joined a Charismatic prayer group I held an important position in a multinational company, and to my surprise in 1985 I was invited by the local coordinators to work in a full time capacity for the Renewal in Melbourne, with the role of Executive Director. After praying to the Lord for guidance, I accepted this role on the condition that the Archbishop would sanction the appointment, and the wider body of the Renewal would accept me in this important responsibility. In preparation for this work, I used to visit a chapel in the local Catholic School to pray earnestly before the Blessed Sacrament, asking Jesus for two gifts, which I felt would be necessary for me in this new and important work for the Lord. The two gifts that I sought were first, wisdom so that I might speak and teach in the power of the Holy Spirit rather than in my own power. The second was the gift of humility so that in my ministry it would be Jesus who would be praised and honoured. One evening at dusk, as I was about to leave the chapel, I had an extraordinary experience. In the silence, I clearly heard Jesus speaking to me in these words: "Allan, do not ask me for those gifts. Ask Me rather that I would draw you daily into a deeper relationship with Me, and then I will give you the gifts that you need..." This, then, became the pattern of my prayer, relying increasingly on Jesus being the source of my ministry.

Over the years, I have witnessed miracles as a result of praying for different needs, but always through the presence of Jesus directing me from within. I found that, from time to time within different prayer groups, I would be approached by a leader or leaders who would complain

that they were not being supported by the other leaders, or that they were not affirmed in what they believed was their own particular ministry. It is essential for individuals in leadership, and also leadership groups as a whole, to pray earnestly for the grace of the Lord to be poured out upon them in order to maintain unity without division. I think that the greatest enemy we face as leaders is disunity, which can penetrate the prayer group or community like ink through blotting paper. If every leadership group exercised its authority in love and mutual harmony, then good fruit will be seen in abundance.

If a leader chooses not to judge others but to affirm them and see the good in them, the power of the Holy Spirit will be poured out in abundance. The success or failure of a leader will ultimately be measured by the example of their lives. What are the fruits of the Holy Spirit (*Gal 5:23*), which are evident whether they are still serving as a leader within CCR, or have retired from that position? Good leadership looks to the future, and the need to allow "fresh water" to flow through the group bringing all of the Gifts with which Jesus will bless its ministry. If a leader grimly sticks to his/her role, refusing to accept the discernment of the body that their time has now passed, the bitter fruit of their ministry will soon be obvious. A good axiom is: "don't just do what I say—do what I do." I believe that the example of my life should now be the best form of my witness, and will continue to be thus for those still in leadership, or even for those who no longer attend the prayer meetings or events.

My final word of advice to leaders in CCR is to never forget that we are all members of the Body of Christ - the Church. When writing to the Ephesians on the sanctity of marriage, St Paul uses as a graphic example the relationship between Christ and the Church. "A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way that Christ treats the Church, because it is his body - and we are its living parts..." (*Eph 5:29,30*).

As a person specially chosen by Jesus to be deeply involved in his work of renewing the Church, a leader in Catholic Charismatic Renewal should have a desire to grow in love for the Church, and deepen his / her relationship with it. Since 2011 when I retired from my active leadership roles in the Renewal, I have been drawn by the Lord into other forms of ministry by giving witness of my relationship with Jesus through my active involvement in Parish life. That includes such other ministries as bringing Holy Communion to the sick and infirm, participating in our local Church as a lector, and on occasion conducting a Communion Service when a priest is not available. Also, I have made myself available to pray for others in their needs and to extend comfort to them. I am happy in these activities because I am aware of the solid leadership that is presently in place for the Renewal in Australia, and for the advice I can offer when requested. I feel that I can sum up my almost 35 years as a leader in the Renewal in the words of St Paul: "During my stay with you, the only knowledge I claimed to have was about Jesus, and only about him as the Crucified Christ."

# CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL JUBILEE CONFERENCE



## THE GREAT DISCOVERY THE HOLY SPIRIT

16-20 JANUARY 2017

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241 ROYAL PARADE,  
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**SATURDAY 21 JANUARY A PRAISE RALLY AT  
COLLINGWOOD TOWN HALL. PRESENTED BY ONE.**

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accommodation  
is available.  
Please phone  
the Centre on  
9486 6544.*

### SPEAKERS

#### MICHELLE MORAN

Michelle together with her husband Peter is a founder member of Sion Catholic Community for Evangelism. She originally trained as a teacher and taught in a College for 5 years before ministering full time in Sion Community.



Michelle has been involved in Catholic Charismatic renewal from her youth. She had a "conversion" experience and was baptised in the Holy Spirit as a teenager. She has ministered in CCR all over the world as a conference speaker and teacher. Michelle is currently Chair of the NSC for Catholic Charismatic Renewal in England and Wales and President of ICCRS, the International Council for Renewal in Rome. In 2007 she was appointed by Pope Benedict XVI to be a member of the Pontifical Council of the Laity. One of her desires is to see the next generation of young leaders in CCR trained and equipped for ministry and leadership.

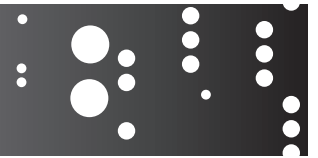
#### ULF EKMAN

Ulf Ekman is the founder of Word of Life, a non-denominational Charismatic church in Uppsala, Sweden and was its Senior Pastor for 30 years.



In May 2014 he and his wife Birgitta converted and joined the Catholic Church. Ekman has held conferences and leadership seminars in many nations, especially in the former USSR, Eastern Europe and India. He founded bible schools and a Theological Seminary, hosted a TV show aired in many nations, and has written more than 40 books and booklets, translated into over 30 languages. For three years he and his wife lived in Jerusalem. He presently lives in Uppsala with his wife and they have four sons and seven grandchildren.

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As I write this article I remember that when I awoke this morning I was interiorly singing *"Glory to God in the Highest and peace to His people on earth!"* over and over again, even as I was driving to work. A bit early for Christmas themes, I thought! But perhaps it was the spirit telling me, I'm sure, to get this article written as it would be the last for this year and the one nearest Christmas.

Advent draws near and so we all begin to look towards the birth of the Child Jesus who comes to us in all simplicity. He comes to restore our 'hope' just as was promised from of old. There's a certain wonder and hope that is restored to us when we look on a new born babe, isn't there? How much more hope and wonder is there when we await the coming of the Infant Jesus into our hearts? After all, there is something more than what we see with our physical eyes, it's what we perceive with our spiritual eyes and our hearts rejoice to understand that the God of all creation has rendered himself so small and powerless to give us the hope of something more. That something is the hope of redemption and eternal life with Him forever. That life He gives to us now if we but listen with our spiritual eyes and ears. *Romans 15:13 say 'May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope'.*

Hope brings a smile to the face. Hopelessness makes you dour. Sadly, in today's world hope seems to have been replaced by a fatalistic negativism. Too many people do not know Jesus and the real meaning of His birth at Christmas.

I sometimes think back to the three Magi and I'm intrigued by their boldness and their faith in something greater than themselves. Three kings who undoubtedly had the best of everything that life could offer them at the time, i.e., power, wealth and reputation. Yet they each knew that something greater was missing from their lives. They each had a desire to encounter the promised Messiah and set out on a journey that would lead them to a foreign land. These three kings bowed before the child born in a stable. Three kings dressed in their fineries bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh knew that the child in the manger was greater than they were and paid Him homage. Can we in our 'nothingness' prepare to do Him homage, this God child born in Bethlehem this Christmas?

Let us open our hearts and begin that journey. Whilst we may not know what we will encounter along that journey, we know that we can encounter Jesus at Christmas and bring him our hearts and our lives. Those lives might be messy, painful or filled with hopelessness and despair. The Child Jesus can restore hope in our lives and bring a smile to our lips and restore our joy.

May you each experience the great gift of Joy which the Child Jesus wants to impart to you all as you invite Him into your lives anew! A Happy and hope filled Christmas to you all!



## Ministry in Lae, PNG

The plan was to share a meal, relax with friends, followed by a good nights sleep. I was to meet Fr John Rea early the following morning and fly to Papua New Guinea. We had a full week of ministry planned together in the Lae Diocese of PNG. I received a phone call: "Mrs Brereton? It's the Brisbane airport here. Fr John Rea has collapsed and been taken to hospital by ambulance". On arrival to the hospital we found Fr John sitting up in bed praying with the young ambulance officer who bought him in and evangelising the nursing staff. He looked great, with a big smile on his face and chatting away as though he were in a 5 star luxury hotel suite. However by 5am the following morning I was told he had suffered a heart attack and was unable to travel. A slight dilemma one would think but not for the Holy Spirit. A quick phone call to New Zealand and within a few hours Brendan Woodnutt was on his way to PNG to minister with me.

Landing in Lae a fellow passenger observed a welcoming party. "There must be a VIP on the plane" he announced. Imagine my surprise when I turned out to be the VIP. I discovered how incredibly warm and welcoming are the people of PNG. There was dancing, singing and rejoicing. This theme continued throughout the week of ministry. During the day Brendan and I presented teachings and all those gathered Praised the Lord through music and dance. We spoke on God's Mercy, His love, the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. We had workshops on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and prayed for a new release of the Spirit. A very special time was when we separated the women and the men. I spoke to the women on our feminine uniqueness in being made in God's image and the tremendous gift of friendship we have for each other. Brendan spoke on leading as men of God.

For three consecutive evenings there was an outdoor Healing Rally. The first night we prayed for each individual person who wanted prayer, around 1,000 in number. By the third evening close to 2,000 people were attending. The Holy Spirit worked powerfully and healed many. Together we sang and danced. Preached and prayed. Rejoiced loudly and stood in complete silence before the Lord. Brendan and I were in a privileged position on the stage. To see 2,000 people praising the Lord loudly and dancing is beautiful. To witness 2000 people standing in silence, with eyes closed and arms outstretched while the Holy Spirit moved powerfully among them, is to stand on Holy Ground.

Please pray for our brothers and sisters in Papua New Guinea. They feel so encouraged knowing that they are not forgotten. I would like to publicly thank ICCRS who sponsored this outreach through their HopeSack initiative and CCR Perth who covered Brendan's expenses. My sincere thanks to Len and Pat Airey who visited Fr Rea daily in hospital providing him with reading material and support.

ANN BRERETON

ICCRS Oceania Representative & NSC Chairperson  
Australia



# MARK YOUR DIARIES...



## Renewal Days

An opportunity for fellowship with others and growth through teachings.

**18 February, 20 May, 19 August and 18 November 2017.**

Our Lady Help of Christians Hall, 49 Nicholson St, East Brunswick.

**NO PARKING IN SCHOOL GROUNDS.** *Public Transport:* train to Parliament Station, tram no.96 along Nicholson St to stop no.22.

## Annual Conference

16 - 20 January 2017

Special guests Michelle Moran and Ulf Ekman will help us celebrate 50 years. There will be an open Praise Rally on Saturday 21 January led by ONE. Brochures now available.

## 50th Anniversary Mass

Sunday 26 February

On Sunday 26 February Archbishop Hart will offer a Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral in celebration for 50 years of Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Praise and worship will begin at 2pm and the Mass at 2.30pm. Please invite everyone to come along and celebrate with us, especially any past members of CCR.

## Can't make it to a Healing Prayer Centre during the week? These are dates for 2017.

Then you are welcome to come to the Open House Healing Ministry Days 2017: Saturday's 25 March, 24 June, 23 September and 25 November. 9.30am - 2.30pm at the CCR Centre.

CHARISMATIC MASSES	TIME	VENUE
Third Sunday	12 Noon	St Benedict's, Burwood
HEALING MASSES	TIME	VENUE
Each Sunday	7.00pm	Holy Family, Doveton (Ministry after)
First Saturday	2.30pm – 5pm Adoration followed by Healing Mass	St Peter's, 38 Guinane Ave, Hoppers Crossing
First Sunday	2.30pm	St Peter Chanel, Deer Park
	3.00pm Praise & Worship, 3.30pm Mass	St Christopher's Parish, 5 Doon Ave, Glen Waverley
	5.00pm	St Benedicts, Burwood. Prayer Ministry after Mass, Praise Rally at 7.00pm
	5.30pm Praise, Worship, Adoration 6pm Mass, followed by Prayer Ministry	St Marks, Fawkner
First Monday	7.00pm Praise, 7.30pm Mass	St Joseph's, Springvale Phone 9547 9557
First Friday	8.00pm	St Patrick's Parish, Rovira House, 5 Dalny Road Murrumbeena
	8.15pm	St Peter's Clayton
First Wednesday	7.30pm	St Peter & Paul, East Doncaster
Third Wednesday	7.30pm	St Mary's, Castlemaine
Third Thursday	7.30pm	Our Lady Help of Christians, Henry St, Eltham
Third Sunday	5.30pm	St Francis Xavier, Frankston
	5.30pm Praise, 6.00pm Mass	Good Samaritan Chapel, 1-29 Southern Cross Drive, Roxburgh Park
Fourth Tuesday	10.00am	St Joseph's, Chelsea
First Friday	10.00am	Holy Hour For Priests St Anthony's, Noble Park

### St Peter's, East Bentleigh - Healing Masses:

Monday 6 February 2017 with Fr Wahid

Monday's 6 June & 20 November with Fr Francis.

### St Joan of Arc, Brighton - Healing Mass:

24 November 2016 at 7.30pm.