

NOVEMBER 2018

# Good News

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

**Catholic Charismatic Renewal  
serving the Church**



**The newsletter of the  
Catholic Charismatic Renewal.  
Melbourne, Australia.**

**[www.ccr.org.au](http://www.ccr.org.au)**

## Challenge the narrative!

By LENYCE WILLASON



Early Saturday morning, 6 October, Christine Grech and I, along with approximately 200 Pastors, Politicians and Media attended the ENGAGE breakfast, sponsored by the Gideon Society and Stairway Church. This gathering presented an opportunity to build a vision together as Church, Marketplace and Ministry leaders to begin a journey of transformation for greater Melbourne. A vision to see the love of God released and recognised in our City with a unity of heart within the people of God.

The guest speakers were Ps Karl Faase, CEO of Olive Tree Media and Ps Peter McHugh from Stairway Church.

Ps Karl challenged all in attendance with his forthright and strong message. His opening statement, *Christians are a negative influence* certainly had everyone sitting up and paying attention. *The world dislikes the Church, the church is dying because the outcome of negative thinking is to retreat, apologise and defend. Christians need to challenge the narrative and build confidence. What use to the world is a Church that doesn't believe the Gospel?* he said.

I believe all in attendance agreed with him. The way of change is to be positive. Don't withdraw your voice from the market place. Our society can trace its roots back to the words of Jesus so don't be ashamed to stand on this. Build confidence by not being concerned with being popular. We need a strategy of resilience and strength as well as cultural relevance he said. (See prophetic word on page 9).

Be the person who serves by serving your local community. It is an interesting statistic that 60% of Christians know nothing of their local area. We are so busy Facebooking internationally, becoming involved in International mission and events and we don't know the person next door. The Greco Roman world of the first Christians was a brutal place, yet they served and loved. Our failure often is to underestimate the words of Jesus – "whatever you did to the least of these" (Matt 25:40). Don't just follow what you have been fed – follow Jesus.

Ps Peter McHugh continued the thoughts by asking the questions: *How do we engage with one another? What might that look like? We don't have to see eye to eye on everything to be able to walk hand in hand in something.* In *Jeremiah 29:7* God says to the prophet "to seek the welfare of the city". *One way we can accomplish this is to not be in a hurry to get into action. Instead, build relationships, see the "Imago Dei" in everyone. God loves people, so our question ought to be - how can I serve you?*

As Christians we stand on the Biblical Principle of one Baptism, One Body in Christ and this calls us to live in a heart to heart form of unity. To live from the space of *John 17* means unwrapping the spiritual – love is the defining aspect of who we are. We need to learn to love one another. There is a move of God, currently that says, "I want to get to know you". It is not a case of what can I get out of it – but what can I give? How many of us know the area we live in? Know the Churches and Councils and the areas and people that need our love?

These are very stimulating thoughts for us to ponder as we move forward as people of God. We need to find impact together and not let the differences separate us. It is very humbling to be able to pray together with so many believers in love with God. Try it for yourself in your area.

If God is making a way perhaps it is time for us to listen, put aside the ways in which we judge one another and begin to love unconditionally and not be ashamed of being Christian.



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# ACROSS MY DESK

By LENYCE WILLASON

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## Good News

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The deadline for the next issue of *Good News* is  
**Friday 25 January 2019.**



Hope, to many people, seems to be a fleeting thing, yet as I look around in this year of 2018 there are many signs of goodness and hope if we would but open our eyes to see. We live in a society where negativity has had the spotlight for far too long. The hope I am witnessing is drowning out the negative voices.

Ernest Hemingway wrote in *A Farewell to Arms* that although the world breaks everyone, *many are strong at the broken places*. What an inspiration it was to witness the courage of the competitors at the Invictus Games. How humbling and hope filled it was to witness these wounded people recover from the experience of being broken and through the love and support of community go on to be stronger than they were before, regaining their sense of self and dignity after suffering life changing injuries. Watching Edwin Vermetten support his tennis partner, Paul Guest, as his PTSD was triggered by an overhead helicopter. What eyes didn't fill with tears as Edwin quietly sang 'Let it go' from the movie 'Frozen' as he cradled Paul and help him overcome his terrors. We saw firsthand hope restored through the power of sport and the community that surrounds it. In the words of the Duke of Sussex, *they are men and women who have confronted a challenge and overcome it. They are ordinary people doing extraordinary things. And with the help of their friends and families, they have exceeded every expectation. Hope restored.*

I have long been fascinated by the way Hollywood seems to be the voice of society. In fact, knowing that what is shown in the spiritual is made manifest in the physical, I often wonder what comes first? The chicken or the egg? I refer here to a new Television program about to begin. It is called "God friended me". The trailers ask: What Would You Do If The Almighty Tried To Add You On Facebook? They say the Almighty works in mysterious ways and, in this case, it's through Facebook. A description of the series includes: 'We've all had those friend requests that we leave in limbo for longer than we should, but for one self-proclaimed "pesky atheist who wants to make you think," ignoring this one might not be an option.' The show goes on to pose the question: 'what if we were all connected'? How many times have we been challenged to find new ways to spread the Gospel? It fills me with hope that the Holy Spirit is inspiring people to do just that.

Over the last five years there has been a major move of God right across the world for unity among Christians. It is happening, in Melbourne, in the world and through the voice of Hollywood – hope that God is afoot in this world to bring us all to a place where we will love one another – unconditionally.

Biblical hope is a desire based on a promise from God. This promise communicates the possibility of God's blessing to the individual and encourages the soul. If one will plant this seed into the soil of the heart, and if the soil is kept right, it will bring forth a harvest of faith.

This Advent I want to warm myself by the fire of hope. I will read and read chapter 11 of the book of Hebrews where there is recorded a long list of people who show us how to hope in God and God's faithful response.

*Lord Jesus, how can we sufficiently thank you for the hope that you put within us when we abide in you – the one steady place in a world of flux and change.*

**The CCR Centre will be closed from Friday 14 December  
and re-open on Monday 7 January 2019.**

# GO..... WHERE THE WATER IS

By TRUDY CLARKE (CCR Townsville)

Through the Prophet Isaiah God invites us to "come to the water all who are thirsty". God is very inviting, God is always encouraging us to be with him, sit with him, receive from him, live in him. "Come", whoever thirsts! The word thirsts seems to indicate 'intense desire', a yearning for something to drink. As the body craves water, the soul also thirsts for God. (Ps.42:2; 63:1)

To whom is God's invitation given? It is given to all who are thirsty and all who have a deep need of him. The prophet Isaiah was addressing the people of Israel who were suffering under Babylonian captivity, and they were hungry and thirsty. God sent his invitation letter to all of them. His invitation is still there today, and is extended to all people.

Life emerges out of water in Genesis 1, in which the entire created order emerges out of water and God makes the waters "swarm" with life (Gen. 1:20-21). And in the second Creation story in which God makes "a stream ... rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground" (Genesis 2:6), life emerges from water. Consistent with our understanding of science (no water, no life), the Bible reminds us of our utter dependence on water. It is our origin. It sustains and renews us. It makes everything possible. In the Christian tradition, water represents Christ's life in us. In Baptism we are immersed in water to die with Christ, in order that we might also emerge as a brand new person. Rom. 6:3-6 Jesus is the one who meets the souls' thirst with the water of life. (Jn 4:13)

After a very long and busy year our CCR team and Prayer Group takes a well-earned two month break from December to February. Townsville being a tropical city, you can imagine that it is fairly hot at that time of the year. So we take an extended break for a number of reasons, heat; tired; and people take their holidays. In the heat of the summer months, our bodies do a lot of perspiring, in fact they cry out for more fluids. Fortunately we are able

to satisfy them with water. Townsville is currently in a drought. We haven't had a decent wet season for many years, and are currently on level 2 water restrictions. This means we must be very conscious of how we use our water, and mindful not to waste it. Needless to say, our grass and gardens are parched and dry and quite brown at the moment. We pray regularly for the blessing of rain. There are also seasons in our life when we might feel spiritually dry. Do we recognize it? In fact the awareness of spiritual dryness is a gift from God. It is his invitation to come and partake of his life and his spirit. "You are my God and I earnestly seek you, I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water." (Ps 63:1)

What does it mean to be thirsty? People carry big purified water bottles these days and they can buy water easily. In fact the size of the water bottle seems to increase every year. But it seems to me, people are still thirsty.

We cannot survive without water; however the prophet isn't speaking about natural water but rather the water that Jesus was talking about. Not the kind of water that will satisfy for only a few hours or so, but the spiritual water which satisfies for all time. This spring of water wells "up to eternal life" and He (Jesus) is the only source of that living water. (Jn 14:4) The offer of this water promises that we will never be thirsty again.

## Go where the water is

So although in December I look forward to the summer break, what seems to happen is, by the time January comes around I start to miss my CCR family, and long for time together again. What I've come to realize is that my body may be tired, but my spirit is longing for spiritual nourishment. I miss the time spent praying together, the fellowship, the friendship etc. Thirst is one of the most powerful spiritual symbols in scripture.

*continued on page 6*

The poster features a green and white background with a map of Australia in the center. The text "ICCRS CHARISM SCHOOL Australia" is prominently displayed in green and black. Below the map, the dates "27<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019" are written. On the left side, there is a circular portrait of Deacon Christoff Hemberger, with text identifying him as a member of the ICCRS Council responsible for Northern & Western Europe. On the right side, there is a circular portrait of Ann Brereton, with text identifying her as the Chairperson of the Australian National Service Committee. At the bottom left, the ICCRS logo is shown, and at the bottom right, there is a small illustration of people celebrating. The full name "INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL SERVICES" is written at the bottom.

**Deacon Christoff Hemberger**  
Member of the ICCRS Council, where he is responsible for Northern & Western Europe

**ICCRS CHARISM SCHOOL Australia**  
27<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019

**Ann Brereton**  
Chairperson, Australian National Service Committee

**ICCRS** INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL SERVICES



*“Unity is  
a journey  
led by  
the Spirit  
of truth,  
leading  
us into  
all truth”*



John Duiker

Co-ordinator Sale Diocese  
& member of the Doctrinal  
Commission of ICCRS

# Reconciled Diversity

By JOHN DUIKER

My wife and I have nine children, and perhaps one of the things that strikes us more than anything else is how unique each child is. They have the same parents, raised in the same environment, but each one of them has their own personality, their own gifts and their own way of relating to the family and to the world around them. They are each so beautiful in their own way. Yet how do we ensure that they develop and grow whilst respecting their differences and uniqueness, and at the same time maintain family cohesiveness? It is a challenge, that is for sure, but we have discovered more and more that if we surrender to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in our lives that he will help us and provide for all our needs. He helps appreciate, encourage and develop the giftedness in each other, not just for our own personal satisfaction, but for the love and service of others. At the same time he also maintains our family identity, our sense of belonging and the understanding that we are each a part of a greater whole. What we have also found, is that when one person focuses more on themselves to the exclusion of others, that is when that family cohesiveness and unity tends to be diminished.

If the family then, according to *Lumen Gentium*, can be understood as the ‘domestic church’, the first place where the faith is cultivated and where the foundations for the wider church are instilled, then there are lessons that can be learnt from it. Consider this in the context of Reconciled Diversity, a form of ecumenism. It is a term that first surfaced in Church circles around the 1970s, and was probably first used in Lutheran circles around that time. In fact it was most likely Oscar Cullman, a Lutheran theologian, who popularized it. Before proceeding with a more in depth look at this term however, it is worthwhile to consider the approach of the Church to ecumenism in general.

Prior to Vatican II, what was sought after by the mainline churches, was a visible and institutional unity of the churches. This is how probably most of us tend to view it even today: a kind of melting into one of all the churches; a position where everyone else agrees with ‘my vision’ of church. Is that going to be tenable? Before answering that question, we need to consider our definition of church: if we accept that baptism is entry into the church, and if we accept the baptism of other denominations, then we cannot say that only Roman Catholic baptism is valid. Our concept of church must therefore go beyond denominational boundaries. The church is therefore something much broader than the Roman Catholic church; all who are baptized in accordance with the faith are therefore brothers and sisters. We are a family. There is something more profound at work than mere denominational lines here. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. Before we start asking everyone to be ‘like us’ therefore, we need to ensure we understand and have an appreciation of the uniqueness and giftedness of all our brothers and sisters in Christ; to do otherwise is to tread a path of arrogance and naivety that will lead to disunity in the family.

Look at what happened with the European settlement of Australia. One of the basic premises of their interaction with the aborigines was that ‘they should be like us’, which resulted in many disturbing interactions categorized by a lack of respect for the indigenous peoples. A contrasting example to that is the Benedictine Monk, Rosendo Salvado of New Norcia in WA. He lived with the aboriginal people, came to understand them and their spirituality and wanted to show that Europeans and Aborigines were equal. He saw the dignity, uniqueness and giftedness of both cultures. This was quite a unique view at the time. To a large extent he was successful in his work precisely because he was able to hold that tension between being different and yet remembering that we are all part of the one human family. Salvado remains a wonderful example of unity in diversity today.

As a contrasting view, the 'they should be like us' attitude, also reminds me of 'the Borg' – humanity's greatest enemy from Star Trek. Their sole purpose was to conquer and assimilate worlds into their collective. Those who were assimilated were made to be 'like them', to be robotic and where they would lose their uniqueness, life and colour. Although I am using dramatic type imagery, this is the kind of thing we will do with others if we do not appreciate their dignity, uniqueness and giftedness. We will try and assimilate them and lord it over them and through it end up losing sight of them as a human person who is loved by God just as much as we are.

If our vision of church and ecumenism is one where we expect everyone 'to be like us'; if it is one that fails to appreciate the uniqueness and giftedness of the other, then it is perhaps one that is more focused on the self than the other; which from my own family experience, tends to lend itself more to disunity than anything else.

With the coming of Vatican II, the approach to ecumenism changed somewhat. There was a shift in attitude with more of an openness to other denominations and a lessening of 'they should be like us' approach. This is in no doubt the fruits of the church rediscovering the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and the influence of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Through this the whole idea of ecumenism, and therefore, Christian unity, gained a richer flavor.

In the decades after Vatican II then, we find Oscar Cullman publishing a book called 'Unity through Diversity' in 1988. In it he proposed that unity is only possible through the Holy Spirit and that apart from the Holy Spirit no unity is possible. He recognised that although the Holy Spirit brings unity, where the Holy Spirit is there is also much diversity through the gifts that he brings (which, I might add, goes way beyond the traditional 7 gifts of the Spirit as often taught in Catholic sacramental theology). This is something therefore, which any form of ecumenism will need to hold in tension: unity and diversity. Something that a well-balanced family will do. Interestingly, Cullman also stated that whoever does not respect this richness and diversity and seeks uniformity instead (i.e. making everyone the same), sins against the Holy Spirit because they would be trying to restrict the Spirit, to stop him from working.

Because of this new openness in ecumenical dialogue and interaction post Vatican II, the work of Oscar Cullman has had somewhat of a profound influence in the Church. He is amongst one of Pope Francis' favorite writers and so we find the term 'reconciled diversity', used frequently by the Holy Father. This is interesting because as Vatican II ushered in a shift in approach to ecumenism, Pope Francis may well be at the forefront of another shift. In *Evangelii Gaudium* for example, he says this

*"If we really believe in the abundantly free working of the Holy Spirit, we can learn so much from one another! It is not just about being better informed about others, but*

*rather about reaping what the Spirit has sown in them, which is also meant to be a gift for us (#246)"*

There is a definite move away from the 'be like us' attitude and a move to the appreciation of the giftedness of all of our brothers and sisters, a realization that we are all part of the one family. In May 2018, in a speech to religious orders and congregations, Francis said this, which has all the echoes of Cullman's thought:

Then, there is something else: this Holy Spirit is a 'disaster' because he never tires of being creative! ...he is truly creative, with the charisms... It is interesting: he is the Author of diversity but at the same time the Creator of unity. This is the Holy Spirit. And with this diversity of charisms and many things, he makes the unity of the Body of Christ, ...and this too is a challenge

So, we can see that Pope Francis has a real appreciation of the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of people; their giftedness, their diversity and the richness of their gifts, whether those people are a part of the catholic church or not. He sees the deeper reality that we are all one in the Spirit; perhaps we could call it a 'Salvadian' approach rather than a 'Borgian' approach.

Of course, there are going to be challenges to this. Any attempt at unity will face conflict but it is how we approach such matters that will, in the end, define us. We can (1) look the issue and ignore it, or we can (2) embrace it in a such a way that we become its prisoner and project onto others our own confusion and frustrations, or we can (3) face it head on, resolve it and make it a link in a chain of a new process. It is only option (3) that paves a way for unity, to build communion amid disagreement. It is only possible however with people who are willing to go beyond the surface of the conflict and to see others in their deepest dignity. This is not to opt for a kind of absorption of one into the other (i.e. like the Borg), but rather for a resolution that takes place on a higher plane and preserves what is valid and useful on both sides (EG # 226-228).

So, this is reconciled diversity. It is not meeting with other denominations to examine the details of the doctrines they hold but it is more looking for people who know and love Jesus as the Son of God and the Son of Man and are open and sensitive to the Holy Spirit. It is rejoicing in the diversity and richness coming from the creativity of the Holy Spirit, and a rejoicing together in the God-given differences that brings a great joy and freedom. It is a real and decisive move away from theological discussions, prepared papers and handpicked representatives. It is a move towards praying and working together as brothers and sisters. It is a move that recognises that we are on a journey together. It is being more kingdom focussed than anything else.

Borrowing the thought of the late Fr Peter Hocken, reconciled diversity is essentially a 'baptised in the Spirit ecumenism' where (1) the role of the Holy Spirit in the life and mission of Jesus is emphasised, where (2) the role of

Jesus as Risen Lord pouring out his Spirit without limit on all disciples is emphasised, where (3) Jesus is recognised and honoured as the living Lord, where (4) other Christians are seen first as bearers of treasures from the Holy Spirit, where (5) the leading of the Holy Spirit is sought after & and his leading is obeyed, so that we will become a soaked in the Spirit church.

It means an investment that desires long term relationships that is based in a willingness to be vulnerable, to be open to one another, which is going to take humility, a realizing one's own weaknesses and strengths, and admitting that you don't have all the answers. It is discovering together the road to oneness; that It does not necessarily mean that we all stay within our denominational boundaries but that we are open to where the Spirit will lead us. It also recognizes the power of acceptance even when we disagree because unity of heart is the way of the Kingdom for the sake of those outside the Kingdom seeing the God who is love. This is reconciled diversity which moves way beyond cooperative effort.

Perhaps it starts in your own family, in your domestic church, with hearts and attitudes that are open to all that the Spirit wants to achieve in you and through you. This is not for you or for me, but it is to be faithful to our mission, to the mandate of church which is to 'go and make disciples of all nations' so that eventually all can stand together as one family and say 'our Father'! We can only do that as brothers and sisters, as one family in Christ. We can't do it as opponents.

*continued from page 3*

As dehydration draws the whole of our physical being to a longing for water, so a spiritual void will draw our spirits into a search for deeper meaning and longing for our lives. The Psalmist expresses it this way: "As a deer pants for water, so my soul pants for you O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God." (Ps 42:1-2) We must capture that type of spiritual thirst! We must thirst and long for God and for spiritual living water! So to satisfy my deep thirst, I make an effort to go where the water is. Each year I look forward to the CCR Melbourne Retreat week. A whole week with my spiritual family renews refreshes and revives my spiritual thirst. One of the things I appreciate about the Melbourne retreat is that it is a whole week... not just a weekend. Each day builds on the other, and by the end of it I find my spiritual thirst quenched through God's fountain of life.

1. Come
2. Buy
3. Eat
4. Enjoy

The Prophet Isaiah rightfully describes God's invitation to come eat, drink, live at no cost, indicating his grace and gift of salvation is free. However, nothing is free in this world. The week retreat in Melbourne is certainly not free and comes at a great financial cost for those of us that live in far north Queensland. Costs of airfares, accommodation,

food, Conference fee etc. for us come to around \$1600. This would certainly cover the cost of a holiday elsewhere. At the same time weighing up the financial cost to the spiritual benefit each year, my choice is always the latter. Listen to God's word. "Listen to me, and eat what is good and your souls will delight in the richest of food." (v2) "Incline your ear and come to me; listen, that your soul may live." (v3)

Going to where the water is in January to listen to God's word, receive it in my heart and obey it, allows my soul to feast on the richest of foods. This is the food that sustains and nourishes me. This is the water that satisfies my deep thirst.

After drinking in the Holy Spirit and feasting on his word and his presence, I usually return to Townsville with my spiritual tank full. I feel energized and bursting with an opportunity to share what I have learnt and received. I almost always come away with God's vision for the year, and deeply grateful for God's gracious invitation to Come. What a blessing!

So, if you are feeling spiritually thirsty, might I suggest that the water is right in front of you. Drink it!

### **Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life**

A new, single, international service  
for Catholic Charismatic Renewal.



The Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, wishes to announce that on 8 December 2018 the Holy See will erect a body providing a new, single, international service for the needs of Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Church. At the same date, the statutes of this body will be approved, *ad experimentum*. This body, requested on several occasions by the Holy Father Pope Francis, will be called CHARIS, and will operate in favour of all expressions of the current of grace that is Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

As a body in the service of all the realities of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, CHARIS will not exercise any authority over these realities. Each single charismatic reality will remain as it is, fully respected its own identity, and under the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical authority upon which it currently depends. However, to help fulfil its own mission, each of these realities will be able to benefit freely from the many services CHARIS will provide. Indeed, providing these services is CHARIS' fundamental objective.

After the erection of CHARIS and the approval of its statutes *ad experimentum*, the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life will appoint CHARIS' Moderator, its Ecclesiastical Assistant and the eighteen members of its International Service of Communion, for a first mandate of three years. The member representing Oceania is Mr Shayne Bennet from Brisbane.



# THE WORDS WE SPEAK: DO THEY BUILD UP OR TEAR DOWN?



By FRANCIS OLOTU

There is power in the words we speak and this power is derived from being made in the image and likeness of God. God at creation spoke this physical world into existence and so when we speak, we are either creating something good or setting in motion a destructive force. Jesus urged caution in our use of words in *Matthew 12:36* by telling us we shall account for every careless word we utter. *Proverbs 18:21* says we proclaim death or life when we speak.

The story was told of a woman who maliciously gossiped about another woman and her family in her village. She later found out that all she said was wrong and became remorseful. She went to the village's wiseman for counsel on how to undo the damage she had caused another person. The wiseman asked her to kill her chickens, pluck their feathers into a bag and, on her way down to him, she should scatter the feathers along the way. She complied. On getting to the wiseman for the next step of action, the wiseman asked her to go and pick all the feathers. She protested that the wind would have blown all the feathers away. The wiseman told her, it is the same with spoken words; once they are let out, they are irretrievable. She was asked to go and watch what she says henceforth. James tells us that we would be considered perfect if our words are perfect while Paul admonishes us that our words should be full of grace seasoned with salt (*Colossians 4:6*). How do we make a habit of speaking good words? It begins with renewal of the heart; Jesus tells us that we speak out of our heart's store of goodness or evil. Practice the following:

- Pray and ask the Lord for grace to always say words that bless, heal, soothe, edify, encourage and build up people.
- Learn to pause and do self-check whether what you are about to say or write is a bullet that hurts or a seed that will bring forth life (*Prov 18:21*).
- Get your mind renewed by constantly reading, meditating and memorising the Word of God. A good deposit of the

Word of God in your heart checks your utterances when you speak (*Psalms 119:11*).

- Imitate David who said he will bless the Lord at all times and his praise will always be in his lips (*Psalms 34:1*).
- Your thought life is very important; what you think about shows up in what you say. *Phil 4:8* asks us to think about things that are true, honourable, just, pure, lovely, gracious and excellent.
- Mind the company of those you keep, bad company corrupts good morals. Keep the company of godly persons (*Ephesians 4:29*).
- Frequent the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist to receive grace to keep improving on the quality of your utterances; it is a lifelong challenge.
- Learn to speak prophetically into your situation. Use the promises of God in the Bible to address any situation confronting you. *Job 22:28* declares you shall decree a thing and it shall be established unto thee. We must be humble at heart and audacious in spirit in our walk with God.
- Use the words of *Numbers 6:22-27* to bless your children so that God would put His name on them and preserve their lives.
- *Mark 11:22-24* and *1 Cor 4:13* encourage you speak to your challenges in faith and you will receive answers.
- If you are a priest, you may prophesy life in to your parish and pull down strongholds in the lives of your parishioners.
- If you're growing old, declare upon yourself that "your youth is being renewed like the eagles" (*Psalms 103:4*) and "as your years increase so shall your strength" (*Deut 33:25*). Declare also over your body that no root of sickness shall arise in your body.

In conclusion, keep a sentinel over your lips so that only words that bless people would be delivered.

*Francis Olotu is a ICCRS Council Member.  
Used with permission from ICCRS. Volume XLIV  
Number 3, May/June 2018.*

Please pray with the co-ordinators for the following intentions:

- For the 'Current of Grace' Conference in January that the Lord would renew and strengthen us in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit and reignite the flame of passion and commitment.
- For all people who share in this "current of grace", baptism in the Holy Spirit, that we may foster peace and charity throughout the church.
- We pray for CCR youth: that their inaugural national meeting will be blessed by God.
- For CHARIS, the new coming together for all expressions of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, that they would be inspired as they lead us into this "new season of grace."
- Young people and families: that God will give them a heart to know him.



## POPE FRANCIS: THOUGHTS ON ADVENT



"The season of Advent restores... a hope which does not disappoint for it is founded on God's Word. A hope which does not disappoint, simply because the Lord never disappoints!... Let us think about and feel this beauty."

Advent is a time when we strive to open our hearts to receive the Saviour, who alone is just and the sole Judge able to give to each his or her due. Here as elsewhere, countless men and women thirst for respect, for justice, for equality, yet see no positive signs on the horizon.

These are the ones to whom he comes to bring the gift of his justice (cf. Jer 33:15). He comes to enrich our personal and collective histories, our dashed hopes and our sterile yearnings. And he sends us to proclaim, especially to those oppressed by the powerful of this world or weighed down by the burden of their sins, that "Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it shall be called, 'The Lord is our righteousness'" (Jer 33:16). Yes, God is righteousness; God is justice. This, then, is why we Christians are called in the world to work for a peace founded on justice.

"Let us allow ourselves to be guided by she who is mother, [Mary], a mamma and knows how to guide us. Let us allow ourselves to be guided by her during this season of active waiting and watchfulness."

"In this season of Advent, we are called to enlarge the horizons of our hearts, to be surprised by the life which is presented each day with its novelty. In order to do this, we need to learn to not depend on our own securities, our own consolidated plans, because the Lord comes in the hour which we don't imagine. This introduces us to a much more beautiful, and great, dimension."



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

*The Coordinators of CCR Melbourne*

### CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

# A Current of Grace

EPH 1:7-8

## SPEAKERS

**15-18  
JAN  
2019**

FOR ENQUIRIES  
PHONE THE  
CCR CENTRE  
03 9486 6544



**JIM MURPHY**

INTERNATIONAL  
PRESIDENT OF CCR



**ANN BRERETON**

CHAIRPERSON  
OCEANIA



**DALE STEPHENSON**

SENIOR PASTOR CROSSWAY  
BAPTIST CHURCH



**BISHOP COLIN  
CAMPBELL**



# STOP GRUMBLING AND START PRAYING

By MAGS EAMES



How do we react when things are hard in our parishes? Mags Eames explains how she was blown away when she gave up complaining and tried a new approach.

My parish has been very much my extended family since I moved into it, 10 years ago. I love my parish and love the people in it.

As with most families, however, there are occasional problems, disagreements and annoyances.

A few months ago, a friend and I realised that, when we got together, we spent a lot of time complaining about the parish. Whilst we felt better after releasing our frustrations and having a good moan, it was not, in the long run, helpful for anyone.

The idea came to us that, maybe, we should pray for the parish instead. It would have to be simple and sustainable. So we decided, after dropping our children off at the same school in the morning, to jump into the car and spend just 10 minutes praying. Another friend found herself accidentally joining us.

## Becoming vulnerable

The first time we met was scary. These people had been my close friends for nine years. We were Godparents to each other's children. We had sat beside each other in Mass for years, run childrens' church activities together, sang together in the church choir, looked after each other's children and spent many a night in the pub. This, however, was different. It felt, to me, that we were about to make ourselves vulnerable to each other in a new way. I was used to extempore prayer, simply praying aloud from

my heart. Although they were not used to this, it seemed the way to go, so we put on our brave faces and started to intercede for our parish.

## Praying in a car park

It is amazing what God can do with 10 minutes of prayer in a car, in a town centre car park.

Jesus says: "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." (Matthew 18:20) This was certainly true that day. The presence of God was tangible in that car.

We continued to pray, 10 minutes a week, for the next few weeks. We relaxed with each other.

Our intentions were very specific and, within a fortnight, things started to change. Our prayers were being answered and the Holy Spirit was moving in the parish. It was incredible to see. Although we should not have been surprised, we were. Over the last few months, I have been reminded of God's faithfulness.

All I have to do, as His child, is to ask Him for what I need and He will answer.

## God is amazing!

As the school term drew to a close, God blew us away once more. There was an urgent visa situation which had one day left to be sorted. For some reason, it had not occurred to us to pray together about it- after all, it was not a 'parish' problem. However, that day we prayed. Three hours later the phone call came to say the situation was resolved. God is amazing!

It has been a simple lesson for me: stop grumbling, and turn your face to God- "For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened." (Matthew 7:8)

Article used with permission from CCR UK.

Image by DANIEL GOMEZ, PEXELS.

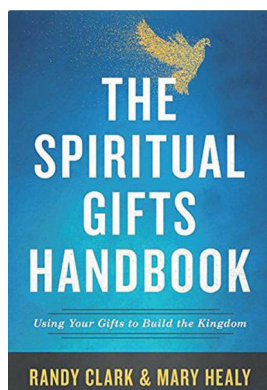
## Priests and Religious Retreat Healing Mass

Thursday 10 January 7.30pm  
Newman College Chapel

## PROPHECY

**At the recent Indonesian CCR Conference when interceding for Australia, the following word was given:**

I saw the Lord standing over the top of Australia and he signalled for Angels to come in. I saw these Angels had syringes in their hands ready to inject something into each of us in the Renewal. What came to mind was that these syringes were filled with steroids. When I pondered on what the Lord showed me I felt like He was saying "I am injecting into you strength by my Spirit. This is a supernatural strength (resilience) that will enable you to move forward with ease into the new I am opening. This strength will give you the power that will enable you to climb mountains and go higher than ever before and for you to move easily through the obstacles that would normally slow you down. This is a long sustaining strength that I am injecting into you. It will give you an ability to run faster and have endurance more than you ever had in my Spirit which will take you to the finish line. I am giving this increased equipping of strength to you because you are instrumental in bringing my New into reality.



## **The Spiritual Gifts Handbook - Using Your Gift to Build the Kingdom**

I was rather excited when I bought a copy of the book "The Spiritual Gifts Handbook - Using Your Gift to Build the Kingdom" by Randy Clark and Mary Healy published by Chosen Books in 2018. Prior to this book I was reading a book by Bill Johnson and Randy Clark on healing and I was trying to

figure out how their teachings could be incorporated in our Catholic environment.

This Spiritual Gifts Handbook provided the basis on how to incorporate Catholic and Protestant teachings on healing and other spiritual gifts. Randy Clark is a Protestant minister who travels extensively for conferences, international missions, leadership training, and humanitarian aid. God works powerfully through his healing ministry. Mary Healy is a professor of scripture at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, Michigan. She gives talks and leads healing services at conferences internationally including Australia.

This collaboration between two well-known Protestant and Catholic authors is a sign of unity in diversity – a sign of an ecumenical movement to extend the Kingdom of God worldwide in an invisible way. It is also very consistent with the prophecies we have heard that God will do a new thing worldwide including Australia.

The book begins by exploring the question "What are Spiritual Gifts?" A spiritual gift is a grace of God given to all Christians to enable a person to be an instrument of God's love and power to others. Paul listed these gifts differently in *Romans 12:6-8*, *1Corinthians 12:8-10* and *Ephesians 4:8-11*. Paul also mention other gifts in *1Corinthians 12:28*, *1Corinthians 13:13*, *1Corinthians 14:6 & 26*. For some gifts to be effective others gifts must operate at the same time (e.g. healing.) The authors provided insightful snippets of history to explain why there are many misconceptions about the spiritual gifts among Catholics and Protestants.

The second chapter describes the manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit since the annunciation and during the life of Jesus on earth. It identifies the spiritual gifts that Jesus used.

The next chapter then looks at how the spiritual gifts were operating in the age of the apostles and the age of the church fathers.

The fourth chapter is entitled "Fire on the Earth." This chapter discusses the four main Protestant perspectives of the baptism in the Holy Spirit:

1. It is the stirring up or release of what was given through faith at the time of new birth in Christ (initial baptism);
2. It is an experience of the Spirit after the new birth in Christ;

3. A new stirring of the Spirit to a new mission or calling;
4. It signals that God is preparing the whole Church for the coming of the King and the Kingdom. Most Catholics tend to hold the first view but some Catholics subscribe to the other views. This chapter ends with suggestions on how to receive baptism in the Holy Spirit but the ultimate advice is to let God decide when it will happen.

The nine gifts listed in *1Corintian 12:8-10* are categorised and put into three chapters as follows:

**Revelation Gifts** – word of wisdom, word of knowledge & discernment of spirits;

**Power Gifts** – gifts of faith, healing and miracles;

**Gifts of Speech** – gifts of prophecy, tongues and interpretation of tongues.

These nine gifts are described adequately and relevant experiences of the authors in exercising the gifts are recounted to illustrate their proper use. An incident was related to warn of need to be cautious, wise and sensitive in acting on revelations as there can be incorrect interpretation of part of the revelation. This and other stories make it easier to grasp the differences among the gifts in practice.

The final chapter, called, "Activating the Spiritual Gifts", is the most useful. It gives 12 keys that will help in activating and growing in the spiritual gifts. The first key is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The next key is to be close and connected to Jesus through spiritual practices. Then we should have God's heart for the lost and broken. Also we should be confident that God will answer our request for good things especially for the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts. However we are encouraged to take risk and step out in faith to exercise the spiritual gifts just like the disciples of Jesus did. Hence, we should trust the prompting of the Holy Spirit and act accordingly even if it could be a mistake. It is by knowing who we are in Jesus that we have faith to use spiritual gifts with authority. Learning from those who have experience in exercising the spiritual gifts will help us to develop these gifts. By giving testimonies, faith is engendered and could even result in healing of the listener. Healing can be obstructed by misguided ideas or by not allowing the Holy Spirit free rein to manifest the presence of God. The twelfth and final key is that spiritual gifts are released with greatest power when they accompany the proclamation of the Gospel (*Mark 16:15-18*).

Overall it is a very useful book to build bridges between the Catholic and the Protestant movements of the Holy Spirit. It does not try to avoid difficult differences in theological views but presents the different views so that the reader can understand the teachings of the various Christian Churches. It is a very much hands on book as it is full of personal testimonies and illustrative stories about exercising the gifts. Finally, this book is very useful as a basis to develop Life in the Spirit Seminars to promote Baptism in the Holy Spirit in an ecumenical way.



# A WORD... FROM MIRIAM

By MIRIAM MARKIS



As we leave behind another busy year and begin preparations for Advent and the beautiful Christmas Season, it's timely to reflect on what exactly has transpired in this past year. A few moments of reflection of how the year began and how it has ended up! A recapping, if you like! As I look back over this year and some of the themes that I've touched upon in my columns, I begin to wonder just how much I've acted upon some of the things that I've posed?

I began the February article with the question that St Paul puts to us in *Romans 12:2*: 'Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.'

Old patterns die hard and cannot be changed unless we become aware of what we do and seek to acknowledge our weaknesses and are willing to allow the grace of God to help us transform. We might have a mindset about a person, people, race or religion. Until the pattern of thinking is acknowledged and we encounter the gentle corrections of the Holy Spirit, we are unlikely to make any headway and change.

That's why each of us is encouraged to *Stay Awake* as I wrote in the May Edition. The parable of the ten bridesmaids is a good example as I mentioned then. We need to be alert to the ways the Evil One can take us down a wrong track and we can easily end up like the 5 bridesmaids who ran out of oil. That would be disastrous surely! The Holy Spirit is our helper and is always available if we call upon Him and are truly willing to change our ways and grow in holiness. It is through the simple things we do in life that can allow transformations to take place. We can be encouraged by the lives of many of the saints, especially ordinary lay people that have been elevated to Sainthood by Pope John Paul II, other Popes and even Pope Francis who canonised *Saints Francisco and Jacinto of Fatima* in 2017, the Centenary year of the apparitions which occurred in 1917. If these two young people were transformed, then there is no reason why each of us can't aim for transformed lives.

That brings me to August where I spoke about cleaning out the storehouses and rubbish we hold onto in our lives, especially anger, resentment and unforgiveness. So much so that they become heavy yokes and burdens. Surrendering all to Jesus, is the only way in which we can have peace of mind and healing for our troubled souls. A good time for spring cleaning is what is needed.

So now as we prepare for the Advent Season, which is a time of preparation, let's not hold back anything we can surrender to the Lord. Let go of the old and begin again like new born babes allowing ourselves to be guided by the Lord and depending totally upon the Holy Spirit who is the Lord and Giver of Life! May that same Holy Spirit brings us to a closer encounter with the Child Jesus, who teaches us humility and dependence on God for all things. May you all be blessed this Christmas.

## IN MEMORIAM



### Fr. Tom Forrest, CSsR 1927-2018

Henry Cappello, President.  
Caritas in Veritate-CiV

That Fr. Tom has preached to hundreds of thousands in about 120 nations, and has led many thousands of youth, nuns, married couples, priests, and bishops to a closer relationship with the Lord, is no news.

He is one of the most respected Catholic evangelists of our time. I would like to highlight two simple yet profound lessons I received from Fr. Tom. Both illustrate his love and passion for God and for his people.

I invited Fr. Tom to accompany me to China. His response was, "If this means that I preach Jesus, I am in." He preached in China on three different occasions.

There, he struck a relationship with a top government official. Fr. Tom wasted no opportunity to witness to him. Fr. Tom spoke of his relationship with the Lord and spent time praying with him, but he also shared about Mother Teresa and asked the official to grant the nun's request to bring the Missionaries of Charity to China as this would be good for "charity in truth" to be witnessed. This request was technically granted. Much work of evangelization has happened in China since.

The second story: I was hosted in Europe with Fr. Tom for afternoon tea. The hostess told Fr. Tom that his tea already had sugar in it, but that he could add more. He started sipping the tea. Suddenly, the hostess, in panic from the kitchen, called out to Fr. Tom. "Stop drinking!" she said. By mistake, she had placed salt instead of sugar in the tea. Fr. Tom, however, continued the conversation as if nothing happened.

Shortly after, he whispered to me, "I knew it, but of course one should never embarrass anyone, particularly if the person is the host!" A lesson I took to heart.

Fr. Tom, thank you. Though you reached the masses, you never missed the person. Pray for us, as we continue on our journey to make Him known to all.

Fr. Tom was a member of the NSC, 1975-1978.

Caritas in Veritate - CiV

## MARK YOUR DIARIES...

### Renewal Day

An opportunity for fellowship with others and growth through teachings.

16 February 2019

**2019 Dates:** 18 May, 17 August and 16 November.

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

15-18 January 2019

'A Current of Grace' will be presented by keynote speakers Jim Murphy International President of CCR & Bishop Colin Campbell from New Zealand. See flyer on page 8 for more details.

### ICCRS School of Charisms

27 – 31 March 2019

Learn about the Charisms of the Holy Spirit and how to use them.

**Guests:** Deacon Christoff Hemberger, ICCRS Council Member for Northern and Western Europe and Ann Brereton, Chairperson National Service Committee CCR Australia.

**Venue:** CCR Centre, 101 Holden Street, North Fitzroy.

### Can't make it to a Healing Prayer Centre during the week?

**Saturday 1 December 2018** - You are welcome to come to the Open House Healing Ministry Day.  
9.30am - 12.30pm 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 Anthony's, Glenhuntly Cnr Neerim Road & Grange Road, Glenhuntly
	8.15pm	St Peter's, Clayton
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

**St Peter's, East Bentleigh - Healing Masses:** Mondays 4 February, 17 June, 18 November at 8.00pm.  
Celebrant for all 3 masses will be Fr. Wahid