



Reflections on 'The Greater Things'

MARCH 2022

Volume XXXVI Issue No. 03

"Amen, Amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." (John 14:12)

MANY ARE THE PLANS By: Thomas Braeger

***"Many are the plans
in a man's heart, but the
Lord directs his steps."***

In 2018 my life took an unimaginable turn as my wife of 30 years, Analida, was diagnosed with inoperable and incurable brain cancer. This was the darkest and most difficult time I have ever faced, and at the same time, the power of God has come into my life and the Holy Spirit has completely transformed me.

In 2018, we were both in our early fifties and had day jobs and an online business that gave us the flexibility to work remotely from anywhere. We started making plans for our 'semi-retirement,' to include traveling overseas to do ministry work or God's work while working remotely.

In June of 2018, we traveled to Ireland on a tour for our 30th wedding anniversary. After this trip, Ana started to get dizzy and fell a couple times. Very concerned, I drove her to the ER at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center hospital in Pittsburgh. We needed answers.

At the hospital, scans found a brain tumor. Time seemed to freeze upon hearing these words. How was this possible? She was admitted and I stayed in the room with her. I stepped into a private lounge while she was sleeping in the ICU and I proceeded to make very tearful calls to our two children and to Ana's family in Panama. My son Adam was home working, but my daughter, Erika, was working in Vietnam at the time. She immediately packed up and moved home.

With each call I made I was more drained emotionally and could barely make the next call. While on the phone I was crying out to God. "How this could be happening to us? This was not supposed to happen. Why? We had plans to do Your work overseas and doing ministry work."

A biopsy came back as cancer in the brain stem. Me being me, I raced into research and discovered that what she, we, were facing was **inoperable, incurable brain cancer** with about a 3% chance of 5 year survival and likely 18 months. I never told her this. We just went into battle mode, whatever it took we would face it together. It was in God's hands and we had to trust Him, regardless of the outcome.

Ana rapidly deteriorated to 89 pounds at 5' 2" (from 130ish pounds), and at one point, she became unresponsive. This was terrifying. They did another MRI. I got a call. Her doctors did not think she was going to make through the night because the pressure in her brain was growing. They wanted to do surgery to relieve the pressure - and I had to make a decision - but surgery would delay the start of chemotherapy and radiation treatment by about 6 weeks.

I said, "No surgery," since I believed she could not survive it at 89 pounds. How could she muster the strength to heal? She had declined so much in just one week how could she wait 6 more weeks for treatment?

I was desperate for God to save her. I knew Our Lady of Lourdes could intercede for miracles for those who were sick so I got on the Lourdes website and found a place to submit a request that would be printed and taken to the grotto of Our Lady. I was crying out to God, not wanting this to be the end. I wept all night and **prayed to Our Lady** for her intercession to save Ana. She made it through the night. When her doctor visited our room the next day **he described her survival as a miracle.** She then began hospitalized for radiation and chemo and the fight for her life. I prayed my rosary each day to Our Lady that She would intercede for Ana's healing and to give all of us strength to care for her at home. As we continued to pray each day, we were given two additional and pre-

cious years as a gift from God. I can't imagine us fighting cancer without our faith. The Holy Spirit carried us.

Ana was called home at only 55 years of age. Now began a period of deep heartache and grieving. Everything felt completely *different*. I was her husband for 32 years. That was the life I knew. And now I was alone. I had to trust the Lord to lead me. It is in the most difficult trials of our lives that the outpouring of God's grace is the strongest if our hearts are open to receive it. This openness comes from the Holy Spirit.

I had no idea how to navigate this new and different life. God had just carried me through the fight of my life. I still felt His grace each day, but I was confused and needed **HIS** direction. For this, I had to step back and let Him show me a bigger picture. One thing the Lord revealed to me early on was that I needed to write down my story to share with others. Others need to know this grace is available to them if they just open their hearts to receive it. In fact, I was bursting to tell this story of love and grace and could not hold my story in. It was burning inside me of Jeremiah when he says in verse 20:9

*"But if I say, 'I will not remember Him
Nor speak anymore in His name,' Then
in my heart it becomes like a burning fire
Shut up in my bones; And I am tired of
holding it in, And I cannot endure it."
Jeremiah 20:9. NASB*

I felt this new and multiplied powerful flow of grace in my life... *and I wanted more. Much more!* I wanted it for others as well. In response, I was trying to live a fast-forward mode that is hard to describe. It was like I was *in a race for more grace.* I have always been a 'type-A' person with a desire to go after things with gusto and vigor, so during my new experiences with the Holy Spirit, I was no different as I was being set on fire. But in doing this, at times, I was running



FAITH ON FIRE!
CCRC

THE LORD DIRECTS OUR STEPS

'Greater Things' Luncheon

Sponsored by

Faith On Fire! Catholic Charismatic Renewal

SATURDAY APRIL 30TH, 9:30 AM – 1 PM

St Joseph Bread Of Life Community Center,
147 West 24th Street, Erie, PA

Worship by Jaci Phillips



Speaker Info: Thomas Braeger is head of International Sales at Lake Erie Systems. He runs a food recipe website: ethnicspoon.com. He has a passion for cooking that was developed with his wife of 32 years, Analida.

Tom began an unexpected journey in 2018 when his wife was diagnosed with a brain tumor. She passed away in 2020. However, God used this extraordinarily difficult and painful experience to forever change, not only Tom's path in life, but Tom himself!

Please join us as Tom shares his story of him and Analida, their battle, how God moved then, and how He continues to move in his life. The talk will conclude with a reflection by Jaci Phillips.

A delicious boxed lunch will be provided. \$10.00 for early registration by April 20th, \$12.50 April 21-26th. \$7.00 at the door, lunch not provided. Please use this

link: <https://bit.ly/steps-luncheon>

Or call TA at **814-833-9717** to register by phone. If fee is a hardship, please also call TA for a scholarship.

MANY ARE THE PLANS

Continued from page one

ahead of God. But as I continued to be open, the Holy Spirit knew exactly where to lead me. I was led to Faith On Fire! CCRC (formerly Word Of Life). I felt like *these people* somehow *understood* what I was going through spiritually and **I wanted what they had!**

Learning about the role of the Holy Spirit through Faith On Fire! had an immediate spiritual and life-changing impact. It also allowed me to use my God-given talents within an incredible evangelistic ministry. However, in my own will, I continued to pile other various ministries on my plate while my mind raced to think of what additional work I could do in the Lord's vineyard. It would be accurate to say that *I had the gas pedal punched to the floor with very little steering.* **Then came my**

Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Not long before my baptism in the Holy Spirit I was prayed over at a prayer group meeting during 'The Gift' Life In The Spirit Seminar. Both experiences were completely new. I physically felt the spiritual power of God and great peace. I was given a word from the Lord to "stop striving and just receive" while they were praying. When I just relaxed and ceased striving, the physical and spiritual calm that came over me felt almost like floating and lasted well into the next days. Words from the Holy Spirit started to come to me: "Slow down and live in the moment." Our risen Lord gave the greeting, "*Peace be with you.*" These words now had a whole new experiential meaning to me. I knew the Lord was telling me

that I needed to slow down, get out of the way, and take time to listen to Him.

There is more to my story. Are you looking for more? **There is always MORE with God!** Let Him *direct your steps*. The "more" you are looking for comes from the power of the Holy Spirit. Come and hear more.

I will be speaking at the Faith On Fire! Event on April 30th at the Saint Joseph Bread of Life Parish community center. See the flyer on page 2 for details.

COME
HOLY SPIRIT

EXORCIST DIARY #175 - DEMONS FROM TV

By: Msgr. Stephen Rossetti

Our Team has exorcized a number of houses, rectories, schools, and church buildings. One of the Team members present is usually a gifted spiritual sensitive. Such people can often tell us where the demons are located, what kind of evil spirits they are, and perhaps when they are cast out.

Invariably, demons will be concentrated in areas where sinful, and especially occult, behavior have taken place. For example, we found demons in known places of illicit sex. We found a demon in the office of a practitioner of Reiki. A possessed person had several in her work space. The worst was an area where occult rituals had been performed and religious statues defaced: it was totally infested!

After doing these exorcisms of a place for some years, I noticed a pattern. In places where there were televisions, regardless of which spiritual sensitive was present, he or she always noted a demon on the main chair in front of the TV. Sometimes I knew the individuals involved in that

place and I do not think the majority of them were watching pornography or explicitly sinful material. Why then was there almost invariably a demon in that place?

Upon reflection, what we are viewing on our screens today, and what society considers "normal," is often sexually arousing and filled with violence. What was considered objectionable only a few decades ago is now considered acceptable for daily viewing. Our society may not consider such material as an opening to evil, but apparently demons do!

Watching such material will not likely result in someone getting possessed, but it will invite demons into one's home. And the stronger the demons present, the more chaos, conflict and temptations they will sow. The consistent presence of demons in front of televisions ought to make us more conscious and vigilant about what we watch. There are some fine shows on television, but there are many others that are not.

Rather than opening the door to demons by watching such degrading shows, why not recite in our living rooms the daily family rosary instead? Thus, we invite into our homes the Blessed Virgin and her beautiful angels.



See Page 5 for How to pray the Rosary

GOD'S WILL? By: Kathryn Wilcox

No matter how old I get, I constantly struggle with the question, "What is God's will for me?" It is easy for me to look at others and see that they are following Him and growing in His love and wisdom. Why can't I see what is happening in my own life? As I pondered this issue I remembered my childhood encounter with the Baltimore Catechism. It was our childhood bible. We worked through the questions and memorized the answers. One question is permanently written in my brain. When I prayed about God's will for me, that question and answer were right there all along from that beloved Baltimore Catechism.

Why did God make me?

To know Him, to love Him and to serve Him in this world and be with Him in the next.

So how do I know God?

By reading His word and connecting with Him in prayer.

How do I love God?

By praising Him in prayer and song, and thanking Him for His love.

How do I serve God?

By bringing His love to every person, or even animal, that He has brought into my life and by using the gifts He has given me to bring His truth and love to others.

Finally, how will I get to be with Him in Heaven?

By practicing the above.

I just realized as I reviewed the question, that I have to *work the list* if I want to realize the end result. It will not happen automatically.

So here I am, and I am in the situation I am in because this is God's will for me. I need to stop beating myself up, and instead, see my daily challenges as an opportunity for blessings. It is not by the world's standards that God will judge my successes, but by His.

It is my choice how I live my daily challenges and that will determine my soul's final destination.

- ◆ Am I kind to my family members who try my patience?
- ◆ Am I am forgiving of the daily irritations that come with interacting with close family members?
- ◆ Have I forgiven the things that have been said that hurt my feelings?

- ◆ Do I perform my daily chores with love or with resentment?
- ◆ Do I use my time wisely or wastefully?
- ◆ Do I give the beginning and end of each day to the Lord in prayer?

When I review each day, I must remember that the next day I need to try again, to do better and try harder with the assistance of the Holy Spirit. God will be there as I persevere.

I recently listened to a teaching about St. Therese of Lisieux. I realized that I could identify with her. She longed to be a Saint, and when she compared herself to known Saints, she felt inferior and discouraged. I struggle to be good Christian, not even thinking of Sainthood. I feel inferior as I compare myself to others I know who have overcome many challenges and difficulties with grace and love.

St. Therese wrote about this spiritual pathway in her autobiography: **Story of a Soul**. As she prayed she realized that she could only do the best she could in any given situation. She came to understand that *this is all God asks of any of us*. She compared our spiritual journey to a child learning to walk. The infant takes a step and falls. As long as the child keeps getting up and trying, God will bless the attempts and the child will ultimately begin walking.

So isn't my original question the same as Therese's 'Little Way'? She worked at knowing God, loving God, and serving Him. She did each little thing well, not worrying about doing 'big things.' And THAT is why she is now with Him in Heaven.

The world's view of success is not God's view. On judgment day, he will not look at my financial net worth, possessions, academic degrees, or followers on social media. My life review will be measured in Love degrees: How much I loved each day, in every way. St Therese of Lisieux reminds me (and you) that:

***"Love can accomplish all things.
Things that are most impossible
become easy where love is at work."***

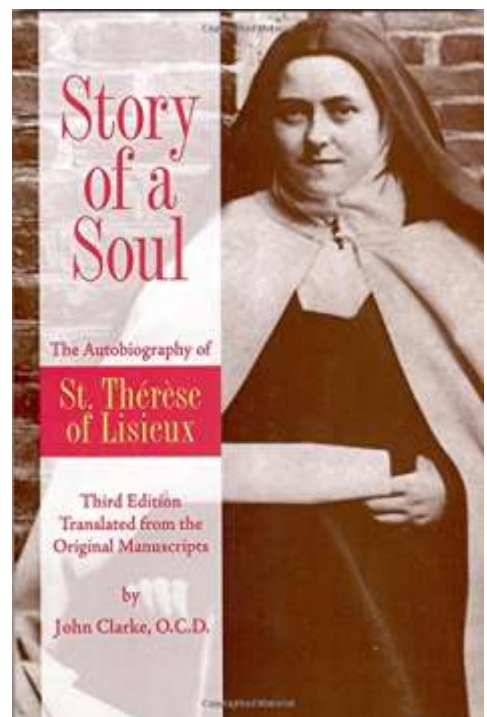
and

***"Our Lord does not so much
look at the greatness of our
actions, or even at their
difficulty, as at the love with
which we do them."***

Our Father,

Who art in Heaven,
hallowed be Thy name;
Thy Kingdom come,
Thy will be done
on earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil

Amen.



HOW TO PRAY THE ROSARY

from: www.familyrosary.org/how-to-pray-the-rosary



The Rosary

The rosary itself is composed of 60 beads laced together with a crucifix and a pendant of Mary where the 3 strands meet. We divide the Rosary into 6 segments. The 1st segment is composed of the introductory prayers and that is followed by 5 decades.

The Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.



Introductory Prayers: The Apostles' Creed / Our Father

The Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the God the Father Almighty; from there he will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be



Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Intentions

After the introductory prayers and before the mystery is announced the leader of the group may announce an intention for this particular decade. The intention may be a person by name, a group of persons, a prayer for peace and justice, or some other worthy cause, or a prayer for the deceased. Next, the leader will announce the mystery, for example, "The first sorrowful mystery is the agony in the garden." All twenty mysteries of the 4Rosary will follow the same three-step pattern, scripture, reflection and personal experience.

Hail Holy Queen

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve: to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, O most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary! Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Amen.



2022 DAY OF ADORATION - "I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU"

We had a wonderful time with the Lord beginning at 10am on January 28th when Father John Jacquel exposed the Blessed Sacrament and gave a reading and a reflection. It was the perfect start for this annual time of Adoration, We recited many rosaries and had times of worship. We prayed in the Spirit, giving our country, city, family and friends, diocese, and all religious and lay people to God in 2022. We prayed for many things, including an end to abortion, peace, mercy, and revival. We prayed for the President and our government. We prayed and prayed and prayed, and we know that God heard our prayers.

We are so thankful to all the clergy who joined us. Fr Jerry Priscaro. offered Mass for the unborn at 2pm. Father Johnathan Schmolt who sang the Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3pm and it was so beautiful. Father Rich Toohey led us in Evening Prayer, with a homily, and stayed to worship with us. It was beautifully reverent and you could feel the power of joining in the same prayer that religious around the world were praying at the same time. From 10:30pm to 12, we had a beautiful Adoration worship concert, with Harmony's House leading worship. Father Joe Petrone led a beautiful, regal Eucharistic Procession followed by Benediction at midnight.

We were exceedingly blessed as we stayed with our Lord on the 28th. We are especially thankful to Father John Jacquel and Holy Rosary Church for always being such gracious hosts for this very special event.

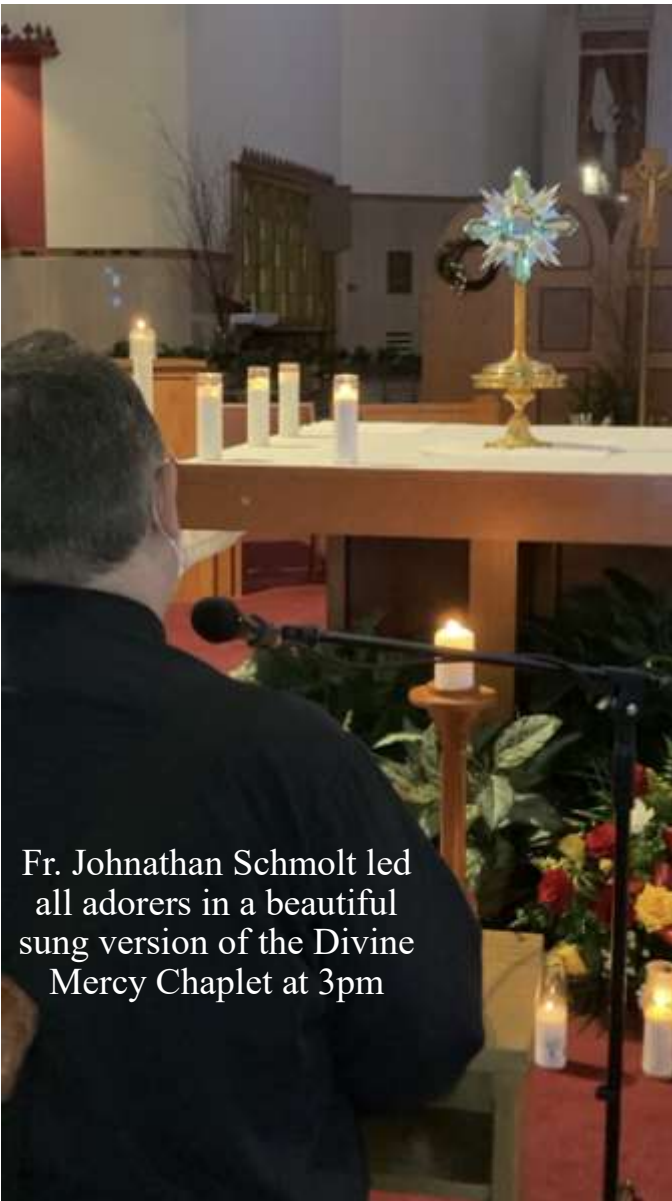
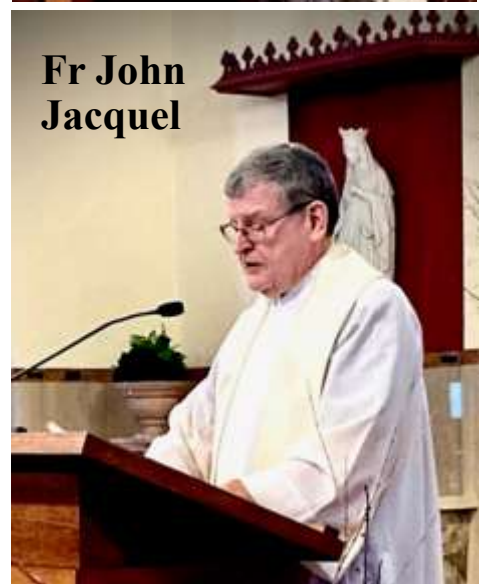
Fr Rich Toohey



Fr Jerry Priscaro



Fr John Jacquel



Fr. Johnathan Schmolt led all adorers in a beautiful sung version of the Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3pm



upcoming events

First Saturday of the Month Mass in honor of Our Lady

9:00 AM at St. Gregory's, Northeast, PA
Sacred Music beginning at 8:50 AM
Music provided by: Soloist, Jacqueline Phillips
and Organist Corey Spacht
Celebrant: Rev. Jerry Priscaro

Young Adult Life In The Spirit
Friday and Saturday, March 18 & 19, 2022
Call T.A 814-833-9717

The Lord Directs Our Steps
Greater Things Luncheon
St. Joseph/Bread of Life Community Center
Saturday - 9:30 AM - 1:00 PM
April 30, 2022

Spirit Filled - Healing Mass
Sponsored by Son of God Prayer Group
Holy Rosary Church
2701 East Ave, Erie
Tuesday's Worship 6:15 PM Mass 6:30 PM
2022—May 10th, August 9th, October 11th

Life In The Spirit
St. Michael's, Emlenton, PA
Friday and Saturday, May 20 - 21, 2022

Fan Into The Flame Seminar
St. Joseph/Bread of Life Community Center
Friday & Saturday - June 17 - 18, 2022

Alicia Hartle
Greater Things Luncheon
St. Joseph/Bread of Life Community Center
Saturday - 9:30 AM - 1:00 PM
August 20, 2022

Adoration Worship Concert
St. George Church
Thursday, September 15, 2022
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Jesus, Son of God, in whom the fullness of the Divinity dwells, You call all the baptized to "put out into the deep," taking the path that leads to holiness. Waken in the hearts of young people the desire to be witnesses in the world of today to the power of your love. Fill them with your Spirit of fortitude and prudence, so that they may be able to discover the full truth about themselves and their own vocation. Our Savior, sent by the Father to reveal His merciful love, give to your Church the gift of young people who are ready to put out into the deep, to be the sign among their brothers of Your presence which renews and saves. Holy Virgin, Mother of the Redeemer, sure guide on the way towards God and towards neighbor, You who pondered his word in the depth of your heart, sustain with your motherly intercession our families and our ecclesial communities, so that they may help adolescents and young people to answer generously the call of the Lord. Amen.

—John Paul II—

You Can Help Make a Difference

Word of Life is *completely* dependent upon your donations to spread the fire of the Holy Spirit in the Diocese of Erie.
Your donation, no matter how much, makes a big difference!

Contributions can be made by check, text, Tithe.ly app, and on the website.

Checks can be made payable to:
Word of Life Charismatic Renewal Center
St. Mark Catholic Center
429 E. Grandview Blvd
Erie, PA 16514



Contributions via text:
Text the word "give" to our dedicated giving number: (570) 536-9187



Tithe.ly app on your phone:
Apps for Tithe.ly are available for both iPhones and Android Phones In the app store search for "tithe.ly" - "create account"
In 'find a church' search for and select "Word of Life Catholic Charismatic Renewal Center"



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Click on the green "give" button

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Reflections

on 'The Greater Things'

MARCH 2022

**THE
LORD DIRECTS
OUR STEPS**

'Greater Things' Luncheon

Sponsored by
Faith On Fire! Catholic Charismatic Renewal

SATURDAY APRIL 30TH, 9:30 AM – 1 PM

St Joseph Bread Of Life Community Center,
147 West 24th Street, Erie, PA

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www.facebook.com/wolcerc

The office is generally open limited hours.
Please call before coming.

The purpose of this newsletter is to proclaim
the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to provide
teaching, news, and calendar of events, which
help to foster Catholic Charismatic Renewal
throughout the Diocese of Erie.

**This newsletter may be copied to put in
churches or shared with others.**

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