



Reflections

Word of Life
Catholic Charismatic Renewal Center

April 2015

“Go into the world and tell the Good News to all creation.” Mark 16:15

THE CHARISM OF INVITATION

By Sister Magdalena Casas Nava, DLJC -

What is the charism of Invitation? We will begin with a simple definition: the charism of Invitation is a gift or anointing of the Holy Spirit to request from others their presence or participation in building up the Kingdom of God. As with any charism, its effectiveness goes beyond human ingenuity. Another trait of this charism is its eminent personal character. It usually appeals to the individual person for a particular mission. A man or woman may have a natural ability for being welcoming, inviting, or persuasive; but an anointing of the Holy Spirit is manifested when a person is *inspired by the Lord* to invite another person for a particular purpose in the Kingdom of God.

How do we know if the inspiration comes from the Lord, or from a merely human sympathy, or from the devil? There is need for discernment here. We in the Renewal tend to attribute to the Lord any inspiration or idea that crosses our minds, and many times it could be true, but the discernment or the origin of any inspiration is not completed until further examination. Is it directed towards the building up of the

Kingdom of God? Are its effects beyond human ingenuity? Sometimes we would not know these until we have acted upon the inspiration. Let us further comment on these criteria for discernment.

For an invitation to be directed towards the building up of the Kingdom of God it must be focused on growth in charity, the increase of the holiness of the Church, and/or a change in the world towards a more evangelical society. In other words, the invitation must be connected to evangelization by making Christ more present to the person, helping the person grow in his or her evangelistic effectiveness, or helping the person better live out the Gospel values in his everyday life.

Saul, after his conversion from being a persecutor of the church, had great difficulty convincing fellow believers of his authenticity. It was not until Barnabas, presumably inspired by the Holy Spirit, went to Tarsus to find him and bring him to Antioch, where both taught the community for a year. (See Acts 11:25-26.) The invitation of Barnabas was the

beginning of the ministry of the great Apostle to the Gentiles.

We can find in the Bible other stories of invitations directed towards the building up of the Kingdom, and which effects are long-lasting. Andrew invited his brother Simon to meet Jesus (Jn. 1:41-42.) Simon eventually became the first of an unbroken line of popes. Philip sought Nathaniel and told him “We have found the Messiah... come and see” (Jn. 1:45-46). Both eventually shed their blood for Christ. But the origin and greatest example of the charism of Invitation is the Lord himself who let the first disciples “find him,” and told them “come and see” (Jn. 1:39).

Being effective evangelists is not a matter of technique, but rather of genuine union with Christ. It is only after “abiding with Him” that Christ’s disciples go out and invite others to “come and see,” then the Lord may touch and change them also. It is, in the end, Christ himself who invites, now through his disciples.

Excerpted from Pentecost Today, January-March 2012, Vol. 37, No.1. Used with permission

Centering in

By Jack Heintzel

2015 events

The Word of Life Center wants to make you aware of these coming events:

- **Women's Retreat**– April 10th to 12th at Riverside Inn, CS.
- **Prayer Brunch** – Aug. 22nd at St. Joseph / BOL Community.
- **Day of Renewal** – Oct. 17th at St. Joseph / BOL Community.

Prayer and fasting

The Executive Committee continues to encourage all supporters to **pray and fast** regularly for the needs of the Center. We have set **Wednesday** of each week as a recommended day to pray and fast. There are many needs to be met, and we need God's help to do so.

Prison ministry

- **SCI Cambridge Springs:**
Life in the Spirit on April 18th with follow-up on May 23rd.
- **SCI Albion:**
Life in the Spirit Days on May 2nd and Nov. 14th plus continuing bi-weekly prayer meetings.

Healing Mass

The Son of God prayer group invites everyone to a healing Mass on Tuesday, April 21st at 6:30 PM. It will be held in Holy Rosary church, E. 28th St. and East Avenue. Doors will open early for your convenience. Fr. David Poulson will preside. Music will be provided by the St. Joseph / Bread of Life music ministry. For more information call Patty (823-3968) or Gerry (452-2499)

Renewal history

The worldwide Charismatic Renewal now includes an estimated 700 million people around the world, of which an estimated 160 million are Catholics. The Renewal has its origins in the events of January 1, 1901. On that day a young girl began speaking in tongues after the prayer and invocation of the Holy Spirit by a lay evangelist of Methodist extraction. This took place in Topeka, Kansas; from there the movement grew and gradually spread to the established churches in the Protestant and Orthodox traditions, and lastly to the Roman Catholic Church.

Although customs and terminology were grafted onto the Catholic Charismatic Renewal from these Pentecostal sources, the Catholic Church had its own part to play in the January 1, 1901 beginning. On that morning, in Rome, before young Agnes Ozman started speaking in tongues in Topeka, Pope Leo XIII ushered in the new century by solemnly invoking the Holy Spirit over all of Christendom.

The Renewal was eventually sparked in the Catholic Church in 1967, not by any intervention of the pope or clergy, but at the level of the laity at a students' retreat at Pittsburgh's Duquesne University in February of that year. From there the flame went almost simultaneously to Notre Dame University. Dorothy Ranaghan, writer and witness of the beginnings, describes what happened:

"Summer school brought in priests, nuns, and lay people from all over the world. And so we held prayer meetings; crowds attended and hundreds were baptized in the Holy Spirit. They took the Holy Spirit back to their home countries. It was a wild and wonderful summer. There were no Life in the Spirit Seminars (they hadn't been written yet). We just laid hands on everyone and prayed right away and amazing things happened. Given our youth and inexperience, it is all the more evident that it was God's work, not ours."

In the late 1960s many hippies were having their "Summer of Love" in San Francisco, and the Beatles were being sought out by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, to attract through them the youth of the West to Hinduism and the New Age. At the same time, the Holy Spirit was at work, treating His own young people to a wild summer of rejoicing and Charismatic Renewal at Catholic Notre Dame.

The Holy Spirit came full circle when the Charismatic Renewal landed back in the Catholic Church in Rome in 1970, led by lay and religious Catholics.

Ed. note: since 1970 our popes have encouraged the Renewal and brought it into the mainstream of the Church.

Excerpted, with modifications, from an article "The Charismatic Renewal and the Catholic Church" by Alessandra Nucci in Catholic World Report, May 18, 2013.

Joy or happiness

By Agnes Helsley

The month of February with its extremely cold temperatures provided me time to spend wrapped in an afghan with a good book. This book had been on my book shelf for several years but I had never read it cover to cover, 459 pages, a worthy project for cold winter evenings.

The book is a compilation of “virtues” – actually the nine fruits of the Spirit. Space does not permit an overall discussion. But “joy” won my greater attention by the fact that happiness comes from good *happenings*, but joy lies within despite what happens to us. A great number of people expect happiness should be result of being a Christian and expect to be protected from unpleasant happenings. A false premise indeed!

Christians are taught to use the limitations of life and make something out of it. The following quote, dripping with satire, is included here to sharpen our recognition of an extremely bad attitude toward life’s difficulties. “You may hear it said of me that I am cross-grained and disagreeable. Don’t believe it. Only let me have my own way exactly in everything with all about me precisely as I wish, and a sunnier or pleasanter creature does not exist.” We all know that this is not the picture of life as we know it.

Remembering that whatever happens in our lives has to be allowed by the God who loves us, and who has written our name on the palm of His hand, gives us the grace to accept what happens and allow it to be a source of blessing.

I think of Joni Eareckson Tada, a quadriplegic for fifty years. She is a shining example of a joy-filled Christian. I have heard it said that when God wants to use someone, it may be necessary to break that person and then use him or her for His glory. He allows the pain for a purpose, just as the shame and the pain of His Son’s death on the Cross was necessary for the purpose of our redemption. Take us, Lord, once more to Calvary, that we may find joy in your sacrifice. Keep us centered in the joy of our salvation.

On seeking forgiveness

[Having cheated on an exam during seminary, this author was able to “live with himself” only so long, and then (1) confessed to God and (2) went to the professor and confessed and made arrangements to make things right. He records his feeling after this:]

I felt deeply cleansed. Pure. Holy. I wanted to laugh and cry at the same time. I wanted to run and jump and dance. The burden was lifted. The chains were broken. I was free! ...

If we don’t ask for forgiveness when we wrong someone, we lose our moral authority, the debris of sin begins to accumulate in our hearts, choking our conscience, and we lose our reputation as a person of integrity. Others know when we sin against them, and if we don’t make it right, it hurts our reputation as well as God’s.

--Max Anders

Raising the standard

In *21 Unbreakable Laws of Life*

In *A Book of Saints*, Anne Gordon tells the story of Father Maximillian Kolbe, who was a prisoner at Auschwitz in August 1941. A prisoner escaped from the camp, and in reprisal, the Nazis ordered that ten prisoners had to die by starvation.

Father Kolbe offered to take the place of one of the condemned men. The Nazis kept Kolbe in the starvation bunker for two weeks and then put him to death by lethal injection on August 14, 1941.

Thirty years later, a survivor of Auschwitz described the effect of Kolbe’s action: “It was an enormous shock to the whole camp. We became aware that someone among us in the spiritual dark night of the soul was raising the standard of love on high. Someone unknown, like everyone else, tortured and bereft of name and social standing, went to a horrible death for the sake of someone not even related to him. Therefore it is not true, we cried, that humanity is cast down and trampled in the mud, overcome by oppressors, and overwhelmed by hopelessness. Thousands of prisoners were convinced the true world continued to exist and that our torturers would not be able to destroy it.

“To say that Father Kolbe died for us or for that person’s family is too great a simplification. His death was the salvation of thousands . . . We were stunned by his act, which became for us a mighty explosion of light in the dark camp.”

--Bill Norman,
Quoted in *Leadership, Spring 1995*

Healing Mass

Our Lady of Peace
2401 W. 38th St. 7:30PM
Wednesday March 4, 2015

Contemporary Mass

St. Joseph Church
Bread of Life Community
11:00AM every Sunday
Children's Liturgy of the Word

Perpetual Adoration

Bread of Life Chapel
St. Joseph Community Center

Chaplet of Mercy

Every day at 3:00pm in Bread of Life
Chapel

St. Joseph Novena

St. Joseph Church Bread of Life
Community
Every Wednesday 7:00PM

Memorials

In memory of

Msgr. John T. Carter
“ “ “
“ “ “
Larry Snell
Tony Drozeski

Requested by

Jack & Jean Heintzel
T. A. Walkiewicz
Carol Mando
Lil Herbstritt
T. A. Walkiewicz

God has a work to do with us

That will not be done without us.

--St. Augustine

All Scripture quotes in this newsletter are from the New International Version unless noted otherwise



PRAYER GROUPS

† Sunday

Shalom in Jesus Prayer Group
In home 6:30PM
Rick Kenawell (814) 375-0328
DuBois, PA
April 5,12,19,26

Acts II Community

St. Julia Church 6:30 PM
West 8th & Powell Ave.
Jack Heintzel 838-1325
April 5,12,19,26

† Monday:

Disciples of the Holy Spirit

St. Mary's Church Annex 6:00PM
139 Church St., St. Marys, PA
Mary Ellen Frank (814) 781-3904
April 6,13,20,27

Leopold Center

1017 West 8th St.
Mary Lou Peterson 866-5678
Chaplet of Divine Mercy and Rosary
At 3:00PM (before Mass)
April 6,13,20,27
(Except major holidays)

River of Life PG

2nd & 4th Monday evenings
7:00PM
St. Bridget Ch., Rm. 4, Meadville, PA
Amy Mosbacher (814) 724-6104
April 13,27

† Tuesday:

Son of God Prayer Group

Holy Rosary Church
2701 East Ave. 7:00PM
Pat Montefiori 823-3968
April 7,14,21,28

Chosen Prayer Group

St. Theresa Church,
Shinglehouse, PA 10AM - 12Noon
Mary Kuhn (814) 697-7519
April 7,14,21,28

† Wednesday:

St. Mark's Prayer Group

St. Mark Church 7:00PM
Religious Education Center
Emporium, PA
April 1,8,15,22,29

† Thursday:

Wildfire Prayer Meeting

2nd Thursday of month 4:30PM
5031 W. Ridge Rd..
S.S.J. Living Center
Sr. Gerry Olon 836-4165
April 9

St. Joseph Church Bread of Life Prayer Meeting 7:00PM

139 W. 24th St. – Upstairs in Center
Regi Connelly (814) 866-0505
April 2,9,16,23,30

St. Boniface PG

7615 Wattsburg Rd. 7:00PM
John Griebel 825-3588
April 2,9,16,23,30

† Friday:

Light of the World Community

In Home Prayer Meeting – Call for
Location 7:30PM
Bob Zimmer 868-5344
April 3,10,17,24

Standing with God

By Jack Heintzel

“Stand firm then...” Eph. 6:14

In his book *Sit, Walk, Stand*, Chinese evangelist Watchman Nee puts forth a process that should apply to all disciples of Jesus Christ. We should start by spending time with God (sitting), then being active in carrying out His commands (walking), and then learning to continually oppose Satan’s attacks (standing). We must be always ready to stand with God against the devil’s schemes. We need to understand spiritual warfare. But we can’t hope to be victorious in the battle against Satan unless we first learn to *rest in Christ* and in what He has already done. Then, in the power of the Holy Spirit, we follow Him in a practical, holy life here on earth.

To stand against the wiles of the devil we must learn to put on the armor of God, as St. Paul explains in his letter to the Ephesians (chapter 6:10f). Watchman Nee writes that *to stand against* really means to “hold your ground.” He goes on to say that “this is not a command to invade a foreign territory. Warfare, in modern parlance, would imply a command to ‘march.’ Armies march into other countries to occupy and to subdue. God has not told us to this. We are not to march but to stand. The word ‘stand’ implies that the ground disputed by the enemy is really His [God’s], and therefore ours. We need not struggle to gain a foothold on it.”

We war against Satan only to maintain and consolidate the victory which Jesus has already

gained. By the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, God has proclaimed His Son as Victor over the whole realm of darkness. The ground that Christ won He has given to us. We do not need to fight to obtain it. We only have to hold it. The victory is ours. We do not fight *for* victory; we fight *from* victory. Satan has been defeated once and for all.

Nee emphasizes that only those who first sit can stand. Our walk – and warfare – both derive their strength from our position in sitting with Christ. If we are not sitting before God we cannot hope to stand before the enemy. If we hold our position we will see the devil utterly routed. He cannot overcome the power of God. It is all a matter of our faith in Him. Ephesians 6 is concerned with more than the personal side of our warfare. It has to do also with the work of God entrusted to us – spreading the Gospel. This requires prayer and trust in God. We are to act and pray in the name of Jesus – the name which is above all names. In this name we will stand powerfully against the Satanic forces and bring them into subjection.

Any work that is going to be effective in God’s plan must be conceived by Him. We must depend on spiritual power, not in our natural power. We need to learn that if God does not move then we dare not move. In our walking and standing we should not be moving ahead of God. And we must always depend continuously on the power of God alone. Jesus says this in Scripture: “Apart from Me you

can do nothing.” (Jn. 15:5) Let’s continue to sit, walk and stand with God, always committing ourselves to the goal of glorifying Him in all things.

In the garden

In 1912, as Charles Austin Miles grabbed his Bible, it opened to John 20. Reading the account of Mary Magdalene outside the garden tomb where Jesus’ body had been laid, Miles felt powerfully that he was there. Inspired, he quickly wrote the poem “In the Garden” and later composed the music.

This hymn might seem sentimental and trite, if understood to refer to just any garden, But the song takes on profound meaning when recognized as Mary’s personal encounter with the living Lord.

And he walks with me, and he
talks with me,
And he tells me I am his own,
And the joy we share as we
tarry there,
None other has ever known!

Because of Easter

“The joyful news that [Christ] is risen does not change the contemporary world. Still before us lie work, discipline, sacrifice. But the fact of Easter gives us the spiritual power to do the work, accept the discipline and make the sacrifice.”

--Henry Knox Sherrill

Signs and wonders

By Kathy Wilcox

There have been many legitimate apparitions of the Blessed Mother, and miraculous healings have occurred connected to the saints over the years since Jesus established our Church. We are visual people with active imaginations, so of course we like to read and retell these stories. We can also easily be drawn into looking for signs and wonders. It is critical that we use our own discernment, and trust the investigations of the Church authorities, to determine the authenticity of signs and wonders and miracles. Why be careful? What harm can be done by believing that God is working in these situations?

We need to remember that Satan can mimic what God is doing and that the reason he was cast out of heaven was because he wanted to be like God. This is especially true in the case of signs and wonders. He loves to draw attention to himself, and draw people away from God.

Consider this: an acquaintance of mine lives in Kansas City, MO and she was invited to go to a meeting where a person was receiving messages from the Angel Gabriel. At the end of the session, there would be prayer for healing. A member of Unity Christian Church (which we now know has its home office in Missouri) invited her. My friend had never heard of Unity, but was told that they welcome all faiths and respect the teachings of all faiths, and it WAS Christian, so she felt comfortable going. It was after the session that she e-mailed me. She felt uneasy, and once she

shared the odd things she witnessed we started researching the speaker. On her website, the speaker admits that she “channels” angels. As a trained “Shaman” healer she channels transcendental energies and spirits into the person she lays hands on. The group was recruiting people to join the church and teach others to practice the “Shaman” version of healing prayer. So while this church SAYS it is Christian, it obviously is not. It is really a cult. The Bible warns us that in the last days, there would be false prophets who practice signs and wonders to deceive believers. This story certainly fits that prediction, and unfortunately the Internet is loaded with false teachings and false prophets lurking there, waiting for the opportunity to connect with those who are seeking God.

St. Paul warned us in 2 Corinthians 11:13-14, saying *“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.”* And St. Paul again warned in 1 Timothy 4:1: *“Now the Spirit clearly says that in the later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.”*

We can’t be too careful! We must stay grounded in our faith. We must trust the teachings of the church, our leadership, and the Bible. We should understand how to determine whether another “denomination” is Christ-centered or a cult, and we must pray and act accordingly! When we have a

close relationship with Christ we will not be easily misled. We must also pray for others in our own faith, and in other Christian faiths, that they will not be misled. May they find a true relationship with Jesus Christ.

Truth and goodness will prevail

Any newspaper or newscast contains enough bad news to wreck any Christian’s hope for mankind. Wars, murders, brutality, crimes and other inhumane acts we witness daily can make us feel hopeless and wilted.

Yet despite the great horror in this world, we must not despair. Our Lord said: “The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers ... Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father” (Matthew 13:41,43, NRSV.) God will always have the last word, His truth and goodness will prevail.

James Russell Lowell wrote:

Though the cause of evil prosper,
Yet ‘tis truth alone is strong;
Though her portion be the scaffold,
And upon the throne be wrong;
Yet that scaffold sways the future,
And behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow
Keeping watch above his own.

Scripture Psalm

(A letter from God)

My child:

You may not know me, but I know everything about you. I know when you sit down and when you rise up. I am familiar with all your ways. (Ps. 139)

Even the very hairs on your head are numbered. (Mt. 10) For you were made in my image. (Gen. 1) In me you live and move and have your being. (Acts 17)

For you are my offspring. (Acts 17) I knew you even before you were conceived. (Jer. 1) I chose you when I planned creation. (Eph. 1)

You were not a mistake, for all your days are written in my book. (Ps. 139) I determined the exact times of your birth and where you would live. (Acts 17)

You were fearfully and wonderfully made. (Ps. 139) I knit you together in your mother's womb (Ps. 139) and brought you forth on the day you were born. (Ps. 71)

It is my desire to lavish my love on you (1 Jn. 3) simply because you are my child and I am your father. (1 Jn. 3) I offer you more than your earthly father ever could. (Mt. 7)

Every good gift that you receive comes from my hand. (Jas. 1) I am your provider and I meet all your needs. (Mt. 6)

My plan for your future has always been filled with hope. (Jer. 29) Because I love you with an everlasting love. (Jer. 31) My thoughts toward you are countless as the sands on the seashore. (Ps. 139)

I rejoice over you with singing. (Zeph. 3) I will never stop doing good for you. (Jer. 32). For you

are my treasured possession. (Ex. 19)

I desire to establish you with all my heart and soul. (Jer. 32) And I want to show you great and marvelous things. (Jer. 33) If you seek me with all your heart, you will find me. (Dt. 4)

Delight in me and I will give you the desires of your heart. (Ps. 37) I am able to do more for you than you could possibly imagine. (Eph. 3) I am the One who comforts you in all your troubles. (2 Cor. 1)

When you are brokenhearted, I am close to you. (Ps. 34) As a shepherd carries a lamb, I have carried you close to my heart. (Is. 40) I am your Father, and I love you even as I have loved my Son, Jesus. (Jn. 17) Nothing will ever separate you from my love. (Rom. 8)

Source unknown

A reason to celebrate

In rural Nebraska in the early 20th century, three of the four Koontz children died of diphtheria in one week. On the following Easter morning, the parents and surviving child attended church. Because Mr. Koontz was Sunday school superintendent, he read aloud the Easter message. Although many people wept, he and his wife stayed calm.

Later, a boy walking home said, "The Koontzes must really believe the Easter story."

His father answered, "All Christians do."

The boy replied, "Not the way they do!"

Prophecy corner

I call you to stand firm. Know My voice. Learn to recognize My Voice. I will speak in My time, My way. Know that prayer and fasting bring us closer. I am the Lord your God. Let My Light shine through you. Be open to Me, to My Gifts, to My will. I do not want you to be remorseful; dance with joy. Take my good news to others. Think of the great love I have for you and them.

(Disciples of the Holy Spirit prayer group, St. Marys, PA)

The look of love

"What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of humankind. That is what love looks like."

- *St. Augustine of Hippo*

"God loves you, but even more, God longs for you. God misses you when you don't come close. God thirsts for you. God loves you always even when you don't feel worthy."

- *St. Teresa of Calcutta*



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WORD OF LIFE
Catholic Charismatic Renewal Center
429 East Grandview Blvd.
Erie, PA 16514

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S Postage
PAID
Erie, PA
Permit No. 285

Reflections is published monthly by:
Word of Life Catholic
Charismatic Renewal Center
429 E. Grandview Blvd.
Erie PA 16504
(814) 824-1286
fax: 824-1285
e-mail: wolccrc@eriercd.org
website: www.wordoflifecrc.org

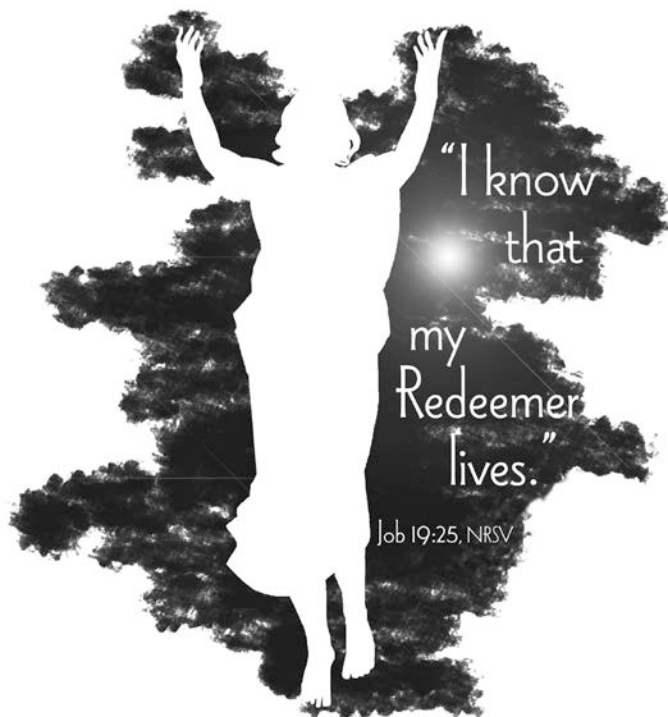
Office hours:
Not currently set

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.

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Volume XXIX

Issue No. 4



APRIL 2015