



ICCRS LEADERSHIP BULLETIN

Formation for current and new leaders in CCR

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WORSHIP IN THE SPIRIT AND IN THE TRUTH

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Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and

his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).

As a Catholic our life can't be separated from prayer, especially as a member of Charismatic Catholic Renewal. Prayer is an acknowledgement of the presence of God. He himself is always there in every prayer, but there are times when we don't realize it. When we pray, we are in communication with God and we open our hearts and ourselves to His presence. In this way we are able to experience His love, His grace, His power, His beauty and His salvation. We are able to change, to be transformed through the magnificent strength of our Lord, when we acknowledge His presence among us.

In every pray, worship is the heartbeat of prayer. As a believer in God, we must nurture a lifestyle of worship. Worship brings us to deeper spiritual dimensions and connects our soul with God's spirit. No barrier can separate us from His Presence as we truly worship the Lord, the Holy One and this is the worship pleasing to the Lord. It's written in John 4:23 that the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

Worship in spirit

What exactly is the meaning of worship in spirit? As human beings we consist of body and soul and spirit. Soul is eternal and invisible. Worshipping in spirit is where our soul meets and communicates with the Holy Spirit. This connection happens inside the soul, deep in our heart and brings us into an intimate relationship with our Lord.

How to worship in Spirit?

To start, we need to open our hearts to be led by the Holy Spirit and allow Him to work inside our soul. Before we worship in spirit, we need the Holy Spirit to be present and guide our soul and lead us during the worship. He will always help us to worship. Rom 8:26 "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit

himself intercedes for us through wordless groans". Scripture also tells us that the Lord Jesus Himself is the Spirit and worship will draw us into a deeper relationship with Him. If we are not willing to open our heart and let the Holy Spirit come to us in our weakness, we won't be able to worship the Lord in the way He desires.

True worship gives us the opportunity to Proclaim the greatness of God and it is through the Holy Spirit we can proclaim 'Jesus is the Lord' for scripture tells us "Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed" and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord", except by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit will lead and teach us true worship if we surrender to Him and willingly follow His promptings during our worship. One of the gifts He's given to help us to worship is the Gift of Tongues which assists us to communicate directly with God in the language of the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 14:2 "For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit".

To worship in the Spirit and in the truth

John 17:17 "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth". To worship in spirit and in truth the word of God will be a guide to open our minds and our hearts and draw us into deeper worship.

Jesus himself promises us in (John 16:13) "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come".

Psalms 103:1-2: "Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise His holy name".

"Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all His benefits" This Scripture captures the heart of worship. To offer to the Lord our Praise from the deepest part of our being regardless of the situation we are dealing with in our life.

In conclusion, the worship that God wants is the worship in spirit and in the truth. By the Grace of God we will do this by continuously surrendering our soul to the Holy Spirit, reading the Word of God and putting time aside for communication with God through personal prayer and worship. 🙏

RISE UP PROPHETIC WORSHIP LEADERS!

■ Cyril John · ICCRS Collaborator



Worship has great potential to reveal the mysteries of God to us. It also helps us to experience the miraculous power of God. The Book of Sirach 43:29-33 says: “Awesome is the Lord and very great, and marvellous is his power. Glorify the Lord and exalt him as much as you can, for he surpasses even that. When you exalt him, summon all your strength, and do not grow weary, for you cannot praise him enough... Many things greater than these lie hidden, for I have seen, but few of his works. For the Lord has made all things, and to the godly he has given wisdom”.

ICCRS Intercession Training Course was held in Botswana from 6 to 11 November 2017. The course included teaching on charisms which help in intercession followed by workshop to enable participants to receive charisms. Francis Olotu, ICCRS Councillor from Nigeria and I, who were conducting the training course were a bit disappointed that the workshops on charisms and subsequent exhortations did not produce expected results. We realized that a number of participants were yet to yield to the Spirit. On the fourth day as the music ministry was concluding praise and worship, I went up to the stage to begin my teaching. It was then that Fr Karabo Baloyi, a participant from South Africa, came up and whispered in my ears that he has a prophecy. I gave him the mike. He shared the following prophecy:

“I want to raise up new intercessors who are on fire with my Spirit. I desire new intercessors who burn with zeal for my house. Let new intercessors rise up and take my cause. I call for a new generation of intercessors filled with mercy and compassion, just like me, the Merciful and Compassionate Priest... I want to set hearts on fire with my love. I want hearts that burn with my love. I want disciples with burning hearts, who burn with hunger and yearning for my glory. I want a new army of intercessors to rise up, submit to my Lordship and take up their posts. The time has come! A time of blessing, a time of harvest... I want to set you ablaze with my fire so that you may set the world ablaze. The time has come. Let my fire fall. Receive the power from my Holy Spirit”.

The prophecy at the end of the time of worship completely

changed the atmosphere at the training course. The prophecy led to a spontaneous outburst of worship that lasted for a prolonged time. At the end of a powerful time of worship, there were 10 prophecies from participants who received the gift for the first time. 27 participants testified that they newly received the gift of tongues.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is called to raise up true worshippers of the Lord. Music and worship by their very nature have a prophetic dimension. However, I find that sometimes the praise and worship sessions at our gatherings end up with singing of a few hymns. Even when it has elements of gratitude and praise, it often does not lead to worship. It is a serious concern that needs to be addressed. Proverbs 29:18 tells us “Where there is no prophecy, the people cast off restraint”. Our praise and worship sessions should lead to deeper and prophetic worship. Because prophetic worship is central to the charismatic experience.

The outpouring at the Baptism in the Holy Spirit enables us a new relationship with God. This relationship propels a renewed way of worshipping the Lord. Worship becomes a bridge that helps us to cross over from the visible to the invisible and transcend to the powerful presence of the living God. As we worship our focus should not be the gifts of God, but the God of the gifts. However, according to St. Thomas Aquinas true worship leads to a powerful effusion of the Holy Spirit. The worship leader is called to be prophetic and lead the assembly to prophetic worship.

The simple meaning of the word ‘prophetic’ is hearing God in our heart and living it or communicating it to others. To prophecy is to speak what is inspired. A prophetic worship leader is the one who relies on the inspiration from God while leading the worship and taking it to the higher level. This enables him to lead the community to a deeper level of being prophetic. What happened to St John in Rev 4:1-2 should happen to every worship leader. Only then our fellowship will become a place where people long to come to and are reluctant to leave. Then our prayer meetings and assemblies will become life transforming and uplifting. It is my wish and prayer that the Lord raise up many more prophetic worship leaders in the Church! 🏰

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WORSHIP JOY AND ETERNAL LIFE

Jane Guenther · ICCRS Councillor



The Book of Revelation is known as apocalyptic literature popular between 200 B.C. and 200 A.D., during a great crisis in Israel wherein the Roman's laid siege of the Temple and annihilated 580,000 Jews seeking to root out Judaism. The Greek word apocalypse (in English, "revelation") literally means "to draw back the veil". Apocalyptic literature attempts to give assurance that however bad things may be, one need only drawback the veil and see things in the perspective of the great battle against evil. God's victorious power is always at work among us. Our hope of the New Heaven and the New Earth can be entered into through reading and praying with the fourth and fifth chapters of Revelation where we find the essence of true worship, joy and eternal life. At the beginning of the fourth chapter scriptural text entitles the chapter, "Vision of Heavenly Worship". As he looks up into the sky, John sees there before me... a door standing open in heaven (v.1). If the sky was like an open window to Jesus at his baptism (Mk 1:10-11), it is like an open door to John, for a voice, the same trumpet like voice he heard once before, beckons him to pass through the door: Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this (v. 1). "At the end of time, the Kingdom of God will come in its fullness. After the universal judgment, the righteous will reign forever with Christ, glorified in body and soul, the universe itself will be renewed: The Church... will receive her perfection only in the glory of heaven when will come the time of renewal of all things. At that time, together with the human race, the universe itself, which is so closely related to man and which attains its destiny through him, will be perfectly reestablished in Christ. The catechism states: "Sacred Scripture calls this mysterious renewal, which will transform humanity and the world. ' new heavens and new earth. It will be the definitive realization of God's plan to bring under a single head all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth" CCC 1042-1043.

Rev. 4:2 "At once I was caught up in spirit", referring to the rapture, in ecstasy. Much of the imagery used here can be found in Ez 1, ... "the heavens were opened and I

saw visions of God." All of Revelation is understood more fully as the Ezekial Prophecy. Ezekiel's visions are found at important moments in the book and represent a new way of presenting the prophetic message. While beforehand the tendency was simply to begin a prophecy with: "Thus says the Lord", in Ezekiel God's pronouncements are preceded by dramatic visions that communicate the divine message in a new way. The visions happen because the "hand of the Lord" comes upon the prophet and in this state he is allowed to see the divine plan unfold in a symbolic representation. In order that our joy may increase we are called to lift our eyes above our own shortcomings and those of others, spend some time visualizing the life of glory to which your heavenly Father calls you. In this life of glory, we see the brilliance of the Father's glory and that of His Son radiating throughout heaven. Myriads of angles and saints are filled with glory praising the Most Holy Trinity, the source of their joy. Not only will this radiant joy and praise never end, it constantly increases in intensity. This life of glory is far more real and more powerful than our present life of struggle. The veil is peeled back and we are invited into that which will be happening for all eternity.

To help you in your contemplation, Chapters 4 and 5 of the Book of Revelation describes the future life of glory. The more you enter into this glory, the more this glory enters into you, giving you energy and hope, and a generosity to undergo the temporary sufferings of purification.

The more we enter into this type of contemplation, the more generous we become in entering into the purification experiences that bring us closer and closer to God, even in the midst of sin all around us. Our own sinfulness loses its grip over our hearts because that for which we long consumes us. The invitation to contemplate eternal life praising God. "A mighty angel asks who is worthy to open the scroll, i.e. who can accomplish God's salvific plan (Rev 5:2). There is despair at first when no one in creation can do it (Rev 5:3-4). But the seer is comforted by an elder who tells him that Christ, called the lion of the tribe of Judah, has won the right to open it (Rev. 5:5)." (USCCB) We are grateful for the gift Christ gave us in joining Him for eternity. 🙏

CROSS OF THE RENEWAL



With great joy we announce the resumption of the Cross of the Renewal production and distribution. The project, conceived and implemented in Canada by our brother René Brimo, now in heaven, to give a symbol of belonging and witness to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal's stream of grace and for the continued support of ICCRS in its worldwide service mission. Visit online shop at www.iccrs.org / www.arrediliturgici.it



QUESTIONS TO THE ICCRS DOCTRINAL COMMISSION

The ICCRS Doctrinal Commission, currently headed by Dr. Mary Healy, is in consultation with theologians and experts from around the world.

If you have a question about the CCR, please send it to newsletter@iccrs.org

ARE CHARISMATIC PRAYER AND WORSHIP OBLIGATORY?

Can I be a good Catholic without participating in charismatic prayer? Sometimes this question is raised by people who prefer traditional forms of prayer and do not feel drawn to the singing in tongues, loud praise, clapping, and similar expressive forms of prayer that they find in the Charismatic Renewal. How should we respond?

It is important to make a basic distinction: all are called to accept and embrace the charisms of the Holy Spirit and the charismatic dimension of the Church, but not all are called to belong to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal with its particular spirituality and its specific modes of prayer, worship, fellowship, and ministry.

Vatican Council II strongly affirmed the importance of the charismatic dimension of the Church. For instance, the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity says,

[T]he Holy Spirit Who sanctifies the people of God through ministry and the sacraments gives the faithful special gifts also (cf. 1 Cor. 12:7), "allotting them to everyone according as He wills" (1 Cor. 12:11)... From the acceptance of these charisms, including those which are more elementary, there arise for each believer the right and duty to use them in the Church and in the world for the good of men and the building up of the Church, in the freedom of the Holy Spirit who "breathes where He wills" (John 3:8).

Subsequent popes have further developed this teaching. For instance, Saint John Paul II stated that at Vatican II "the Church rediscovered the charismatic dimension as one of her constitutive elements." He also said,

I would like to cry out... to all Christians: Open yourselves docilely to the gifts of the Spirit! Accept gratefully and obediently the charisms which the Spirit never ceases to bestow on us! Do not forget that every charism is given for the common good, that is, for the benefit of the whole Church.

This exhortation means that all Christians should be radically open to the charismatic working of the Holy Spirit. It does not, however, mean that everyone is called to belong in an explicit way to the Charismatic Renewal. God raised up the Renewal as a current of grace to treasure and foster the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that he wants to bestow on the whole Church. But the CCR also has its own spiritual style that is not for all. We should guard against the human tendency to

limit the work of the Holy Spirit to that which is most familiar and congenial to us. The Holy Spirit works in an infinite variety of ways, and he brings unity from the rich diversity of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12).

So the forms of prayer and worship found in the CCR cannot be called obligatory. In fact, no specific kind of worship is obligatory in the Catholic Church except the liturgy itself. There are people living a full life in the Holy Spirit who practice mostly silent, contemplative prayer; or liturgical prayer with Gregorian chant; or the rosary and other devotions; or other traditional forms of prayer.

That being said, even if particular forms of prayer are not obligatory, they may be highly recommended and spiritually beneficial. It is good to reflect on the many exhortations in Scripture to praise God exuberantly:

Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy! (Ps 47:1)

Shout for joy in the LORD, O you righteous! Praise befits the upright. Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre; make melody to him with the harp of ten strings! Sing to him a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts (Ps 33:1-3).

David danced before the LORD with all his might.... So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the horn (2 Sam 6:14-15).

Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart (Eph 5:18-19).

So those in the CCR who love charismatic styles of prayer and praise need to speak about these in a balanced way. We rightly encourage others to participate in charismatic prayer meetings with singing and praise. We can explain that praising God aloud, with hands raised or even dancing, is a beautiful way of giving glory to God with our whole human nature, body and spirit. Expressive worship helps us forget ourselves; it puts our troubles into right perspective as small in comparison with the greatness of God; it stirs up joy and love for God; it draws a group of people into a deep experience of fellowship. Using tongues, prophecy and other charismatic gifts in the context of worship also allows the Holy Spirit to work in a powerful way in our midst. But we must avoid giving people the impression that they are not good Catholics if they choose not to participate in these forms of prayer. 🙏