



# ICCRS LEADERSHIP BULLETIN

Formation for current and new leaders in CCR

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## THE JOY AND PAIN OF TRANSITION

■ Ann Brereton · ICCRS Councillor

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### NEW WINE NEW WINESKINS

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**Jude Muscat**  
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Questions to the ICCRS  
Doctrinal Commission:

### CAN A RECENTLY CONVERTED PERSON BE A LEADER/SERVANT?



This article seeks to review the journey of transition, in particular the transition the worldwide Charismatic Family is currently undergoing: the transition to CHARIS.

There are some who are joy filled and see a future filled with hope as we enter a new phase of Charismatic family life. Equally, there are those who are frustrated and disappointed with some of the changes. They are grieving rather than rejoicing. Neither stance is right or wrong – it simply IS. So how can we as a worldwide family navigate our way through this process?

Those of us who live in a temperate climate (4 Seasons) are consistently in transition. Change is expected and it will happen that summer will move into Autumn (Fall), then into winter etc. We adjust and we adapt to the Seasonal changes. Depending on our personality or circumstances we may prefer one Season more than another and we may complain about the winter's cold or the summers' heat, however experience tells us to be patient and wait. Few people will embrace all seasons. For those who do, they experience both the joys and pain of high and low temperatures. They fear the dangers both extremes can bring and they rejoice in the beauty of each season.

Can we be like these 'few' and embrace the transition into CHARIS whilst honestly entering into any experience of pain or turmoil that the transition experience might bring? This is not a journey for the faint hearted and can only be undertaken through the Grace of God. We may be faced with our fears (will I be accepted and involved in this new identity?); our ego (who am I now that I've lost my position?); our desire for control (what's going to happen?); letting go of our dreams (is everything lost?); stepping into a place of many questions and few answers. Perhaps for some, it may seem easier to walk away, and that may be a very real temptation. Yet, our Tradition tells us that the interior journey takes courage, but if embarked upon, will lead us ever more deeply into the heart of God – a place which may feel devoid of Presence and yet faith tells us God is near

Every year the Church invites us into a Desert Season (lent). Our personal desert

is not geographical, but is located in our heart. The Hebrews stayed in their desert for 40 years while God purified them. During this time, whilst being threatened by many uncertainties and possibilities (tribal attack, hunger, thirst, exhaustion etc) they consciously allowed themselves be led by God whilst facing the fear and uncertainty of so many 'unknowns'. God invited a wandering Hebrew people into a new identity – that of Israel. In order to take hold of the new, God's ancient people had to let go of the familiar and be purified in their human nature so as to become the new nation of Israel. God is offering the Charismatic Renewal an invitation to new identity – and the spiritual process is the same.

There's a Jewish exhortation which says "Every tear brings the messiah closer". Pain in the dessert will be experienced before Joy in the promised land.

Fr Ron Rolheiser wrote: "The desert empties you. Hence it is not a place wherein you can decide how you want to grow and change, but is a place that you undergo, expose yourself to, and have the courage to face. The idea is not so much that you do things there, but that things happen to you while there – silent, unseen, transforming things. The desert purifies you, almost against your will, through God's efforts... Your job is only to be have the courage to be there. The idea is that God does the work, providing you have the courage to show up".

Transition says goodbye but it also says 'hallo'. Hallo to new possibilities and new horizons. As ICCRS becomes a name of the past, the men and women, girls and boys formed through the ICCRS family carry into the new situation of CHARIS, the gifts and blessings given to them and within them. These are not abandoned but can be part of the rich foundation of a new reality. Just as we stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us, so too will CHARIS stand on the shoulders of Charismatics who have lived and nurtured life through the Baptism in the Spirit during the past 50 or so years.

Transition. A place of transformation and change. An invitation to be accepted or declined. By the Grace of God, we can embrace this place, accept the season and live both the Joy and the Pain of transition. 🏠

## NEW WINE NEW WINESKINS

Jane Guenther · ICCRS Councillor



*"No one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out, and the wineskins will be ruined. No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins" – Luke 5:37-38*

The Holy Spirit is moving and revealing the truth of this scripture in our time. As the International Charismatic Renewal Service and the Catholic Fraternity come together along with other renewal entities worldwide in the new reality CHARIS, we find ourselves recognizing that the Holy Spirit, the new wine needed the new wineskin CHARIS. The Holy Father put forth a desire for a single service for the worldwide renewal and here it is. June 9th, Pentecost Sunday begins the new reality. As we look at the vision and work ahead we need to heed the words of Michelangelo, "The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short; but in setting our aim too low, and achieving our mark." This new wine – the Holy Spirit has to have the capacity to grow and renew the Church as the agent that brings new life that is necessary for the Church. The enormous scandal in the Church needs the clergy and laity alike to aim high and seek to think how the renewal can be part of the solution and healing by listening attentively to the Holy Spirit.

The renewal has been encouraged to help the current of grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit to ignite a new energy and new enthusiasm into the life of the Church, the body of Christ. Cantalembra shares with us: "When we talk about the mode of this grace, we can speak of it as a new coming of the Holy Spirit, as a new sending of the Spirit by the Father through Jesus Christ or as a new anointing corresponding to a new level of grace. In this sense the outpouring, although not a sacrament, is nevertheless an event, a spiritual event. This definition corresponds most closely to the reality of the thing. It is an event, something that happens and that leaves a sign, creating something new in a life. It is a spiritual event, rather than an outwardly visible, historical one, because it happens in a person's spirit, in the interior part of a person, where others may not recognize what is happening. Finally, it is

spiritual because it is the work of the Holy Spirit.

There is a wonderful text from the apostle Paul that speaks specifically of the renewing of the gift of God. Let's hear it as an invitation addressed to each of us:

I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline –2 Timothy 1:6-7" (words from his talk in Norfolk,VA Awakening the Domestic Church).

One of the great contributions of a life in the spirit is the unity that it brings to the people of God. This global unity in the Spirit is what can be accomplished because the Spirit knows no boundaries. The individual National Service of Communion will feed to the Continental Services of Communion, that will find greater unity brought to CHARIS as they meet for the International unity among those baptized in the Holy Spirit. This unity I find mounting as well across all Christians. We have been gathering with other Christian charismatics and are finding that our unity in prayer and praise is helping us celebrate an incarnation of the body of Christ that is vast and beautiful.

Sometimes, the need for reform is so great that the fresh work of God cannot be contained in old or expected forms. The beginning of planning for CHARIS began in 2017 at the Jubilee celebration. It needed time like the way in which new wine must be left to ferment, almost breathe, inside the wineskin so that it can age properly and eventually be savored and shared. We have come to the time when CHARIS will be shared as a service to the worldwide renewal. This may be an unexpected form from some groups perspective. It is clear that the document that addressed that we are a hierarchical and charismatic Church gives credence to this movement under the Dicastery of Laity and Family seemingly an unexpected form that can serve the Church more broadly. Let us rejoice and be glad for the way in which "He makes all this things new" that He breathes the Holy Spirit evermore into our lives and hearts. 🕊

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# SERVANT LEADERSHIPS

■ Jude Muscat · ICCRS Councillor



An oxymoron is normally coined together for a dramatic effect or to add flavour to speech. It is not normally a profound figure of speech but in our case the two concepts of leadership and servanthood brought together create a sublime characteristic of leadership. We all hold a basic idea of what servant leadership is, especially when we keep Jesus' ministry in mind. But little knowledge is a dangerous thing. We can all cite examples of how bad leadership can wreak havoc in communities and groups. Unfortunately some communities thrive on authoritarian rule, but leave a lot of individuals by the wayside, becoming a counter witness to the body of Christ.

This is not an exhaustive explanation of servant leadership, but rather a basic idea outlining what I believe to be the main characteristics of the subject matter.

## Taking the nature of a servant

*Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. (Mk 10:43)*

The scene in Mark 10:42-45 lends itself to a quick historical background. In the Greco-Roman world greatness was demonstrated by lording it over the others using intimidating power, tyranny, superiority and conquest. In essence it describes the Master Morality as conceived by the German Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche who described greatness as the will to overpower, while all else is folly.

While Jesus stands in total contrast to this mentality, his choice of words, slave and servant might shock us and betray the true meaning behind the notion. The biblical notions of slave and servant are in sharp contrast to the Greco-Roman world who regarded slaves as possessions like animals and things. To slave was to be deprived of happiness, as Callicles declares in Plato's Gorgias: "For how can a man be happy if he is a slave to someone?"

Slaves in Israel were not stripped of their humanity. Their harsh experience in Egypt created a national consciousness and must have nurtured in them a new anthropology. God's mercy shown to them also contributed greatly towards a more merciful treatment of slaves. To some extent slaves and servants were regarded as family members. The law prohibited grave ill-treatment either by punishing the oppressor or by giving freedom to the slave (Cf Ex 21:20,26-27). Hebrew slaves, as opposed to non-Hebrew, had more rights, for example Exodus 21:2 states that "If you buy a Hebrew servant, he is to serve you for six years. But in the

seventh year, he shall go free, without paying anything." Deuteronomy goes even further and adds: "when you release them, do not send them away empty-handed. Supply them liberally from your flock, your threshing floor and your winepress. Give to them as the Lord your God has blessed you" (Dt 15:13)

With that backdrop in place we can posit that putting on the nature of a servant does not necessarily mean a slave mentality. A slave mentality deprives us of authority and vision; it kills creativity and simply transforms us into machines on hold until the next command. The "I" is dead and with it the uniqueness of one's mission. The slave exists simply as an extension of the master. Although this resembles abandonment in God, it is a parody; God does not destroy us, grace perfects human nature.

On the other hand, the "I" is the most dangerous word in servant leadership because it only serves to inflate the ego and authority becomes authoritarian, vision becomes blurred showing a narcissistic image of the inflated "I". Mission serves only to increase the grandeur of the ego. This despotic attitude creates herds of goats and seeks the adulation of followers.

## Identity of the Servant leader

Servant leadership in essence means to have a serving heart which does not exclude authority. Jesus taught with authority (Mt 7:29; Mk 1:22), he had authority over evil (Mk 5:1-15), he showed authority over nature when he calmed the storm (Mk 4:35-41), raised the dead (Mt 9:18-26; Lk 7:11-17; 8:49-56; Jn 11:1-44), multiplied the loaves (Mt 14:13-21; Jn 6:1-15) and walked on water (Mt 14:26). He showed authority over the crowd whose intention was to push him off the cliff (Lk 4:28-30) and of course he had authority over sin, sickness and death. Jesus' authority is directed towards the well-being of the community and is characterised by humility, empathy, compassion and altruism. Psychological studies show that such behavioural characteristics build up a sense of organisation, teamwork, strong relationships and mutual trust, thus strong communities.

## Fruit of the Spirit

Servant leadership does not come about simply by human effort. Certainly the honing of personal skills and psychological studies are sine qua non for growth, but servant leadership is clearly empowered by God's greatest gift: the Holy Spirit. Servant leadership is the gift of authority through diligent leadership (Rm 12:8) empowered by the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). 🍷



## 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](mailto:newsletter@iccrs.org)

# CAN A RECENTLY CONVERTED PERSON BE A LEADER/SERVANT?

The selection of leaders and the invitations to serve in Renewal groups and communities is a vital question for spiritual maturity and growth in the Renewal. Most important are some fundamental principles to be outlined, principles that are applicable in all nations and situations. The principles are more important than generalized answers that may not fit the vast variety of situations in which Renewal groups are arising.

Let us consider first the size and the character of Renewal groups and communities. We can consider groups of under 30 participants, those between 30 and 100, between 100 and 250, and those over 250 members. For groups of less than 30 people, formal structures are unnecessary. Often there will be no forms of admission to membership, and no commitment asked of members. In such groups, there is often a core group or team that takes responsibility. In small groups there is little difference between being a leader and serving in such roles as teaching, prayer ministry and music. A key principle is looking for persons with a servant heart, who want to serve out of love and not out of some inner psychological need. To be part of a core team does not require much experience and a person could be considered for some service in a team a year after conversion. The spirit of a person can be tested by inviting them first to do some spiritually less demanding service, such as helping with refreshments, with preparation and clean-up of the meeting place, helping with a book table or joining a greeters' team to welcome newcomers.

With groups and communities between 30 and 100 people, some simple structure begins to be needed. It is wise to distinguish between those who are in leadership and those who serve under their leadership. In this category, it becomes more important who serves in the leadership team and to develop some pattern for initiating new members. It becomes necessary to discern who should serve in a Life in the Spirit seminar and in any prayer ministry, neither of which should include any persons with major unresolved sin patterns in their lives. Normally persons should not be chosen for a leadership team who have not demonstrated their faith-life and their reliability in other forms of service. Newly-converted persons would not normally be considered for a leadership team until at least three years after conversion.

With groups between 100 and 250 people, it is normal to have an explicit process to join the community and a planned pattern of initiation and subsequent formation. The community will have, or will seek to acquire, canonical statutes approved by the Church. If a community belongs to the Fellowship of Catholic Covenant Communities and Fellowships, they are covered by the statutes of the Fellowship. The statutes will specify how leaders are to be chosen. With communities of this size, it begins to be necessary to have specific teams for different services, all led by a person approved by the leaders

to be in charge of this service, whether music, prayer ministry, children's ministry, the Life in the Spirit seminar.

With over 250 people, the community often becomes the primary instrument of formation in the lives of its members. The community will need to provide for the pastoral care of different age groups, for the teenagers and young singles, for families and their children, and for the older members. The larger the community the greater will be the maturity required of the top leadership. Newly-converted persons would not be considered for leadership in such communities. With over 250 members, a community will normally develop forms of intermediate leadership answerable to the senior leaders. Otherwise the leaders become exhausted and can suffer "burn out". The senior leaders need to form the intermediate leaders, gradually introducing them to bigger responsibilities. For the selection of leaders for regional service committees, the following method has been used successfully in some countries. First, the leaders of the prayer groups are collected in a list. This list is sent to all leaders of prayer groups who can mark some leaders, after prayer and according to the specific character of leaders, which can be found in the bible (the letter to Titus, etc). Then the existing regional team invites those with the most votes for an interview, to check their personal and spiritual suitability. Then the old team selects the persons needed for the "renewal" of the old, and presents them to the leaders' assembly. After a time of prayer any objections concerning the proposed new leaders can be brought to the old team. When there is unity over the proposals the new leaders are blessed by all the leaders.

What is the role of the priest in Renewal groups and communities? Clearly it is desirable that a priest takes part in all groups of over 100 people. The priest is their link with the local bishop and diocese. But this will depend on the availability of priests. In some places where priests have to cover large areas, the occasional participation of a priest is the most that is possible. But always there should be a deep respect for the role and the authority of the priest in Catholic communities. However, from the start, the Renewal has been a predominantly lay movement, and it is one of its biggest contributions to the life of the Church to have produced many wonderful lay leaders. It is preferable to have all significant decisions agreed by the whole team of leaders, together with the priest, or with the team then presenting their key decisions to the priest for discernment. It does not accord either with the theology of the Church as the Body of Christ or with the grace of the Renewal that the priest should make all the decisions by himself alone. But the input of the priest and his discernment is to be sought, particularly concerning the content of the teachings. 🙏