

ICCRS NEWSLETTER

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JOURNALING IN PRAYER

■ Ann Brereton · ICCRS Councillor

IN THIS ISSUE

ICCRS NEWSLETTER

JOURNALING IN PRAYER

Ann Brereton
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TRUSTING IN THE ACTION OF GOD

Cyril John
ICCRS Collaborator

VICE PRESIDENT'S REFLECTION

Dn Christof Hemberger

ICCRS LEADERSHIP BULLETIN

DEEP CALLS TO DEEP

Jane Guenther
ICCRS Councillor

THE POWER OF TRADITIONAL PRAYER

Tim Kirk
CF Executive Member

ACADEMIC: GATHERED TOGETHER

Jude Muscat
ICCRS Councillor

Questions to the ICCRS
Doctrinal Commission:

IS IT PERMISSIBLE TO GET A TATTOO?



Catholic tradition teaches us that God longs to continually communicate with us. The Church states that He does this in three basic ways: creation, the voice of our conscience, and Sacred Scripture. God is always striving to get the attention of every human being. A couple of questions we can ask ourselves are, “How do I communicate with God?” and “Do I use the means at my disposal for this purpose?”

A prayer journal can be a fruitful tool to assist a praying person with this personal God communication (prayer). St Ignatius of Loyola (Spiritual Exercises) and St Thérèse of Lisieux (The Story of a Soul) are two of the many saints who have used this tool to record their interior lives. Millions have benefitted from their written recordings. The revelations of their interior lives have inspired a multitude of Christians.

A prayer journal is not a chronological diary of prayer with a particular written form. It is not a theological thesis, nor does it need to be grammatically correct. Put simply, it is an interior dialogue of prayer, captured on paper, between the writer and God. A conversation between one heart and another. This journal can record great joy and equally deep sorrow. It can use many words or very few. It can be poetic or chaotic. There can be times in our spiritual journey when it seems as though we are the ones doing all the talking. God is silent. Recording our prayer experiences during these times can reveal the “still silent voice of God.”

The Information technology highway in today's world gives us answers at the touch of a button. Our minds can be entertained through many different media and this has affected our prayer communication with God. We are becoming “surface dwellers” with no time to journey towards depth and mystery. With little hesitation, we can jump from one “thought” (or Scripture

verse) to another. We are losing the ability to wait patiently, to go deeper. Due to this inability, it is becoming rare to “taste” our prayer experiences (or lack thereof) with God. We no longer savour prayer's full flavour or give it adequate time to reveal the full message contained within its depths.

We can experience God's presence during our prayer time in a very powerful way yet within a matter of hours or days, we can easily forget this encounter. However, if we record our experience in a prayer journal, it brings us back to that experience and gives the Holy Spirit space to work with deeper revelation. A prayer journal helps us to remain focused on such an experience, particular theme, or subject and assist us greatly in bringing us back to any “unfinished” business.

A prayer journal can be a very powerful tool when dealing with past hurts. These hurts and emotions can be so deeply hidden within us that it is difficult to get in touch with them and almost impossible to express them through the spoken word. Our journal can be our best friend where we can record, through the written word, the powerful emotions welling within us. We can use our recordings to safely confront ourselves, our aggressors, or God Himself. Through these recollections, we have the ability to see paths of Grace, paths of weakness, and the Hand of God at work in our lives.

God desires a living, close relationship with all His people. He constantly invites us to draw deeper into the mystery of who He is and the depth of His love for us. We must deepen our prayer connection if we are to experience the fullness of life that God is offering to us. Praying the same way now as we did a couple of years ago would indicate that we might not be completely open to the Grace God offers to deepen our relationship with Him. A prayer journal is one way to turn this around. 🙏

TRUSTING IN THE ACTION OF GOD

■ Cyril John · ICCRS Collaborator



“We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose” (Rom 8:28). When we talk about growing in spirituality, it is not so much about doing the extraordinary, but more about trusting in the promises of the Lord. The dictionary gives the definition of the word trust as, firm belief in the honesty, veracity and strength of a person; confident expectation; total reliance; etc. Trust is the confidence that Jesus is big enough, strong enough, and caring enough to ensure what is good for us despite a temporary phase of uncertainty. Yes, I may believe that Jesus is bigger than the problems, but I really don't think that it is true in this case. There is a big chasm between the “yes” and the “but.” Only trust can bridge the gap. Trust is a tiny key that can unlock the grace that will affirm that Jesus is bigger than any uncertainties. It makes us confident that we can rely on Him.

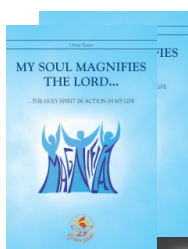
I would like to share a testimony where I individually—and the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in New Delhi in India as a body—trusted in the action of God. On 8 July 1996, during my personal prayer, I had a vision of a huge building. I was filled with awe and enquired from the Lord what the vision meant. I received a strong confirmation in prayer that the Lord wanted us to establish a renewal centre in Delhi. Although I was Chairman of the Archdiocesan Service Team of the CCR then, I did not dare to share this message with the members of the Service Team, because we did not have even a bank account at that time to fund such a centre. The only thing I did was that I started praying for it and asked our intercession ministry to pray for the same. We have the assurance, “Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours” (Mk 11:24). My faith was not strong enough to really believe that such an incredible thing would eventually happen.

However, in 1999, while the Service Team met with Archbishop Alan de Lastic of Delhi, he suggested to us that we should look for a plot of land for setting up a centre of our own, because we used to organize many Renewal

events in the Archdiocese. This came as a confirmation of the message I had received earlier. After a considerable search, we found a piece of agricultural land with eggplant cultivation measuring about five hectares on the outskirts of New Delhi. In prayer, the Lord gave us confirmation for purchasing that plot of land. With personal contributions and a heavy bank loan, the Delhi Service Team managed to acquire the land in 2001.

There was a serious impediment coming in the way of using the land for construction of a renewal centre. Because the land was being used for agricultural purposes, the land laws would not permit its conversion and use for any other purpose. Hence, initially, we constructed only a small structure with an adoration chapel. It was christened as Jeevan Jyoti Ashram (a Centre of the Light of Life). Twenty-four hour adoration and intercession commenced in the chapel. “Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb 4:16). The Lord prompted us to buy the land and then we witnessed His powerful intervention. In 2009, the local government published a new Master Plan for the city that converted the zoning for the whole area surrounding our centre into freehold land meant for construction of commercial buildings and residential houses. Subsequently, to our surprise, in 2011, the government released a plan for a highway that would run next to the centre.

Today, the facility can house about 150 people for retreats and training courses. Three priests and a few volunteers are available for full time ministry at the centre. There are regular retreats, night vigils, training programs, and gatherings offered at the centre. “Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession” (Ps 2:8). Now, the centre has three perpetual adoration chapels where members of the Renewal and volunteer groups come to spend night and day in adoration and intercession. As the Psalmist says, “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but let us place our trust in the Lord, our God” (Ps 20:7). Jesus is worth taking the risk! “Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act” (Ps 37:5)! 🙏



MY SOUL MAGNIFIES THE LORD... by Oreste Pesare

Oreste's powerful and virile encounter with God slowly develops into a close relationship between a loving Father and a son who learns to open his heart more and more to God's grace. He becomes more aware of not wanting to 'use' God for his own needs but rather wanting to be 'used by' God for His purpose. He becomes available to serve the spiritual and material needs of others, near and far. What we are shown is a marvellous exchange: if you take care of the Kingdom of God, He, the Lord, will take care of you and your life in a very concrete way... according to the trustworthy words of Jesus himself: So do not worry, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear?” For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well (Matthew 6:31-33).

[from the Foreword written by Paul Joseph Card. Cordes]

The book is now available in Italian too.

Buy online at www.iccrs.org

VICE PRESIDENT'S REFLECTION

■ Dn Christof Hemberger



Half a year has gone by since many of us took part in the events of the Golden Jubilee of the Charismatic Renewal in Rome. The experience blessed many who were present in Rome.

Obviously, the themes of the workshops and talks, as well as the innumerable encounters that took place, will have a long-term effect and, we hope, will leave a permanent imprint on our local groups. And naturally, the presence of Pope Francis and his words to the Charismatic Renewal worldwide have given us an incredible boost. This encouragement is not intended only for our archives—so that we can say, “It was great! Look, I can still show you what the Pope said at the Jubilee...” The key is for us to carry what we heard and experienced into the day-to-day reality of our groups and communities. For this, it is necessary that we let sink in the themes that Pope Francis, the pioneers of the CCR, and its current leaders brought to us. We must delve into them and keep focusing on them.

Here is a little thought in closing. Something that really spoke to me in Rome was a phrase I repeatedly heard in the testimonies of the pioneers of the first hour. It was, “When we had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, we did not know what to do next...” In the beginning, there was no such thing as “this is how it works” or “we have always done it this way!” Our mothers and fathers in the CCR had to rely solely on the action and words of the Holy Spirit. They could only make themselves available to God as His instruments and wait for His instructions. It is with this attitude that the CCR began and spread all over the world. I have a sense that this attitude ought to guide us anew today: where human wisdom and experience end, the sovereign action of the Holy Spirit begins. And where people humbly make themselves available to God, they are not in His way and HE can do great things! So let us live in this humble attitude and expect great things!

With best regards. 🙏

HELP! ICCRS needs YOU to reach more people for the Lord!

ICCRS welcomes well-organised and responsible people who have the talent of speaking more than one language to offer their voluntary service to the CCR worldwide. Collaborators will be requested to translate or proofread texts basically from our Newsletter and website. The texts are generally translated from English into Italian, Spanish, French, German, and Portuguese. You can see some details below:

- Translators: we search for responsible people that are fluent in English and have a wide knowledge of their mother tongue. Translators should be familiar to the Catholic and Charismatic environment. They will receive a text occasionally and a reasonable length of time will be given to accomplish the task.



- Proofreaders: we also expect to have other collaborators that may serve as proofreaders of the texts already translated. Proofreaders should have a good knowledge of English and a deep knowledge of spelling, grammar and vocabulary in their mother tongue. They will receive a text occasionally and a reasonable length of time will be given to accomplish the task.

- We also need English mother tongue people that have a deep knowledge of the language and that are able to translate or proofread texts from the foreign language into English.

If you are willing to serve the Lord with this important mission, please contact us at communications@iccrs.org. 🙏

NEWS FROM THE WORLD

Please send news from your group, community or NSC to newsletter@iccrs.org.

Spain: 25 priests from around the world, students at John Paul II Theological Institute (Valencia, Spain), experienced an enormous gift of the Lord to deepen the themes of Eucharistic Adoration, healing in body and soul, and holiness within the subject of 'Family Ministry', through the use of the Guidelines for Healing Prayers, produced by ICCRS. The focus of their studies has been: "He, only He", since "Without Me you cannot do anything" (Jn 15, 5).

According to Raúl Eguía, a professor at the Institute: "Today the Church needs priests who can be used powerfully by the Holy Spirit, Saints of fire! Men with a deep experience of Adoration, of The Word of God, of Eucharistic depth, of Love for the Holy Spirit and for Our Mother Mary, with immense hunger and thirst for the Lord and for so many brothers who die not knowing that Jesus is alive".

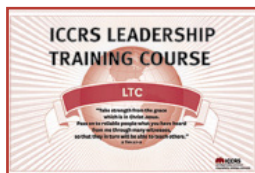
Let us pray for that priests of the John Paul II Theological Institute and also for all the priests around the world. May God flood the earth with His Holy Spirit and touch all the men's heart in order to Sanctify His creation.

ICCRS FORMATION Visit www.iccrs.org or e-mail formation@iccrs.org for more information about our training programmes.



VIII LFI • Rome, Italy

- 2 - 22 September 2018
- formation@iccrs.org

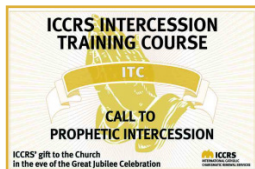


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