

# ICCRS NEWSLETTER

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■ James Murphy · ICCRS President

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I have written a lot of articles for a lot of newsletters over the years. It seems ironic that this time, in our own newsletter, I am stumbling to find the right words to write.

As you know, this is our last ICCRS Newsletter, and I have been asked to share my parting thoughts.

If I started listing people to thank, I would use up the entire Newsletter, and still not get everyone in! I think I can say however that the "ICCRS experience" owes so much to so many: to the Popes and other members of the hierarchy who gave encouragement and direction, to the past Presidents of ICCRS, to the members and consultants of the ICCRS Council, to Oreste Pesare, our faithful Director for so many years, to the fantastic staff and volunteers who have come from all over the world to serve, to the translators who "helped interpret our tongues," to the men and women around the world who helped sponsor ICCRS events, which truly made ICCRS an international family, to the men and women who for years have prayed and financially supported the work of this world-wide family.

Each person has made a difference. God alone knows all you have done for us. May He reward you for your generosity and your servanthood. Thank You.

Serving ICCRS has been one of the greatest joys and adventures of my life, and I will always be grateful to God for allowing me to be a part of this truly world-wide family.

Again, I could write a list of the fruit I have seen borne through ICCRS, but I think I can put it very simply.

By the grace of God, all of us have grown closer to Him... and one another. There is literally one family that lives all over the world. We have different languages, different cultures, but we are joined by our common experience of Pentecost. Our hearts burn with one fire. We are men and women, young and old, rich and poor, but we are one in Christ. There is a bond of unity that did not come from organization but from fellowship in the Holy Spirit.

This grace at work in us will continue in the days ahead. It's blood is in our veins. We will continue to live what are, I believe the key earmarks of what ICCRS is;

-Obedience and loyalty to the Catholic Church,

-Respect for all, even though we are different from one another,

-Dynamic, charismatic prayer,

-We enjoy each others company and try to laugh just a little bit more than we cry,

-We go out of our way to help one another.

-We are a people with our feet on earth, but our eyes gazing towards heaven.

I am so proud that ICCRS has maintained all these years, an office on Vatican property. I love the generous souls who have staffed that office for so many years.

And yet, ICCRS is so much more than a name plate on the door of a Vatican office.

It's the men and women who read this Newsletter, who pray, who participate in local, regional, national and international events. It is the men and women who were born in the Upper Room and continue to share their experience with others. It is the embraces, the smiles, the prayers that truly gave ICCRS its authority and mandate to serve this great family.

I know that this common bond will continue to thrive among us in the days ahead. The lived experience of the world-wide ICCRS family will be forever in our hearts as we move forward into the new reality of CHARIS. And as we build together into a broader world-wide network of brothers and sisters, may our love for God and each other deepen.

If CHARIS can benefit from this work of ICCRS's 25 plus years, and continue to move the Catholic Charismatic Renewal deeper in to the heart of the Church, then our years have been well spent, and we can rejoice in the what God has accomplished.

We have been a family. We will always be a family. Maybe for that...I am the most grateful of all. 🙏

# UNITY OF THE BODY IN ITS DIVERSITY OF EXPRESSIONS

■ Christof Hemberger · ICCRS Vice President



One year ago, the national leaders of the European CCR met in Assisi. Mounted on the wall of the conference room where we met, there was an unusual wooden cross: the corpus was not made in one piece but consisted of many wooden pieces – like a puzzle. Looking at them individually, they were just a few pieces of wood. Together they formed the body of Christ.

At that time, this depiction of the cross touched many of us deeply as it reflected the reality of those meeting in that room: There CCR regional leaders as well as leaders of communities, ministries and CCR initiatives. All were different in their personalities, responsibilities, backgrounds, traditions... And still there is something that unites us: Together the wooden pieces had a meaning – they expressed visually what we were and are on a spiritual level: Body of Christ.

St. Paul wrote in his letter to the Corinthians, “As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit. Now the body is not a single part, but many. If a foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand I do not belong to the body,’ it does not for this reason belong any less to the body. Or if an ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye I do not belong to the body,’ it does not for this reason belong any less to the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God placed the parts, each one of them, in the body as he intended. If they were all one part, where would the body be? But as it is, there are many parts, yet one body.” (1 Cor 12:12-20)

The body Paul writes about is the community of believers,

the Church. The head is Christ himself, we – in our diversity as intended by God – are the parts. What unites us is the Spirit of God. He himself makes us children and heirs of God and thus parts of the body.

This image can also be applied to the Charismatic Renewal as a whole: What unites us, what connects us is the Holy Spirit. Baptism in the Holy Spirit and living in the power of the Holy Spirit which results from it, is what we all have in common. But then the differences start. There are large and small prayer groups, communities of people living together, covenant communities, missionary and mercy ministries, services and initiatives and many more. They are all different: they vary in their origins, they vary in their expressions, they vary in their traditions, they vary in their vision. And still, they are all part of one body – and together they form the CCR.

How could anyone say, “My group belongs to it, yours does not!”? Or, “Your experience of the Holy Spirit is false as it is not the same as mine!”?

A wise person once explained to me, “Just because someone is different he is not wrong. He is simply different!” God has desired me and created me as I am. But the others as well! The other person makes mistakes and is not perfect, but so do I!

Especially in these days as we are urged by the initiative of the Holy Father to move closer together and to express the unity or our CCR in CHARIS, we cannot but face the fact: We are different and that is fine. But we do belong together, and together we form one body. The CCR is not uniform, it is diverse in its expressions. This very fact makes it so special.

I continue to have the picture of the body composed of many parts on the wall of our meeting room before my eyes. Individually, the parts were just pieces of wood. Only by being placed together as a unit, complementing one another, their meaning became visible to all. 🙏

## VICE PRESIDENT’S REFLECTION

Some years ago I heard God say in my prayer time: “Christof, the time for something new has come. Do you trust me?” I have learnt that is gets serious if God asks the question “Do you trust me?” Behind it, there is always the question: Do I have the trust that God will guide me on a good path? Do I rely on him for the fullness of life he has promised? Or do try to help out a bit in a human way by providing for something to fall back on in case it gets uncomfortable?

As I was sitting there in my prayer time, Isaiah 43:29 came to mind, “See, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” A few verses earlier, it says, “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine. When you pass through the water, I will be with you...” It was as if God were saying, “I have something new for you. But do not be afraid. I am with you,

I will accompany you! And: I know you and take care of you! I will guide you; I am by your side!”

Something new came, and it was good. Still, it happened once in a while that it was not all that easy, and I felt discouraged wanting to give up. In these situations, God had patience with me. He did not let up and kept reminding me of Isaiah 43.

In a few weeks, ICCRS will cease to exist. With CHARIS something new springs forth. Some do not understand it, many are excited about it. There is certainly a lot of work ahead of us because it is about a deeper unity of the worldwide CCR. Let us receive encouragement from God for all that lies ahead by holding on to the ancient promise from Isaiah 43: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine!” 🙏

## THANK YOU LORD! PRAISE RISES TO THE SKY FROM THE ICCRS OFFICE!

■ Oreste Pesare · ICCRS Director



Thank you Lord for the almost 26 years of faithful service; I am referring to ICCRS.

Having started its services on 14th September 1993, the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (ICCRS) will cease to exist on 9th June 2019, leaving its place to the new worldwide service organization 'CHARIS' (Catholic Charismatic Renewal International Service).

This type of change has historically occurred twice in the worldwide Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR). In fact, the pioneer office started in Ann Arbor in 1972 by Ralph Martin – called ICO (International Communication Office); then changed its name, service and headquarters in 1978, giving way to ICCRO (International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Office), based first in Malines, Belgium and then in Rome; finally moving to Vatican City in 1984. So, ICCRS was an expansion and transformation of ICCRO in 1993, when the Church officially recognized and blessed, through the Pontifical Council for the Laity, the worldwide services to CCR as a private association of the faithful with Pontifical right. Alleluia!

I arrived at ICCRS – by the grace of God – in September 1996, for a probationary period ending December 31st 1996 & appointed full time executive director from January 1st 1997; almost 23 years now. Thank you Jesus for this privilege! The executive function was previously held by Fr. Ken Metz followed by Sr. Nancy Kellar, who concluded her service after the ICCRS Healing Seminar in San Giovanni Rotondo (Fg) with 600 worldwide delegates and the great ICCRS One Day Evangelization Outreach at the Foggia Stadium, with over 42,000 participants from all over Italy.

Claude Lopez (Australia, now 92 years old), accompanied by his wife Miralda, was instrumental during this transition; volunteering an almost year-long management service; first for the Foggia event and then in Rome as temporary director; tasked to find and train a fulltime executive director for the Vatican office. Thank you Claude for your worthy service to the Lord and your wonderful and unique friendship.

I have served ICCRS under four Presidents: Charles Whitehead, England; Allan Panozza, Australia; Michelle Moran, England; and finally Jim Murphy, USA. I praise the Lord for each of these special people, who the Lord has used as privileged instruments in my life and CCR worldwide. Dozens have been ICCRS councillors, representing ICCRS in many areas of the globe. Thank you Lord for each of them; all very precious and gifted people at the service of the reign of God.

My collaborators number more than fifty hailing from

all five Continents, speaking diverse languages, bringing with them diverse cultures and tendencies; representing many different expressions of CCR's multiform current of grace. This diversity and each of my collaborators has been such a blessing for me personally and for the entire worldwide CCR. We have worked as a team in the areas of: secretariat, communications, formation, events, resources, administration and accountancy.

When we started the service in 1996, very few people were using mobile phones and emails; our principal ways of communication were postal letters and faxes; no internet, neither cloud drives nor social networks; neither the possibility to register online for international events. The multilingual ICCRS newsletter and bulletin were created and assembled by hand, attaching images and drawings to the text with glue, and each month using scores of volunteers to fold, envelope and ship them!

Regardless, the spirit of service among the staff has been constant: faithfulness to the staff morning prayer, great availability and generosity, acceptance of the diversities and continuous forgiveness for any possible misunderstandings or mistakes among us; using the different charisms received by the Lord and a great desire to serve to expand the reign of God in the world!

It has been a great honour and privilege to serve the Lord and the entire Church for many years here at ICCRS, collaborating with many diverse people of God, and learning, from each, infinite things on the human and spiritual dimension. Thank you Lord! A great and special 'thank you' to each of them!

A new season is dawning; a new understanding of CCR and the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the entire Church. Another step needs to be taken; other people are called to take the baton and continue the race towards the goal; the renewal of the Church and the whole world! People change, God's dreams remain! We are only 'servants', grateful to the Lord for honouring us to serve in his vineyard.

Dear brothers and sisters of the CCR, whom I was called to serve in this unique role in ICCRS, it is time for me to leave the administrative service. It is time to adjust my sails; to remain ready to preach and testify wherever He beckons. For the wonders that He has done in my life: always and everywhere my soul will magnify the Lord!

Let's continue to love our God together, in the grace of the Spirit. Let's continue to be available collaborating with the new leaders, who the Spirit will call to serve in CHARIS. The fire of the Lord will continue to spread and thus more people will know God's love! Amen, Alleluia. 🙌

# ICCRS FORMATION

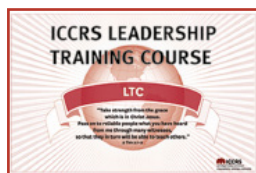
Visit [www.iccrs.org](http://www.iccrs.org) or e-mail [formation@iccrs.org](mailto:formation@iccrs.org) for more information about our training programmes.



## VIII LFI · Rome, Italy

**REGISTRATION IS NOW OPENED**

- 06 – 26 October 2019
- [formation@iccrs.org](mailto:formation@iccrs.org)
- English, Spanish, French - other languages on request



## LTC · South Korea

- 29 Sep – 5 Oct 2019
- [madangser@gmail.com](mailto:madangser@gmail.com)
- English and Korean

## LTC · New York, USA

- 10 – 17 November 2019
- [mariejos@optonline.net](mailto:mariejos@optonline.net)
- Creole and French



## CROSS OF THE RENEWAL

The Cross of the Renewal depicts the outpouring of blood and water from the side of Jesus crucified which is symbolic of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (1 Jn 5:6-8). The words 'Veni Creator Spiritus' express the fervent prayer of the CCR. It is our hope that all who have experienced the Baptism of the Holy Spirit will wear this symbol as a witness to the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

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### ICCRS Council Members

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- Marcos Volcan, Brazil
- Oreste Pesare, Italy (Director)

The *ICCRS Newsletter* is an international publication released bimonthly in English, Spanish, Italian, French, Portuguese, German, Arabic and Romanian for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Its purpose is to provide information about the growth and development of CCR throughout the world, as well as the events organised by ICCRS.

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