

THE GOOD NEWS: JESUS IS RISEN!

■ Andrés Arango · ICCRS Councillor

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MARY AND ECUMENISM



The message of Salvation can be summarized in one sentence: Jesus is alive! Or Jesus has risen! Or The tomb is empty! "Jesus is alive!" is central for our faith as Christians, as St. Paul reminds the Corinthians: "and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is without substance, and so is your faith" (1Cor15: 14). Sometimes we make evangelization complicated, thinking that people need to know a lot about God to be able to accept Him while, in fact, the Good News we have to proclaim is that Jesus has Risen... He is alive... He is among us! Once people acknowledge that Jesus is the Lord, that by His death and resurrection he defeated sin, death and Satan, their lives will be changed, transformed, and will have meaning since if Christ has risen, we will also rise with Him (cf. 1Cor15:20).

After rising from the dead and before going to the Heavenly Father, Jesus appears before his disciples and tells them: "Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation... These are the signs that will be associated with believers: ... they will lay their hands on the sick, who will recover." (Mk16:15-18). I want to share some thoughts on what the disciples experienced and on how their lives were changed after seeing the Risen Jesus. Firstly, they had a personal encounter with the Risen One; it wasn't something someone told them; they saw him themselves and their lives were transformed. Secondly, they listened to Jesus' missionary calling to go out to the whole world. Having a personal experience with the Risen One, their words take on an invigorating meaning. Finally, they go out to preach the Gospel and their mission is associated with signs in the power of Jesus, to such an extent that they are able to give their lives for the Lord, confident that one day they will rise with Him.

How can we imitate the disciples who saw the Risen Jesus, so that Jesus' mandate to proclaim the Gospel till the ends of the world becomes a reality? In the first place, we need to have

a constant personal encounter with Jesus, remember that He is alive, that He is present among us. That's why having a daily prayer life, intimacy with the Loved One, contemplating Jesus in the depths of our hearts is fundamental so that, like the disciples, we can be completely in love with Him. Furthermore, we must explicitly proclaim the Gospel: Jesus has Risen! In our modern world we meet people whose lives have no meaning, who can't find a way out of their problems, who have lost all hope, who are internally and physically sick. They need to hear clearly with the conviction of someone who has had an encounter with Jesus that He is alive, that He is near, that He is the solution, that with Him life has a new perspective, just as The Catechism of the Catholic Church 654 states: "By his Resurrection, he opens for us the way to a new life". However, just like with the disciples, the message of Salvation must be accompanied by signs. That is, so that the world may believe not only by our words but by the works of the Risen Jesus, Who continues setting the oppressed free and healing the sick. Lastly, the mission of the disciples wasn't only talking about Jesus and doing miracles in His name, but, above all, living like Jesus did, imitating Him completely even unto death. Therefore, for the Gospel to be proclaimed all over the world, we must be witnesses of Jesus; that is to say, others should find Jesus through our witness in life. Let our actions show that we have a relationship with the Risen Jesus. Moreover, that we may be infused with Jesus... since we love like Jesus, forgive like Jesus, live like Jesus.

The world is constantly unstable, afraid, dark... only the Risen Jesus, when he is accepted into our hearts, can change our society. He is the only one who brings real peace, and through the gift of His Spirit, He transforms people's lives and hearts. For that reason, we are called to live a kerygma... a Good News... triune, as Pope Francis says: "The kerygma is trinitarian. The fire of the Spirit is given in the form of tongues and leads us to believe in Jesus Christ who, by his death and resurrection, reveals and communicates to us the Father's infinite mercy" (EG 164). 🙏

ECUMENISM OF BLOOD

■ Marcos Volcan · ICCRS Councillor



Recently we have been reflecting upon and bringing alive the memory of men and women such as Blessed Elena Guerra who, before the turn of the twentieth century, wrote several letters to Pope Leo XIII. It is enriching to reflect on the different “reactions” of the Supreme Pontiff to her requests. One such reaction was the consecration act of the twentieth century to the Holy Spirit that took place on 1st January, 1901. In fact, the charismatic growth which followed that act of consecration is true evidence that *the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, heard the cry of the Church and came... Came in power!*

The 20th century witnessed many manifestations of the Holy Spirit. Agnes Ozman attending Charles Parham’s biblical school started speaking both in strange languages (glossolalia) and in foreign languages she had never spoken in before (xenoglossia). To Parham and his students, this event was a confirmation of the teachings on the Baptism in the Holy Spirit (1901).

In that same year, a charismatic awakening happened in Wales and a few years later, a similar phenomenon in Los Angeles was birthed during prayer meetings led by William Seymour, considered to be the milestone of Pentecostalism. There was also the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council – called “The Council of the Spirit” because of the strong emphasis placed on the Holy Spirit. The Pentecostal current of grace reverberated all through that Century, in what some authors call waves and it was in 1967 that the Catholic Charismatic Renewal came into being.

One of the most powerful manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the Twentieth Century was the witness (martyria) of Christians of different denominations who died through the shedding of their own blood. The twentieth century had a greater number of martyrs than all the other centuries put together! Martyrdom is, in fact, a gift of the Holy Spirit – but you will receive the power of the Holy Spirit, which will come on you (dynamo), and then you will be my witnesses

(martyria) – for nobody is able to say, “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:8; 1 Cor 12:3). Undoubtedly, the Century of the martyrs owes it all to the powerful move of the Holy Spirit!

The Ecumenical Movement that appeared in the “Century of the Spirit” uttered its most powerful cry through the shedding of the blood of Christians from many different traditions.

Saint John Paul II said: “The courageous witness of so many martyrs of our century, including members of Churches and Ecclesial Communities that are not in full communion with the Catholic Church, gives new vigour to the Council’s call and reminds us of our duty to listen to and put into practice its exhortation. These brothers and sisters of ours, united in the selfless offering of their lives for the Kingdom of God, are the most powerful proof that every factor of division can be transcended and overcome in the total gift of self for the sake of the Gospel” (Encyclical Ut Unum Sint, #1, 25-May-1995).

Pope Francis reminded the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the words written by Cardinal Leon Joseph Suenes in the Document of Maline: “The Charismatic Renewal is essentially Ecumenical.”

During the 2017 Circus Maximus Pentecost Vigil in celebration of the Catholic Charismatic Renewals 50th anniversary, he once more exhorted the Charismatics of the world and those present to make every effort to promote ecumenism, reminding them that the enemy makes no distinction among those who give witness to Jesus when they are beheaded. We, therefore, have to pull down the walls of division and walk the path of a reconciled diversity.

In 2014, Pope Francis said: “As in the ancient Church, the blood of the martyrs became the seed of new Christians. So too in our time the blood of innumerable Christians has become a seed of unity”.

May the powerful announcement of Jesus Christ as Lord reach the Church today and promote the restoration of a visible Unity. 🙏

VICE PRESIDENT’S REFLECTION

■ Dn Christof Hemberger



In 1989, I spent some time as an exchange student in the South of England. Unbeknown to me I was placed in a Christian family (coincidence is the stage name of God!). By their stairs, there was a poster which I have not forgotten to this day. It said: “I asked God: How much do you love me? He looked at me, stretched out his arms and said: This is how much I love you!” The background of the poster was a scene from Calvary showing Jesus on the cross with his arms stretched out wide.

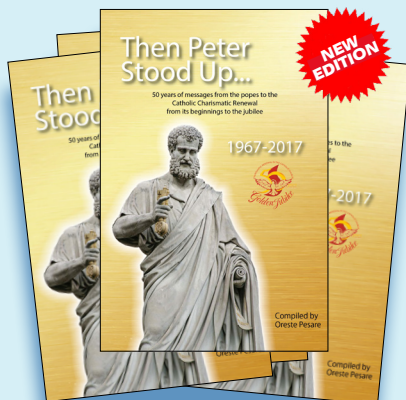
How often have we heard this fact and preached about it ourselves? God loves us, God is love. Jesus Christ died on the cross for us – out of love. Because he loves us so much

and because we are valuable and precious in His eyes. Even though we know this reality, we will never understand it fully. He died for you – and He died for me. He gave everything for us, keeping nothing back. It is unbelievable but it is true! The most precious thing a person can give is his life. To give it up voluntarily, out of love, makes it all the more significant. It is a gift that cannot be expected nor demanded. It can only be given freely. For this reason, it gives the other person unbelievable dignity and worth.

My desire for all of us is that we grasp this truth in a new way during this upcoming Easter season: What happened on the cross, solely took place out of pure love for you and me! 🙏

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Language: English 2018

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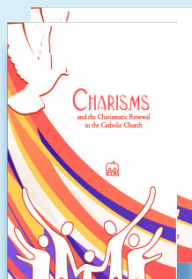
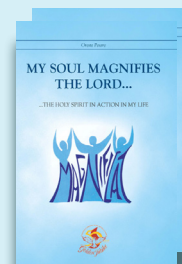
MY SOUL MAGNIFIES THE LORD... ...THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ACTION IN MY LIFE

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.

Author: Oreste Pesare

Language: English, Spanish and Italian

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CHARISMS

The gifts of the Spirit are not always well understood or well integrated into the life of the Church. There is need for deeper theological and pastoral reflection on the role of charisms and how to discern, guide, and foster their use for the good of all.

Author: ICCRS and CF

Language: English

Price: € 9 + shipping

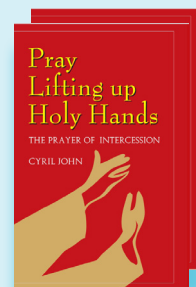
PRAY LIFTING UP HOLY HANDS

"All of us are called to be intercessors. I, therefore, recommend the book to all the faithful for detailed study. It is an excellent guide for those specially called to the ministry of intercession. It will also serve as solid reference for those involved in imparting teachings on intercession". (Bp Francis Kalist, of Meerut)

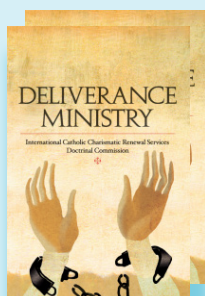
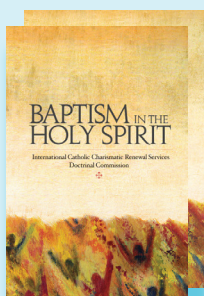
Author: Cyril John

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Language: English, Spanish, Italian

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Language: English

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ICCRS FORMATION

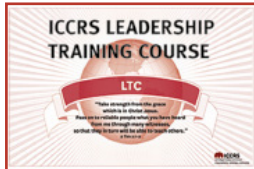
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CROSS OF THE RENEWAL

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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