

VATICAN II

and GAUDIUM ET SPES



Father Jack Finnegan SDB, unpacks and reflects on the message of Gaudium et Spes.

I was a novice when Gaudium et Spes was conceived at Vatican II. I still remember the excitement and wonder the document caused in our community; its compassion and openness, its lively vision of the Church in the world, its understanding of the human predicament and its Christ-like compassion. As a result we discovered a renewed sense of the dignity of the human person, of the role of the Holy Spirit in the world and the sense of Christian responsibility in the world, as well as a renewed sense of the vocation of the laity and the role of the family. There was also a renewed sense of the value and importance of faith-based solutions in politics and the economy - convictions that are as important today as they were fifty years ago.

A Spiritual and Ecumenical Charter

Gaudium et Spes is a charter for all who are committed to spiritual and religious renewal in the world. It is a map that identifies many of the traps and challenges facing movements like Catholic Charismatic Renewal as they negotiate the dangers of poor spiritual reflection and teaching. Gaudium et Spes is above all a charter of human dignity, both spiritual and social. It is a manifesto of life and hope, especially for those scarred by war and the profound spiritual and cultural crises of our times (GS29). The document shapes a culture of life, a culture of dignity, a culture of genuine compassion and justice rooted in the person and message of Jesus, a vision of solidarity and dignity born of the Holy Spirit. Are any of us called to imitate Dives who had abandoned Lazarus to his fate (GS 27)? Where is the shared dignity in that? Our call is to be Good Samaritans.

Gaudium et Spes is also a charter for spiritual ecumenism of the best kind, an ecumenism based on harmonious and non-contradictory witness to God's love. Every participant in the Charismatic movement should be aware of the way Gaudium et Spes challenges us to be concerned with every aspect of life in the world and attentive to the invigorating presence of God's Spirit at the heart of everything.

A Person-Centred Vision

Gaudium et Spes is the seed-bed of Blessed John Paul II's prophetic humanism and the new evangelisation. It puts the human person at the centre of its reflections, the human person whole and entire, body and soul, heart and conscience, mind and will (GS 3), most especially, the person understood and respected in the liberating light of Christ. Humanity becomes fully human in Jesus Christ (GS22). That is why we witness to the Lord's action in human lives. That is why we support the new evangelisation.

The document not only affirms commitment to the fullness of the vocation of the human person, it calls for genuine Christian solidarity with the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the world. It invites Christian solidarity with the anguish of the world's peoples, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way. Nothing genuinely human falls outside the compassion of real Christian hearts (GS 1).

We seek to become a people united under God for the welfare and benefit of all. United in Christ, the Spirit leads us into the glory of the Father, transforming us on the way with the good news of salvation (GS1). Are our prayer groups up to the challenge implicit in such a vision? Or have they become "holy huddles" cut off or unconcerned about the stark realities of life in the contemporary world?

Transformation of the world is fundamental to the preaching of the gospel

It is easy to forget that the love of God cannot be separated from love of neighbour (GS 28-29). That is why solidarity with and participation in the transformation of the world is fundamental to the preaching of the Gospel, something close to the missionary heart of every authentic Christian prayer group. When we evangelise we are seeking to address a profound human need. When we give witness we are taking seriously the main contexts where God has been expelled by supposedly value-free bureaucratic interest.

Can your group hear the challenge to heal the mutual distrust, enmities, conflicts and hardships that are so much part of life:

occurrences of which we humans are both cause and victim (GS 8)? Social reality is not something secondary, additional, or optional to a vibrant spiritual life. Social, political, economic and family reality is always and everywhere the privileged context of encounter with God in the world (GS 24).

Our task is to work out our salvation, to witness to its liberating reality in transformative deeds of love and justice wherever we find ourselves in the world, for God is already there waiting to be found by the eyes of faith and made visible by caring Christian action (GS 31). A charismatic spirituality that does not translate into solidarity with those in need has fallen far from Christian authenticity.

Challenges of holiness today

Think of a Mother Teresa, think of contemporary martyrs, think of a Dorothy Day, and then ask questions about the social demands and challenges of holiness today, challenges of generosity and genuine care. Unfortunately, as recent history amply demonstrates we humans all too easily resolve our difficulties through the violence and deafness of clashing ideologies. The document also confronts us with the question of atheism, especially those forms caused by the treacherous behaviours of believers: deficient doctrines and the insensitive practices that end up hiding more than manifesting the genuine face of God and of religion (GS 19), inequalities that mark so much of socio economic life and the effects of hunger, misery, war and violence on poor and fragile populations (GS 4).

How can we speak of human dignity when such evils still afflict so many? How can we speak of spiritual meaning when we are confronted by dark absurdity? How does Charismatic Renewal help people to recognise the meaning of their own existence? How are we to engage with the vexed questions of politics and of political lives and what inspires them (GS 73-90)? How convinced are we of the link between the search for the meaning of life and genuine openness to the Gospel? That is why *Gaudium et Spes* made an appeal for the personal witness and informed initiatives of the laity in the life of the Church and the world (GS 43), the more honesty and integrity hold sway, the more the world will respect and be guided by the liberating truth of the gospel. (GS 16).

Listen actively to creation's pain

How many of us truly understand with *Gaudium et Spes* that the Spirit wants us to listen actively to the creation's pain, to the world's need for God's love and healing compassion? Are we open and compassionate people? Are we truly alert to the Spirit in the world? Are we truly concerned for creation and its completion in Christ? Are we capable of contemplative listening to what is happening in the world, of listening deeply to realities that lie beyond our own concerns and preoccupations, our own fantasies and illusions?

Do we really believe that the Holy Spirit is God's mystical, practical, expansive, unbridled, uncontainable, empowering presence in the world? Do we truly believe that the Spirit is a force to be reckoned with; a Sacred Impulse to which the wise surrender, a Divine Source of daily breath and life; an Unquenchable Power at work everywhere; and the grace of union with God?

The Spirit is encountered in every kind of event and experience; in upheavals, in disorienting dilemmas and crises, in purifications and moments of repentance, and even in the shock of hostility and anger. The Spirit is present in ecstasy and restraint, in courage and prudence, in studied responses and spontaneity, and especially in justice, compassion, generosity and human respect. And the Spirit is capable of provoking and unsettling our spirits when we fall prey to compromise and collusion, to rigid defensive positions, and the selfish protection of the status quo.

Are we up to the challenge?

Does Charismatic Renewal understand, embrace and support the full spiritual dignity of the human person ((GS 23)? Does it grasp how Jesus reveals us to ourselves and shines a radiant light not only on our God given dignity but on our sublime calling to holiness and oneness in God (GS 22)? Are we ready like Jesus to co-operate fully with God's living word in an obedience nourished by daily meditation and the kinds of spiritual and ethical practices that allow us to glimpse the sacred mystery of a personhood shaped by the life-giving breath of the Holy Spirit? Acting to support the awesome vision of *Gaudium et Spes* remains one of the great

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challenges confronting Charismatic Renewal in the Church and in the world today. The humane and compassionate world described in *Gaudium et Spes* cannot be built without the creative presence of the Father, the healing presence of Jesus, and the empowering presence of the Spirit at work in the hearts of everyone of good will (GS 22). Each of us can pray every day into this vision. After

all, Christ continually calls on the charity and generosity of his disciples (GS 88). Are we up to the challenge? May we be true witnesses in our families and work places, in our localities and in the world to Christ's gospel of love and peace, and may that love and peace shine in the hearts of men and women who have learnt how to stand firm in the reality of their spiritual dignity.

Unstoppable Spirit

Greg Crowhurst reflects on how he, and his wife, have received support from unexpected people and places during the trials of their life which has pushed them to the margins of society due to her chronic ill health and suffering.

I have always felt led, guided and inspired by the Holy Spirit; perhaps it has a lot to do with being born in Belfast, growing up in South Africa during the apartheid era, where I experienced radical Christianity, plus a life long devotion to the work of Paulo Friere, the great South American educationist.

Four years in the seminary, taught me a great deal, but I left frustrated and disturbed by what struck me as a dysfunctional system. I fell in love and got married 19 years-ago. However our life together very quickly descended into chaos, for my wife was stuck down with a devastating incurable neurological disease; so began a journey of pain and spiritual oneness, into the Heart of Love, the awesome Mighty Trinity.

We have been led to the edge: of society, of coping, of life itself. Where has the Church been in this? Initially we had a presence, we were known, we were loved, we participated, we interacted; Church came to us. We prayed at home together, celebrated house masses, we grew in fellowship. We led a small Christian charismatic prayer group.

Hard to engage and create new bonds and fellowship

As the illness increased in intensity, we had to move seeking medical help and expertise that turned out not to exist. Moving to a new community though, as a severely ill person and carer, made it hard to re-engage and create new bonds



and fellowship. Sadly, the church was not able to engage or reach out to us, in the ways that we needed it to, in order to feel included and in communion.

Being part of a community and becoming ill are not the same as being ill and unknown in a new community. The stresses on the carer are immense: of how to protect the person and provide for their needs as well as your own. We moved from being at the centre of a loving church community, even though my wife was physically bed/ house bound and isolated, to being unaccepted, passed by, patronised, rejected and isolated.

However, even though we are not active members of our local church (over the years we seem to have become out of sight, and out of mind), we have many gifts to share, many graces given and gained through intimate knowledge of the suffering Christ on the cross, powerful gifts of the Spirit, discernment, knowledge, tongues, prophecy, prayer, love, which have led us to reach out in new ways to maintain communion with the suffering Church and create meaningful community, here on the edge. If you journey deep into suffering either you are inspired to survive or you fall into despair.

We needed to share our spiritual journey and make spiritual connections

I wrote books. We prayed. I learned web design, in order to build and maintain a website that could effectively reach out, support and inform people with my wife's illness (www.stonebird.co.uk). Eventually we found that it was not enough to focus on the illness, we needed to share our spiritual journey, make spiritual connections, reach out in prayer to others and receive prayer. As the decades pass, we pray and contemplate together in our own way, given that every single moment is one of torment and complex suffering. Our world is reduced to the silence of a single room, my wife is profoundly noise sensitive.

Attending church services, New Dawn, theatre, parties, walks, attending weddings, funerals, visiting family, socialising, none of these things are possible. Even eating together, sharing ordinary things in an ordinary way, these things have become impossible. We are no longer able to physically see people, but others we have never met physically, have reached out in the Spirit to pray with us and for us. I received a book of prayer, poetry and contemplation just this morning from someone who has stood by us for years, though we have never physically met and are not likely to. This is true connection of Spirit. Someone else, very ill herself, offers support from a remote shack in the Australian outback.

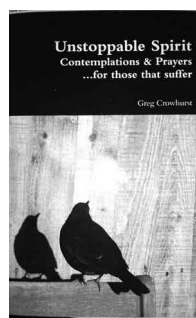
God works in mysterious ways

Their help is vital. God works in mysterious ways. We were encouraged to start a weekly virtual prayer group for the sick and the house bound, not by the church, but by a self confessed atheist, yet one who longs to know and believe in a God of compassion. It is she who sent my wife holy oil from the shrine

of St Jude so that my wife can be anointed. It is a huge comfort. Our Breakthrough prayer group is based on a prayer, written by another house/ bed bound spiritual companion. We who pray at home, alone, isolated from society and the church itself, are the church of the excluded; as such we are so close to Christ, there is little separation. We burn with spiritual fire. We are uplifted and strengthened by the cross. We are inspired by the Spirit. We are touched by the presence of God in the most Holy Eucharist, which we rarely receive. I have written three spiritual books, the latest a compilation of contemplations and prayers arises from love in the context of intense suffering, alienation, torment and abandonment. Clinging on only to God for survival, renewal, hope and help, these contemplations and prayers are a triumph over adversity, illuminating God with us, bring joy, light and life, within suffering. He has always answered. Our hearts are on fire with the unstoppable spirit who brings us love, inspires us to continually speak up against injustice and untruth, helps us to battle daily against spiritual attack and despair, enlivens our hearts and keeps us inspired, prayerful and compassionate for those who truly suffer and need hope.

Seek God within

This then is our message. Where do you seek God when you are ill or struggling or when life does not work out as planned? Seek God within. Seek God with each other. Seek God in secret hidden places, in stillness, in the sanctuary, in the temple of yourself lies the key. If you have once received Christ in the Eucharist. He is truly with you. You cannot be separated. Do not look for him in the empty tomb where He is not. Seek him in your heart and there be transfigured by love. Pray, above all things pray for the healing of the world and the Church. See Him in your neighbour. Look for those who are isolated, struggling, find a way to bring Christ to them, find Christ already in them. We pray that the Church of the poor and excluded will be invigorated by the message of hope brought by Pope Francis. Do not just give charity to overseas aid, charity must begin at home. Look to the needs of your next door neighbour, be guided by the Spirit of love. Charity is seeing with spiritual eyes the truth of your neighbour's suffering and reaching out with an open heart. Do not make your prayers empty words. Make them living breathing actions of the Spirit; be empowered, lifted into the Heart of Love and there find the healing, the hope and the power.



Greg Crowhurst is the author of *Light for the World* (Kevin Mayhew, 2004), *Beyond Normal Prayer* (St Paul's Publications, 2006) and *Care for Someone with Severe Myalgic Encephalomyelitis* (Stonebird, 2012). His latest book *"UNSTOPPABLE SPIRIT,for those that suffer"* by Greg and his wife Linda, is a selection of contemplations and prayers, which come out of the shared experience of suffering, reminding us that even in the bleakest place, God is with us and can shine a path of light. www.stonebird.co.uk/book/spirit.html



FAITH IN ACTION

Lillian Awere, who is GP in South London, talks about how her faith in Christ and the local Christian community have helped her achieve her ambition of becoming a doctor.

I was born in South London. I used to spend some weekends at my uncle's house. He was a gynaecologist. Perhaps that was where the seed was planted because, from the age of 10 I was determined to be a doctor. I was warned that it would be difficult because I was black and a woman, but this made me just more determined. My parents were both devout Catholics and we used to go to church on Sundays but I wouldn't say that I had a personal relationship with God at the time. This happened when I started going to the charismatic prayer group in St Vincent de Paul parish, near Clapham Junction. There I was introduced to books like "Chasing the Dragon" and "The Cross and the Switchblade" and a whole new understanding of the power of the Holy Spirit.

I got very friendly with one of the girls in the group called Constantina who was about the same age as me. She introduced me to praying in a different way and praying spontaneously instead of just reading prayers. She was also really supportive of me and came with me when I went and visited different medical schools to see which was the one I wanted to go to. We used to go to different towns by bus every day (praying on the way) to see what the places were like.

I had a terrible accident

I ended up going to Bristol. The medical school was full, but there was a place on the Dentistry course and I hoped I might be able to transfer. In my third year of Dentistry, I had a terrible accident when I was knocked down on a zebra crossing and damaged my back very severely. That accident really changed everything for me. Dentistry was now out of the question as I sustained an injury to my back from the accident. That's when I decided to give medicine another shot. I came back to London and worked in medical records at St Mary's Paddington, while I decided what to do. God was helping me, however, and one day out of blue I saw an advert in the Guardian newspaper where they were advertising an international medical course being run in English in the Czech Republic. I decided I would give it a go and went for the exam, which I passed and they offered me a place. It was a big step and

I wasn't sure if it was the right thing, so Constantina came with me to check it out and see if I liked the country and the set up. I decided I would go, and so in 1994 I went. It was a six year course, but I hoped, if I went for two years and did well, I might be able to transfer back to England.

At the end of my 2nd year I got a letter from Newcastle to say they would consider me. But I realized the letter was two months old and it might be too late. I wrote back anyway and hoped for the best. I hadn't budgeted to finish the course in the Czech Republic so I came back to St Mary's for the summer. But I didn't get into Newcastle and the temptation was just to stay on at Paddington because at least I had a job, even if it was just a clerk. But I knew I had a calling and I just had to trust that God would find a way in all this. So on 1st October I stopped my job and inspired by a book that, Anna, a parishioner gave me on the Infant of Prague, dedicated the whole month to prayer and fasting. I had never fasted before as I love my food. During this time I also went with Simone, another friend from the parish, to Kensington Temple to hear Colin Dye preach. He spoke about the importance of putting one's faith into action. In response I decided I would pack my suitcase as an act of faith that I would be going somewhere to continue my studies as a doctor.

God heard my prayer

And God heard my prayer. Canon Charles who was the parish priest at the time and Brenda, a parishioner at St Vincent's, acted as guarantors with the bank, so I could get a loan for £10,000 which was the amount I needed to go back to Czech Republic to finish the course. It would have been far easier to finish my course in Newcastle, but I realized through all this that God wanted me to go to Czech Republic. And studying there really did develop my faith in a way it probably wouldn't have if I had stayed in the UK.

In Czech Republic I was all alone. There was no one to help me and I had to rely on God and prayer. I found out later that the way I lived inspired others and I was told that people still talk about me at the university where I studied. The life was very hard there, however, not just having to learn a new language, but the weather too. It was so cold that I didn't want to go to church on Sundays as the church was far away and freezing, but I realized that I owed God this hour, even if it was a sacrifice. I used to pray three or four times a day and people would often ask me to pray for them as they felt that God answered my prayers. One of the students, called Jackie, who became my best friend, came from a Pentecostal background. She said to me once, "My mum is a Christian but you are different. You are so confident that God is going to answer

your prayers that you never seem to worry.” She suggested that we pray together and she has remained my prayer partner for the last 15 years. We pray together twice a week although now it tends to be over the phone, as she lives in Birmingham.

I know He wants me to be a doctor

I decided to organise a celebration party after our final medical exams. A fellow student asked me how I knew I was going to pass. But I knew I would. I told him, “I have studied hard, I have prayed and now I am putting it in God’s hands and I know he wants me to be a doctor.” I believe that God wants us to trust him completely as a child trusts his parent. God is our father and he wants the best for us. Some of the people on my course were very nasty to me, which I had never come across before. But God was always there helping me, even when someone tried to sabotage my exams and I fortunately managed to find this out in time. If the Lord hadn’t come to my rescue I know I would have failed the exam. I did pass my final exams in Czech but I still had the hurdle of doing the conversion exam for the English system, which was another ordeal. But I did it and I think the struggles and afflictions I have had have actually made me a better doctor. I am more empathetic because I know what it is like to suffer. No one wants an intellectual doctor. They want a kind compassionate doctor, who listens.

I didn’t have any Christian friends to support me

When I got back to England I spent three years in Bangor and Aberystwyth doing hospital training, although I always knew I would be GP because of my health. I actually found this period more difficult than being in the Czech Republic because I didn’t have any Christian friends to support me. I was studying and working so hard too that I didn’t have time to pray properly either and God got pushed to the side a bit. I also really missed the parish community of St Vincent’s which had always been like an extended family to me and even though it was a long way, I would come back twice a month just to be with them. When I qualified I came back to practice as a GP in South London and I still live in the same

parish. Although I go to Mass every Sunday at St Vincent’s I also go to the evening service at St Mark’s, an evangelical church in the area, and am in one of their house groups. This has helped me a lot as it means I spend time with Christians of my own age and I feel I am being ecumenical. I really miss it during the summer when the groups don’t meet.

Pray as you can wherever you are

I try to pray every morning before I go to work. One of the vicars at St Mark’s encouraged me a lot when he told us that we should not feel guilty but pray as we can wherever we are. So I tend to pray in the car. I switch off the radio and have a quiet time with the Lord. It is difficult being a Christian GP as you can’t pray openly with patients. But I know that God is there with me when I am with a patient and I believe He guides me when someone comes in with a tricky condition which I am not sure about. You do the best you can from a medical point of view but I will come to God and pray for His guidance to unravel the mystery before me. God will often reveal what is wrong through my intuition. You suddenly know something is wrong even if you can’t put your finger on it and I know this has on several occasions saved someone’s life.

Some years ago my sister got very ill in her pregnancy. She had already had one handicapped child and when the doctors saw the 20 week scan, they suggested a termination, because the baby was very small and wasn’t growing. I went back to the prayer group and prayed for the baby instead. My prayer was that the Holy Spirit would go into the womb and heal the baby physically and it would be completely normal when it was born. We all prayed and prayed and when baby Sarah was born at 33 weeks, the hole in her heart had been healed and she was totally normal.

Today she is a 16 month old happy toddler. I have good days and bad days, but it is always prayer that gets me through and I thank God for all that he has done and is doing for me in my life and helping me to put my faith into action.



Lilian with her parents on Graduation day (previous page) and at work (above and below).





We are companions on a journey

Fr Chris Thomas reflects on the hopes the Spirit aroused in Vatican II.

As for many people, the election of Pope Francis filled me with delight. I had become a little disillusioned and anxious about the direction the Church was heading in, so his simple humanity and many things that he has said and done have made me look to the future with more hope. One of the comments he made has been "The Council (Vatican II) was a beautiful work of the Holy Spirit, But after 50 years, have we done everything the Holy Spirit in the Council told us to do?" The answer, he said, is "no." At the same time, Pope Francis told the congregation at the Mass he was celebrating that there are "voices saying we should go back. This is called being hard-headed, this is called wanting to domesticate the Holy Spirit, this is called becoming 'foolish and slow of heart.'"

It made me reflect on how open I want the Church to be to the work of the Holy Spirit or do I just want the Church to be what I want it to be? Charismatic Renewal surely demands that we, of all people, should be open to the movement of the Spirit even when it cuts across our ingrained attitudes. Despite the fact that Second Vatican Council is fifty years old, for many people the only perceived change the Council made was liturgical change. "Suddenly" Mass was celebrated in the vernacular and the priest faced the people. But the Council was so much more and, sadly, as Pope Francis said, "we haven't even begun to unpack and to put into practice its teaching."

In 1958 John XXIII was elected Pope. He was an elderly man who many thought would be a caretaker Pope. His election is a reminder that the Spirit is at work even in the most unlikely of situations. The Spirit of God was about to turn the Church upside down as I believe and hope the Spirit is doing now. In 1959 John XXIII announced that he was summoning the twenty-first ecumenical council of the church. He saw that the main aim was letting in the light of day. At the opening of the first session Pope John declared, "The substance of the ancient deposit of faith is one thing, the way in which it is presented is another."

The late Archbishop Derek Worlock worked at the Council. He said "The Second Vatican Council was a powerful call for renewal spiritually, liturgically, socially and politically. It was the occasion for new insights and understanding of the nature of the Church, of shared responsibility, of true relationships between distinct ministries, of equality, of the dignity of all in the sight of God and of the need to reach out with the Good News of the Gospel towards those bewildered or misled in a self centred world."

The Second Vatican Council was a call to renewal in every possible way. It was an invitation for every person in the Church to recognise their own unique value and dignity and to know that each person through Baptism, is called to ministry. Responsibility within the Church was to be shared. We were to reach out to others. It wasn't that the message changed but certainly the way we proclaimed it had to change. The Council's own view of the task facing the Church is expressed in *Gaudium et Spes*: 'The future of humanity lies in the hands of those who can hand on to posterity grounds for living and for hope' [GS 31].

The Church began to recognise that dialogue, change and evolution had to be at the core of who and what we are if we are to give people reasons for living and hoping. The Council said that change may mean admitting our need to turn away from sin and be renewed. It may mean responding creatively to the signs of the times and learning to understand the new sciences so that Christian morality and doctrine can work in harmony with them. The Council

also talked of creative involvement in the evangelisation of culture through the possibilities offered by the mass media. Vatican II invited Catholics to be open to dialogue with all people of good will. We are to pursue ecumenism and dialogue with all those who believe in and seek God. The Council recognised that the world of today needs to hear the Gospel and the Church needs to hear the insights of the world and saw this as a vital part of evangelisation.

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, certain aspects of the Church's life had to evolve. A renewed liturgy helps people to celebrate with greater participation. The ministries of bishop, priest and deacon will develop in accordance with the Church's renewed understanding of itself. Lay people will be invited to play a more active role in the life and mission of the Church. This and so much more helps me realise that Vatican II was a beginning and Pope Francis is right; we haven't begun to let the Spirit do what the Spirit wants to do. So I would encourage you to read the documents. Bill Heusch's version called "Vatican 2 in Simple Language" is well worth using for those who find "Vaticanese" a little difficult to follow. Then pray that the Spirit will have the freedom to do in us and in the Church what the Spirit wants to do.

“Reasons for living and hoping.”



Fr. Chris Thomas heads up the Irenaeus Project. He is a member of the Emmaus Family of Prayer.

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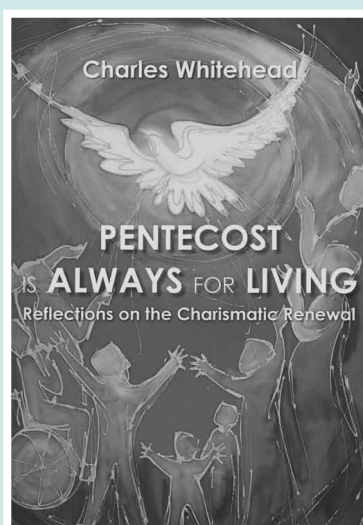
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CCR Centre



TIM STEVENS BRINGS US UP TO DATE WITH WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE CCR CENTRE

The CCR Centre is now well and truly open with our volunteers coming in daily to help out with the administrative work for the office and Goodnews as we develop the vision for the Centre, each bringing a different skill. Our wonderful volunteers include Maureen (our very first volunteer), Elizabeth (a prayer group leader in Ealing, London), Monica (from the St Joseph's Guildford home groups), Neil (from Isleworth prayer group, Niru (from the Community of the Risen Lord) and her cousin Paulin. ***If you live in the London area and would like to help out as a volunteer please contact Gabriele at the office 020 7352 5298 or email me tim @ faithcafe.org***

Our next task is to improve our garden and we need some garden furniture. ***If you are upgrading yours please consider if you could make a donation of your old set to the CCR Centre.***

We have established a monthly intercession meeting to pray for the future activities of the Centre, and we have had a

variety of prayer group leaders coming to join us. This has been an enriching experience as people have come from different nationalities and communities and we have had some great curries made by Sonia Tissera. One of the words we received at one of these meetings was Isaiah 58 and the call to go out to the poor in some way. We are currently discerning this word and how we might put this into practice, possibly in conjunction with the parish, so please pray for this.

In the month of May we welcomed Gertrude Mushayabasa from the Zimbabwean chaplaincy who was delighted to see the facilities of the Centre, and the possibilities that the meeting rooms offered. ***If you are interested in being shown round with a view to booking a room or would like to know more please email me tim @ faithcafe.org***

We would appreciate potential visitors giving us a call in advance before dropping in to check we are able to meet you. In the future we hope to run a regular charismatic prayer meeting with a speaker and some CaFÉ courses and when we have a proper schedule worked out we will let you know.

Catholic Charismatic Leadership Formation Course (CCLFC)

By popular demand we are offering this programme once again. CCLFC is a 9 month formation course spread over 8 weekends. These comprise of 6 residential teaching weekends, covering relevant topics such as; the theology of baptism in the Holy Spirit, practical leadership skills and much more. The speakers are well known leaders in CCR in England and overseas. There will also be special 'guest' speakers who come to share their experiences of CCR. The course includes a retreat weekend and an optional pilgrimage to Rome. The programme is aimed at leaders or upcoming leaders of prayer groups, ministries or other Charismatic initiatives and projects. The weekends and main topics are:

11th-13th Oct: Practical Discipleship

1st-3rd Nov: Theology of baptism in the Holy Spirit; Nature of CCR

24th-26th Jan 2014: Growing in the Charisms

28th Feb-2nd March: Retreat led by Fr Chris Thomas

25th-27th April: Practical Leadership Skills

16th-18th May: Mission and Evangelisation

20th-22nd June: Pilgrimage to Rome (optional)

18th-20th July: The Church

CCLFC is sponsored by the English NSC and hosted and led by Sion Community, the residential weekends are held at the Sion Community training Centre in Brentwood Essex. **For further info email admin @ sioncommunity.org.uk or call 01277 215011**

Catholic Charismatic Leadership Formation Course

CCLFC

Formation...
CCLFC is a nine month Formation Course for Leaders spread over 8 weekends

Teaching...
It's made up of six teaching weekends, covering topics relevant to charismatic leadership, including :

- The theology of the Holy Spirit.
- The nature of Charismatic Renewal,
- Practical leadership skills
- and much more...

Retreat...
A time to go deeper into the life of the Holy Spirit

Pilgrimage...
An optional weekend pilgrimage to Rome

Sponsored by the NSC, hosted and led by Sion Community

Sion
Catholic Community for Evangelism
Charity No. 327967



LITTLE WAY HEALING MINISTRIES

GOD STILL HEALS TODAY

Camilla Burleigh reports on a recent Little Way Healing Ministries Weekend in Aylesbury

The Little Way Healing Ministries organised its second weekend healing event at St Joseph's Catholic Infant school in Aylesbury (12th-14th April 2013). The Little Way Healing Ministries which has now become a registered charity under the name New Spring Trust, has grown out of the shared healing ministry of Fr Laurence Brassill OSA and Mrs Pauline Edwards and their team of helpers.

This year the numbers attending far exceeded expectations, and not just locals came but also those from further afield, having been encouraged by word of mouth since last year. Some people specifically returned in order to give witness as to how the prayer they had received last year had irrevocably changed their lives. The weekend took the form of inspired teaching from Fr Laurence and Pauline, interspersed with prayer, praise, witness and several very moving powerful testimonies. There was also, most importantly opportunity for individual healing prayer done by volunteers all trained by Fr Laurence and Pauline in their specific way of praying for the healing of painful memories. During the weekend many were blessed and healed psychologically, physically and spiritually. The music ministry was provided by a team from Corpus Christi Church, Wokingham, St James, Reading and helpers from other churches.

It is hoped that the event will be repeated next year. One of the most enjoyable and valuable aspects of these events is that they provide an opportunity for members of Little Way Healing Ministries, as a growing community from around the country, to meet together, form new friendships and provide mutual support, as well as to grow in experience in praying for healing.

We are hoping to acquire a new international centre for the ministry and for details of this and future events see www.littlewayhealingministries.com See also Goodnews coming events.

ANNE'S HEALING TESTIMONY

One of the participants shared how she was healed at the weekend

For some weeks I had felt in a dark place and didn't want to go out or see people. I felt I couldn't cope with my physical condition any longer and it was getting me down, thinking about all the things I couldn't do any more. I said "I'm not going" and went upstairs but when I came down again, I was surprised to find I was dressed and wearing my coat and scarf. When my husband and I arrived at the Little Way Healing Ministries weekend we found a couple of seats in the packed hall. A lady came over and prayed with me. She put her hand on my back where the problem is and prayed. I could feel warmth. Someone gave a testimony about suffering with depression and how she had been healed. She said, "people in this room today will receive healing". Suddenly a light went PING in my head, and I felt happy! It was like a light was switched on. I felt uplifted which took me by surprise.

Fr Laurence asked if anyone felt different and I put up my hand. I wanted to say how I felt better. However before I could say this a lady came to the microphone and said "there is a lady in the room today with a back complaint"; and indicated the spot that corresponds to my back problem called "Cavernoma", which is a hole in the spinal cord. Before she spoke any more I knew the words were meant for me. She said the person had brown hair, which I had. My heart was pounding. Normally I couldn't even talk about the condition, even with my family, but I put my hand up. My husband couldn't believe it. The same lady as before came and prayed with me and I found myself crying with tears just running down my face. After the prayer I felt so different – uplifted. My husband remarked how it was good to hear me laugh again. I had been under a black cloud for so long and that night, in bed I didn't have the dead feeling in my legs any more and they felt warm." Praise God

STOP PRESS!!!

REMEMBER TO BUY TICKETS

FOR

MOVEMENTS CELEBRATION

IN NOVEMBER

SEE P. 35 FOR DETAILS

SOUL FOOD IN CAMBRIDGE HOSTS TEACHING DAY WITH PAT KENNEDY

Sandy Hobson reports



We had invited Pat Kennedy, a member of the NSC from the Hexham and Newcastle diocese, to run a “vision” workshop for us on 27th April this year. It could not have come at a better time and marks a new beginning for Soul Food prayer group here in Cambridge. The teaching was excellent and Pat covered the importance of the Sacraments in the Church, the power of intercessory prayer, working in conjunction with the healing and deliverance ministry. She also enlightened us on the safeguarding policy for the ministry of healing and the need to keep within the guidelines especially the importance of individual Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) registration. By relating her own life experiences and her journey in faith, Pat brought each person to reflect on their own individual experiences and offer them into God’s hands. She explained how painful memories both personal and those passed down the generations could be healed. The day has enabled us to begin gathering a team together which will minister in a prayer tent for our own parish fete day (9th June) and an Ecumenical service with our fellow Christian brothers and sisters (23rd June), both of which will have taken place by the time Goodnews is published. We may be a small charismatic prayer group but we stand together with those who surround us and feel we are moving forward as one body of Christ.



Australian couple, Byron and Francine Pirola are to be the main speakers at an exciting summer school (22nd-24th July) in Luton, supporting marriage and family life organised by Eamonn and Paola McMorro (Northampton Diocese). The

Pirolas have been instrumental in developing a fresh, dynamic understanding of how couples preparing for marriage can be supported as well as the on-going sacramental life of the family. There will also be presentations of helpful resources such as “Home is a Holy Place”. A wonderful opportunity for those working with couples and families in parishes to be inspired and equipped. £35 a day inc lunch. **Please book in advance mfl @ nores.org.uk or tel 01582 723312 or 07412 151517**

COCKFOSTERS CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP CELEBRATES 40 YEARS TOGETHER

In celebration of its fortieth anniversary Cockfosters prayer group, in North London, has produced a small book charting some of the healings and high points of its existence. Based at the Benedictine parish of Christ the King, the prayer group is one of the best known and longest running prayer groups in the London area. Begun by Benedict Heron OSB, who was a personal friend of David Watson and Colin Urquhart, the group, from its inception, always has had a strong ecumenical dimension. One of its regular members in its early days was Mike Pilavachi, a teenager living in Harrow, who later went on to set up Soul Survivor and has become a well known international evangelist. Other well known members were composer Cormac O’Duffy and Fr John Woolley (RIP) who has written the extraordinarily popular devotional “I am With You” and who used to regularly pray with people at the meeting. At first people met in private homes but after a few years the group moved to Christ the King, where it has continued meeting on Monday nights ever since. Since the retirement of Dom Benedict in 2002, the group has been run by Ros Kraushar and a large service team. The group has always been actively involved in evangelization and a team headed by Peter Kraushar run regular Alpha courses every year. The group has always had a strong charism in the area of healing too, and under the leadership of Eileen Shaunessy and Dom Benedict, the group set up the prayer centre in 1989, which was the equivalent of a spiritual healing clinic and was open two mornings a week. It is currently located in one of the halls of Christ the King parish and now operates every Thursday from 11.30am to 1.30pm. Some of the many healings and conversions are documented in the book. Although now confined to a nursing home, founder Dom Benedict, aged 92 and the author of many books, still continues his ministry of healing and encouragement from his bed and has a constant stream of visitors. **Those who would like to know more about the group or get a copy of the book, which is very encouraging to read and a sign of the hidden work that often goes on in many prayer groups faithfully year after year, should contact 020 8449 6648**



Dom Benedict at the 40th Anniversary celebration with Peter and Ros Kraushar

PENTECOST OF THE NATIONS

Michelle Moran reports

After the encounter of the Movements with Pope Benedict in 2006, ICCRS held an international event, the 'Pentecost of the Nations' where people from all over the world came together to share the joy of the Spirit, to witness to what God had done in their lives and to pray for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit. From that event, we promoted the Pentecost of the Nations to the CCR worldwide. So ICCRS has been encouraging people all over the world to gather at Pentecost. The idea is to spend some time together in the Cenacle gathered together in praise, worship and Eucharistic adoration. Then, to pray for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, in order to be empowered for evangelisation. Ideally, the final part of the event should be a public witness.

This year after celebrating Pentecost Mass with Pope Francis, in St. Peter's Square, we moved to St Paul's Basilica outside the walls and in the afternoon of Pentecost about 4,000 people gathered to celebrate the 'Pentecost of the Nations'. The symbolism was strong as we had been with the Holy Father at the heart of the institutional Church and now we gathered outside the walls for a charismatic celebration. The event was hosted by ICCRS in collaboration with communities and groups from the CCR in Italy. The first reflection, based on Acts 2, was given by Msgr Joe Malagrega, the chaplain to the Hispanic and Haitian CCR in the USA. Then Fr Raniero Cantalamessa OFM, shared about Pentecost and CCR from a prophetic perspective; he asked: "Has the longed for New Pentecost happened?" Then drawing upon a reflection he gave to the Papal household in Advent 2012 he said; 'the Holy Spirit doesn't make new things, he makes things new'. He then

urged us to live in the grace of a 'perpetual' Pentecost. After the reflections and some testimonies we had a parade of the nations. There were people present from all the continents and some of the countries included; Fiji, Australia, New Zealand, Korea, India, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Togo, Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, Germany, Holland, France, Spain, England, Wales, Scotland, Canada, USA, Brazil, Columbia, Paraguay, Ecuador, Venezuela. Finally, there was a short but intense moment of Eucharistic adoration where Jesus was enthroned as Lord of every tribe, tongue and nation and then we prayed for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit. **The event is available for viewing in Italian via www.iccrs.tv**



40 DAYS FOR LIFE CONTINUES TO GROW AROUND UK

Robert Colquhoun reports



Lent 2013 saw the largest 40 DAYS FOR LIFE campaign conducted in the United Kingdom since the campaign started in the country in September 2010. 40 DAYS FOR LIFE is a locally organised community initiative encouraging Christians to pray and fast for an end to abortion. Prayer vigils are organised outside abortion centres and community outreach is conducted: taking a positive and upbeat pro-life message to all parts of the community. The mission and purpose of the campaign is to save lives and inspire hearts and minds.

The London campaign saw at least 36 women who were scheduled for an appointment with an abortion provider choose life for their babies during Lent. It was noted that an ambulance was called to Marie Stopes in Ealing a total of five times over this period. Despite this, the vigil at Ealing was the most successful 40 days for life campaign ever

conducted in the UK with outstanding support from the local Polish community. Many women have been offered tangible help from Pregnancy Centres such as the Good Counsel Network, while in other cities, Christians have realised the need and opportunities to develop further pro-life groups and resources.

Prayer vigils were also conducted in Brighton, Birmingham, Manchester, Milton Keynes, Southampton, Cardiff and Leamington Spa. Many of the volunteers have reported considerable spiritual growth since participating in vigils. The campaign helps to show that there is a love in the community that can help a young woman choose life for her unborn child. A number of British cities are considering running an Autumn campaign starting September 25th.

**40 DAYS
FOR LIFE**

For more information, or if you would like to contribute or become personally involved please contact Robert on Robert @ 40daysforlife.com or 07947698195.

RIP

Some more of our faithful family in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) network have died in the last few months.



Richard Emblem, brother of Alistair, from Little Bookham in Surrey, who was involved in running Life in the Spirit seminars in the Surrey area who died after a long and debilitating illness.



Deacon Maurice Williams, well known to New Dawn regulars, also died in May 2013. Married to Sandra and brother of Veronica, the founders of Mothers' Prayers, he offered them invaluable support over the years and set up Fathers' Prayers encouraging fathers to pray for their families. www.fathersprayers.org/



Fr Peter Dolan, parish priest of Holy Family Church in Preston, one of the few priests who succeeded in bringing the CCR to the heart of his parish life. Fr Peter, a man of great warmth and prayer, over the 40 years he was there turned the parish into a spiritual powerhouse. He was greatly supported by a small covenant community and his great ally and co-worker, Annie Colbert (who died a few months ago). The fruits of his ministry are many, from leadership of the CCR in the North West to arranging diocesan wide events. The Arc of the Covenant bookshop, which was based in his parish, began by distributing literature about the CCR and later became a significant bookshop serving Christians in the whole of the North West.



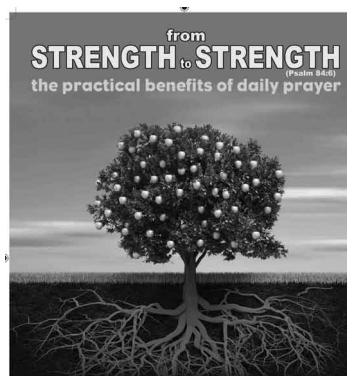
MIKE STANLEY RIP

Mike Stanley, one of the founder members of the very popular CJM music group, died on 6th June 2013 shortly before Goodnews went to press.

He had been suffering from cancer for a number of years and leaves a wife and three young children. As CMJ, Mike together with Jo Boyce, were responsible for many wonderful songs and hymns including "Bread of Life". He once said "I'd like my epitaph to read "he communicated the love of God and touched people's hearts." And this he did through his music and words.

ERRATUM NEW DAWN SCOTLAND

We apologise that in the last issue of Goodnews we wrote that New Dawn Scotland was happening in June, when in fact it will take place as usual in July, (8th-12th) 2013 at Madras College, St Andrew's with a great line up of speakers. Don't miss it. **For further details contact 0131 447 6153.**



A NEW CAFE DVD SERIES

is being filmed with a planned September launch. It is a 5 session TV quality series designed to help people to have or to deepen a daily prayer life. Inspired by the Catechism and filmed with a live studio audience, each session will be full of humour, practical teaching and personal examples.

The sessions will be given by David & Giovanna Payne and Fr Emmanuel Mansford CFR. Ideal for prayer groups, post Life in the Spirit/Alpha Courses and for general parish use. Group DVD series price £79.95 with leaders' pamphlet, discussion questions and sample book for the participants (more can be ordered sale or return). *Private use downloads will also be available from www.faithcafe.org (There is a 10% discount for purchases made before the end of 2013)*

FR SEAN CONATY TEACHING TAPES



Fr. Sean Conaty, who died in 2011, was widely known for his involvement in the healing and deliverance ministry, as well as being a speaker on many aspects of spirituality. Since Fr Sean's death there have been many requests for his talks. Thus Paul Copeland, a member of the Hexham and Newcastle DST, has spent the last 18 months, transferring Fr Sean's talks from their old format, onto CDs. He has listened to them all, monitoring the sound quality of each recording and has now produced a list of 62 CDs available for people to order. He said the work had been a privilege and he had really enjoyed hearing once again the inspiring words and Christian witness of a friend who lived what he taught with faithfulness, compassion and wisdom. **Those who would like this list and order form please send an SAE to Pat Kennedy, 42 Southwood Gardens, Kenton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 3BU.**

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SATURDAY, 9th NOVEMBER 2013, 10.30am-5pm

- METHODIST CENTRAL HALL, LONDON -

ORGANIZED BY: CCR & FOCOLARE AND MEMBERS OF 20 MOVEMENTS AND COMMUNITIES

Day of witness, music, drama and prayer and talks

Many Streams, One River

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CHEQUES PAYABLE TO CREW TRUST. PLEASE ENCLOSE SAE

NET CELEBRATES 21 YEARS

"The Harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out more workers into his harvest field." Matthews 9:37

NET's origins began 21 years ago, a small charity with a vision to raise charitable income to fund Catholic Evangelisation initiatives, to send workers into the vineyard.

NET merged with Crew Trust in 2010 now known as NET Fund CREW Trust, and continues its ministry today supporting individuals, groups and event initiatives that serve the Church in the New Evangelisation.

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IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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or contact: Margaret Cawley, email cawley4margaret@yahoo.co.uk
4 Wenlock Close, Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 1HQ Telephone: 0121 501 1240

A Message from Michelle Moran

"From it's beginning in 1992 NET was truly visionary in encouraging stewardship especially in the Catholic world. Over the years, countless individuals have benefited from either one-off donation to support a particular evangelistic project or on-going support for longer term evangelistic ministry."



"NET has helped to birth many pioneering projects which were only able to get off the ground with seed money and support from NET."

"Undoubtedly many individuals and therefore the Church as a whole have been blessed through those who support NET. During this season of new evangelisation. I recommend NET to anyone who wants to see new evangelistic initiatives launched and sustained. Please support NET so that more workers can work effectively in spreading the good news."

"With heart-felt thanks to all those involved in NET."

CREW Trust (Catholic Renewal for England and Wales) is a UK Registered Charity, number 277425. The objectives of the charity are the advancement of the Christian religion and the promotion of the spiritual renewal of the Roman Catholic Church.

CREW TRUST (Charity No. 277425) RE NET FUND

If you would like to become a friend of CREW Trust's NET Fund by making a one-off or regular donations please complete the relevant details below. If you are a taxpayer you can make your gift even more valuable by ticking the Gift Aid donation details. Then send the form to: **Crew Trust, PO Box 333, St Albans, Herts. AL2 1EL**

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