

PARISH RENEWAL: A CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL APPROACH

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Abstract

Parish renewal is about renewal of the faith and life of the faithful in the parish. It implies that every single member of the parish, due to the sacrament of initiation received, is called to live out their faith. In reality, however, not every one of the faithful is concerned about the renewal. There are Catholics who are not practicing their faith anymore, not going to church on Sundays and the days of obligation. The Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR), as one of the ecclesial movements recognized within the Catholic Church, seems to have got something to offer for such a renewal, that is their personal experience of being touched, renewed, and strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

Key words: renewal, parish, Catholic, Charismatic, mission, vision, goal.

This essay deals with the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in its mission for the renewal of the Church. It is particularly applied to the parish life, for the parish is

... the point contact between the Catholic and the Church; it is the normal context in which the Catholic lives out his Christian life; it is his primary source of Christian fellowship; it is the single most important source for the teaching that guides him; it is the place where he joins others in worship and the celebration of the sacraments.¹

This essay applies neither to a particular charismatic prayer group nor a particular parish. Rather it presents a general picture of what the CCR has in common for the renewal of the parish life. Henceforth, each charismatic prayer group should examine itself and the parish where it

¹ G. Martin, *Parish Renewal: A Charismatic Approach* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Word of Life, 1976), 13.

is because each has a specific situation in responding to the call of the Lord.

The questions to be answered in this essay are: *What particular contribution does the CCR have in its mission for the renewal of the parish life? How does it bring renewal into the parish? What are its mission and goals? What principles does it need to consider and follow to renew the parish?*

To answer these questions this essay presents the following points: an overall history of the CCR, baptism in the Spirit as its central characteristic, the CCR's vision, its mission for the renewal of the parish, its goals, personal spiritual life as its main contribution for the renewal of parish life, basic principles, and what the CCR does.

Overall History of the CCR

The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) sparked a revolutionary stance in the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church began to open herself up to the non-Catholic world more. One of the many remarkable developments resulted in the Council is the encouragement of dialogue with Protestantism and even non-Christian religions. The documents of the Council also made mention of charismatic gifts, which had largely been forgotten by Catholic theology, as being a channel of the Holy Spirit. John XXIII, at the beginning of the Council, invited the whole Church to pray that the Holy Spirit would descend upon the Church and create in her a new Pentecost. Many charismatic Catholics see the CCR as being a direct response by the Holy Spirit to Pope John XXIII's prayer.

In August of 1966, a year after the Council ended, some lay professors in the faculty of Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, came into contact with Steve Clark and Ralph Martin, who were both staff members of Saint John's Student Parish in East Lansing, Michigan. On February 18-19, 1967, they decided to hold a prayer meeting, which came to be called "Duquesne Weekend." About thirty people, students and professors alike, attended. During this time more people were baptized in the Holy Spirit and more spoke in tongues.²

Shortly after then similar Catholic charismatic prayer meetings began taking place at Notre Dame, Michigan State University, and Iowa State University. Within seven years, the CCR had expanded so much that thousands, perhaps millions, of Catholics were involved worldwide,

² P.D. Hocken, "Catholic Charismatic Renewal" in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* Eds, S. M. Burgess, G. B. McGee (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1988), 111-112.

though estimates vary widely and are hard to pin down due to the CCR's informal nature.

The CCR attracts a lot of people from all walks of life and exists in many local Catholic communities throughout the globe. Catholic parishes are hardly without the presence of the CCR through its many members.

The current reality of the CCR varies from region to region. One could say that every charismatic prayer group is unique and diverse. In terms of participants, for instance, there are small and large prayer groups. "In some areas it is still enjoying vigorous growth; in others there has been a leveling off or a drop in the number of groups and participants."³ Whilst in terms of strength and compositions of prayer groups, George Martin makes the following observation.

Some groups have only the loosest of ties among members, and really exist only during their weekly prayer meeting. Other groups have evolved into tightly knit communities, with their members committing their entire lives to each other. Some groups are exclusively made up of Roman Catholics. Other groups are to varying degrees ecumenical in their membership.⁴

Every prayer group is independent, for the CCR "is neither uniform nor unified. It has no membership lists. [I]t is a flow of grace that allows individuals and groups to express themselves in different ways and forms of organization and activities, often quite independent of one another, in different stages and modes of development, with differing emphases."⁵ However the overall impression of the current state of the CCR is that it "is solidly rooted in the life of the Catholic Church and that it is not likely to fade away."⁶

³ P.D. Hocken, "Catholic Charismatic...",114.

⁴ G. Martin, *Parish Renewal...*, 16; cf. T.A. White P.P, *Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (Melbourne: Catholic Charismatic Renewal, 1994), 9-10.

⁵ O. Pesare, *A Sign of Hope for All People: The Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Heart of Pope John Paul II. Present State and Challenges for the Third Millennium* (Melbourne: ICCRS, 2005), 7.

⁶ P.D. Hocken, "Catholic Charismatic...",114; cf. N.Kellar, "A Grace for the World: A Renewal still Strong and Growing" in *Charismatic Renewal: A Grace, a Challenge and a Mission*, Ed, N. Kellar (Vatican City: ICCRS, 2000), 55-61.

CCR's Central Characteristic: Baptism in the Spirit

Central to the belief of the CCR is personal experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit in which God's Spirit comes in power into the believer, enlivening and strengthening his or her faith and giving him or her special gifts called charisms, both extraordinary and ordinary. The most unusual of these charisms is speaking in tongues, giving prophecies in God's name and performing miracles, particularly healing.

There are many other phrases used as synonymous with this phrase "baptism in the Spirit."⁷ This term is used here simply because it is commonly used. To describe the content and the nature of baptism in the Holy we find a variety of its expressions. According to Bishop Sam G. Jacobs it relates to ministry and "is the activation of the power of the Spirit, already given to us in Baptism, but now energized and released for ministry on behalf of the Kingdom of God."⁸ For Charles Whitehead, who has been involved in the CCR for more than three decades,⁹ baptism in the Holy Spirit is a grace of Pentecost "through which our lives are transformed and we are called to a new commitment to Jesus Christ and his Church."¹⁰

From the outset of its use by Pentecostals right down to the contemporary charismatic renewal, the term is still debated over by scholars. For those involved in Pentecostalism, however, the term refers to a personal, charismatic and religious experience which occurred at a certain moment in the past and has since renewed and transformed their lives and their faith. In their use of the term they emphasize personal experiences of God who is no longer abstract, but real, present and at

⁷ Such other phrases are: "a new imparting of the Holy Spirit", "a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit", "a release of the power to witness to the faith", "release of the Spirit", "effusion of the Spirit", "renewal in the Spirit", "being born again", "being baptized in the Spirit", "a new sending of the Holy Spirit", "total surrender to the power of the Holy Spirit", "actualization of gifts already received in potency", "reviviscence of the Sacraments of initiation", "Spirit baptism", "renewal of the sacraments of initiation"; cf. K. McDonnell (ed.), *Presence, Power, Praise: Documents on the Charismatic Renewal*, (vol III - International Documents Number 1 to 11, 1973-1980), (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1980), 8.

⁸ S. G. JACOBS, "The Grace of Pentecost" in *Charismatic Renewal: A Grace, a Challenge and a Mission*, Ed, N. Kellar (Vatican City: ICCRS, 2000), 11.

⁹ C. Whitehead, "A Grace for Renewed Lives" in *Charismatic Renewal: A Grace, a Challenge and a Mission*, Ed, N. Kellar (Vatican City: ICCRS, 2000), 13.

¹⁰ C. Whitehead, "The Challenge of the Call" in *Charismatic Renewal: A Grace, a Challenge and a Mission*, Ed, N.Kellar (Vatican City: ICCRS, 2000), 69.

work in their lives. These Pentecostals and Catholics charismatics do claim personally that they have received the charismatic experience of “baptism in the Holy Spirit”, similar to that of the people on the first day of Pentecost. There are people within the Catholic Charismatic Renewal who even explicitly name the date of their reception of such a charismatic experience.¹¹ Others, without explicitly naming the date of their charismatic experiences, admit confidently that they have received such a fruit-bearing experience of “baptism in the Holy Spirit”.

In Roman Catholicism there are two dominant views of theologizing about baptism in the Holy Spirit: non-sacramental and sacramental. The non-sacramental view, promoted by Francis Sullivan,¹² looks upon baptism in the Holy Spirit as a new imparting of the Holy Spirit unrelated to any immediate sacramental context. According to this viewpoint, a person could receive baptism in the Holy Spirit either prior to or after water-baptism, without any direct links to sacramental initiation. It is a new imparting of the Holy Spirit. He calls this view the biblical sense of baptism in the Holy Spirit which includes the theological and the experiential senses. “[W]hat people are receiving in the charismatic renewal is a real imparting of the Spirit, a new ‘outpouring of the Spirit’ (the theological sense), which typically has effects that make them aware that the Spirit is working in a new way in their lives (the experiential sense).”¹³

On the other hand, the sacramental view is the one of looking upon “baptism in the Holy Spirit” in its relationship to water-baptism. This view does not entertain any possibility of receiving baptism in the Holy Spirit in its experiential sense apart from the water-baptism. The baptism in the Holy Spirit in this instance is a renewal of the sacraments of initiation that comes to conscious experience.¹⁴

This charismatic, personal and conscious experience of having been baptized in the Spirit has distinguished those involved in

¹¹ A. Panozza, “Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Special Gift” in *Good News* (The Newsletter of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Melbourne, Australia), (February 2008), 2; A. Commadeur, *The Spirit in the Church: Exploring Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (Melbourne: Comsoda Communications, 1992), 3; K. Ranaghan, “Catholic Charismatic Renewal: The First Seven Years” in *The Spirit and the Church* Ed, R. Martin (New York: Paulist Press, 1976), 61.

¹² Cf. K. McDonnell, “Communion Ecclesiology and Baptism in the Spirit: Tertullian and the Early Church” *Theological Studies* 49 (1988), 671.

¹³ F. A. Sullivan, *Charisms and Charismatic Renewal: A Biblical and Theological Study* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Servant Books, 1982), 63.

¹⁴ K. McDonnell (ed.), *Presence, Power...*, 39.

charismatic renewal from those not. In the theological sense, "baptism in the Spirit" makes no difference among the faithful as long as they have already received sacramental initiation. It means each and every Christian who has been baptized with water, has been baptized in the Spirit as well. Charismatic experience, therefore, is not a second blessing. Rather it is "the later awakening of the original sacramental grace."¹⁵

For some others "baptism in the Holy Spirit" is primarily an ongoing state of being baptized in the Spirit rather than an event. Father Raniero Cantalamessa, for instance, says that baptism in the Spirit or the outpouring of the Spirit "is not an event in and of itself but rather the beginning of a journey whose aim is the profound renewal of life in the Church."¹⁶

This idea is strongly supported by Patti Gallagher, who has herself received baptism in the Spirit, saying "I now understand that being baptized in the Spirit is a continual process of deeper immersion in the life and love of God. The more I grow in the Lord, the more I see of his greatness and goodness and of my poverty and need."¹⁷

Donald Door, a Franciscan priest, who seems not to be counted as being associated with the CCR, looks at "baptism in the Spirit" as an ongoing state. He describes it in detail as follows:

To be baptized in the Spirit is, then, to have been given 'a new heart' and 'a new spirit', so that the sense of the redeeming love of God has permeated one's spontaneous feelings. So what is in question is primarily a state rather than a single event. For this reason it is preferable to speak of being baptized in the Spirit rather than of baptism in the Spirit; for the latter phrase suggests an event while the former one can indicate an enduring state. Of course it is more or less inevitable that people will want to speak at times of baptism in the Spirit as an event. That is fine provided it is recognised that the importance of the event is that it is the beginning of the state. [T]he primary meaning of being 'baptised

¹⁵K.McDonnell, G.T.MONTAGUE (eds.), *Fanning the Flame: What Does Baptism in the Holy Spirit Have to Do with Christian Initiation* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 9.

¹⁶ R. Cantalamessa, *Sober Intoxication of the Spirit: Filled with the Fullness of God* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Servant Books, 2005), 38.

¹⁷ P. Gallagher, "Are you Ready?" in *The Spirit and the Church: A Personal and Documentary Record of the Charismatic Renewal, and the Ways It Is Bursting to Life in the Catholic Church* Ed, R. Martin (New York: Paulist Press, 1976), 4-10.

in the Spirit' is the state rather than the event or process which initiates it.¹⁸

The above variety of descriptions of baptism in the Spirit implies that such charismatic experiences contain a significant turning point of one's faith journey and "are generally more directed towards a building up of the community and witness in mission."¹⁹

CCR's Vision

The CCR's focus concerning renewal is the parish, because "it is there that the needs of the overwhelming majority of Catholics can be addressed."²⁰ According to George Martin, the very basic vision of the charismatic renewal "is to become fully integrated into the life of the Church."²¹ In the CCR's vision on the parish renewal, "a renewed parish is a community worshipping in vibrant liturgy, bonded together by the Holy Spirit, serving one another, committed to ongoing conversion and growth, reaching out to the inactive, the unchurched and the poor."²²

This vision explicitly includes the fundamental dimensions of the Church's nature: community, worship or liturgy, service or ministry, witness, and continuous conversion and growth in holiness.

CCR's Mission

The CCR's primary purpose is found in its name: renewal. Charismatic Catholics are looking to renew the Church, the whole Church. Thus it can be said that the CCR's goals are no different than those of the Church in general such as the spread of the gospel, personal commitment to Jesus, and faith in God's word.

But the CCR also has its own specific mission, which is to foster "an intensified awareness of the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian life,

¹⁸ D.Door, *Remove the Heart of Stone: Charismatic Renewal and the Experience of Grace* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1978), 51.

¹⁹ K. McDonnell (ed.), *Presence, Power...*, 379.

²⁰ K.McDonnell and G.T. MONTAGUE (eds), *Fanning the Flame...*, 23; cf. G.Martin, *Parish Renewal...*, 13.

²¹ G. Martin, *Parish Renewal...*, 45.

²² K. McDonnell and George T. Montague (eds), *Fanning the Flame...*, 23; cf. S.G. Jacobs, "The Challenge of Vision: Vision for the Renewal" in *Charismatic Renewal: A Grace, a Challenge and a Mission*, Ed, N.Kellar (Vatican City: ICCRS, 2000), 71-74.

marked by the reappearance of charismatic activity like that of the primitive Church."²³ Put more simply, the CCR wants to show people that God is real, at work, here, and now.

Ideally, then, when the charismatic mission is completed, the CCR as such will disappear. "The ambition of the Charismatic renewal is to eliminate itself as soon as possible. The purpose is to disappear when the goal is reached, even as a river loses itself when it merges into the sea."²⁴

This view of the CCR's mission, which I shall call the exclusive view, stems from the fact that Christianity has been on the wane for the past few centuries. Christendom is gone. Church attendance is down and those that still do attend rarely show their faith in any noticeable way in their daily lives, or reject various Christian dogmas. During this widespread "crisis of faith" the CCR is seen as God pouring out his Spirit in a new way, forming something new to restore the old.²⁵ It is the holy leaven in a dying Church made up largely of "baptised pagans," the remnant of the remnant.

But there is another perspective on the CCR and its mission which stands in tension to the exclusive one. This view believes that Christian spirituality is a broad category and that different groups give different parts of it different emphases, thus resulting in at least the appearance of different sorts of spirituality, one of which is the charismatic, which, as its name suggests, emphasizes charismatic gifts. Or, using its other name, Pentecostalism, it emphasizes the coming of the Spirit in power into the life of the believer as on Pentecost. "Viewed from this angle, there is no doubt that the charismatic renewal has its own distinctive character."²⁶ Suenens in particular seems to favor such an inclusive view.

CCR's Goals²⁷

On May 9, 2005 the revised Statutes of International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (ICCRS) were approved by the Pontifical

²³ E. D. O'Connor, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Notre Dame, Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1971), 29-30.

²⁴ L. J. Suenens, *A New Pentecost?* (Great Britain: Collins Fountains Books, 1978), 113.

²⁵ Cf. G. Martin, *Parish Renewal...*, 34-38.

²⁶ E. D. O'Connor, *The Pentecostal...*, 30.

²⁷ All materials in this section are taken from O. Pesare, *A Sign of Hope...*, 8-10.

Council for the Laity. It mentions the CCR's five central goals as following:

1. To foster mature and continuous personal conversion to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.
2. To foster a decisive personal receptivity to the person, presence and the power of the Holy Spirit.

These two spiritual graces are often experienced together in what is called in different parts of the world a baptism in the Holy Spirit, or a release of the Holy Spirit, or a renewal of the Holy Spirit. They are most often understood as a personal acceptance of the graces of Christian initiation and as an empowering for personal Christian service in the Church and in the world.

3. To foster the reception and use of the spiritual gifts (*charismata*) not only in the CCR but also in the broader Church. These gifts, ordinary and extraordinary are abundantly found among laity, religious and clergy. Their proper understanding and use in harmony with other elements of the Church life is a source of strength for Christians on their journey towards holiness and in the carrying out of their mission.
4. To foster the work of evangelization in the power of the Holy Spirit, including the evangelization of the unchurched, the re-evangelization of nominal Christians, the evangelization of culture and social structures. CCR especially promotes sharing in the Church's mission by proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed, and by bearing witness to Jesus Christ through personal testimony and through those works of faith and justice to which each one is called.
5. To foster the ongoing growth in holiness through the proper integration of these charismatic emphases with the full life of the Church. This is accomplished through participation in a rich sacramental and liturgical life, and appreciation of the tradition of Catholic prayer and spirituality, and ongoing formation in Catholic doctrine. This is guided by the Church's Magisterium, and participation in the pastoral plan of the Church.

CCR to Renew Parish Life: Personal Spiritual Renewal

The CCR is one of the ecclesial movements and innovations in the Church which has emerged since the Second Vatican Council. It is one of many ways the Spirit is renewing parish life, and parish renewal is only one of the works the Lord is accomplishing through the charismatic renewal.²⁸ However parish renewal is one of the prime thrusts of the CCR in the Catholic Church. It is a renewal in the power of the Holy Spirit. "If the charismatic renewal exists for the renewal of the Church, the necessity of parish renewal cannot be ignored."²⁹ What does the CCR grasp that could be brought into for the renewal of the parish life?

The main contribution that the CCR can make to the renewal of the parish life is personal spiritual renewal.³⁰ It is its key value. This personally renewed spirituality has to begin with one's self. According to Stephen Clark, personal spiritual renewal is the top priority that ecclesial movements, including charismatic movement, can make for the parish renewal. He adds to say that "those who want to renew the Church have to begin with their own personal spiritual renewal."³¹

This emphasis on personal spiritual renewal is the essence of the charismatic experience of baptism in the Spirit as was above described. Personal spiritual renewal is a matter of personal and conscious commitment as a Christian. It is underlined in the theological statement concerning the nature of baptism in the Holy Spirit and the CCR. "Charismatics emphasize the necessity of personal commitment. As an adult one cannot be a Christian by proxy. One can only be a Christian by personal commitment. Each adult must say yes to the baptism received as an infant."³²

The importance of personal spiritual renewal for the renewal of the Church is also emphasized by Bert Ghezzi who also encourages those within the CCR to begin such a personal spiritual renewal within themselves, saying "Participants in the charismatic renewal should understand that the authentic Church renewal is rooted in personal spiritual renewal. The Church lives in its individual members. Its holiness grows as the individual members grow in holiness. If prayer

²⁸ G. Martin, *Parish Renewal...*, 23

²⁹ G. Martin, *Parish Renewal...*, 19.

³⁰ G. Martin, *Parish Renewal...*, 19. 102-103

³¹ S. B. Clark, *Building Christian Communities: Strategies for Renewing the Church* (Notre Dame, Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1974), 175.

³² K. McDonnell (ed.), *Presence, Power...*, 8.

group members want to renew the Church, the place to begin is in our own hearts.”³³

The CCR has no intention to seek and create a special group within the Church which specializes in the Holy Spirit and His gifts, but rather the renewal of the local and the universal Church through a rediscovery of fullness of life in Christ through the Spirit, which includes the full spectrum of the gifts.

Basic Principles³⁴

The following basic principles are to be taken into consideration by every charismatic prayer group both prior to taking commitments and on the process of putting commitments to its mission for the renewal of parish life.

1. Because parish renewal is never easy, so not every prayer group should undertake it as a primary mission. To determine whether a prayer group should make a major effort in parish renewal, its leaders and members should examine three factors with special care.
 - a. The internal strength of the prayer group
Prayer groups that are internally weak should not attempt parish renewal. Very small groups and groups with uncertain membership and widely fluctuating attendance at the weekly prayer meeting should not proceed in the direction of parish renewal.
 - b. The composition of the group
Other groups should proceed cautiously because of the composition of their membership. Some large and effective prayer groups are composed of people from many different parishes in a city or region. To concentrate on resources on one parish to the neglect of others may involve decisions and commitments that many members of the prayer group cannot share.
 - c. The situation of the parish in question

³³ B. Ghezzi, “The Charismatic Renewal and Church Renewal” in *The Spirit and the Church: A Personal and Documentary Record of the Charismatic Renewal, and the Ways It Is Bursting to Life in the Catholic Church* Ed, R. Martin (New York: Paulist Press, 1976), 231.

³⁴ These basic principles are compiled from the first two chapters and chapter 6 of G. Martin, *Parish Renewal...*, 13-38, 102-127.

Some parishes are not receptive to charismatic renewal. If the pastor is openly or even subtly hostile to the prayer group, it may well be impossible for charismatic renewal of the parish to even begin.

2. It is to be kept in mind that renewal of the parish life in the power of the Spirit must be an area of high concern for the CCR. If the CCR exists for the renewal of the Church, the necessity of parish renewal cannot be ignored.
3. CCR and parish renewal are not synonymous. The CCR is not the only way of the Spirit is renewing parish life, and parish renewal is only one of the works the Lord is accomplishing through the CCR.
4. The CCR is not simply a means for parish renewal. Accordingly it is necessary to avoid two errors: the error of identifying charismatic renewal and parish renewal too closely and the opposite error of separating charismatic and parish renewal too rigidly. Parish renewal should be one of the prime thrusts of the CCR in the Catholic Church.
5. If the charismatic renewal is called to become completely integrated into the Church, then it will have to follow a path different from many other movement and organizations within the Church. If the ultimate goal is one of integration, then the charismatic renewal cannot indefinitely remain a specialized grouping.
6. The goal of the charismatic renewal should be that everyone be truly "Spirit-filled": living their lives in the Spirit as fully and freely as possible. The goal is not that every Christian adopt certain form of prayer and behavior, or exercise certain spiritual gifts, or speak of their relationship with God with a certain terminology. Being a "Spirit-filled Christian" cannot be equated with simply attending charismatic prayer meetings. The ultimate aim of the charismatic renewal is not merely to build bigger and better prayer meetings, but to foster everyone's growth in his or her life in the Spirit.
7. Integration of the CCR into parish life means that ultimately the CCR will become so much a part of the normal life of the Church that it will no longer exist as a separate movement.
8. Such integration into the life of the Church is the ultimate call of the charismatic renewal. For the time being, a charismatic renewal movement is needed in the Catholic Church. For the time being, a group of people must explore the full meaning of

the presence of the Spirit in the Church, develop wisdom about the use of charismatic gifts, experiment in new forms of community life and prayer, and bring a fuller meaning of life in the Spirit to the Catholic Church. But the ultimate aim of the renewal is to bring about a renewal of the Church. Its goal is not to perpetuate itself as a special movement. To accomplish its ultimate goal, the charismatic renewal cannot exist indefinitely as a specialized grouping; it must ultimately disappear into the Church, as leaven into dough.

9. The goal of parish renewal and charismatic renewal is a fully functioning body of Christ, composed of Christians whose lives are flourishing in their relationship with God, in their relationships with one another, and in the growth of the fruits of the Spirit. A charismatically renewed parish will primarily manifest the presence and love of Jesus; only secondarily will it manifest a specifically "charismatic" element. It is more important that people pray than they pray in tongues; it is more important that people love each other at the Sunday liturgy than they exercise spiritual gifts; it is more important that members of the parish draw closer to each other in Christ than they become involved in the charismatic renewal.

What the CCR Does

We already discussed that it is the personal spiritual renewal that the CCR can make as its main contribution in its mission to renew parish life. To achieve this goal, the CCR tries its best to form, live and promote what Ralph Martin calls "environmental approach," that is creating Christian environments in which people are conditioned and encouraged to live for God in communities.³⁵ In the context of Christian environments the CCR espouses the following three spiritual acts, just to mention some, such as life in the Spirit Seminars, Prayer Meeting, and Healing Mass.

1. Life in the Spirit Seminar

According to the initial history of the CCR people were baptized in the Spirit in different ways. Some received it by being praying over, some others on their own without being prayed over. This releasing of the Spirit, however, usually occurs at prayer atmosphere with an

³⁵ S. B. Clark, *Building Christian...*, 23-46.

expectant faith. It is to be desired, requested and appropriated. 'Life in the Spirit Seminars' which consists of a series of talks is "designed to help people to realize the power of the Holy Spirit that is available for every aspect of their lives."³⁶ It is "a time of prayer and worship; a time of teaching and growth; a time for an intimate encounter with Jesus; a time to receive His promise of the Holy Spirit more fully; a time of renewed intimacy with God leading to deeper Christian living."³⁷

2. Prayer Meetings

Prayer meetings are weekly prayer gatherings that usually consist of the following elements such as invitation, preparation, welcoming and loving, praise and worship, awareness of the presence and power of God, proclamation of the Word, teaching, testimony, intercessory prayer, and prayer ministry. Lifting arms in the air while singing or praying, singing popular religious hymns and speaking in tongues are usually exercised at every prayer meeting.

3. Healing Mass

Healing Mass has become a regular and constant service within the CCR. Healing is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Those within the CCR believe that Jesus continues to heal his people as he did at his time in the first century. Some people are witnesses to the healing they have received.

Concluding Remarks

The CCR is rather confident of having something significant to contribute for the renewal of parish life. Its main, unique and special contribution for such a renewal is what it values as its fundamental and central tenet: experiential experiences of baptism in the Holy Spirit. It is a kind of renewed, conscious and mature commitment to one's faith. This confidence, however, does not necessarily mean that parish renewal is easy.

The Church is ever re-reforming. It implies that renewal is an unending task or mission. In the CCR's viewpoint accepting baptism in

³⁶[http://www.dpsrfd.org/Charismatic Renewal/What is a Life in the Spirit Seminar.htm](http://www.dpsrfd.org/Charismatic%20Renewal/What%20is%20a%20Life%20in%20the%20Spirit%20Seminar.htm), accessed April 4, 2013

³⁷[http://www.nd.edu.au/ministry/Fremantle/Life in the Spirit Advertisment.pdf](http://www.nd.edu.au/ministry/Fremantle/Life%20in%20the%20Spirit%20Advertisement.pdf), accessed April 4, 2013

the Holy Spirit does not necessarily mean to be a Catholic charismatic. It simply means embracing the fullness of our Christian initiation, living in the Spirit, and fully participating of every single Christian in the Body of Christ.

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