



NEW LIFE

CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

MAY 2017

CHARISMATIC RENEWAL: IS THE FIRE BURNED OUT?

As we begin celebrating the 50 year existence of the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church we are reminded of its early beginning and rapid growth. The Duquesne Retreat Weekend in Pittsburgh, PA. where it all started with a fresh outpouring of God's Holy Spirit among a group of college students. The rapid growth of the 1970s and 1980s brought thousand upon thousands of people from all generations and different Christian denominations together to proclaim that Jesus is Lord! St. Matthew's message of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit became a reality; **"He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."** (Matt 3:11) It also marked the beginning of the Charismatic Weekly Prayer Meetings.

LET THE FIRE FALL

Suddenly, in the United States, prayer groups of all sizes began to spring up in major cities and small towns. The fire of the Holy Spirit was spreading throughout the country and eventually throughout the world as other countries caught wind of God's Holy Spirit. It seemed that people all over the world wanted a renewal of the Baptism of the Spirit and Fire! There were groups of 25, 50, 100 300 and more meeting wherever they could come together; in churches or in private homes.

I go back far enough when the Charismatic Renewal was referred to as "**Catholic Pentecostals**". There was an eagerness and a strong desire from everyone involved in the movement to receive all the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit that St. Paul speaks about in his letter to the Corinthians. **"Now in regard to spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be unaware. You know how, when you were pagans, you were constantly attracted and led away to mute idols. Therefore, I tell you that nobody speaking by the spirit of God says, "Jesus be accursed." And no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom; to another the expression of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit; to another mighty deeds; to another prophecy; to another discernment of spirits; to another varieties of tongues; to another interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes."** (1 Cor. 12:1-11)

These are the same charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit that the Apostles and the others who were gathered together in the upper room on that first day of Pentecost. It was

given to them, Mary, Our Lady, and the other 120 by the same Holy Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead. And it was the same Holy Spirit that came to those on the Duquesne Retreat 50 years ago; and it is the same Holy Spirit that renews us today

Those students on the Duquesne Retreat who received a fresh outpouring of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit reacted the same as the Apostles did on that first Day of Pentecost; they told everyone. There was no formal program set by a parish committee or group; they just told everyone what happened to them and then prayed over anyone who wanted to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Just like the early Christians, they were touched by the Holy Spirit and they had a yearning desire to share their "New Way" of praising God with other people; in short, they had a **"Fire in their belly"**.

BAPTISM OF FIRE

Fire is a source of light and power. It is also the symbol of God's Holy Spirit. When we receive the Baptism of the Spirit and Fire we become a powerhouse of light within the world; God's power of light! Jesus said to His followers **"You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lamp stand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father."** (Matt 5:14-16)

When the followers of Jesus received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, they became a powerhouse of light and immediately began telling everyone that Jesus **IS** the Messiah and about the glory of God that raised Him from the dead! When people saw and heard what was being testified, they too wanted what these followers had. They too wanted the Fire of God's Holy Spirit! This is the same Baptism of Fire that was spreading in the 1970s and 1980s. St. Paul reminds us just as he reminded St. Timothy, **"I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control. So do not be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord."** (2Tim 1:6-8)

This verse of scripture raises the question: **Is the Fire burning out?**

For some, the Fire no longer exists, yet others still have a spark or two within. And there are some who are waiting for a new wind to come. Whatever the reasons, the Fire of the Holy Spirit seems to be getting dimmer. Those involved in the charismatic renewal movement today do not seem to have that same enthusiasm of **"Fire in the belly"** that the early Christians had or those of 40-50 years ago. Are we in the Charismatic Renewal experiencing a "cooling down" period?

What about you? Where do you fit in? Your response and feedback is important to the future of the Charismatic Renewal. Is the Charismatic Renewal Dead or Alive? Your opinion matters I want to hear from you about what you think. May God's Holy Spirit continue to bless you abundantly with His New Life!

Email me at Vincent@NewLifeCRM.or

Or write me at:

New Life Renewal

115 E. Burnsville Parkway #220

Burnsville MN 55337.