

IGNITE

in us the fire of your love



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The Challenges of Christian Unity by Charles Whitehead

Ed.Note: In January each year, the Church observes Unity week, a time to foster relationships with other Christians. Charles Whitehead's article addresses this issue in a pastoral way.

The commitment to work for the unity of all Christians is a special calling for many of us in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Our shared experience of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit has made a bridge between us and many of our Protestant and Pentecostal brothers and sisters.

In "Ut Unum Sint" (the 1995 Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II on Commitment to Ecumenism) we are clearly reminded that at "the second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church committed herself irrevocably to following the path of the ecumenical journey" (section 3).

The Council had clearly expressed the Church's decision to take up the ecumenical task of working for Christian unity, and exhorted all the Catholic faithful to participate actively in this work. Ecumenism is again mentioned in many of Pope John Paul's writings to the Church. So there can be no doubt that this subject should remain one of our principal commitments. "Among the most fervent petitions which the Church makes to the Lord...as the new millennium approaches, is that unity among all Christians of the various confessions will increase until they reach full communion" (*Novo Millennio Ineunte* 16).

On the journey toward full communion, Pope John Paul II emphasized in "Ut Unum Sint" the

importance of praying, discussing, cooperating, and giving joint witness with those from other ecclesial communities. But at the same time we need to be alert to the dangers of a false ecumenism, which pretends there are really no differences between us. So in this short article, I want to offer 10 simple principles to guide us in our important ecumenical work, and to ensure that we avoid the dangers of a false ecumenism.



*Accept One
Another
As Brothers
and Sisters in
Christ*

At Vatican II the Church reminded us that through our shared baptism we are already in relationship, and we need to recognize this. The challenge to us is to build up and protect these relationships. We must banish the old stereotypes, stop criticizing each other, and begin to relate as brothers and sisters—even though this may be difficult. Just as in a natural family, we are not able to choose our brothers and sisters, yet we can decide how we will relate to them.

*Be Faithful To Who And What
We Are*

We need to know why we are Catholic, what we believe, and be faithful to that. While we accept that all those justified by faith and incorporated into Christ by baptism

Leaders Gather in

During the weekend of Nov. 10-12, several hundred leaders from across the U.S. gathered at the 2006 National Leaders' Conference, which had as its theme, "Anointed for the New Evangelization"

Among the many speakers at main sessions and multiple workshops were Fr. Tom Forrest, Josephine Cachia, Fr. John Gordon, Peter Herbeck, Judith Hughes, Marilynn Kramar, Dave Mangan, Walter Matthews and Aggie Neck.

Workshop topics addressed many areas: charisms, evangelization, healing, intercession, praise and worship, strengthening prayer groups, as well as sessions for youth and Hispanics.

General session keynote speaker Peter Herbeck encouraged participants to believe they are indeed "Anointed"; Marilynn Kramar helped us "Proclaim the Good News" and Fr. Tom Forrest urged us to embrace "The New Evangelization."

If you are interested in tapes or CD's of any of the talks and/or workshops, contact Colin LaVergne, Resurrection Tapes, 2719 E. 42 St., Minneapolis, MN 55406-3061, 888-809-0267, www.resurrectionTapes.com

are to be properly regarded as our brothers and sisters in Christ, we believe that the Church of Jesus Christ subsists in its fullness in the Catholic Church. In other words, that it is more clearly, fully and visibly present. So it's very important for us, just as it is for our Protestant and Pentecostal brothers and sisters, to know what we believe and to be fully committed to that. We are not seeking a compromised, lowest common denominator Christianity.

*Understand That There Are
Important Differences Between Us*

We cannot pretend that very important differences do not exist, or that they do not matter. We are to honest and truthful. We must also recognize that there are many differences among our Protestant and Pentecostal brothers and sisters -we are dealing with a wide range of beliefs and practices, and all of us are seeking to understand each other better.

*Remember That More Unites Us
Than Divides Us*

We should begin by concentrating on those things on which we agree—they are many! Sometimes the problem is that we have a different way of saying the same things—let's look at what is meant, rather than at how it is expressed. It's often helpful to start by listing those things on which we are united.

*Love One Another -
It's The Sign Of True Christianity*

We will not make progress without love, because only in love can we together search for the truth. Remember—we need each other (John 17) and there is a healthy tension between love and truth. Truth is essential, but expressed without love can seem harsh, and this will discourage us from trying to understand each other.

Listen To One Another

No relationship will grow unless both parties are willing to listen. Listening shows respect, and helps us to understand why others have different beliefs. We don't have to agree with them, but it's important that we understand and will only understand if we listen.

*Repent For The Scandal Of Our
Divisions*

Examining our hearts and attitudes, recognizing our faults and seeking forgiveness from the Lord and from each other presents a deep challenge to all of us. Pope John Paul II recognizes this in "Ut Unum Sint" section 82, but he also reminds us that it is essential to do this, as we have all contributed to the scandal of division.

*Recognize That There Is A Price
To Be Paid*

There will be many difficulties and misunderstandings on the journey. At times it will be very painful and we will feel like turning back. We must realize that there is a price to pay. So we need to build good, strong, personal relationships with Christians from other ecclesial groups, communities, and churches. These relationships will encourage us in the times of difficulty—we need to be committed to them and willing to defend them when they are misunderstood or attacked.

*Do Together As Much As We
Can*

We are called to "every possible form of practical cooperation at all levels: pastoral, cultural and social, as well as that of witnessing to the Gospel message."("Ut Unum Sint" section 40). This too can be challenging because of our different ways of doing things, but it offers a wonderful witness to the power of God at work in our weakness.

Unity Is The Will Of God

Finally, we must never forget that Jesus and the Father want unity, and

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**NEWS
NOTES** 

- ✦ It is time to collect current information about our prayer groups so as to provide a new 40th Anniversary directory for 2007. Contacts—please send the form back as soon as possible.
- ✦ Check out the website—it continues to be updated and gets many "hits" - that's "computer-ese for many people look at it each day.
- ✦ Leaders—save March 3, 2007 for the next Tri-Di Leaders' Day. Tentative speaker: David Thorp. Details in early 2007.
- ✦ Apologies to those who ordered the new DVD on the Charismatic Renewal and did not receive it. The format did not work on U.S. machines—it will be available soon from Chariscenter, USA.
- ✦ Please remember Bill Busch in your prayers. A member of the DST, and long-time leader on Staten Island, he has been hospitalized with a serious illness.
- ✦ Pray for the repose of the soul of Barbara Marino. She and her husband Al were leaders in Rockland County.
- ✦ The 40th Anniversary of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Catholic Church will include a day of prayer and fasting, February 16, 2007. Pray for more of the Holy Spirit.

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that it's a work of the Holy Spirit. So we must pray as if it all depends on God, while working together as if it all depends on us.

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In all of this, prayer remains the most important activity. As we pray together, our respect for one another grows, as does our concern for unity. From this will flow true ecumenical cooperation in the areas of promoting Gospel values, meeting needs, challenging injustice, and demonstrating mutual respect with a willingness to listen and to dialogue. Then the witness we give will speak loudly to the society in which we live, and will begin to answer the prayer of Jesus in John 17:21 "Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me

Tri-Di Gathers 900 at General Conference in Queens

Participants from the three metropolitan dioceses joined together to celebrate the theme "God Is Love." on Saturday, December 2. Main speaker, Fr. Michael Moses spoke on the theme, drawing on Pope Benedict's recent letter on love.

Beloved Babsie Bleasdell shared in leading a special healing service with Fr. Michael.

English workshops by Fr. Michael and Breeda Connolly addressed the themes: "Forgive Us As we Forgive" and "Generosity of Spirit" respectively. Spanish and Haitian workshops were on these topics also.

At the closing Mass, Msgr. Joe Malagrecia gave his homily "For I Am Meek and Humble of Heart." Readings and music included all three languages.

CD recordings of all the talks and workshops are available from: Marie-Josee Joseph, 11 Lawrence St. Nyack, NY 10960, 845-353-3184 for \$4 each, plus shipping costs.

New York celebrates 40 years of Amazing Grace: Remember- Rejoice - Rekindle

Saturday, November 7, 2007

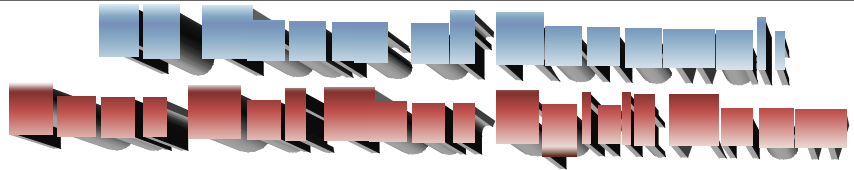
at

St. Helena Church, Bronx

Featured Speakers:

Fr. Tom Forrest Walter Matthews
Sr. Nancy Kellar Fr. John Gordon
Fr. Benedict Groeschel Fr. Steve Norton
Mary Beth Greene

Music by Steve Leaden and "The Voice of Praise"
*Write or call CRO, 194 Gaylor Rd., Scarsdale, NY 10583
914-725-1773—CharismNY@optonline.net*



June 22-24, 2007

2007 National Catholic Charismatic
Renewal Conference

Meadowlands Exposition Center
New Jersey

Keynote Speaker: Bishop Sam Jacobs
Plus—Patti Gallagher, Sr. Nancy Kellar, Vinson Synan,
Aggie Neck, Pablo Bayona, and more...

Pre-Registration of \$45 available until Feb. 28, 2007
Call 1-800-338-2445 or go online:
www.nsc.chariscenter.org

MINI-CALENDAR

Staten Island Conference, varied events, call 718-987-8175 for all, except where another number is given

...Healing Mass, 3rd Tues., 8 p.m., St. Joseph Church, 40 Poplar Ave., Call Nanie, 948-2049

...Healing Mass, 2nd Tues., 8 p.m., O.L. Star of Sea, 5371 Amboy Rd., Call Rita, 984-4144

...Healing Mass, 3rd Sat., 8 p.m., O.L. of Mt. Carmel/St. Benedicta, 1235 Castleton Ave., Call Victor 494-1860

...Healing Mass, 4th Wed., 8 p.m., Holy Child Church, call Sr. Jean, 718-356-5890

...Weekly Mass - Wednesdays -Lamb of God, Mt. Manresa, 9 P.M. (following 8 P.M. prayer meeting)

S.I. website: <http://siconf.tripod.com>

St. John the Baptist P.G., 210 W. 31 St., Healing Mass, third Tuesday, other events, call 212-213-9150

Manhattan...O.L. of Peace Prayer Community, 237 E. 62 St., NYC, 212-838-3189...call for current events

Hope Healing Ministry, 12:30 P.M., 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, St. Mary Church, Mt. Vernon, 914-664-5855

St. Paul the Apostle, 77 Lee Ave., Yonkers, call Sr. Eileen, 914-969-3480

...Charismatic Holy Hour, 1st Tues., Prayer Meeting, 2nd Tues., Healing Mass, 3rd Tues., Prayer Meeting, 4th Tues., Prayer Meeting & Bible Teaching, Fr. James Villa, 5th Tues.

St. Elizabeth Seton House of Prayer, Scarsdale, 914-723-0533

...Thursdays of prayer, from after parish 9 AM Mass, until 12 PM (or Noon Mass with lunch)

...Jan. 20, Brunch, "New Year-New Beginning", 9 AM to 12:30 PM

...Feb. 10 Seminar, Sr. Nancy Kellar, "Prophetic Dimension of Catholic Charismatic Renewal", 9 AM to 4 PM

...March 10, Brunch, "Lent—Time of Purification" 9 AM to 12:30 PM

...April 21, Brunch, "Springtime—Season of Hope", 9 AM to 12:30 PM

...May 19, Seminar, "Releasing the Grace of Pentecost", 9 AM—4 PM, Noon Mass-Fr. Steve Norton

Northern Westchester/Putnam Vicariate Cluster - Mary Jane -914-737-4286 for general info*

...Thursday Cluster,, Jan. 25, 2007, 7:45 PM, St. Patrick's, Yorktown Hts.(also Apr. 26, July 26)

...Monday, Jan. 8, 2007, Healing Mass, Holy Rosary, Hawthorne, 7:45 PM, call Anne, 914-769-4067

...Healing Masses, March 8, and May 10, St. Patrick's, Yorktown Hts.

Ulster Healing Masses, Music at 7 pm, Mass at 7:30 pm, Call 914-626-7477

...1st Sunday of month, Prayer Meeting, 1:30 p.m., St. John the Evangelist Church, call 845-246-9581

See the "Out & About" column of Catholic New York for more current information on events.

or log onto the NY Charismatic Renewal website: catholiccharismaticny.org