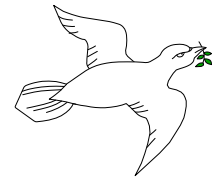


# IGNITE



in us the fire of your love

Volume 18, Number 2

Summer 2003

## **Come Back to the Roots: *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*** **by Peter Thompson**

**Christ has and will continue to renew His Church.**

Here we are, thirty-five years- plus into the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. This profound grace of the Holy Spirit that has swept across the face of the globe, touching millions of Catholics with the grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit. This grace has renewed and restored the focus of our lives unto the lordship of Jesus Christ, empowering us with charisms both ordinary and extraordinary, raising up gifted ministries of service to the body of Christ, the Church, sending forth evangelists, teachers, and those who minister in the power of the Gospel to many nations. It has been an extraordinary time of grace that we have had the privilege to live and serve within.

### **Comparison of the Seven Churches of Rev. 1-3 with our own experience**

Yet my mind goes to these words, "remember your first love", written to the Church at Ephesus in the book of Rev. 2:5. There were seven letters written to the Church of Asia Minor by St. John the Apostle, given to him by Christ himself. We do not know the exact date when they were written but some scholars put the date when revelation was written at approximately thirty to forty years after the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus into heaven and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. If this is so, then there is a remarkable similarity in the span of time from Pentecost to the time those letters were written and the time that the Charismatic Renewal has been within the Church (thirty-five years).

These seven Churches were first generation Christians living within the

lifetime of the Apostles. They were Catholic Charismatics empowered by the Holy Spirit manifesting charisms and many other good works. But Jesus Christ has a stern warning for Ephesus and for four of the other Churches named. But for the other two he has no words of chastisement.

Beginning with Ephesus he lists all the good things that he has seen in this Church (incidentally, Church here with



a capital C denotes that these local churches were in union with the chief shepherd Peter and were under the authority of their local Bishop, successor to the Apostles). There is much for which to commend the Church at Ephesus. They had worked hard labouring in the harvest fields of God's Kingdom.

They had patiently endured hardship, persecution, and had not grown faint or weary in their struggle. They had recognized and rejected false teachers who claimed to be Apostles yet were not. But Jesus (through John) goes on to say, "I have this against you, you have lost your first love; repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from you." Their first work was in fact their passionate love for the Lord.

**Christ challenges us as He did**

**these Churches**

Could Jesus say these same words to us today as we celebrate thirty-five years of Catholic Charismatic Renewal! Would He speak words such as these to us, "Yes, my people, I have watched your growth, how you fell in love with me, burning with zeal for my word, how you have patiently endured much opposition even at times from within my body. You have persevered, not growing weary, gathering faithfully, week after week, to praise my name. I have seen how you have sought out authentic teachers to guide you, rejecting the allurements of false teachers. Yet my children, look deeply into your hearts, for I see a fading of that first love, that burning fire that consumed you when you felt my touch upon your lives.

You burned with zeal for my word, devouring the pages as I spoke to you, words of love and compassion. How few open my word daily to ponder the truths that are always there. Once again your bibles gather dust upon the shelves forgotten for days at a time..."

Would the Lord go on speaking to us of many other areas, as when he challenged the Churches at Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis and Laodicea? Both Pergamum and Thyatira where again Christ had much to commend.

Nevertheless, they had compromised their faith allowing lies and deception of Satan to weaken it. The most harsh words are reserved for Sardis and Laodicea. Sardis had the reputation for being alive in the Spirit, yet was in fact dead. What a condemnation! God forbid that we in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal should receive a similar condemnation. Even though the renewal has the reputation for being alive: alive in the spirit, alive in praise and worship, alive in good works authored by the Spirit. Let us pray that we never become an empty shell, white-washed

tombs filled with dead bones.

Laodicea experiences the wrath of Jesus' words piercing the hearts of his listeners, "Because you are neither hot nor cold I will vomit you out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16). They were wealthy with the world's goods, a prosperous city, manufacturing cloth and medicine for the eyes. They were complacent, apathetic in their self-sufficiency and Christ sternly warns them that in fact they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked spiritually.

Christ counsels them to buy gold that is purified in fire, the gold that comes from being tested and purified through trial and tribulation (cf. 1 P. 1:7); spiritual ointment for their eyes so that their spiritual eyes would be open to see clearly their true state. Again we cry out to the Lord to preserve us from being lukewarm, from a return to apathy and self-satisfaction or complacency.

**Our response to His call**

Jesus never leaves us in this state, but exhorts us to recognize our ongoing need for Him, for the graces that flow from His throne through a genuine desire for prayer, for intimacy with our God. Here He stands at the door of our heart knocking gently. Do we have ears to hear His call once again? Many are familiar with the profoundly beautiful painting of Christ, the light of the world, as He stands knocking at the door. The door is covered by tangled ivy and has not been opened for years. Jesus stands with lantern in hand, there is no handle for Him to turn. He awaits our answer, listening for our footsteps approaching the door in response to His call. If the door is opened, Christ once again steps through and into our hearts, the place of intimacy and union to embrace us and to sit with us. To open the door is an act of repentance recognizing our renewed yearning. Yes, Lord, I have sinned, I have allowed my first love to grow cold. I have compromised my faith. Lord, I call out to you for mercy, for I know that you are filled with mercy for those who call out to you.

Jesus is there to forgive through the sacrament of reconciliation, a sacrament of healing love. Through the hands of His priests we are once again restored to our first love. Zeal and

perseverance are renewed and restored to those who seek Him diligently.

**Encouraged and renewed**

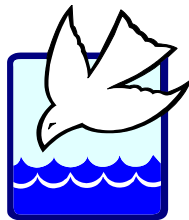
The task ahead is so enormous that we would faint if we fully comprehend the work involved. Apart from Christ we can do nothing (cf. Jn. 15:5). Go back to that time of your own baptism in the Spirit, to the time when hands were laid upon you just as St. Paul reminded Timothy in 1 Tm. 1:6. Stir into flame the embers, for Christ will not extinguish the flickering flame (cf. Mt. 12:20). Beg the Holy Spirit for refreshing fire to fall upon you. Seek out brothers and sisters in Christ to pray for a fresh infilling and release of the Spirit. Use the gifts that He gave to you, "at every opportunity, pray in the spirit" (Eph. 6:17). Pray in tongues daily, for he who prays in tongues builds up himself (cf. 1 Co. 14:4).

Come prepared to the prayer meeting, with scriptures, inspired prayer, prophecy, be open to tongues interpretation and all the charisms. Be expectant to see the hand of God touching hearts and bodies with His healing hand of love. Then Christ can commend us as He did the two Churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia.

There was no spot or stain upon them. They were poor but abundantly rich in the Spirit. They recognized their own poverty and lack of strength without Christ. They were humble of heart and so Christ could use them in ways beyond their strength for they drew from His own mighty power. (cf. Eph. 6:10).

Therefore let us be encouraged and remember the words of St. Francis to his brothers, "Let us begin, for as yet we have hardly begun."

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**NEWS NOTES**

- Each issue of Ignite includes a special insert for leaders. These are reprinted from the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services Newsletter with their permission. They are designed to help leaders with teachings for prayer meetings. Be sure to read the inserts and plan to use them as teaching tools.
- Have you visited the New York website yet? It has much valuable information, coming events, links to other sites, prayer requests, and is still growing. Special thanks to DST chairperson Steve Leaden who is our webmaster. Go to: [www.catholiccharismaticny.org](http://www.catholiccharismaticny.org).
- Congratulations to the Staten Island prayer groups who had their 23rd Annual Unity Night celebration on May 16.

SPC



Saturday, June 14, 2003

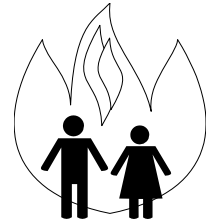
*A Day to Celebrate the Season of Pentecost*

sponsored by the Council of Ecclesial Movements\*

*Msgr. Albacete - Speaker on the theme:*

*“Contemplating the Face of Jesus”*

*(Discovering the Mysteries of Light)*



*Special appearance by the Blackfriars’ Guild performing “The Drama of Light”  
Five Short Dramas written by Fr. John Peter Cameron, OP*

*Bishop Timothy McDonnell - Celebrant*

Under a “big top” at St. Joseph Seminary  
Yonkers, New York

\*Catholic Worker, Charismatic Renewal, Communion & Liberation, Community of St.Egidio, Cursillo, Focolare, LAMP,

**"I will pour out my Spirit..."**

At the opening of the Second Vatican Council, Pope John XXIII prayed to the Holy Spirit: “You help the church by your presence and guide it infallibly. Renew your wonders in this our day as for a new Pentecost.” We in the Charismatic Renewal know that this prayer was answered. We know that this was a fulfillment of Scripture passages that speak of God’s promise to send the Holy Spirit. “I will pour out my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing upon your descendants.” (Is. 44:3). “It shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out a portion of my Spirit on all mankind. (Acts 2:17).

Oh, what a gift to be living in this holy time! The Renewal began because the church cried out to God for help, the help of the Holy spirit, and God answered this request. The Renewal of those early years was exciting, but it was also a time of mistakes, a time of learning, and a time of trying again. The fervor of the moment urged us on in spite of human weaknesses. We saw new signs and we experienced new wonders. Our spiritual awakening began a journey for us that became a way of life.

The Renewal today numbers approximately 120 million Catholics worldwide, according to figures provided by ICCRS. These are faithful people who serve the Lord with all their heart, their

soul, their mind and their strength. (Mk. 12:30). These are days that show us there is more - so much more - to be done. These are days that are challenging and exciting and full of promise and hope. God is not finished with his plan. “I say that my plan shall stand, I accomplish my every purpose” (Is. 46:10). His plan stands firm, it stands strong and full of potential for those who believe. Regardless of how old we say we are, hoy young we say we are; regardless of how long or short a time we have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, God is not finished using those who have said yes to his call.

Saying yes to God should be something repeated over and over again. Today would be a good day to repeat that yes and ask God to renew our zeal. “He who serves God willingly is heard: his petitions reach the heavens. The prayer of the lowly pierces the clouds; it does not rest till it reaches its goal, nor will it withdraw till the Most High responds, judges justly and affirms the right” (Sir. 35:16-18).

The future, the tomorrow of the Renewal is yet to be fulfilled. We are the people who will pass on to generations yet to come the history, the hope and promise of these graced years. The mighty move of the Holy Spirit among the young people of today is a

sign that God is not finished yet. The mature should not say to the younger, “You have no experience.” The young should not disdain the wisdom of those who have served longer. Rather the zeal of youth and the experience of years of service should blend and unite us all. The harvest of the Lord stands ready and ripe in fields shining and white. The call of the harvest Master sounds forth. It is his will that none be lost. “You are not to spend what remains of your earthly life only human desires but on the will of God.” (I Pet.4:2).

Lord, send out your Spirit! “Give new signs and work new wonders; show forth the splendor of your right hand and arm” (Sir. 36:5). Then, we shall be created and you shall renew the face of the earth!

*Aggie Neck is Chairperson of the National Service Committee. She co-directs Servant House, a Catholic Charismatic House of Prayer in Marksville, Louisiana*

*Reprinted from Pentecost Today, April/May/June 2003, with permission*

## MINI-CALENDAR

Staten Island Conference, varied events, call 718-987-8175...

...Aug. 17, Picnic and Charismatic Revival Under the Stars, call for more information

...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

...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

House of Peace, 718-547-3230...call to verify times, dates,

...First Saturday Healing Mass, 1:30 Pm, O.L. of Victory Academy Aud., 565 N. Bway, Dobbs Ferry

...Tuesdays at Noon, Healing Services at Sacred Heart Church, Broadway/Ashford Ave., Dobbs Ferry

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

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

...Thursday, July 31, 7:45 P.M., St. Patrick's Parish Center, Sepaker: Mrs. Diana Roda on Divine Mercy

...Healing Mass, Monday, June 9, 8 PM, Holy Rosary, Hawthorne, Fr. Steve Norton, Call Anne, 914-769-4067

...Healing Mass, Thursday, June 19, 8 PM, St. John the Evangelist, Mahopac, Call Eileen, 845-628-5393

...Healing Mass, Thursday, July 17, 8 PM, St. James the Apostle, Carmel, call Laura 845-225-2531

...Mass, First Thursday of month, 8 PM, Graymoor, Garrison, 6th Fl. chapel, Fr. Walter Gagne, 845-424-3671

Rockland Cluster meets first Monday of the month, 8:15 p.m. Call 914-623-6503 for location

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

...June 20, St. John the Evangelist, West Hurley

...July 18, St. Peter, Rosendale

...August - No Mass

...Sept. 19, Presentation, Port Ewen

...Oct. 17, St. John the Evangelist, Centerville

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

*or log onto the new NY Charismatic Renewal website: [catholiccharismaticny.org](http://catholiccharismaticny.org)*

### Other Events

June 22, 4 P.M. - Prayer & Healing with Linda Schubert, St. Paul's Church Yonkers, call 914-965-9333

June 22-24, 5th Annual Good News Tent Revival, St. Veronica Church, Howell, NJ, call 732-365-6158

Aug. 1-3, Scranton Conference, call 570-344-2214