

Diocese of Venice in Florida English Catholic Charismatic Renewal Newsletter

WHY RENAME THE NSC (National Service Committee)?



Our new name captures our new vision and mission in response to the CHARIS commission and clearly distinguishes us from the newly formed CHARIS National Service of Communion USA, of which we are a key participant:

- "Pentecost" conveys baptism in the Holy Spirit and the charisms
- "Today" stresses the urgency of our vision and mission
- "USA" is our mission field

LOGO DESIGN

NSC and NSC Council Members formed a special team to pray and discern through each step of the design process with the goal of a logo that would embody the new name and dynamic launch into the action of Bring .Build. Serve.

Tongues of fire from Pentecost and baptismal waters come together to form a dove taking flight - the movement of the Holy Spirit.

THE MISSION TODAY

Bring: baptism in the Holy Spirit to the whole Church

Build: unity in the Body of Christ

Serve: the physically and spiritually poor

THE STORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

« Today one thing ends, and another begins. A new stage of this journey is beginning. A stage marked by communion between all the members of the charismatic family, in which the mighty presence of the Holy Spirit is manifested for the good of the entire Church. A presence that makes each one equal, since each has been born of the same Spirit: great and small, old and young, engaged on the worldwide or local levels, all form a whole that is always greater than the part. » (Pope Francis, 8-6-2019)

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal, as it exists today, is the outgrowth from a retreat of several faculty members and students from Duquesne University held at The Ark and The Dove in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in February 1967 . Many of the students – though not all – experienced a movement of God’s Spirit called being “baptized in the Holy Spirit.” The professors had previously been “baptized in the Spirit” a week or two before. God’s action was also prepared for in a very human way by the students’ prayerful preparation in reading the Acts of the Apostles and a book entitled The Cross and the Switchblade.

What happened quickly spread to graduate students and professors at the University of Notre Dame, and others serving in campus ministry in Lansing, Michigan. It continued to spread, so that, as of this date, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal exists in over 238 countries in the world, having touched over 100 million Catholics in its nearly 40-year existence.

“The Church and the world need more than ever that ‘the miracle of Pentecost should continue in history’ . . . How could this ‘spiritual renewal’ not be ‘good fortune’ for the Church and the world?” [others have translated “good fortune” as “a chance”]

Pope John Paul II was an enthusiastic supporter of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. In 1979, soon after becoming Pope, he said, “I am convinced that this movement is a sign of the Spirit’s action . . . a very important component in the total renewal of the Church.” He met with the international leaders of the Renewal on a number of occasions, and regularly sent greetings to National and International Conferences on the Renewal.

Further, as early as 1969, only two years after the Renewal started, the U.S. Bishops investigated the fledgling movement, and the Committee on Doctrine wrote that “Theologically, the movement has legitimate reasons of existence. It has a strong biblical basis. It would be

The 1984 Statement, A Pastoral Statement on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, concluded with these words: *We wish those in the charismatic renewal to know that we make our own the view of Yves Congar: “The charismatic renewal is a grace for the Church.” We assure those in the charismatic renewal of the support they enjoy from the bishops of the United States, and we encourage them in their efforts to renew the life of the Church. (39)*

The Statement also says: *Echoing the words of Pope John Paul II, we commend the charismatic renewal to the priests of the United States: “The priest, for his part, cannot exercise his service on behalf of the renewal unless and until he adopts a welcoming attitude toward it, based on the desire he shares with every Christian by baptism to grow in the gifts of the Holy Spirit” (May 7, 1981). The priest’s responsibility to give pastoral guidance.”*

We, the U.S. Bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, want to affirm again all those Catholics involved in this movement of the Holy Spirit in our day. We, likewise, ‘encourage them in their efforts to renew the life of the Church.’” (Grace for the New Springtime).

“Thus, we can say again, with great thanksgiving and enthusiasm, that in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and in the grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit, we see God’s outpouring of a new Pentecost.” At the core of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal is the “grace of Pentecost,” also known as baptism in the Holy Spirit.

What Does Baptism in the Holy Spirit Have to Do with Christian Initiation? “Baptism in the Holy Spirit” refers to both Christian initiation and to its reawakening in Christian experience. “We believe that this gift of the baptism in the Holy Spirit belongs to the Christian inheritance of all those sacramentally initiated into the church” (p. 10).

While not a theological statement, the U.S. Bishops Ad Hoc Committee defines baptism in the Holy Spirit in this way: *As experienced in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, baptism in the Holy Spirit makes Jesus Christ known and loved as Lord and Savior, establishes or reestablishes an immediacy of relationship with all those persons on the Trinity, and through inner transformation affects the whole of the Christian’s life. There is new life and a new conscious awareness of God’s power and presence. It is a grace experience which touches every dimension of the Church’s life: worship, preaching, teaching, ministry, evangelism, prayer and spirituality, service and community. A broad range of charisms, including those closely associated with the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, is part of the normal Christian life.*

THE MALINES DOCUMENTS

*In the Malines Documents, you have a guide, a reliable path to keep you from going astray.
Pope Francis June 1, 2014 – Olympic Stadium, Rome...*

(Descriptions below are taken from a workshop presented by Fr. Wilfried Brieven, longtime secretary to Cardinal Leon Jozef Suenens, on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the Renewal, 2017)

Malines 1: Theological and Pastoral Orientations on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

1974 – Looking at the ecclesiastical context of the Renewal as well as the theological basis; also considered are areas of theological concern, especially about the use of the words ‘baptism in the Holy Spirit’. This also evaluated, in a positive way, pastoral orientations about charisms and ecumenical dimensions.

Malines 2: Ecumenism and Charismatic Renewal

1978 – The document aimed to show what specific contribution the Charismatic Renewal can make to the ecumenical movement, which is endeavoring to reunite divided Christians. The conditions for authentic ecumenism and authentic Charismatic Renewal and the links between those are examined as well as giving . He gives concrete pastoral guidelines and opens horizons when he evokes spiritual ecumenism.

Malines 3: Charismatic Renewal and Social Action: A Dialogue By Card. Suenens and Bishop Dom Helder Camara

1979 – They both show in a complementary way to Christians that prayer evangelization, social and political action can and must be integrated in the life of a Christian, guided by the Holy Spirit. They see the tensions between the ‘spiritual’ man and the ‘active’ man. How to avoid that the Charismatic Renewal be alienated from the ‘real’ world is one of their concerns.

Malines 4: Renewal and the Powers of Darkness

1982 – Cardinal Ratzinger, then the prefect of the Congregation of Faith, wrote the preface. The subject of the document was very delicate. The cardinal was aware that there were excesses in the practice of exorcism in some places within the Renewal. He said that he wrote it with tears, knowing that some people objected that he was speaking of myths that didn’t exist, and at the other hand, that others who practiced at a wide scale prayers for liberation of the devil, said that he lacked pastoral experience.

Malines 5: Nature and Grace, A Vital Unity

1985 – He examined, reacting to some pedagogical excesses, that in the actual world there is a hypertrophy of the individual person and that the role of grace is minimized. Some psychological methods insist too much on autoanalysis and promote narcissism. In the education of the Christian we may not ignore that the human being, rich in natural gifts, is also fragile and wounded. The modern man may never forget that grace is an essential part of his healing and his growth.

Malines 6: Resting in the Spirit

1986 – The phenomenon was very controversial in that period and divided the spirits in the Renewal. The cardinal contacted ICCRO that later became ICCRS to gather reactions in the whole world. He received many answers that went all ways. He examined the phenomenon and his conclusion at that moment was very restrictive. It shows that the cardinal remained always attentive at what was happening within the Charismatic Renewal and that he took seriously the mandate he received from pope Paul VI to be the guardian that the Catholic Charismatic Renewal always remained in the heart of the Church.

(A complete list of the writings of Cardinal Suenens, including his book “A New Pentecost?” can be found at the Cardinal Suenens Center at John Carroll University.

THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

GUIDELINES FOR THE CREATION OF A NATIONAL SERVICE OF COMMUNION

CHARIS

Catholic Charismatic Renewal International Service

At the request of Pope Francis, the Holy See, through the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life, erects CHARIS, the new and the only international service for the entire Catholic Charismatic Renewal, with a public juridical personality (cf. Statutes art. 2 §2).

Its objective is to serve and create communion between the different realities existing in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal for the proclamation of the Gospel in the world.

GLOSSARY

To be clear, we have to agree on the terms we use. For this reason, we begin these orientations with a glossary.

CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal began in the Catholic Church in Pittsburgh in 1967 when a group of Catholic university students received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, experienced in the protestant churches since 1901. This experience of conversion renewed their faith and all their life and opened them to the gifts and the charisms of the Holy Spirit.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit quickly spread to millions of people around the world, helped by the spirit of openness initiated by the recent Vatican II Council.

CURRENT OF GRACE

Inspired by the intuition of Cardinal Leo Joseph Suenens, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, defined the Charismatic Renewal as a "current of grace", composed of different realities or expressions, ministries, associations, religious institutes, etc. "It is called to warm the whole Church so that all

Realities or expressions are an indication of the diverse ways in which the Holy Spirit calls people and groups to gather to this current of grace. The most common forms of gathering together are Prayer Groups, Communities, Ministries, Schools of evangelization, and Religious Institutes.

1 Cardinal Farrell, January 18, 2020, address to the Brazilian Bishops, Recife.

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PRAYER GROUPS

Prayer groups are groups of people who meet periodically (in general, weekly) to pray together listening to the Holy Spirit and welcoming his charisms. These groups generally form an extensive network that coincides with the organization of the Church through diocesan and national coordinations. The membership of these groups is spontaneous and there is usually no formal record of them.

Prayer Groups are the most widespread expression of the CCR worldwide. They can be considered the basic and common cell of all forms of expression in the CCR. In addition to praying together, these groups take on a variety of missions.

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

"The outpouring of the Spirit is a transforming experience of the love of God the Father poured into a person's heart through the Holy Spirit, which that same person has received through a surrender of self to the lordship of 1 Cardinal Farrell, January 18, 2020, address to the Brazilian Bishops, Recife.

Jesus Christ. It revives the grace of baptism and confirmation, deepens my communion with God and with the other faithful in Christ, ignites evangelical fervor and equips the person with charisms for service and mission.

REALITIES OR EXPRESSIONS

The realities or expressions are an indication of the various ways in which the Holy Spirit calls people and brings them together in this stream of grace. The most common forms of association are prayer groups, communities, ministries, schools of evangelization and religious institutes.

NATIONAL NETWORK OF PRAYER GROUPS

In many countries, prayer groups are organized in national coordination, often called Charismatic Renewal Coordination or National Renewal Team. In this document, these structures are referred to as the "National Network of Prayer Groups" in order to avoid confusion between the prayer group structure and the overall Charismatic Renewal as a stream of grace.

COMMUNITIES, COVENANT OR COMMITMENT COMMUNITIES

A community is a group of people who lead a fraternal life, residential or not, around a charism, with an important place for the mission. To be members, people make a formal commitment, sometimes called an "alliance". Membership is not limited to participation in a specific charism; it also involves community life. The commitment or covenant can have different levels and vary over time. Often these communities bring together different states of life: lay people, celibate for the Kingdom, priests and deacons.

Some communities are born out of prayer groups. Many are canonically recognized as associations of the faithful by their bishop, their episcopal conference or the Holy See.

MINISTRIES

A ministry is a service in relation with a charism exercised for the good of the Church either by a particular person (P. Emiliano Tardif had a preaching and healing ministry) either by a group of people who share the same charism.

2 The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit, ICCRS Doctrinal Commission, EdB, p. 15.

Art. 15. Functions

The goal of National Services of Communion is to build and strengthen the wide and diverse family of Catholic Charismatic Renewal. They should therefore be as inclusive as possible and open to new and emerging realities. The model focuses on communion rather than government or structure.

Art. 16. Composition

National Services of Communion should consist of representatives from realities in the current of grace who identify themselves as a part of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, and who are seeking to build communion within the wide and diverse family of Catholic Charismatic Renewal. This may include prayer groups, communities, networks, schools of evangelization, religious institutes, publishing houses, particular ministries, ecumenical initiatives, youth etc.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF CHARIS

1. The NSC will:

- Be attentive to the pastoral needs of the different expressions, as well as to the new realities arisen by the Spirit; it will invite all of them to communion;
 - Identify the different expressions or realities of the current of grace present in the country;
 - Organize National (or regional) gatherings of the responsible persons of all the charismatic realities (See point 7 below);
 - Offer training courses if required;
 - Be in contact with international instances: CSC3, ISC and CHARIS office;
 - Identify needs and provide information;
 - Be a link between the country's current of grace and the Episcopal Conference;
 - Assist in the eventual formation of regional or diocesan services of communion;
 - Organize the election of the next NSC.
- a) To help deepen and promote the grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit throughout the Church;
 - b) To promote the exercise of charisms not only in Catholic Charismatic renewal but also in the whole Church;
 - c) To encourage the spiritual deepening and holiness of people who live the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit;
 - d) To encourage commitment to evangelization, particularly through the new evangelization and the evangelization of culture, while respecting religious freedom;
 - e) To encourage cooperation between communities born from Catholic Charismatic Renewal, with a view making the experience of particular communities available for the good of all;
 - f) To promote the ecumenical dimension of Catholic Charismatic Renewal and foster the commitment to serving the unity of all Christians;
 - g) To identify and promote specific topics that can help deepen the grace of Pentecost;

2. Continental Service of Communion.

- a) To encourage networking and cooperation between realities within Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the areas of formation, evangelization etc.;
- b) To promote service of the poor and social action through Catholic Charismatic Renewal;
- c) To organize training and formation opportunities, according to the needs expressed by the General Assembly;
- d) To enable clerics and religious to deepen their experience of Catholic Charismatic Renewal and to participate more fully in it;
- e) To foster communion: among persons involved in various realities within Catholic Charismatic Renewal; with ecclesial movements that do not refer to this current of grace; and with other Christian Churches and Communities, especially those living the experience of Pentecost;
- f) To organize major events, colloquia, leader's gatherings, in order to share and exchange the various experiences flowing from the Holy Spirit.

If the Episcopal Conference designates a bishop or a priest to attend the current of grace, he accompanies the NSC in its meetings and in the meetings it organizes.

3. Communion between the different expressions is at the center of the CHARIS Statutes. This communion does not prevent each expression from retaining its independence and its own associative form.
4. CHARIS Statutes also promote a renewal of leadership. That is why it limits the duration of each to three years (renewable only once) and includes spaces for young people at different levels of representation.
We strongly recommend these orientations to be reflected in the creation of the NSCs.
5. The continental representatives of the ISC (Statutes art. 9) are the ones who supervise, accompany and assist in the formation of the NSC.

6. The CHARIS Statutes speak about the inclusion, as much as possible, of all the realities or expressions of the current of grace present in each country. For this integration, it is important that the creation of the CNSC's would be made following the objective and transparent criteria:
 - 6.1 Every reality has the same dignity, "one member is no more important than the other, neither by age, intelligence or ability, because they are all beloved children of the same Father." (Pope Francis, June 8, 2019)
 - 6.2 For a practical matter, it is impossible that each single reality would have a representative in the CNSC. But, the NSC must ensure that each form of expression is represented.
 - 6.3 In countries where there are no other national expressions known than the prayer groups, the national network of prayer groups becomes the NSC and is charged to investigate if there are other charismatic expressions which could participate.
 - 6.4 The criteria for the representation of each different reality depend on each country and must be transparent. It will take into account:
 - Nihil Obstat, approval or recognition of the competent ecclesiastical authorities.
 - To identify themselves as part of the current of grace through Baptism in the Holy Spirit.
 - Communion with charismatic expressions.
 - 6.5 Each NSC chooses a coordinator from among its members. He is not in any way responsible for the current of grace in his country, but he organizes the communion.
 - 6.6 All members of the NSC, including the coordinator, are volunteers.
7. National (or regional) gatherings of the responsible persons of all the charismatic realities
All expressions of the Charismatic Renewal of a country cannot physically participate in the NSC's meetings but all are invited to participate in the National (or Regional) Meetings for leaders of the expressions of the Charismatic Renewal prepared by the NSC, according to the needs of communion, formation and mission in the country. These meetings are a privileged place to build and live the communion that the Holy Father asks: "With one heart, returned to the Father, witnessing unity in diversity: diversity of charisms that the Spirit has raised in these fifty-two years. "Lengthen the ropes of the tent" we read in the prophecy of Isaiah (54.2), so that everyone can dwell in it as members of a single family. A family where there is only one God and Father, one Lord Jesus Christ and one Spirit of life" (Pope Francis, June 8, 2019).
8. A NSC may be required to write statutes for legal or canonical recognition in the jurisdiction of its country. In this case, these Statutes must be approved by the ISC to assure the coherence with the spirit of the CHARIS statutes.

TRANSITORY ARTICLE

If the establishment of the NSC is in need of a special adaptation time, it can start with the creation of a transitional NSC until 2021. This transitional NSC will be in charge of identifying all the charismatic expressions of the country and organizing national meetings for the leaders of these realities of the Charismatic Renewal, to arrive in 2021 to the constitution of the final NSC, with a term of three years. This will allow the organization of the elections for the ISC and the CHARIS Moderator in 2022, as provided by the Statutes.