

Fueling the Fire of Renewal

Issue 3 2021

PENTECOST *Today*

Magazine of Pentecost Today USA

Called to Holiness

Sr. Renee Kittelson

Fr. Raniero Card. Cantalamessa

Bishop Peter Smith

John Gresham

Jessica Navin



Chairman's Corner

By Ron Riggins

“Be holy because I am holy.”

(1 Peter 1:16)

Several thoughts came to mind praying about this call: God wills it, it's more than being a good person, we should zealously seek holiness and it leads to mission.

God Wills It.

Imagine striving for holiness by your own willpower. 1st Thessalonians 4:3a says that holiness is God's will for us. With God all things are possible. The Lord sends us the Holy Spirit to empower us for personal holiness. Baptism in the Holy Spirit gives us new life, makes us aware of God's power and presence, and leads us to metanoia and the path to sanctification.

More than Being a Good Person.

For some, holiness may simply convey “moral goodness,” but this description

falls short. Holiness requires us to be set apart from what is common, imperfect, and sinful, and instead follow Jesus' way, truth and life. St. Teresa of Calcutta said we must have a real living determination to reach holiness and despoil ourselves of all that is not of God.

Zealously Seek Holiness.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit leads us to renewed Catholic life with a fervor that transforms our lives and brings us joy, peace and love for others. This current of grace leads us to zealously devote ourselves to scripture, prayer, communal service and the Sacraments.

Holiness Leads to Mission.

St. Francis of Assisi tied holiness to mission: “Sanctify yourself and you will sanctify society.” *Redemptoris Missio* 90 states that “the universal call to holiness is closely linked to mission.” Echoing Jesus' Great Commission to preach the Gospel, St. Paul VI exhorts us to mission: “the Church exists to evangelize.”

The call to holiness leads us into the grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit: “the Holy Spirit empowers us for personal holiness, renewed Catholic life, and evangelization.”

Come, Holy Spirit! ♦



Editor's Desk

By Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner, SSND

In Issue 3, 2021 you will find articles related to the topic of holiness: see p 2, *Chairman's Corner* by Ron Riggins; and pp 4-5, *Holiness and Baptism in the Spirit* by Cardinal Cantalamessa. Related, but not using the word *holiness* are: p 6, *Surrendering to Jesus* by Bishop Peter Smith; and p 3, *My Spiritual Sons*, a testimony regarding Prison Ministry through letter writing by Sister Renee Kittleson. In *The Transforming Power of Beauty*, p 12, Jessica Navin illustrates how beauty can summon us to holiness.

Beginning with Issue 1, 2020, there has been a series of articles in *Pentecost Today* magazine, illuminating at least some points of each of the Malines Documents written by Cardinal Suenens in the very earliest days of Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church. (Malines refers to the city of Malines in Belgium, from where these documents originated.) In this Issue, on page 11, John Gresham writes about the last of those documents, *Resting in the Spirit*. Why did we write this series of articles in *Pentecost Today* magazine? It is because, as you can read on the front cover of Issue 1, 2020, Pope Francis is quoted as saying, “In the *Malines Documents*, you have a guide, a reliable path to keep you from going astray.” The six documents can be found at this link: <https://www.pentecosttodayusa.org/malines-documents/>.

See pp 7-10 and 15 for a description of The Joshua Project, a response to “the growing urgency to reach younger generations and raise up younger leaders”. May they be strong and courageous (Jos 1:9). On p 15 you can read about the roles of Fire Starter, Fire Sustainer, and Legacy of Fire planned giving partners. ♦



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Executive Director

Alicia Hartle

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Bill Marcotte
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Sr. Mary Anne Schaezner, SSND

Production Manager/Designer

Sharon Fox

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BRING baptism in the Holy Spirit to the whole Church, **BUILD** unity in the body of Christ, and **SERVE** the poor.

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MY SPIRITUAL SONS

By Sister Renee Kittelson, MSC

While living in Melbourne, Australia, and working as the Director of Nursing at Cabrini Hospital, I was baptized in the Spirit on August 26, 1972.

Several years later while I was at prayer, I had a profound sense that the Lord was asking me to become the mother of many sons. How could that be, since I am a religious sister with a vow of chastity? Little did I know that my spiritual sons would be inmates.

In 1978 two men escaped from a criminally insane prison in Sydney. I was led to pray for them. Three weeks later they were captured. I sensed the Lord asking me to write to them. I was hesitant to do so, but finally wrote them a simple letter, assuring them of God's love. Two long months later, I received a letter from John, one of the escapees. He wrote, "I honestly do not know if I believe in God or not...I pray occasionally, but not for myself, just for other people...I pray just in case God can hear." I was overjoyed to hear from him, and wrote back immediately, sending him several Charismatic books. It took another couple months before he wrote. He stated that he had been too depressed to read the books.

I decided to change my approach, writing, "I do not want to be a pushy nun. Just let me know what you need." He was not long in responding, "I don't need anything. What I need is what you are giving me - friendship."

A few months later he wrote, "You asked me if I wanted anything. I said, 'no', but now there is something you can get me, a Bible."

I was delighted with his request and sent him a New American Bible, just like mine. His 'thank you' letter was filled with gratitude, stating that before he took it out of the box he even washed his hands.

John wrote to me about Peter, a Jewish inmate, with whom he shared the yard. He said that Peter was very anti-Christian, so he suggested that I not write to him. I decided to do so anyway. Peter responded promptly, stating that it was so good to hear from someone outside the prison walls. In his second

letter he asked me to send him a Bible, stating, "I would like to know Jesus, but I don't know where to start."

A few months later I was able to visit my two new spiritual sons. Six months later John was transferred to a larger prison in Sydney where Bill, who had escaped with him, was also being held. I enjoyed a great visit with both men.

I was transferred to Chicago in 1980, where I became a volunteer chaplain in the Gateway Drug Program of Cook County Jail for six years. I was also privileged to work with Death Row inmates. One of the men was fully received into the Catholic Church prior to his execution.

My dream job was to become a prison chaplain, so I obtained a Masters in Pastoral Studies at Loyola Chicago. I was missioned to my home town of Seattle, where I became a prison chaplain at the Monroe Correctional Complex for sixteen wonderful years.

John became a model inmate. He taught a Bible Study, led many men to the Lord, and attended a Kairos Retreat in the prison. Years later at a Kairos Reunion in his prison we both gave our testimonies about how our friendship had changed both of our lives. John died on February 21, 2018, the same day as Billy Graham. Peter and Bill have also passed on to their reward.

At the final judgement when Jesus says to you, "I was in prison and you visited me," will that be true? Prison ministry is very rewarding. Even letters can change lives. Is the Lord inviting you to minister to the incarcerated? Check out Volunteer Manual Jail & Prison Ministry or Free Prison Ministry Classes online. Then contact your diocese, local jail or prison chaplain. I would be happy to answer questions: sisterreneemsc@gmail.com. ♦



Sister Renee Kittelson, MSC is the author of three books—*Practical Catholic Spirituality*, *Prayers for Such a Time as This* and *Unexpected Journeys* (autobiography). She is a Missionary Sister of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the order started by St. F.X. Cabrini.

Holiness and Baptism in the Spirit

By Fr. Raniero Card. Cantalamessa, OFM.Cap

I had the occasion of speaking on spiritual fervor and baptism in the Spirit in my first Lenten meditation to the Papal Household a few months ago. I thought the best way for me to write on “Baptism in the Spirit and Holiness” is simply to share in part what I said there so that the readers of *Pentecost Today* may see how the message of “the current of grace” of the Charismatic Renewal is resounding at the very heart of the Catholic Church.

We are the heirs of a spirituality which typically saw progress to perfection as going through three stages: purification, illumination, union. In other words, we need to practice renunciation and mortification at length before we can experience fervor. All this is based on great wisdom and on centuries of experience and would be wrong to think it is outmoded by now. No, it is not outmoded, but it is not the only way God’s grace chooses to follow. Such a stern distinction shows a slow gradual shift from divine grace to human efforts.

According to the New Testament it is a circular and simultaneous process, whereby mortification is surely necessary to achieve the fervor of the Spirit, but at the same time it is also true that the fervor of the Spirit is necessary to be able to practice mortification. Embarking on an ascetic journey without a strong starting push by the Spirit would be dead toil and would not generate anything but ‘pride of the flesh.’ We are granted the Spirit to be able to

mortify ourselves, rather than as a prize after mortifying ourselves.

This second way, going from fervor to asceticism and to the practice of virtue, was the one Jesus asked the apostles to

Baptism in the Spirit proved to be a simple and powerful means of renewing the lives of millions of believers.

follow. As the great Byzantine theologian Cabasilas put it, “The apostles and fathers of our faith had the advantage of being instructed in every doctrine and what’s more by the Savior in person. [...] Yet, despite having known all this, until they were baptized [at Pentecost, with the Spirit], they did not exhibit anything new, noble, spiritual or better than in the old times. But when baptism came for them and the Paraclete stormed their souls, then they became new and they embraced a new life, they were leaders for others and made the flame of the love for Christ shine within themselves and others. [...] In the same way God leads to perfection all the saints who have come after them” (*Life in Christ*, II, 8: PG 150, 552 s.).

The Fathers of the Church expressed all this with the attractive image of

‘sober drunkenness’. What drove many of them to take up this subject, which had already been developed by Philo of Alexandria, were Paul’s words to the Ephesians: “Do not get drunk on wine, in which lies debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another [in] psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and playing to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks always and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father” (Eph 5:18-19).

Starting with Origen, countless texts of the Fathers spelled out this image, by playing either on the analogy or on the contrast between physical and spiritual drunkenness. Those who, at Pentecost, mistook the apostles for drunkards were right – as Saint Cyril of Jerusalem writes – their only mistake was to relate that drunkenness to ordinary wine, whereas it was ‘new wine,’ made from the ‘true vine’ which is Christ; the apostles were indeed drunk, but theirs was a sober drunkenness crushing their sins and reviving their hearts (*Catech. XVII*, 18-19).

How can we take up this ideal of sober drunkenness and embody it in the present situation in history and in the Church? Why should we take it for granted that such a strong way of experiencing the Spirit was an exclusive privilege of the Fathers and of the early history of the Church, but that it is no longer the case for us? Christ’s gift is not limited to a specific age, but it is

offered to every age. It is precisely the role of the Spirit to make Christ's redemption universal and available to anyone, at any point in time and space.

What are the 'places' where the Spirit acts today in the same way as it acted at Pentecost? Let us listen to Saint Ambrose who, among the Latin Fathers, was the herald par excellence of the sober drunkenness of the Spirit. After mentioning the two classic 'places' – the Eucharist and Scriptures – where the Spirit can be drawn from, he hints at a third option, saying: "There is also another drunkenness caused by the drenching rain of the Holy Spirit. In the same way, in the Acts of the Apostles, those who talked in different languages appeared to their listeners to be filled with wine" (St. Ambrose, *Comm.* on Ps. 35, 19).

After mentioning the 'ordinary' means, with these words Saint Ambrose hints at a third 'extraordinary' one, by which he means it is not something that is pre-planned, nor is it something institutional. It is about reliving the experience of the apostles on the day of Pentecost. Certainly, Ambrose did not intend to point to this third option, to say to his listeners that it was not accessible to them, being exclusively reserved to the apostles and to the first generation of Christians. On the other hand, he means to spur his congregation to experience that 'drenching rain of the Spirit' which took place at Pentecost. That is what Saint John XXIII meant to do with the Second Vatican Council: a 'new Pentecost' for the Church.

Therefore, we also have a chance to draw the Spirit from this channel, solely dependent on God's own free and sovereign action. One of the ways the Spirit is made visible in this manner outside the institutional channels is the so-called 'baptism in the Spirit.' The phrase 'Baptism in the Spirit' comes from Jesus himself. On referring to the approaching Pentecost, before ascend-

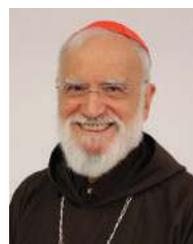
ing to heaven he said to his apostles: "John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5). That ritual has nothing exoteric; rather, it consists of extremely simple, calm and joyful gestures, along with feelings of humility, repentance and willingness to become like children.

It is a renewal with fresh awareness not only of Baptism and Confirmation, but also of the entire Christian life, of the sacrament of marriage for married people, of their ordination for priests, of their religious profession for consecrated people. The candidate prepares for the baptism in the Spirit not only with a good confession, but also participating in instruction meetings, where they can come into living and joyful contact with the main truths and realities of faith: God's love, sin, salvation, the new life and transformation in Christ, charisms, the fruits of the Spirit. The most frequent important fruit is the discovery of what it means to have a 'personal relationship' with Jesus risen and alive. In the Catholic understanding, the Baptism in the Spirit is not the end of a journey, but a starting point to mature as Christians and as committed members of the Church. If someone doesn't like the expression "baptism of the Spirit", let him or her leave it aside and instead of the "baptism of the Spirit" ask for the "Spirit of the baptism", that is a renewal of the gift received at the baptism.

The secret is to say 'Come, Holy Spirit' once, but to say it with your whole heart, knowing that such invitation will not remain unheard. To say it with an "expectant faith", leaving the Spirit free to come in the way and with the manifestations he decides, not in the way we think he should come and manifest himself.

Baptism in the Spirit proved to be a simple and powerful means of renewing the lives of millions of believers in

almost all Christian Churches. Countless people, who were Christians only by name, thanks to that experience have become real Christians, engaged in prayer of praise and in the sacraments, active evangelizers, willing to take on pastoral tasks in their parishes. We should say to ourselves what Augustine used to repeat, almost with indignation, to himself when he heard stories of men and women who, in his time, left the world to devote themselves to God: "If those men and women did, why don't I do too?" "Si isti et istae, cur non ego?" (*Confessions*, VIII, 8, 19). ♦



Fr. Raniero Card. Cantalamessa, OFM. Cap is Preacher to the Papal Household since 1980 and Ecclesiastical Assistant of CHARIS. He is an Italian priest, raised to the rank of cardinal on November 28, 2020. He is a member of The Order of Friars Minor Capuchin and a theologian.

Prayer Card

Called to Holiness

As Our Lord is Holy ...

"There is no Holy One like the LORD; there is no Rock like our God."
(1 Samuel 2:2)

... We Are Called to Be Holy ...

"... as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in every aspect of your conduct, for it is written, "Be holy because I [am] holy."
(1 Peter 1:15-16)

... So Others May See the Light

"... place [your lamp] on a lampstand so that those who enter may see the light."
(Luke 8:16)



“O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, Surrendering to Jesus take care of everything!”

By Bishop Peter Smith

Some of us remember the words of an old Charismatic Renewal song, “All to Jesus I surrender, All to thee I freely give” and its chorus “I surrender all, all to thee my blessed Savior, I surrender all”. So, what does it mean to surrender to Jesus?

When we hear the word surrender, many of us have images in our minds of defeated soldiers and people, waving white flags, hands up, dejected. They are all clearly overpowered, overwhelmed, crushed, and subjugated. Surrender is the result of a defeat.

However, the Christian notion of surrender is different. It focuses on

Please join Pentecost Today USA in these prayers:

- Lord, holy, holy, holy are you, Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of your glory! Who is like you, so magnificent and awe-inspiring, who saves us and calls us to holy life? May we tremble in worship before the splendor of your holiness!
- Holy Spirit, help us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, to cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, to be free from sin and to respond with holy conduct so that we might be led to sanctification and eternal life seeing the Lord.
- Holy Spirit, in calling us out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Lord, inspire us and equip us with charisms enabling us to give convincing witness to your unfathomable love and mercy, as we place our lighted lamps on a stand for others to see you and your holiness.

seeing, acknowledging, and giving ourselves to that which is far greater than ourselves. It may come about through defeat in some form, but it may also come about through realizing that no matter how good or successful we may be, Jesus Christ is better, the best. So, we freely give ourselves over to Christ who is so much greater.

This Christian understanding of surrender is something we see more of than we may at first realize. Think of marriage when a man and a woman freely surrender and give themselves to each other. Real freedom and surrender only occurs when we are all in. It is only when we are all in that we are completely free. That is when we can love, serve, and give to the utmost. This is also true of religious community life.

At first, we do this in principle and work out the details going forward. It is as though these commitments and surrender have brought us to the Olympic finals. Now we have to live this out in the practicalities of our ordinary lives.

Scripture gives us plenty of examples. In Matthew’s Gospel we have the parable of the Prodigal Son who is thoroughly defeated by rejecting his father and going his own way. When he returns and surrenders he is welcomed back. The mercy of the father shows forth. The older son responds in anger showing that despite external obedience he is just as rebellious in his heart. He did not see the father as greater than himself. Despite being told by his father that all he has was his, we are not told whether he too surrendered to the mercy of the father and joined the celebration.

Another series of examples involve the call of the disciples. Jesus, passing by, challenges them to leave everything and follow him. Clearly their encounters with Jesus led them to seeing someone far greater than themselves and they respond by leaving everything to follow him. They went all in. That radical response allows them to travel with Jesus for three years and then, after being baptized in the Holy Spirit, to continue as coworkers of Jesus in building his kingdom.

Jesus gives us the freedom of how we respond. Some accepted completely, others rejected him, and others such as the rich young man, wanted to accept but on their own terms. That is not possible as we are then not completely free to follow and accompany Jesus.

One practical way to respond is the increasingly popular *Surrender Novena*. The concluding prayer is, “O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything!” You can adapt the reflections and prayers and include the Holy Spirit, whose wisdom, strength, guidance, and gifts we need to live a life surrendered to Jesus. ♦

You can find a downloadable version of the *Surrender Novena* here: <https://bit.ly/SurrenderPrayer>



Bishop Peter Smith, born and raised in South Africa, is Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon. He is a member of the CHARIS International Service of Communion. Appointed by Pope Francis, he represents North America and the Caribbean. Recently he became an Episcopal Consultant to Pentecost Today USA, joining Archbishop Emeritus Robert Carlson and Bishop Emeritus Sam Jacobs.



THE INVITATION

When I first met Kathy Semerling, she shared with me that it was her role to record the words received during times of prayer at the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the U.S. (NSC) Council Meetings from 2006 through 2013. She said this word was proclaimed again and again with a building urgency to raise up younger generations of Renewal Leaders: "Pass the baton."

Here are some of the many ways the NSC, now known as Pentecost Today USA, first responded to this powerful word:

- Electing and appointing younger Board and Council Members and inviting them to serve in leadership positions.
- Devoting an entire Strategic Priority Team to engaging and raising up young adults.
- Hosting a young adult Renewal Leaders retreat at The Ark and The Dove led by Bishop Sam Jacobs, Father Dave Pivonka, TOR, Dave VanVickle, and Terry and Ron Riggins.

The Joshua Project is a response to this word and to widespread urgency and excitement to reach younger generations and to raise up new generations of Renewal Leaders in Renewal Centers, Prayer Groups, Covenant Communities, Ministries, Dioceses, and Parishes across the nation.

Glory to God for how He will be magnified 1) as we respond to this invitation to "Pass the baton" to younger generations and 2) as older and younger generations work together to BRING baptism in the Holy Spirit to the whole Church, BUILD unity in the Body of Christ, and SERVE the poor!

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." -Joshua 1:9

-Alicia Hartle, Executive Director
Pentecost Today USA (formerly known as the NSC)

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THE JOSHUA PROJECT

Brainstorming and planning phases have already begun, and we need your insight!

Pilot initiatives made possible through your inspiration and support will launch in 2022.



01

BRAINSTORM

Brainstorm with Renewal Centers, Prayer Groups, Covenant Communities, Ministries, Renewal Leaders from across the nation and around the world. How is the Holy Spirit inviting us to BRING, BUILD, SERVE with younger generations? Visit PentecostTodayUSA.org to share your ideas via the National Renewal Leaders Survey.

02

PLAN

How is the Holy Spirit inviting us to support and build needed organization, communication, and formation tools, resources, and models on local, regional, national and international levels? Online discussion forums will be held from 4-5:30 pm EST prior to the 7pm Virtual National Leaders Meeting on December 4th. Register at PentecostTodayUSA.org

03

FUNDRAISE

Invite all who have been touched by the fire of Renewal to be a part of The Joshua Project through giving, prayer, and inviting friends and family into fueling the work of the Holy Spirit. Find and share ways to give at PentecostTodayUSA.org/ways-to-give

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"But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you." -Romans 8:11

04

PILOT LAUNCH

Launch small pilots with input from focus groups to build tools, resources, and models with the fullness of inspiration and discernment of Renewal Leaders, theologians, and those being served by the tools, resources, or models being built.

05

FULL LAUNCH

Tools, resources, programs, and models will be shared for Renewal Centers, Prayer Groups, Covenant Communities, ministries, dioceses, and parishes to use to reach and raise up younger generations.

06

SUMMARY

The vision is for The Joshua Project to ignite and fuel the work of the Holy Spirit to renew the Renewal so that younger generations and older generations can work together to fulfill our mission to **BRING** baptism in the Holy Spirit to the whole Church, **BUILD** unity in the Body of Christ, and **SERVE** the poor.





PENTECOST TODAY *USA*



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Younger generations are hungry for hope.

Older generations yearn to pass on the fire of Renewal.

THE NEED

In the world. Younger generations increasingly suffer from loneliness, anxiety, depression, and addiction.

In the Church. More and more young people are joining the ranks of the nones, choosing to be unaffiliated with any organized religion.

In the Renewal. Though younger generations have been touched by countless ministries that sprang up out of the Renewal, there is a fullness of embracing the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit and a depth of understanding the theology of baptism in the Holy Spirit that Prayer Groups, Covenant Communities, and many other Renewal Ministries and Leaders have received and yearn to pass on to younger generations.

Many Renewal Centers, Prayer Groups, Covenant Communities and other ministries need support and desire to collaborate to develop highly engaging communication tools, resources, content, mentoring, and programs that reach and raise up younger generations.

The need in the world, in the Church, and in the Renewal is urgent, and we magnify the Lord for how Jesus will set the world on fire through our prayer and action.

Come, Creator Spirit!

"I HAVE COME TO CAST FIRE UPON THE EARTH;
AND HOW I WISH IT WERE ALREADY KINDLED!" -LUKE 12:49

Resting in the Spirit

The 6th Malines Document

By John Gresham

“The encounter with God impacts both soul and body. When people experience the powerful presence of God, sometimes they cry, sometimes they laugh, and sometimes they fall to the ground like St. Paul on the road to Damascus.”

In the final Malines document, Cardinal Suenens expressed his concerns over the phenomenon of people falling over when receiving prayer. This experience, variously described as being slain in the Spirit, resting in the Spirit, or overcome by the power of the Spirit was becoming more common in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and the Cardinal wanted to subject this practice to discernment. He prefaces his discernment with a preliminary discussion on the nature of the Charismatic Renewal. He emphasizes that this renewal is not one particular movement within the Church but a current of grace for the whole Church. This vision of the Renewal as a grace for the whole church drives Cardinal Suenens' analysis. He is concerned that these physical manifestations would hinder the Renewal's acceptance by the wider church. Suenens acknowledges the fruit of healing and spiritual transformation described by those who had experienced this. Despite those positive fruits, the Cardinal ends up rejecting this phenomenon. With some possible rare exceptions, he concludes that it is ordinarily of human not divine origin. He suggests that it is caused by auto-suggestion or human psychological powers yet to be discovered. Thus, he discouraged this practice in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

Suenens laid out two exclusive options: either this is a charism of the Spirit, or it is a human phenomenon. He did not seem to consider a third alternative. Another way to look at this is to recognize it as a human phenomenon, but a human phenomenon that may happen when human beings experience the power of God. The encounter with God impacts both soul and body. When people experience the powerful presence of God, sometimes they cry, sometimes they laugh, and sometimes they fall to the ground like St. Paul on the road to Damascus.

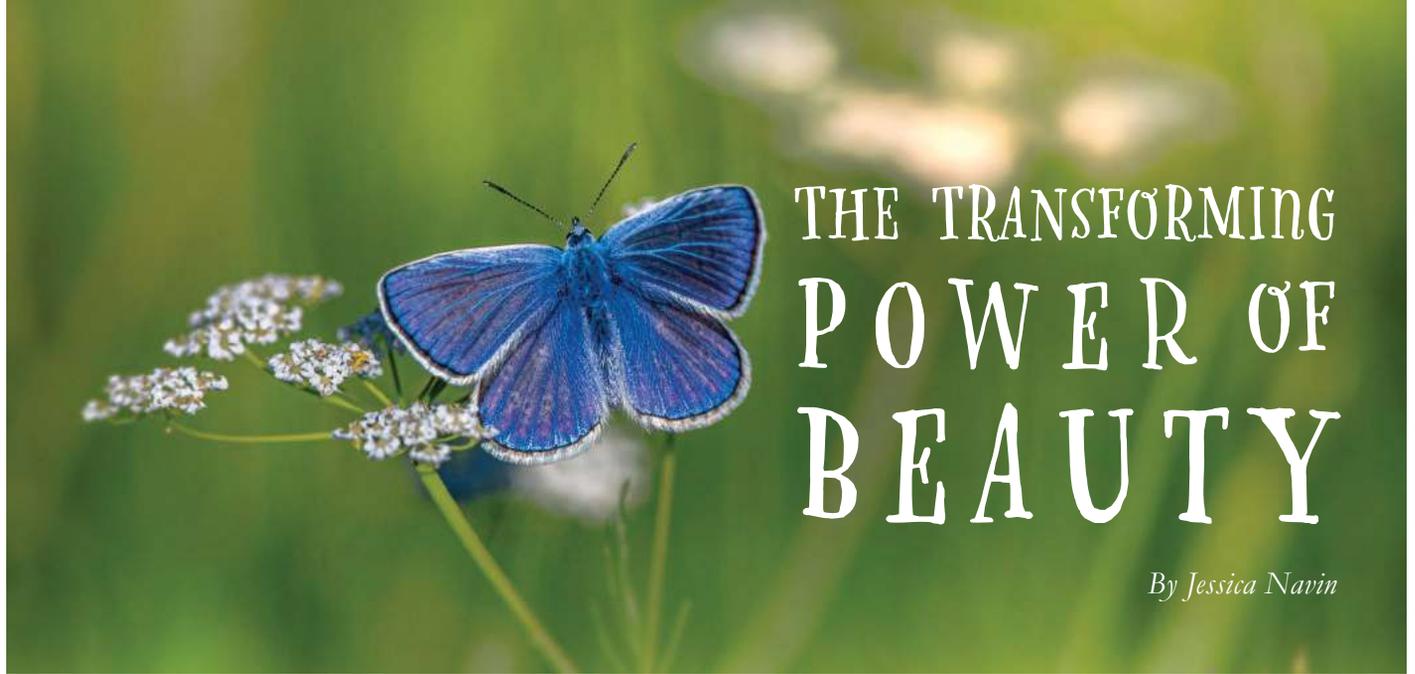
Shortly after the publication of this document, noted author and teacher, Francis MacNutt, gave an account of this phenomenon in his book *Overcome by the Spirit* written in part as a response to Suenens and other critics. Unlike Suenens, MacNutt believed the spiritual fruits that accompanied this experience validated it. For many, it is an experience of surrender to the power of God that brings interior healing. MacNutt emphasized that the genuine experience is not

something subject to human control – he could not stop it from happening if he wanted to! I had an experience that leads me to agree with MacNutt. I was speaking at a charismatic retreat where a few people came forward to receive prayer. I felt sort of like Peter in Cornelius' house, for as I began to speak, before I could even pray over them, the Spirit came down. One of the people fell over. I had not said anything about the possibility of this happening. There were no “catchers” behind the people in anticipation of it happening. I was not expecting it myself. The person who fell over was not expecting it. In fact, she admitted later she had no idea what was happening. She just felt God's power and fell over. Similar experiences in MacNutt's ministry convinced him that this is an authentic human response to an experience of God's power. He shared Cardinal Suenens' concern to avoid any sort of human manipulation to try and manufacture the experience but also believed in leaving room for the authentic experience.

Both Cardinal Suenens and Francis MacNutt shared a vision for a charismatic renewal of the whole church, but they differed on where “resting in the Spirit” fits into that vision. Cardinal Suenens saw “no place for a religious practice which remains on the fringes of the common Christian life” whereas MacNutt longed for the day when “resting in the Spirit is not seen as some weird fringe element in Christianity but as a normal - even ordinary - component of prayer meetings.” Thirty-five years after the publication of this final Malines document, *Resting in the Spirit* has not disappeared from the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Will it marginalize the Renewal as Cardinal Suenens feared? Or will it be more widely accepted as a normal part of healing prayer as MacNutt hoped? Whether or not one agrees with Cardinal Suenens' conclusions, his call for careful discernment remains relevant and must continue. ♦



John Gresham is the author of “Jesus 101: God and Man” and of “Holy Spirit 101: Present Among Us”. He has served on the NSC Council since 2015.



THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF BEAUTY

By Jessica Navin

Restless and dissatisfied with her life, Kaitlin, a young college student, searched YouTube for music that might pull her out of the discouragement she felt. She stumbled upon the song “Burn Out” by Andrew Ascough. As she listened to the song, something stirred within her heart. She encountered beauty.

Realizing that “Burn Out” was written for Awaken, a competition for participants at the FOCUS national conference, she began listening to talks from the conference. Her heart was opened to God, and she became involved with FOCUS. Through an encounter with beauty, Kaitlin converted to the Catholic faith and became a FOCUS missionary.

Both in our efforts towards evangelization and in our personal striving for holiness, we need to open ourselves to the power of beauty. Fr. Jacques Philippe notes that the Greek word “kalos”, meaning “beautiful”, is derived from the verb “kalein” meaning to call or summon. Beauty speaks to the eternal yearnings within us and summons us to something higher, ultimately, to the beauty of God.

In evangelization, beauty can reach someone who would not otherwise be open to hearing the message of the Gospel. As we look to bring the younger generation to Christ, we notice that they are constantly bombarded with images and noise. How many of these images are beautiful? To evangelize younger generations, we should follow St. John Paul II’s example. Let them experience the beauty of creation. Take them hiking and star gazing and engage them in conversation about eternal truths. For those of us who work with the poor, we should ask: How often do they encounter beauty? Can we provide them with opportunities to experience beautiful music or films, and use the arts as a springboard to share about Christ?

Finally, beauty also summons us to holiness. Sometimes, we can become discouraged in our journey to holiness by the lists of virtues, vices, tips for growth, and the countless other things we are encouraged to do. Beauty



reminds us that holiness is letting Jesus live within us. By immersing ourselves in the wonder of his creation, gazing upon his beauty in icons or classic art, or engaging in our own creative gifts, he awakens with us a desire to be united with him, the Source of beauty, and to relinquish everything in our lives that prevents us from union with him. ♦

Jessica Navin is the Manager of Spiritual Formation for the Fellowship of Catholic University Students. She is a member of the Pentecost Today USA Board and of the Pentecost Today magazine Editorial Board.

Photo: Pixabay/Erin Karis

Save the Dates

Saturday, December 4, 2021

National Leaders Meeting

- 4:00pm-5:30pm EST – Pre-meeting Discussion Forums
- 7:00pm-8:30pm EST - National Leaders Meeting
- Renewal Leaders from across the nation will come together virtually for an informal meeting livestreamed from The Ark and The Dove. Pre-meeting discussion forums will cover various topics including “Sustaining and Growing a Prayer Group” and more. The meeting will include praise and worship, testimony, intercession, online prayer ministry, special announcements, and discussion panel with Michelle Moran, Fr. Boniface Hicks, OSB, Johnny Bertucci, and Alicia Hartle. See more details and register at: [Pentecost TodayUSA.org](http://PentecostTodayUSA.org)

Saturday, December 18, 2021 (10am EST)

“Cantalamessa Movie” World Premiere

- Cardinal Rainero Cantalamessa, O.F.M. Cap. has served as Preacher to the Papal Household since 1980, under Saint Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis – holding the record for the longest time in this Vatican position. What is the story of this humble Capuchin friar, theologian, and Renewal Leader? Watch the “Cantalamessa Movie.” Learn more at: CantalamessaMovie.com

Pentecost Today USA (NSC) Updates

- **Sr. Nancy Kellar, SC** recently accepted an invitation from the Pentecost Today USA Board (NSC) to serve as a Pastoral Consultant to the Pentecost Today USA (NSC). She has served the work of the Holy Spirit in the Renewal on national and international levels, and actively supported Pentecost Today USA (NSC) over the years.
- **New Wineskin.** As Pentecost Today USA continues to prepare New Wineskin for the New Wine of our expanded mission to BRING baptism in the Holy Spirit to the whole Church, FP1 Structures and Processes and FP2 Communications Teams are working to streamline and develop new structures, processes, and tools that will cultivate:
 - A “raising up Joshua” culture
 - Increased support for Chairpersons and Council Member Teams
 - Increased opportunities for holy collaboration within and across Council Member Teams
 - Increased opportunities for fellowship, prayer, and sharing the work of the Holy Spirit

Regional Spotlight

- **Honolulu, Hawaii.** Pentecost Today USA Board Member, Jorge Samaniego, recently shared that though COVID restrictions in Honolulu prohibit singing at public gatherings and limit group sizes to less than ten people, the Lord is multiplying the ministry with online prayer meetings and events often reaching over 50,000 people from around the world. Learn more at: www.hccrs.org
- **North Chelmsford, Massachusetts.** *The Catholic Charismatic Prayer Community at St. John the Evangelist church in North Chelmsford, Massachusetts, is celebrating 50 years of Life in the Spirit in 2021. The Spirit of God was already at work in discussion groups being held at St. John’s in 1968. One of the groups, an ecumenical one, decided to study the forgotten member of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. During their time together they received a visit from a priest who taught them about, and prayed over them for, a renewed infilling of the Spirit of God, known as baptism in the Holy Spirit. They began to speak in tongues and prophesy. Recently, a new Holy Rood collaborative was birthed, consisting of St. Mary’s and St. John the Evangelist churches in Chelmsford, MA, and St. Margaret of Scotland church in Lowell, MA. As we recall fifty years of living Life in the Spirit of God; filled with mercy, graces, forgiveness, challenges, losses and difficulties; we proclaim once again **YOU JESUS, are our hope, our life, our love and we give YOU THANKS.** Submitted by Louise Larose, Leadership Team Member. Read the full story at: www.PentecostTodayUSA.org/Newsbrief*
- **Milwaukee, WI.** Nothing can stop the power of the Holy Spirit! For years the people of the *Archdiocese of Milwaukee* have been gathering together in prayer groups to praise and worship the Lord... Benet Lake was the very first Charismatic Prayer Group in our Archdiocese. River of Life – a prayer group that has been around since 1970’s. Promises of God has been around for 47 years and Servants of Yahweh (a covenant community) formed 41 years ago. Prior to the pandemic, these groups were operating independently. However, COVID-19 drastically put a halt to that, in terms of in-person meetings. River of Life had about 40-50 folks gathering weekly at a local church to praise and worship the Lord and use the Charisms of the Holy Spirit. When that shut down, I invited the leaders of 2 other groups to join me in offering a virtual phone prayer meeting. This began in March of 2020 and continues weekly. We have had 82+ virtual phone meetings to date, averaging 55 folks per time. Submitted by Marianne F. Skrobiak, Liaison, Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Join the phone prayer meeting at 6:50 pm CST on Thursdays at 351-999-4715. Read the full story at: www.PentecostTodayUSA.org/Newsbrief ♦

How is the Holy Spirit moving in your region? Share a story by sending it to contact@PentecostTodayUSA.org



From the Executive Director

By Alicia Hartle

In February of 2021, I received a joyful phone call from Jean-Luc Moens, then Moderator of CHARIS. He shared with me his appreciation of the work of Pentecost Today USA in the recent launch of our new name, logo, and mission and then spoke about the importance of sharing baptism in the Holy Spirit with younger generations. He emphasized how it is critical for young people to know that a powerful experience of the Holy Spirit can be sustained over decades and grow over a lifetime.

Since this conversation with Jean-Luc Moens, Renewal Leaders from across the nation and from many realities of the Renewal have shared both the urgency of the need to reach and to raise up younger generations and a desire to work together collaboratively to meet this need.

The *Joshua Project* as outlined on pages 7-10 is a response to this need and opportunity to work together in holy collaboration, and the first three phases of *The Joshua Project* have launched: **Brainstorm** (National Renewal Survey), **Plan** (Discussion Forums), **Fundraise** (Invitations to be a Fire Starter, Fire Sustainer, and to leave a Legacy of Fire).

The initial response to *The Joshua Project* has been glorious, and there is a growing excitement and anticipation to reach and raise up younger generations with each prayerful survey, discussion forum, and donation.

The letter below is one of many precious responses to *The Joshua Project*. Glory to God for this witness of a lifetime of transformation and anticipation of the lives that will be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit:

*Dear Mr. Hartle -
MORE ... Let the Fire Fall"
Re: the Joshua Project
I am a widow, almost 86 years young, walking and living in the Holy Spirit, since the early 60's beginning. My life was transformed by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal... Regional Conference.
For 2 years I have prayed for a "New Pentecost" ... and now with your new project, I can see it fulfilled... not only in our Dallas Catholic Diocese ... but EVERYWHERE.*

The letter went on to share a testimony of how powerful it was to witness Bishop Sam Jacobs leading an altar call at the 1990 Congress on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelization in Indianapolis, Indiana with about 25,000 people in attendance and concluded with this proclamation of faith:

*"It is a Mighty God we serve!"
"Let the Fire ... burst forth in an EXPLOSION of dynamic growth!"
With an abundance of outpouring of the Holy Spirit
"A Fire Starter"*

Let the fire of Renewal burst forth in an explosion of dynamic growth in our own hearts, in our families, in our communities, in our churches, and among younger generations as we receive and respond to the Holy Spirit ever more deeply.

"But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Pt 2:9). ♦

The National Service Committee dba Pentecost Today USA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Contributions to defray the cost of this publication are gratefully accepted and are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please mail to:

National Service Committee
dba Pentecost Today USA
PO Box 628, Locust Grove, VA 22508-0628
Tel. (540) 972-0225
PentecostTodayUSA.org

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PENTECOST TODAY PARTNERS

The Joshua Project Launched! The Joshua Project, designed to pass on the fire of Renewal to younger generations and raise up new generations of Renewal Leaders equipping them with the tools, resources, and programs to receive and share the dynamic grace of baptism in the Spirit, has been launched. You can learn more about this project on pages 8-9.

This past August the Joshua Project went live with the first phase, online giving. In September the second phase of this catalytic giving campaign began with an appeal letter and overview of the Joshua Project being mailed to our supporting partners, an invitation to become a Fire Starter. Fire Starters work with Pentecost Today USA through prayer, insights, and gifts to ensure the success of the campaign.

Become a Fire Starter with a special foundational gift, a Fire Sustainer or a Legacy of Fire planned giving partner with a bequest or trust.

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you." - Luke 6:38

In the Fire of God's Furious Love for you,
Jimmy Archer
Development Manager, Pentecost Today USA

Jimmy Archer is the Development Manager for Pentecost Today USA. Jimmy has been involved in the Renewal since 1975, serving on the Advisory Council, NSC Council and the NSC Committee / Pentecost Today USA Board from 2000 to 2021.



WAYS TO GIVE



FIRE STARTER

catalytic giving

Fire Starters make an offering that is sacrificial, prayerful, and explosive in nature - regardless of the amount.

These gifts are catalysts for dynamic growth.



FIRE SUSTAINER

monthly giving

Fire Sustainers' faithful monthly gifts and prayer are the heartbeat of provision for our infrastructure and operations.

These gifts sustain the organization.



LEGACY OF FIRE

planned giving

Legacy of Fire gifts given in a will, bequest, or trust are prayerfully planned and have a long-term impact.

These gifts enlarge the territory of our mission.

To give in one of these ways, visit: PentecostTodayUSA.org/ways-to-give/

A check or a portion of a will can be written to:

NSC dba Pentecost Today USA, P.O. Box 628, Locust Grove, VA 22508

If you have a question please call (800) 338-2445

PENTECOST Today

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Our Mission

BRING baptism in the Holy Spirit to
the whole Church, **BUILD** unity in the
body of Christ, and **SERVE** the poor.

Support Pentecost Today!
Call 1-800-338-2445
or visit PentecostTodayUSA.org
\$10.00 suggested annual donation

If you have received more than one copy of this issue, please return all the mailing labels and we will make the necessary corrections. Note: we send Prayer Group contacts a copy. If the contact is also a donor, you also receive an individual copy. There is no need to send your two labels to us.



PENTECOST TODAY
USA bring · build · serve



National Leaders Meeting

SAVE THE DATE

4
DEC

Virtual Meeting
Register at
PentecostTodayUSA.org

7:00
PM EST

"WITH JOY YOU WILL DRAW WATER FROM THE WELLS OF SALVATION." -ISAIAH 12:3

4:00-5:30 PM EST PRE-MEETING DISCUSSION FORUMS

7:00-8:30 PM EST NATIONAL LEADERS MEETING

PRAISE & WORSHIP - ONLINE PRAYER MINISTRY
WITNESS - SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISCUSSION PANEL WITH FR. BONIFACE HICKS, OSB,
MICHELLE MORAN, JOHNNY BERTUCCI, & ALICIA HARTLE

