

The Holy Spirit in East Anglia

SPRING 2017



The Newsletter for the Catholic Charismatic
Renewal in East Anglia

COME TO A DAY OF PRAYER AND RENEWAL IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

The theme for the day is

PRAISE

Led by

EDDIE DROZDZIAK

Eddie has been involved in charismatic renewal in his parish and diocese for many years and still currently leads the parish prayer group in Tarporley. He is a member of the National Service Committee for charismatic renewal, with special responsibility to coordinate teams and events across the country

The day includes

PRAYER AND PRAISE

HOLY MASS

ADORATION

RECONCILIATION

PRAYER FOR HEALING

Date: Saturday, 25th MARCH 2017

Time: 10.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Place: Bowthorpe Church Centre

Bowthorpe Hall Road, Bowthorpe, Norwich, NR5 9AA

Tea and coffee provided. Please bring a packed lunch
For further information contact Philip on 07910157584

Organised by the Diocesan Service Team for Charismatic Renewal

www.ccr-eastanglia.org.uk

ONWARD AND UPWARD INTO 2017

We get an insight in this newsletter into the way the Holy Spirit is clearly at work in our diocese: The new initiatives that have taken place in 2016 and continue to grow this year, show an outpouring of his love and power. Rosemary and I are privileged to meet with many people around our diocese, and also from other churches, and everywhere we go we hear the same message of lives being changed as people come to know Jesus. The activities we are all involved in demonstrate shoots of growth, so be encouraged, no matter how large or small the shoots in your own life, your prayer group, your parish may be. They are all part of the work of the Holy Spirit in our nation. In fact many of the initiatives we see in our diocese are happening in other dioceses right across Britain.

This is certainly true in the way the opportunity to run The Gift (Life in the Spirit course), has been taken up. The CaFE team report that there has been a high demand for this DVD course. Bishop Alan was present when representatives from over half of the parishes in our diocese came to The Gift preparation days in Newmarket, last October. In his opening talk Bishop Alan clearly showed his enthusiasm for The Gift being run in East Anglia and said this was part of his strategy to encourage and enable parishes to become missionary parishes. The Gift is being run in many parishes across the diocese.

2017 is the 50th anniversary celebration of the beginning of the current of grace in the Church that we know as Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Pope Francis is leading the Jubilee Celebration by calling everyone who can, to come to celebrate Pentecost with him in Rome. As well as recognising and celebrating this gifting for our time, he sees this focus on the Holy Spirit as the occasion of another outpouring of grace for the Church.

There are still tickets available for the British celebration of this anniversary on 4th March in Birmingham. See www.ccr.org.uk As well as that event, our Celebrate Weekend takes place at Pentecost and will include Jubilee thanksgiving, with, we hope, a possible link up with those celebrating in Rome.

Philip Walters

A Report from the Day of Praise and Renewal November 2016

A great day! It was lovely that some people had brought a 'come and see' visitor, which linked into our theme for the afternoon. This session gave everyone the opportunity to think about the importance of 'personal testimony' as part of how we can inspire others to be interested in Jesus.

Hamish (the Diocesan Youth Officer) had our attention as he shared his experience of coming into a deep personal relationship with Jesus. I was delighted to hear this, because despite knowing Hamish for many years, I had never heard his 'faith-journey story' before!

When I knew that he was going to be sharing this, I asked myself the question – "What reply would I give if someone asked me why I believed in Jesus? What made my faith in Him strong?" I remembered having some teaching on how we often only have a few minutes, maybe three at the most, to answer those questions. That could be all the time a casual acquaintance, and even a family member or close friend might give us – so we need to have our answer, our own personal testimony, ready.

The truths about Jesus – why He came, why He died, what he taught – are all vital before someone can make their own personal prayer of acceptance to Jesus, of his death for **their** salvation; and surrender their lives to Him as Lord. But hearing the personal witness of another believer can be a very powerful tool used by Jesus to call someone closer to him.

People at Bowthorpe in November welcomed the opportunity to write their own three-minute testimony, and then practise sharing it with others in a small group. There was a real 'buzz' in the church while this was happening. I had the privilege of praying in the Spirit over everybody as they wrote and shared together, and I sensed the Spirit rejoicing at what was happening – sons and daughters of the Father preparing ourselves to tell others about His Son, 'getting ourselves ready' to evangelise.

I want to tell you that this is so important! I've been looking at research recently that shows the great majority of people (80%) begin to follow Jesus as a result of 'Friendship Evangelism'. They hear the Good News from their spouse, children, parents, Christian friends, and it sparks a desire for the things of God; and the Good News we share, we 'witness' to it. Being an evangelist means witnessing to what we personally know - our experience of a loving, accepting, forgiving Father, a saving Son, a powerful Spirit.

In the UK 69% of people said they came to faith gradually - they couldn't point to any one particular momentous occasion - and it took, on average, four years to walk that part of their faith-journey from unbelief to acceptance of Jesus as Saviour. Four years is a long time - Are we befriending people for all that time? Helping them feel a sense of belonging? Praying for them constantly - for their protection, for the Holy Spirit to work in their hearts? Are we sowing love and kindness that is tangible - and then later, sharing the reasons *why* we feel called to be loving and sacrificial, being ready to tell our own story?

Evangelism needs commitment from us - and what a privilege to journey alongside others as they, like us, enter deeper into the truth of Jesus' Kingdom. We are all journeying into the Father's heart.

Mothers Prayers

I'm part of a new Mothers Prayers group. It is a wonderful way for all women to give their children and all children to the Lord in prayer. A little booklet is provided to help us pray and we also have time to worship and share Scripture. We try to put our trust in Jesus, inspired by a word that was given to Veronica, one of the founders of Mothers Prayer - "Understand that Jesus loves our children even more than we do and that He is eager for their protection and growth in Him, and as He will intervene when requested, He is EAGER for our intercession for them"

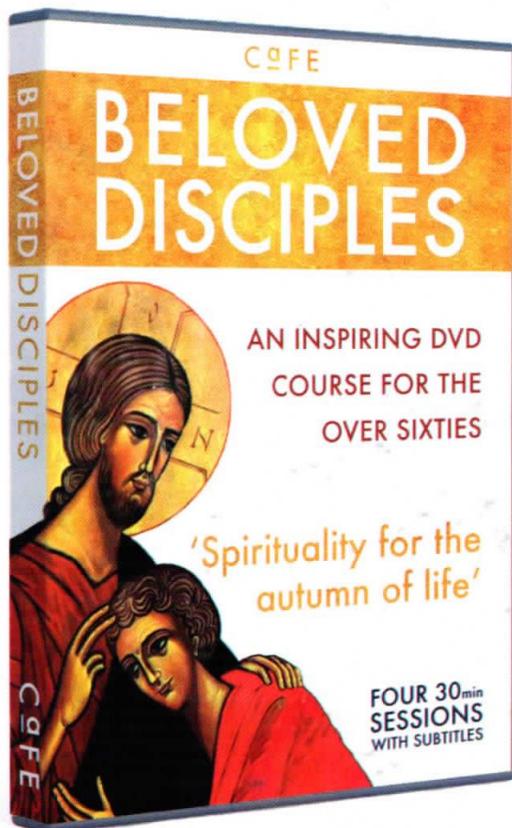
Though we haven't been meeting long we feel the Lord is working with us. We know we can bring our children in prayer and leave them at Jesus' feet, so we try not to worry about their problems once we have offered them to him. We are learning to trust Him, but it's not easy!

Our new group meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month in Dussindale, on the eastern edge of Norwich, and people are welcome to join us.

I hope quite a few people know about Mothers Prayers as they've been active for many years. There is a good introductory website: mothersprayers.org.

Debbie Bool (07737 909366)

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‘The Gift’ in the Diocese

After the pilot training sessions at Newmarket, it has been very encouraging to hear about ‘The Gift’ being run in a number of parishes already, with more scheduled for this Lent, and after Easter.

From some feedback that people have given us, which we on the DST always appreciate, it is evident that the Holy Spirit is touching people’s lives, and bringing about changes in them.

Moira, from Gorleston/Great Yarmouth, told us the informative videos led to valuable talks, with people learning from them, and coming to a deeper understanding of some truths. But more especially, people really appreciated the personal discussions afterwards, when they had the opportunity to talk about their **own** faith, and even share their doubts, in the safe environment of a small group; and that by being listened to, and listening to others, their faith was helped to grow stronger. This is indeed a lovely work of the Spirit.

At another venue, among other lovely blessings, something very special happened to one of the participants. He said that he didn’t “feel anything” on the fifth praying-over session, and he spent the whole of the next week being rather disappointed.

Then the following session, as he led the Rosary intentions, praying for different needs, the beauty of what he was doing really struck him. He became very emotional. It was the first time that he “realised the length, breadth and depth of what he had received, and his heart was deeply healed.” He offered to prepare the Bidding Prayers for the following week, and spent all week praying about them. His faith had become alive! A wonderful work of the Spirit.

Lucy Walker tells us about ‘The Gift’ experience at Lowestoft: “The Parish of Lowestoft has completed their first course of the Gift. We wanted to ‘do it’ before Christmas but had not much time to tell the Parish! So we took the plunge and decided to go ahead with only giving people two weeks’ notice! We had to use the School as the Church Hall was booked up. This was another first for the Parish and it was wonderful to have the link between School and Parish strengthened through sharing in ‘The Gift’ We had a good-sized group and had animated discussions as people came together each week. The Baptism in the Spirit (5th

session) was wonderfully blessed and when the course finished people wanted to continue!!

We had had a Parish Mission with the Little Way Healing Ministries last year and from this a Little Way Prayer Group had emerged. Our Prayer Group has been strengthened through experiencing 'The Gift' and later this month we are going to start our second 'Gift' Course!! Alleluia – Praise the Lord!!”

Jan, who led the course in her prayer group at Ardleigh said, “It has been an amazing experience... the buzz of excitement for the new people was ...wow! The Holy Spirit was certainly with us when we had Session 5. We are beginning to get ready for a presentation of the course after Easter at our parish of St Marks.”

If you have any encouraging feedback from **your** experience of The Gift in your parish, do let the DST know.