

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN EAST ANGLIA

AUTUMN 2021

Catholic Charismatic Renewal Newsletter
For the Diocese of East Anglia

Onwards and Upwards

It is September again and our newsletter comes at a time when we are officially out of restrictions and seeking the Lord's guidance about making a new start. We know that in the current atmosphere it must be a *new* start rather than just thinking of picking up from where we left off pre-covid. I have been missing the joy of being together at our day and weekend conferences and having that support to live life in the Spirit, the precious gift from Jesus and the Father we all share. Before outlining our plans for this new season, I will say what has been happening.

Our online Lenten evenings of renewal were well received and well attended. It was great to have you with us if you were able to attend. I have also heard of a number of prayer groups who have been meeting through Zoom, adapting to this new way of meeting and finding the Spirit has no barriers, and that praise and prayer ministry has been effective.

Since April this year the establishment of Charis Teams (CDSCs) has got under way in all dioceses in Britain and across the world, responding to the initiative of Pope Francis to give an official place in the Church to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, that he refers to as a current of grace for the whole Church. For our DST to "upgrade" into a Charis team, as well as continuing to run and promote day, evening and weekend conferences, we are studying this year how to be better instruments of this grace in encouraging and uniting existing expressions of CCR across the diocese and building new channels of communication and fellowship within our church and in the wider Christian body.

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

The theme for the event:

**From Darkness into His
Wonderful Light**

Led by

Fr Luke Goymour

The day will include

**PRAYER AND PRAISE
HOLY MASS
ADORATION
RECONCILIATION
PRAYER MINISTRY**

Date: Saturday, 23rd October 2021

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

Place: Bowthorpe Church Centre

Bowthorpe Hall Road, Bowthorpe, Norwich, NR5 9AA

*In order to keep us all as safe as possible we respectfully ask you
to do a lateral flow test prior to attending*

Tea and coffee provided. Please bring a packed lunch

For further information contact Philip on 07910157584

www.renewaleastanglia.org

So where do we stand now in our planning for conferences we can actually attend? In my parish church of St George's in Norwich our parish priest has introduced singing at some of the Masses and most of the congregation join in still wearing their masks. I have tried this and am surprised I can actually sing and praise through a mask, even if not quite so easily. It is a recommended precaution when attending church and instils confidence that we are protecting each other. So we are going to recommend wearing masks, as well as safe distancing as far as possible at Days of Renewal we organise.

We have organised a Day of Renewal for next month, on October 23rd. This will be an opportunity to connect and support one another, and know the Lord is with us as we journey through challenging times. We have chosen Bowthorpe, Norwich as the venue because it is a church we know well and, with its movable chairs, is flexible for us to adapt to spacing of a metre plus. Anybody is also welcome to move their chair into a space where they would feel comfortable. We will suggest that everybody who comes will take a lateral flow test, readily available from any pharmacy. My family are doing this at home any time we have welcomed visitors inside. There will be hand sanitisers at various locations.

We are delighted that Fr Luke has agreed to speak, celebrate Mass and hear confessions for us. We will offer a slightly "distanced" form of prayer ministry and Hamish and co will lead the Prayer and Praise. We look forward to welcoming all who are able to come. I enclose an extra flier in case you are able to pass it on to someone else.

Philip Walters

The Called and Gifted Course

Three team members describe how this new course worked for them

At the beginning of this year an invitation was issued by Celebrate for local Celebrate Teams around the country to register for a course called 'Called and Gifted'. In essence this course invites participants to undertake 'a process' that helps them identify their Spiritual Charisms.

The course consisted of teaching sessions and small discussion groups, all done online, plus using the books ‘The Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory’ and ‘Discerning Charisms’.

The first session was led by two members of the Portsmouth Diocese Called and Gifted Team, Anne-Marie and Nicola, who introduced us to the process and gave some background to how this course had come about.

Next participants were asked to complete an inventory to identify their experience of different charisms, thus highlighting the ones that they were discerning. This was the basis of a 1:1 interview with a discerner, to identify the particular charism the participant would be ‘testing out’.

Small group meetings enabled every participant to have prayer support from other regional explorers as well as help/ support testing out or discerning ways to test out their individual charism.

Like many of the participants I was intrigued when ‘Called and Gifted’ was first mentioned, and decided I wanted to take this opportunity to further explore my charisms. In the past I had done courses such as Myers Briggs, as well as work related courses, so the idea of completing an inventory and discussing this with someone else did not phase me at all.

The standard of the teaching sessions was excellent, and I found Anne-Marie and Nicola really inspiring with their enthusiasm. The “mantra” from both of them was to trust the process and not to worry if it didn’t seem initially to make much sense. I had to keep remembering this when I began to explore my charism.

When I completed my Spiritual Gifts Inventory I was not surprised to see that I scored maximum marks for Encouragement, closely followed by Writing and Intercessory Prayer. Pastoring, Knowledge and Wisdom followed.

During my 1:1, I explored with the discerner Pastoring, Knowledge and Wisdom and we decided it would be good for me to ‘test out’ Knowledge. After the session I looked more closely at this Charism and I could not really identify with many of the charism’s characteristics; I wondered if I had made a mistake in choosing to test this one out?

When I met with my small regional group I was very honest about how uncertain, confused and overwhelmed I felt about testing out this charism. I remembered what Anne-Marie had said about ‘trusting the process’, so asked the group to pray that I would indeed do that and have peace about it. What I found hard was knowing where to start. Another group member was also testing out the same charism which was helpful and encouraging. However, it was another group member testing out Prophecy who the Lord used very powerfully to speak to me. He gave each of us a prophetic word, and unlike the others who got words such as ‘Trust’ I was given ‘Castles!!!’ I found myself thinking ‘CASTLES!!!!.....what on earth is that meant to mean?’ The confusion and anxiety I was feeling seemed to intensify. I really had chosen the wrong charism to test! Then the person who gave me this word said ‘Teresa of Avila, maybe look at her book ‘Internal Castles’? This was news to me. I’m not well acquainted with Teresa of Avila, so I looked up the book and found it was about her own deepening inner journey. This resonated with me. During the first lockdown I had begun to explore who Jesus was. I realised I rarely prayed to Jesus, always to Father God. Yes, I knew the familiar gospel stories, but I longed to have a deeper relationship with Jesus. I had recently, two years before, returned to the Roman Catholic Church after 25 years in a multi denominational church, drawn back through the Virgin Mary whilst on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje.

Realising Teresa was a Carmelite I then started looking up the website of a Carmelite Monastery in the next county and found two extraordinary quotes:-

“Carmelite Spirituality is centered on the person of Jesus in his self-emptying and human poverty; it shows us how God is at work in all our efforts to give ourselves to him, and to offer sure guidance to people of prayer wherever they are in their journey of faith.”

“Whoever lives in the presence of so good a friend and excellent leader as Jesus Christ, who went ahead of us to be the first to suffer can endure all things. The Lord helps us, strengthens us and never fails. He is a true friend. And I see clearly that God desires that if we are going to please Him and receive His gifts, we must do so through the most sacred humanity of Christ”. – St Teresa of Avila

This was a lightbulb moment. Here was Knowledge I had not known. It not only confirmed the journey I had embarked on during the first lockdown, but as a Spiritual Director I shared this knowledge with a directee and it opened a door for her.

I stopped worrying about doing this ‘the right way’ but opened myself to exploring new books, including the Catechism, watched talks and sermons on YouTube and listened! No longer intimidated, I stopped trying to prove what I was reading and learning and allowed myself to be a sponge. I relaxed!! Not only was I being enriched but I found myself sharing with others naturally, realising what I said often spoke to their hearts.

For me this process is ongoing and continues to be a work in progress. Knowledge definitely feeds into my ministry of Spiritual Direction as well as the charisms of Encouragement and Writing that I am aware I have also been given.

On reflection this whole process has given me confidence to use the charisms the Lord has blessed me with, and to be aware of how the Lord is using me as I see Him at work. It is exciting; I now feel able to look at other Charisms and see how I can test them out. It is not about success or failure but about being willing to explore and listen. Discovering I do not have a particular Charism is very ok, as it means I do not use up valuable energy trying to be a square peg in a round hole. It is much better for a round peg to fit into the round hole and for me, the square peg to fit into a square hole!!

Jane Harper

“I think the two of us had a bit of trepidation that somehow we would be asked to do something that we were unwilling to do, but we found the course exciting and it opened our minds to realising that it is good to be able to identify how we have been gifted, which is different from others, in order to make best use of our gifts as a team of people, as the church.

I explored the charism of Writing, something I have done little of in recent years, but quite early on I decided to write something for the prayer group sharing we were doing. Normally I wouldn’t write everything down but rather use notes or headlines. The talk came across well and seemed to

strike a chord with the others. Later, on an impulse I sent it to a friend who immediately responded that it was exactly what they needed to read at that moment, that it set them free from a situation they were grappling with. It was a small thing but it showed me that God can use us more easily when we are in action for him.

Kevin discerned Knowledge as a charism and has been on an exciting discovery of relating teaching about the Sunday readings to a small group. We have all gained a great deal from an in-depth exploration of our faith in relation to the scripture in a way we could not have imagined a few months ago.

The other thing we have gained is an ability to say no when we realise that what is being asked of us is not really what we have been gifted with. No longer feeling guilty, we know we cannot do it all. We appreciate the journey and are more confident in looking to identify and use better the gifts we are given to serve.

Rachel and Kevin Pugh

“I wasn’t sure what to expect nor how it was to work when beginning the Called and Gifted Course. The experience was interesting, although leaning heavily on a set of scored questions at the beginning to explore different charisms one might have and use, they sufficed as a backdrop to begin the process.

My scores from the questions were rather embarrassingly high and it was quite difficult to decide upon which charism to explore. I think that if I had answered these questions many years ago that I would have found the process much more helpful. I persevered and explored the charism of Teaching. Teaching in time of pandemic and lockdown is and was a challenge! The Holy Spirit had pre-empted me in exploring this charism as I had already been prompted to start a Zoom RCIA Course for my Parish!!”

Overall the experience was a helpful one”

Lucy Walker

If you want to find out more, go to: www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/called-and-gifted

Book review on ‘*Surprised by the Spirit*’ by Charles Whitehead

At a time when a number of us on the wider diocesan team have been discerning our charisms and our calling, I came across a new autobiographical book by Charles Whitehead that for me filled in the journey of listening and discerning he went on after his dramatic meeting with the Lord. Charles has frequently shared his testimony of the initial revelation to him by the Lord of how much he was loved unconditionally, and how he was led into a living faith that changed the whole direction of his life. It is clear however, from this book, that he still had much growth and transformation to happen to him before he was used to the ways of the Lord and ready to be used by him.

Sometimes this happened through a word directly from the Lord, as when he felt challenged that he did not know the Bible well enough – two years of reading and studying the Bible followed. Sometimes it was responding to the invitation of prayer group friends. On another occasion it was being prayed for by an experienced prayer minister, rested in the Spirit, and given prophetic words that the Lord was going to use him to lead his people. Exactly how this would be he did not know and his journey in seeking the Lord’s will and using the charisms he had been given was revealed to him gradually, as step by step he accepted invitations to speak and then invitations to be part of other groups and eventually their core teams.

Charles says at the end of his book, (in chapter 18), that we all need to know what God is calling us to do, confident that he will supply us with the gifting we need. He states that he learned to hold on to whatever vision God gives him and be faithful to that. That the Lord will call seemingly unlikely people into positions of influence and authority. “This means that I have to remain totally dependent on Him and not on my own ideas and abilities. There is no substitute for God’s Will.”

He learned to take seriously the prophetic words he was given, keeping them in mind, even if he had to wait months or years to see the words realised. Reading this book I realised Charles has learned to listen to God and be open to his guiding Spirit who not only surprised him by revealing God’s love to him, but has continued to surprise him in new callings throughout his life.

Philip Walters