

THE LOCAL CHURCH AND RENEWAL OF FAITH.

Talk given at the Summer Camp for Seminarians and Members of the Family Apostolate at Port Hacking, January, 1969 by Alex Reichel. This was the launch of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Australia.

Opening Prayer:

O Jesus, you have promised that if any two of us agree, on earth, about anything, then it shall be done for them by our Father in Heaven. There are many more than two of us here who agree that you should be with us during this talk.

O, Heavenly Father, in the name of Your Son Jesus Christ, present in our midst, we pray that You send forth Your Spirit amongst us here today. We pray that those who listen to this talk may hear, not what is said, but only those things You want them to hear. In Jesus name we bind the Evil One to be absent from our discussions....
Amen.

RENEWAL OF FAITH

My dear Friends, I would much prefer to stand before you and 'prophesy' instead of reading a prepared paper, for, after all, prophesy is surely a more properly Christian mode of address between Christians than reading. I draw some consolation from the fact that most of what I am reading is scripturally based and not in any sense a 'theological' treatise. The Church is not theologically established; it is not a theological debating society, as many of the loyal subjects of Queen Juliana might have us believe. It is in fact, a community of believers enjoying a life shared 'in Christo', and the authentic expression of Christian life flows from the well-springs of faith which the Holy Spirit augments into 'rivers of living water' (See Eg. Karl Rahner, "The Dynamic Element in the Church" 111,1) Prophesy has a spontaneity, an immediacy which ought to characterise life 'in the Spirit'. The question of authority in the Church is incredibly simple; Christ is the Christian's authority; "Jesus is Lord" The competence of those who speak with authority in God's Church is derived from God. (cf. 1Cor. 12:27-28). The Christian is "sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ"...(1Pet.1:2); "...the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that any one should teach you..." (1John 2:27)

But it is those who are sick who need the physician, not those who are well. Thus it is that Christ's present Vicar, confronted with the present spiritual malaise of alienation from God, nihilist philosophies of violence, chaotic sexuality, egoism and so on, is forced to shout the obvious from the rooftops. When we look back from the renewed Church to Pope Paul's pleas we will see that the physician had the remedy. The significance of the Year of Faith seems to have escaped most of us. He was not talking about a dull repetition of creeds, but was calling us to put on Christ (cf. Ephesians 3:17-19). In a recent general audience (15 January) he called for a "renewal" of the "moral, personal, the interior, that is to say, the one (renewal) which would rejuvenate the Church". In an audience last year, in hitting out at protestant tendencies, the Pope complained of the widespread personal choice of doctrine resulting in disintegration of faith "It is no longer the faith of which St. Paul spoke".

The Pope has insisted on the Church's teaching that one of the properties of the assent of faith is certitude, against the almost universal scepticism and despair of the ability of the mind to know truth and God; and in "Humanae Vitae" he has insisted on the possibility of true love, with a forthrightness which will keep marriage possible as a normal means of reaching God.

Now it is clearly in the local Church that renewal must occur since it is precisely in the local Church that Christian hearts are to be found. I used to think that the renewal would occur in the local Church with the "aggiornamento" in the liturgy. If one could only get the parish priest to listen to the Pope in his urgent plea to put the Liturgy document "wholeheartedly and loyally into execution" (Sacram Liturgiam, Motu Proprio of Paul VI) a new vigour and joy in Christ and a passion for doing good to all men would result automatically. Now I have seen churches in which every liturgical practice recommended by the Implementation of Liturgy document has been used and many more which are not recommended. In many cases the most charitable thing one can say is that it just does not work. I am not "knocking" liturgy but I'm becoming more and more convinced that a living liturgy can only be expressed by living Christians. I'm wondering about that baptism and the faith which was asked for by our godparents. Have we ever received Christ through that faith in our hearts?

A NEW PENTECOST

In "Humanae Salutis", in which Pope John convoked the Council, he envisaged Christian people all over the world re-enacting the scene of the apostles in Jerusalem after Ascension, and asking the Divine Spirit to "Renew your wonders in our time, as though for a new Pentecost..." We recall the "action" at Pentecost; the rushing wind, the tongues of fire, the filling with the Holy Ghost resulting in the gift of tongues "as the Spirit gave them utterance"; the bystanders hearing each in his own language, and, as always, the scoffers saying "They are filled with new wine". The same scoffers in these Freudian days would say perhaps that they were sexually frustrated or they would use some other scientific fairy tale to explain it all away.

But the now mighty Peter, about whom the others were gathered, was stung by the charge of drunkenness, for after all the 'sun wasn't over the yard-arm' and he quoted the beautiful prophesy of Joel (Ch.3) whom the same Spirit had "seized" on an earlier occasion: "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; yea, on my menservants and my maidservants in those days, I will pour out my spirit and they shall prophesy; and I will show wonders in the heaven above, and signs on the earth beneath, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and manifest day, and it shall be that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Acts 2: 17-21).

Jesus had promised this Holy Spirit outpouring (Acts 1:5) and said that it would be accompanied by power (Acts 1:8, Eph.3:14-21). In fact, on the last day of the feast of Tabernacles, Jesus had stood up and proclaimed, "If anyone thirst, let him come to

me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water'" (Jn. 7:37-38) John tells us that He was speaking of the Spirit which those who believed in Him were to receive, (Jn. 7:39). In Mark (16:17-18) we read: "And these signs will accompany those who believe; in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues, they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick and they will recover".

One of the important functions of hierarchy is to assure us that this text is certainly part of the canon of scripture.

References to the living reality of life in the Spirit are many. For example, the whole Christian spirituality might be summed up by Romans 8:14: "For all who are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God". See also Galatians 5:16-26. The scripture writers in describing the gifts and fruits of the Spirit are obviously talking about living experience, existential reality. We are used to the tired old explanations of the non-existence of these realities in modern days, namely, that they were only necessary to get the Church established. I want to suggest that, in fact, the mind of the Church is otherwise. The charisms, the gifts and fruits of the Spirit are available to modern Christians and this has essential relevance in the life and the theology of the local Church. Let us look first at the Council documents. In Lumen Gentium 4 we read: "The Spirit guides the Church into the fullness of truth (cf. Jn. 16:13) and gives her a unity of fellowship and service. He furnishes and directs her with various gifts, both hierarchical and charismatic (cf. Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Cor. 12:4; Gal. 5:22)". Note particularly the reference to 1 Corinthians Ch. 12. Again in Lumen Gentium 7 we read: "As all the members of the human body, though they are many, form one body, so also are the faithful in Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 12:12). Also, in the building up of Christ's body there is a flourishing variety of members and functions. There is only one Spirit who, according to His own richness and the needs of the ministries, distributes His different gifts for the welfare of the Church (cf. 1 Cor. 12:1-11). Among these gifts stands out the grace given to the apostles. To their authority the Spirit Himself subjected even those who were endowed with charisms (cf. 1 Cor. 14). Giving the body unity through Himself and through His power and through the internal cohesion of its members, this same Spirit produces and urges love among believers. Consequently, if one member suffers anything, all the members suffer it too, and if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice together (cf. 1 Cor. 12:26)". Note particularly the references to a large section of 1 Corinthians 12 and the whole of 1 Corinthians 14. Note also the community expression of life in the Spirit. Again in Lumen Gentium 12 we read: "It is not only through the sacraments and Church ministries that the same Holy Spirit sanctifies and leads the people of God and enriches it with virtues. Allotting His gifts "to everyone according as he will" (1 Cor. 12:11) He distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks or offices advantageous for the renewal and upbuilding of the Church, according to the words of the Apostle: "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit" (1 Cor. 12:7). These charismatic gifts, whether they be the most outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation for they are exceedingly suitable and useful for the needs of the Church". And again, Lumen Gentium 30: "Pastors also know that they themselves were not meant by Christ to shoulder alone the entire saving mission of the Church toward the world.

On the contrary, they understand that it is their noble duty so to shepherd the faithful and recognise their services and charismatic gifts that all according to their proper roles may co-operate in this common undertaking with one heart".

The documents in several places, urge on the faithful the fact of the living reality of scripture. For example, in Divine Revelation 25 we read, "And let them remember that prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture, so that God and man may talk together, for "We speak to Him when we pray; we hear Him when we read the Divine Sayings"

[I suggest that you might read the whole of Chapters 12 and 14 of 1 Corinthians. Most Christians know by heart the beautiful Pauline dissertation on love, 1 Corinthians 13. They do not normally see it in context however. This is not accidental.]

Also Christ always joins a community group of Christians: "Where two or three are gathered together for my sake, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt. 18:20)

There are further references to the spiritual gifts and ministries described in 1 Corinthians 12, for example in Ecumenism 2, Religious Life 8, Missions 23. There are extremely pertinent references to the gifts in the Laity document eg. 3 and 30. Thus Laity 3 "For the exercise of this apostolate the Holy Spirit who sanctifies the People of God through the ministry and the sacraments, gives to the faithful special gifts as well (cf. 1 Cor. 12:7) "allotting to everyone according as he will" (Cor.12:11) Thus may the individual, "according to the gift that each has received, administer it to one another" and "become good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet.4:10) and build up thereby the whole body in charity (cf.Eph.4:16) From the reception of these charisms or gifts including those which are less dramatic, there arise for each believer the right and duty to use them in the Church and in the world for the good of mankind and for the upbuilding of the Church".

Thus we see a very distinct pattern of the local Church. "For though we live in the world we are not carrying on a worldly war, for the weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have Divine Power to destroy strongholds" (2 Cor. 10:3.4)

From all of this there emerges a distinctly different local Church from the one we are used to, and it is a vision of the local Church which Mother Church is holding up for us and I do not wish to labour the point.

For the remainder of my time I want to tell you something of the charismatic renewal in the Catholic Church and also give a little personal testimony.

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Last year I went on Study Leave to the University of Colorado. Prior to my departure I had become increasingly dismayed and sickened by the growing secularisation within the Church and I resolved to look for some parish or community where a genuine attempt to implement the 'aggiornamento' of Vatican II was taking place. Since I had been working in my own parish in the area of liturgical participation, I had been thinking that the genuine renewal called for by the Church would come through

liturgy. I was quite sure I would not find such a renewal within universities for reasons which seemed obvious at the time; and even though I was residing in the University parish in Boulder, I used the University Church only for morning Mass, preferring the town parish Church for family attendance on Sundays. This was a Benedictine parish with a truly magnificent Sunday liturgy; the last word in the implementation of Vatican II. However it soon became obvious that the liturgy was all show with no depth. The people remained just as cold and impersonal as in Australia and the Sunday "filling station" attendance was just a brief pause in the normal business of living the good affluent life. As the year progressed, all good intentions seemed to deteriorate and the new liturgy had become just as stereotyped and ossified as the old.

In April I chanced upon an evening folk Mass in the University church and was invited by one of the Extension Volunteer workers in the University parish, a young graduate in history from the University of Notre Dame, to attend a field Mass and picnic. We (our family) duly attended this picnic and we were delighted with the spontaneity and devoted participation of many of the young people present in the liturgy of the Eucharist. There was spirited singing, guitar music and, most of all, what seemed to be a real concern for one another. It was here that Michael, the Extension Volunteer, invited me to attend a prayer meeting scheduled for the following Friday evening. My reaction to this invitation was probably quite typical; I made a non-committal sort of acceptance noise but inwardly I wondered whether the young man was quite sane or perhaps a little bit less than masculine. Naturally I didn't go to the prayer meeting, but later I ran across Michael again and thought I had better apologise for my non-attendance at the prayer meeting and I made some lame excuse. Michael said, "That's all right Alex, you can come next Friday". Clearly I had hooked myself, and duly on the following Friday evening turned up timidly at the prayer meeting. It was held in the basement of the home of the Assistant District Attorney. When I arrived there were twenty or so young people sitting around informally, some on the carpet, and singing wonderful lively folk hymns to guitar music. Most of the young folk I recognised from the field Mass. After about half an hour there was a fresh influx of a dozen or so young people who were greeted very warmly. I later learned that these young people were from a non-denominational Christian fellowship in Denver called Calvary Temple. They joined in the singing. Later the singing gave way to a period of spontaneous prayer in an atmosphere of quiet and deep devotion and I was struck by the sincerity of their belief that Jesus was present in the room with them. One could almost sense this real presence. I joined in with a very formal prayer, "Come, O Holy Spirit..." just to express a little rapport with the young people and to show that I belonged. It was then that I received quite a shock. Michael began to speak in a foreign language, a sort of high pitched middle-eastern dialect. I had in my past vaguely heard of "speaking in tongues" and had associated it with the frenzied religious emotionalism shown by the backward poor in America's hillbilly belt. I wondered what I had let myself in for; perhaps I'd joined a mob of "Holy Rollers". However my uneasiness gave way to a strange feeling of peace when, as Michael finished speaking, one of the young men from Denver spoke out in what I later learned was an interpretation. He said something to the effect, "My children, truly you are all my children; my children hear the voice of my Son Jesus and my voice also. Listen to me as I tell you what great things I plan to do with you. I am going to build your gatherings into real communities, communities in which love for one another in Jesus will abound". There was

possibly more but this much made great sense to me because this was precisely what was happening in that basement room. There was more joyful prayer and hymn singing, prayer for the needs of those present and their friends, scripture readings and the like. The whole evening was most edifying and at the coffee break I began asking questions and found that practically all of them spoke in tongues quite often in private devotion and at the meetings; that they had been, as they said, "baptised in the Holy Spirit"; and they were convinced that this was precisely what had happened to the apostles on the first Pentecost. I discovered that they had a great love for Scripture, and indeed their grasp of it was far in excess of mine. When they spoke of miracles and healings in their community I was reminded of the signs and wonders which had accompanied the renewal begun by the Dominican and Franciscan friars in the Middle Ages which I had learned about from the Dominican Sisters as a boy. More importantly I recognised that these things were integrally related to faith as the Church understood it. I really felt that the avenue of communication with these young people had been opened for me. This re-establishment of communication with young people really thrilled me because I had progressively lost this over the years, and as a University teacher this was a very great loss indeed.

I kept coming back to the Friday night prayer meetings and after three or four of them Michael began to be more explicit in teaching me about being "baptised in the Spirit". Using Scripture texts which I found I could not refute, he pointed out the necessity of every Christian to come alive in faith by surrendering their lives to Jesus and to allow the Holy Spirit to bring into action the gifts which they had received in baptism and confirmation. When I finally could not meet the arguments of these young people in my heart, I shrugged in resignation and said, "Well Michael, what should I do?" Four or five of the young people, and a young priest who had recently joined the group, gathered around me, kneeling. They began to pray that the Lord would become a real person to me and they suggested that I surrender my tongue and voice mechanism to Jesus as a sign or token of my interior disposition of being completely open to him. The young people did not, as far as I can remember, lay hands on me. I think the main reason for this was that I was "faculty" and they were "students" and that the laying on of hands was not done out of deference. I was later glad of this because the manifestation of the Spirit is not dependent on the laying on of hands but on the active disposition of surrender to Jesus in faith. The Bishop has done the laying on of hands in confirmation. Presently, after five minutes or so, I received the wonderful grace to "let go and let God" and I was literally overwhelmed with an intense sense of Jesus' presence within me and around me and I found myself speaking fluently and effortlessly in a beautiful melodious language. My young friends left me in this state, speaking in other tongues quite loudly, while they went to a corner of the room for coffee. About ten minutes afterwards one of them came over to me and said, "Alex, you can stop whenever you want to you know". This was news to me, mainly because I could not imagine anyone wanting to stop such a wonderfully edifying encounter with Jesus and his Holy Spirit. I did stop however, and after some coffee and good natured banter from all of them I eventually got into my car to go home.

Almost immediately I began to sing in this strange language and I was aware that Jesus was speaking to me in a gentle "leg pulling" humorous fashion about my life and my apostolate. He was in fact teaching me through the simple childhood songs

he was getting me to sing in the unknown language. I had been working in my own parish context back in Sydney endeavouring to build parish community (as called for by Vatican II) through liturgy and parish social functions etc. and I belonged to a parish group engaged in the apostolate of restoring marriage to its place in God's plan. I seemed now quite aware that Jesus was encouraging me to continue this apostolate. The songs he was getting me to sing were recognisable by tune as "The more we are together the happier we'll be" and "Daisy, daisy, give me your answer do". But more importantly he was beginning to show me a deeper vision of the parish community apostolate and how marriage would need to be deeply imbedded in Christian community in order to be a viable reality in a modern city context.

I spent the whole night in joyful fellowship with Our Lord and next day, being Saturday, I took the older children up into the Rocky Mountains to fish the glorious mountain streams which were fed by the gradually melting snow still visible all around. I think this day must have been a foretaste of paradise. In the presence of such resplendent mountain beauty, and conscious of the all-pervading presence of Our Lord, I sang and praised Him hour after hour in that beautiful language of praise. The fishing was of secondary importance; I think I caught a couple of tiddlers. However, at the end of the day my jaw muscles were stiff and sore from using muscle and jaw configurations I had never used before but needed in speaking a language I had never used before.

During the ensuing weeks I found that the Holy Spirit really does "quicken one's mortal body" as scripture says, for I was able to apply myself to my research work with greatly renewed vigour. I have travelled over quite a bit of dry ground since and been sorely tempted since but the reality of God seen in faith has grown day by day.

BEGINNINGS IN THE CHURCH

By questioning Michael and others I was able to form an accurate picture of how the movement of the Holy Spirit began in the Church. Briefly the story is as follows: In Pittsburgh there is a University known as Duquesne University of the Holy Spirit. It is run by the Holy Ghost Fathers. Late in 1966, two junior members of the Theology Department met together to review their Christian lives. They were laymen actively engaged in the apostolate but had reached the point where they realised that the impact they were making in the apostolate was negligible; in fact it was fatuous. They admitted they had nothing to offer anybody and their efforts were meaningless. They agreed that they would meet regularly to pray together for guidance as to whether to quit theology or not, hoping that some guidance might come their way. They prayed to the Holy Spirit regularly for quite a few months but nothing seemed to happen. Early in 1967 there came quite accidentally into their possession two remarkable books. One, called "The Cross and the Switchblade" by David Wilkerson and John Sherrill was concerned with the remarkable success enjoyed by a young Pentecostal minister amongst criminal drug addicts in a New York slum. The book read like the Acts of Apostles in modern times. The second book was called "They Speak in Other Tongues" by John Sherrill. This second book was an account of the renewal of the striking charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit which had been occurring in the mainstream Protestant churches since 1956; and it gave special reference to the outbreak of tongue speaking amongst Episcopalians, the American version of High Anglicans. The two young theologians spoke to an Episcopalian minister of their

acquaintance and he invited them to a charismatic prayer meeting. After early off-putting experiences at the prayer meeting, stemming mainly from a reaction to the immense sincerity of faith of the participants, the young men brought some of their colleagues to subsequent meetings. It was not long before the presence of Jesus in the meetings attracted them so much that they asked for the prayer of the community for the graces of Pentecost to be manifested in them; and they found themselves speaking with tongues and praising God.

Now there is nothing greatly remarkable about this event from the Catholic point of view. It is an event that had occurred to Catholic folk many thousands of times before and generally had the effect of causing the person involved to leave the Church and to become Pentecostal. That this did not occur was due partly to the fact that the young men were deeply committed Catholics with sound knowledge of the faith. That there should further be an outpouring of the Holy Spirit within a purely Catholic context is due to an extraordinary event which occurred a few weeks later.

A retreat organised by the student chaplaincy at Duquesne University had been scheduled for some time. Ralph Kiefer, one of the young lay theologians, had booked to go on it before the events at the Episcopalian prayer meeting. The retreat, which was held at "The Ark and the Dove" retreat house in Pittsburgh was attended by about thirty students and was devoted to prayer and meditation on the Acts of Apostles. The retreat director led the students in this prayer and meditation till quite late on Friday night, all of Saturday morning and into the afternoon. After all this time they became quite fed up with praying and they became quite distracted. One girl, Patti Gallagher, apropos the wonderful stories in Acts, wrote an expression of her frustration on the bulletin board. She wrote, "I want a miracle".

It was decided that a party would be prepared for the Saturday night to celebrate the retreat master's birthday and preparations began. A young married couple who were friends of Ralph noticed that Ralph had undergone a remarkable change in attitude and personality since they had last met. Whereas he had seemed morose and defeated he was now very bouyant in spirits and seemingly much more alive. They said to Ralph, "Something's happened to you. We don't know what it is but we'd like you to let us in on it". Ralph took the young couple to the upstairs room and shared with them about the action of the Holy Spirit in his life. His testimony engendered quite a hunger in the hearts of the young couple and Ralph prayed with them for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and this occurred for them also. They stayed upstairs for quite a long time in joyful praise of God and then the realisation that they should have been joining the party downstairs came to them. They debated the wisdom of joining the party because of their ebullent joy and lack of taste for human intercourse at that stage. Eventually they came downstairs expecting to find the party in full swing, but they found no sign of any party activity; they were led to the chapel where apparently everyone else had gathered and an amazing scene greeted them.

During the preparations for the party, for some inexplicable reason, Patti Gallagher had experienced a strong inner urging to go to the chapel. She obeyed the impulse and in the chapel, in front of the Blessed Sacrament, she experienced a remarkably strong impression of Jesus' presence. It seemed to her that he was pouring his love out upon her, assuring her of his intense concern for her, and there was an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in her life. She was quite excited as she went to relate her experience to the retreat director and several of her friends. This began a

general move towards the chapel in two's and three's and the same experience occurred for the others. There were tears of repentance, joyful spontaneous praise, people singing in tongues, praying in tongues, laughing, and generally behaving in a most unseemly manner in chapel. This was the scene which greeted Ralph and the young couple who had come downstairs. To those of us who have seen Pentecost, the description given by the bystanders at the first Pentecost, viz. "They have drunk too much new wine", is a very apt description. Drunks seem to be able to perform the feat of laughing and crying together.

There was even a young man who had not been attending the retreat but came to the retreat house to try and date a girl called Karen for the following week. When he arrived Karen was in the chapel and when he went in the self-same experience happened to him. This student had not been to Mass for about a year. His conversion to Christ was now very real indeed.

News of the events of the retreat spread rapidly to friends at the University of Notre Dame and others at Michigan State University and there began a quite fantastic outpouring of the Holy Spirit particularly in Notre Dame. It was here that the Holy Spirit involved three theologians, Father Edward O'Connor and Dr. J. Massingberd Ford, associate professors of theology, and a young theology instructor at St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Kevin Ranaghan. These three began quite a deep study of the new Pentecost and have become ardent advocates of the Holy Spirit.

STUDY TOUR OF THE RENEWAL CENTRES

I became quite strongly involved in the Boulder charismatic community which clashed quite strongly with the prevailing theological climate we have come to know as "Dutch Catholicism". All except a couple of the local clergy were affected by the Dutch and the students involved in charismatic renewal prayer meetings often had to endure the ire of their pastor who was doing his best to quench the Spirit. I saw the need for expert theological opinion and I expressed to myself the desire to visit Notre Dame and talk with the theologians there. Unfortunately I did not have a great amount of money to spare since I was essentially living on my Australian salary and had my wife and six children with me. My American earnings had already been spent on air fares so I felt it would be somewhat risky to go east to Notre Dame when I still had to get my family home. I simply expressed a prayer, Lord, if you want me to go to Notre Dame I know you will make it possible". I left the matter at that and went on with my normal work. I had submitted a piece of mathematical research to a learned journal a couple of months earlier and was awaiting a reply from the referee to see if it would be accepted for publication. A couple of weeks after my little prayer I received a letter which brought out a few "goose pimples" and caused quite a bit of excitement. The letter stated that its writer had noted my research paper and that he was very interested in the topic and would very much like to discuss the matter with me. The letter was signed by Henry Thatcher, Professor of Computing Science, University of Notre Dame!!! In later correspondence Henry arranged a seminar for me at the nearby Argonne National Laboratories attached to the University of Chicago and also arranged a \$200 stipend.

I was thus able to visit practically every known centre of charismatic prayer in the Catholic world. I arrived in Notre Dame in early October, on the eve of the feast of

the Little Flower of Jesus. I had a long talk with Father O'Connor who was extremely helpful. He gave me about two hours of his time. I also had brief chats with the others and spoke to a well known physicist, Professor Paul De Celles, who was also involved in the prayer meetings. For over three weeks I attended a prayer meeting in a different community almost on alternate nights. Each community sent me off to the next with a prayer and a laying on of hands blessing. I felt indeed that I was re-enacting the Acts.

In Notre Dame, Ann Arbor, and Iowa City, small communities of the live-together kind had started. I was strongly reminded of the rapid growth in basic Christian communities which occurred with the mendicant friars and sisters in the 13th Century. The Word of God community in Ann Arbor is quite astounding, and it was described to me as the "Promised Land". There were about 20 young folk in full time community. Their prayer meetings were attended by four hundred or so and each month their day of renewal was drawing huge crowds. There was a strong eucharistic orientation and a house of hospitality run by the community gave evidence of deep social concern. The Rosary I recited with the group at this house of hospitality, amongst hippies, negroes etc. was the most edifying Rosary of my life I think. It was the feast of the Holy Rosary. It was at Ann Arbor that I met Patti Gallagher and I was able to question her about certain aspects of the retreat at The Ark and the Dove. Patti was a full time member of the Word of God community and she impressed me with her joy and deep inner glow of confidence in Jesus.

There was a Benedictine monastery in Wisconsin where the Abbot, the Prior and 10 or so of the monks had received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. There were a large number of Jesuits in St. Louis involved, and so on. It gave me great joy to be used by the Holy Spirit in taking news of the Holy Spirit to the Benedictine monastery at Pecos, New Mexico. A strong movement has begun in that area.

There seems to be a climate of theological opinion akin to Pelagianism abounding at the moment. You find theologians emphasising "relevance" in Christian thinking, as if Christianity had to bow before the insights of the scientific world in order to succeed. After what I have seen and heard I have no hesitation in declaring my dedication to the "irrelevant" aspects of Christianity.
Praise the Lord!