

# **THE HOLY SPIRIT IN EAST ANGLIA**



PEACE  
ON  
EARTH

**CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL  
NEWSLETTER No 1 - 2012  
FOR THE DIOCESE OF EAST ANGLIA**

# DAYS OF RENEWAL IN 2012

**THE NEXT DAY OF RENEWAL**

**WILL BE ON SAT 23rd JUNE**

**LED BY FR BILL KEOGH**

**Check our website**



**[www.ccr-eastanglia.org.uk](http://www.ccr-eastanglia.org.uk)**

## **PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON OUR LAST RENEWAL DAY**

**The Word and the Word made Flesh.**

The Spirituality of St Francis of Assisi lead by Fr Sebastian Kajko CFR

Who better to give a talk at a Renewal day than a member of a religious order that particularly embraces renewal? Fr Sebastian of the Order of Franciscans of the Renewal gave a stimulating talk on how the spirituality and the work of St Francis is still as valid for Christians today as it was 800 years ago.

Simply speaking, (as was St Francis's way), the route to pure spirituality is to be naked before your God. Although St Francis at one time stood bodily naked before his Bishop to get his point across, his underlying message is to bare one's soul completely before the Lord. To achieve this we need to do only two things: follow the Word and the Word made Flesh - read the Bible and attend the Eucharist – this is the way to achieve a full life with Christ.

If we live off the Word and the Word made flesh, we need nothing else. The complete trust in, and obedience to, the Lord ensures that all our needs are provided for. This may seem tough at times, but the members of the Order find their pure love of the Lord, fortified by following the Word and the Eucharist, carries them through. This simplistic life enhances the appreciation of the beauty of the world around them, God's pure creation, hence Francis's great love for nature and God's creatures, animal as well as human. It is no surprise then that he is known as the patron saint of ecology.

Everything in Francis's life was simple. Even his writings, as Fr Sebastian pointed out, were really simple praises or biblical-based sayings. He was a true charismatic although his preference would have been to live as a hermit so that he could devote his life to his relationship with the Lord. But the Lord had other plans for him. Because of his utter desire to follow Him, his obedience led him to live among brothers who also had a complete devotion to the Lord. Francis was a great advocate of evangelising but again his method was of the purest: just by living the Word so that people recognised him for what he was – a follower of Christ in the absolute sense of the word. Words accredited to Francis are: "Evangelise - only use words if necessary." These words are not actually recorded as having been said by him but are very much in the spirit of his writings and in the way he lived his life. For us, our lifestyle, our personal example, should give out a message to others of where we are in our relationship with Christ without the need to use words. Francis and his brothers only had to walk through towns, many of which were degenerate and in turmoil at that time, to be recognised as men of God.

Francis achieved great things in his life by allowing himself to be led by the Word. Humankind was in great state of flux with corruption in the Church and a deal of unrest in the world around him – even cities battled against cities. Not much has changed in 800 years! He is said to have played a part in the Great Council of the time, the fourth Lutheran Council, in which, among other things, the doctrine of Transubstantiation was promulgated.

Fr Sebastian summarised the essential elements of the spirituality of St Francis of Assisi as follows:

Experience of God: When we have an experience of God we become especially aware of how much God loves us and we should be conscious of the effect this will have on others we come into contact with. In this way we are witnesses to Christ.

Love of the Words of Jesus: As well as reading the Bible we need to withdraw into silence and listen to what God is telling us by meditating on His words. We should preach the Gospel always and not be afraid to walk in the Spirit.. Francis was very aware of the tension between body and soul: we should not compartmentalise our lives but be aware that mind, heart, body and soul should be working in unison at all times so that we can be true followers of Christ.

Francis was submissive and subject to the Holy Church. Although this sometimes caused him internal tension, by submitting to those in authority over him he was rewarded in ways he could not imagine initially. We should remember that Christ in His love for us gave us the Church as His legacy. Francis was a brother to every creature: he consorted with tramps, animals and nobles alike and loved all things of nature. We should remember that all creatures are equal in God's eyes and respect God's creation. St Francis is the patron saint of ecology.

Fr Sebastian referred to the Beatitudes as the "Be Attitudes" = how to be! He gave us many other pointers to what we can do to promote the spirituality of St Francis, so much needed today as it was in Francis's time. One that resonated was "Catholic Mathematics": however much God gives us in love and generosity, we, in turn, must give away, and how much will we receive in return!. It is only by stripping ourselves bare, both our souls and materially, can we get truly close to God. Fr Sebastian was very clear in pointing out that we should not be followers of Francis, but followers of what Francis stood for. We should do this by being lovers of Christ and by loving His Word and His Eucharist. Francis was asked to repair the Church 800 years ago – this is still required today, and it is what we must continue to do today by evangelising.

The day followed the usual format with Mass in the middle of the day celebrated by Fr Sebastian and served by Brother Oscean. Benediction followed the afternoon talk and there was time for Confession and healing ministry. However, unusually, for the first time we had an 'in-house' music group led by Hamish, the Diocesan Youth Officer and a Team member. He was ably assisted by David on the keyboard, 17 year-old Liam on the drums, and the beautiful young voice of Helen to lead the singing. We sincerely hope that our praise and worship will be enhanced in the future by this spirited and Spirit-led group.

Anne Murrin – November 2011

**CELEBRATE 2012**

**8TH TO 14TH APRIL**

**ILFRACOMBE**



## HEALING MINISTRY

Do you believe in God? Of course you do!

**BUT** do you believe God?

Jesus instructed us to "lay hands on the sick, and they will recover" (Mark 16:18)

Do you believe this? **I do!**

If you need hands to be laid on you and healing prayer then you are welcome to contact

**Dr Richard Cavanagh**

**Blands Place**

**Copdock**

**Ipswich**

**IP8 3JD**

**01473 730426**

Jesus told his disciples:. He who believes in Me,  
the works that I do he will do also;  
and greater works than these he will do, because I go to my Father.

And whatever you ask in my name, that will I do,  
that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If you ask anything in My name, I will do it. (John 14: 12-14),

## ONWARD AND UPWARD

As I write this there are Christmas preparations happening everywhere and I have just listened to Saviour's Day on Premier radio! I thank God for all the ways that he breaks through into our lives and into our culture. I am reminded that he is also able to use any people or situations he chooses – sometimes in overtly Christian places but also through channels we would least expect.

### What is the vision?

I would like to share with you in these pages the vision we are forming on the Service Team about where the Lord is calling us at the moment. I take heart from what Fr Sebastian told us last renewal day about the state of the church in Francis's day and how we have a real parallel and challenge from the Lord to contribute to the renewal of the church in our own day.

We on the Team are convinced that the Charismatic Renewal movement has already made an impact on church life and, together with the other renewal movements, is being led by and used by the Holy Spirit to breathe fresh life into our church - and so into society.

I am the first to admit that the Charismatic Renewal is not the only movement of renewal. There are various other significant movements like Alpha, Focolare, Lectio Divina, Youth 2000, Taize, non-charismatic prayer groups, Mothers' Prayers and many others. I am sure there is huge overlap in the practice and prayer life of these groups and one influences another, because it is the same Spirit who inspires, and thus all contribute to the Church.

### A Culture of Openness to the Holy Spirit

We have our own particular role to play in the Church of today. Blessed John-Paul II at Pentecost 1998, having summoned us 'Ecclesial Movements' to Rome for a convention, told us the Church has need for both the hierarchical and the charismatic. By this I understand that we, the Church, need all the structure and initiatives that the bishop and our parish priests put into place and maintain under the guidance of the Spirit, but we also need the charismatic initiatives that don't start at diocesan or parish level, but are part of a separate world-wide movement initiated by the Spirit.

We in Charismatic Renewal have as our focus the Holy Spirit and his activity as central in our personal lives and in the life of the church. To me that means we have insight into the way God acts, we witness his power moving among us; we see many lives changed and transformed and can thus point to the Lord being alive in our world today.

I have seen so often those who have been touched by the Holy Spirit through the Charismatic Renewal seeking out a role in their parish; many live lives of service to other parishioners; others take a more formal role – I know, for example, at our Days of Renewal we have many who are Eucharistic Ministers in their parish. Even in tangible ways like this we can see this great movement contributing to the renewal of the Church. So one of the roles of our days of Renewal is to encourage each other in our commitment to the Lord. I see another role of helping us to understand and co-operate with the working of the Spirit and thus grow more Christ like and be better instruments in our parish and in our locality.

### Celebrate Weekends

Many of us have had the blessing of being able to spend a week away at the New Dawn Conference in Walsingham or at the Celebrate Conference in Ilfracombe. For me these week long conferences enable me to experience and learn so much about the working of the Holy Spirit. Each time I have attended I have been confirmed in my commitment to follow Jesus and to accept his Spirit deeper into my life. My prayer has been greatly enriched by praying in tongues and by accepting that the Spirit wants to use me to minister to other people. Listening to those with great experience is a wonderful education and encouragement!

It is this conviction that makes me want to make this experience as available as possible to everyone in our diocese. When we were invited to arrange a Celebrate Weekend in East Anglia I saw what huge potential this had – despite the colossal amount of work entailed! At a central location people could attend for a weekend without the expense of a week away and have the same quality teaching and rich experience of worship. Many will meet the Lord for the first time as a personal God and Saviour and have their life transformed by his presence.

This would be especially good for parents of all ages because their children are welcomed at these weekends and catered for appropriately. At the moment our days of Renewal cannot welcome parents with children, but in a centre large enough to accommodate the young people, each can have space to be ministered to according to their needs.

### How can this be done?

This is a very good question! The short answer is by the power of the Holy Spirit and by prayer.

How we feel led at the moment is to put on a Celebrate Weekend sometime in 2013, which gives us one year to get ready. In this preparation arranging venues and speakers is the easy part – the lion's share of preparation is to begin telling lots of people about it and get them interested enough to come.

This is clearly not something we can do alone. We definitely need your help to tell people all about how good it is going to be and what a blessing. So please begin to mention it to your friends and extended family. By the next Renewal Day on 10<sup>th</sup> March we should have definite details of when and where.

### Please Pray

And may I invite you to pray for the Lord's blessing on this weekend. On the Team we have decided to make one day every month – the first Friday – a special day of prayer and fasting for this intention. Please join us and add your prayers to make a huge body of intercession and praise of what God can do in our diocese.

Philip Walters

**PRAY – PRAY – PRAY**

# **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

## **A Reflection of my Spiritual Life in Parkistan in 1976**

"I believe in God'. I've repeated these words in church week after week ever since I was a child. I believed I knew it was true and it would never occur to me to question that statement I was taught never to question what I was taught about God. Looking back I have a sneaking feeling that there were queries in my mind but I would not dare formulate them that might not please God. He, for me, was the all holy one and had to be approached with awe and reverence. There was a sense in which He seemed to be remote from everyday life. He seemed to be rather an inactive God and I didn't expect Him to do anything positive. I was the active one and I expected Him to bless my actions. (Later I was taught that I was using my own sanctified common sense). I was taught to believe in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was supposed to be around as the "Comforter" and I still have visions of a bit of blue woollen knitting which my grandmother called a comforter. I think you wrapped it around your shoulders to keep you warm.

The first recollection I have of anyone talking about the Holy Spirit was when the priest at our local church told the congregation one Sunday that the third person of the Trinity was always neglected. In my childlike way I thought. "Then why doesn't someone do something about it?" My second recollection of the Holy Spirit was at my Confirmation. I knew it was the time when I would receive the Holy Spirit in fullness, I had no idea what this meant. But after the ceremony I wanted to dance all the way home, no one else did, so I didn't mention the subject again. My next recollection of teaching about the Holy Spirit was when I was training to work overseas. The fact that the power of the Holy Spirit was lacking at the time was mentioned, but the subject was not discussed further: And most of us believed the power of the Holy Spirit which came upon the disciples at Pentecost was just to get the Church started as it were and such manifestations were not for this day and age. St. John Chrysostom writing towards the end of the fourth century said:

"In the beginning, christm's were given even to the unworthy, because the ancient period needed this help to foster faith: but now they are not given even to the worthy because the faith is strong and firm enough not to need this (On Principium Actorum, Pg. 51 :81 quoted in. 'The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church: Fr. Edward O'Connor, C.S.C. Pg. 280).

At this stage in my life I believed the Holy Spirit was at work leading and guiding, but He was present in rather a vague sort of way. I believed that as a committed Christian I was called to serve the Lord as an overseas missionary. I was still the active one. I was doing the work and asking the Lord's continued blessing .

I was sent to a country where there was much opposition to the preaching of Christianity so I remained a silent witness. Outwardly I indicated this was a dreadful state of affairs: but inwardly I knew I was very thankful not to have to verbalise what I believed. I felt I could not do this with conviction. I came to the conclusion that the only thing I could do was pray and somehow people would be converted. Eventually I became restless. "Why", I asked God, "Are we so powerless to witness for you? What is the point of working here in this situation when we are having no impact on these people? It was alright for the Christians in the early church I argued; they had the power of the Holy Spirit to help them".

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech" Acts 2:4 And the onlookers described what was happening: "We hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God" Acts 2:12

When Peter addressed the crowd thousands were converted. The disciples performed miracles and the people were healed. These early Christians knew the reality of the presence of God with them.

As the Holy Spirit was poured out upon them they knew that God was not beyond their range of human experience. God revealed in Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit was present to each one and would continue to be as they led their communitarian way of life in the power of the Holy Spirit.

I first became aware that the Holy Spirit was actively and positively at work in this day and age when I read Fr. Edward O'Connor's book, the Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church. I knew immediately that this experience which he described was what was needed in our missionary situation. People even now were being empowered by the Holy Spirit so that they could witness with conviction. I knew that I wanted God to do something in my life, but I didn't know what. I felt in complete darkness spiritually. I prayed and prayed but nothing significant seemed to happen. So I persevered in prayer. I remained in this darkness sensing there was something beyond which I couldn't reach: was it possible to reach?

"Jesus told us to knock. He did not say how many times. We have to be sure to knock and knock again" (A New Pentecost: Cardinal Suenens, Pg.60)

Finally, I gave up knocking, I felt totally rejected by God and also full of anger because I could see He was at work in other people's lives but He didn't seem to be doing anything for me. I went to bed one night determined to reject anything to do with any positive activity of the Holy Spirit. In the middle of the night something suddenly woke me up. I felt my room was full of light - but not a visible light- and a voice within me saying, "Ask someone to pray with you". I went straight back to sleep. Normally I would have said that I couldn't ask anyone to pray with me because I would be too embarrassed and asking someone to do that did not come within the sphere of my traditional thinking. I would, however, have no qualms about asking someone to pray for me. That could be done at a safe distance when I wasn't around!. The next morning I surprised myself by going to ask someone to pray with me. I had to. I knew I had experienced something of the supernatural the night before although I could not put all the details into words.

A group of people laid hands on me after Mass and prayed. I was full of apprehension wondering what the outcome of this would be. Then I heard one of those praying say, "Remove from her anything that hinders her from accepting you fully into her life". At that moment I felt what can only be described as an electric shock go through the whole of my being I knew in that indescribable moment I had experienced a real encounter with the living God. The power of the Holy Spirit had been released within me and I knew Jesus was there for real. I knew in a new and deeper way that Jesus was both Lord and risen Saviour. He was no longer just the historical figure I read about in the New Testament. He was alive and active and I knew it. By the evening I was singing and praising God in tongues and bubbling over with joy at this encounter with the living Lord. Night after night, for some time after, I felt I was being taken apart and reassembled; words cannot really describe what the Lord was doing. And I had no desire to resist Him. All the teaching I had received in the past seemed to become a reality. Day by day I was taught so many things by the Holy Spirit; and I knew how true the words are: "When, however, the Spirit comes, Who reveals the truth about God, he will lead you into all truth" Is 16:13

I discovered that when we allow ourselves to be open to God: when our conscious and subconscious minds receive the radiance of His presence so a new life takes over and we can truly say with St. Paul "It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me". Galatians 2:20

I now knew the presence of the Holy Spirit was not simply a doctrine of faith: it is an experience which can be realised. I now knew it was not enough to speak to people about Jesus. I could introduce them to Jesus and I had the power within me to speak out in faith. In the early church it was the truth of Jesus which convicted people not the truth about Jesus. As my faith was sustained by this personal experience so my faith grew and God's action was very evident in my daily life. I had a great hunger for God's word and as I studied scripture day by day so the word of God became alive. The Holy Spirit had made very real the fact that Jesus is the Son of God - that Jesus is Lord. The early Christians first of all lived an experience of the Holy Spirit - and with what joy! The dogma of the Holy Spirit was defined only three centuries later. For those Christians to receive the Spirit and to experience the Spirit were one and the same thing". "A New Pentecost?" Cardinal Suenens. Pg.57.

In summing up I would say that this experience led me to see the importance of Christianity as a "communitarian" way of life. I had a great desire to pray and share with others and could do this because sharing my life with the risen Jesus - now a reality. So many of us in the past have thought of our Christian lives as being between us and God without really relating to other people. But there must be a coming together of the followers of Jesus as we share together our common life. Together we look to the one who leads us forward to the Father. the one who promised I am the way the Truth and the life .

Anthea Rix

## **A FOOTNOTE FROM FR LUKE.**

### **Listening and Responding to the Call to Holiness**

Listening is an important and often overlooked word in modern society. We live in a noisy world, a chaotic world full of things competing for our attention. Whether it be television, music from radios or IPod's, traffic, people on the phone it can be very difficult to hear anything clearly in the din of modernity, on the few occasions where we might actually be able to grab a little quiet time - in the car, or in the kitchen when all the kids have gone to school, we instinctively turn on the radio, put a CD on or have the television on in the background it's as if we're frightened by what we might hear in the silence!

Listening implies that we do more than simply hear, it implies that what we hear is acted upon, that the words penetrate our hearts - that they affect us and move us to something. The Lord is constantly communicating to us, constantly calling us but so often we don't hear, even if we do hear the Lord's voice so often we don't listen we don't allow His Word to penetrate and change us...it's as if His voice falls on deaf ears!

From all eternity God has called us into existence. The very essence of what it means to be human is wrapped up in the phrase "called being". If we go back to the first book of the Bible we discover that God calls us right from the very beginning. God spoke and there was:

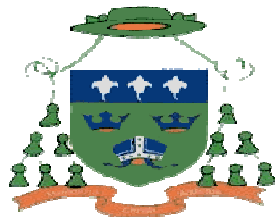
“Let us make mankind in our image...so God created mankind in his image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them.” (Gen 1:26,27) Human beings are called into existence, and we are called to - to live for God. The whole of our life should be understood as a response to this call - we come from God and we go back to God.

The Latin root for the word vocation is *vocare*, meaning: “to call”. We tend to think of vocations within the Church in a very limited way, typically either as a vocation to priesthood or a vocation to religious life. If we are feeling very adventurous we might add marriage. Whilst these are certainly vocations, and in no way should these be diminished, we are making a fatal flaw if we see these as the only vocations or worse the only worthy vocations. All of us have a vocation and that vocation is to God, essentially it can be called what the Second Vatican Council popularised as the universal call to holiness. That holiness is lived in many different ways and in many different contexts, but it is a call to holiness none the less. We are all called to be saints. Of course we don’t become saints in our own strength, and for most of us it is only finally in purgatory where we are prepared, polished off, as it were, to be the saints that we are meant to be fit then only for Heaven. This said, God calls us to holiness now, he gives us the graces we need now to be the people he has created us to be. But so often His gifts, His Word falls on deaf ears.

The trouble is if we are called by God, then we need to be listeners. Listening needs silence. It in the silence above all else that God comes to us, stirs us and moves us. Those of us involved in the renewal are very good at praise and very good at witness, but not always the best at silence. All of us need silent prayer, a time where we are still before God. We need this for the very health of our spiritual lives. Ideally each day we need to have some period, some moments of silent some quality ‘contact time’ with the Holy Spirit.

It does not matter whether we have been Christians all of our lives or have only recently responded to His invitation. Each of us is invited to respond daily to the call of Christ, each of us is called day by day to follow Him, every moment of every day we are called to make decisions for God or against Him, to follow Him in a fresh and new way or to follow our own way. God gives us fresh start to return to Him whenever we get things wrong, but we have to be open, we have to be listening to His still small voice that speaks us often within the quiet of our hearts. If our lives are full of noise how will we hear Him?

We must pray that we are open to God’s Word, that we can hear his voice and act on it – that by listening to God we allow His Word to penetrate our hearts, our souls, our whole being. As we walk in the ways of the Spirit we are changed evermore, bit by bit, into the people that from all eternity we are called, we are meant, to be!



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