

# STIRRINGS OF THE SPIRIT

A Quarterly Publication of Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services of Ontario

Volume 13 # 3  
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CCRSO

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## *Audacious Faith*

Looking back at our early days in the charismatic renewal, my attention was drawn to the audacious kind of faith we had then. We seemed to have a faith that was boldly enthusiastic and radically expectant; we saw God move powerfully in response to that faith. It seemed that we had faith that dared pray and believe for anything. I sense the Lord would have us return to that kind of faith again that He may be glorified and that others will be attracted to Him and receive Him as their personal Saviour and Lord.

### **Squeaky Wheels**

After a conference session we were in the lobby of the campus residence when a person entered pushing her friend in what looked like an adult sized stroller; the wheels squeaked terribly. One in our group said, we should have some of that anointing oil to oil the wheels. I responded, "I don't have oil but Jesus healed by spitting." Then bending over I spit at the wheel nearest me. They went on to the elevator; the wheels had stopped squeaking. The person pushing the stroller turned to us with a strange look that seemed to say, "What kind of weirdos are these?" Jesus heals squeaky wheels!

### **Healing a Bus**

Another time a group of us were returning to Timmins from a conference in Hamilton. It seemed that we were on Highway 400 for just a few minutes when the bus overheated and the driver had to pull over and stop. It was a warm sunny day so most of us got out of the bus

to enjoy the weather while we waited. Finally someone issued a challenge, "Why can't we pray for the bus to be fixed?" A few of us gathered around the back of the bus where the engine was located and began to pray. One of us took out the vial of anointing oil we had received at the conference and anointed the bus for "healing." After a while, the driver started the engine and checked the temperature gauge. It was in normal range. So we all got back in the bus and finished the remaining eight-hour drive home without problem. Jesus heals vehicles!

### **Jesus heals Cancer**

We were at a conference. I had been elected president of CCSO, the precursor to CCRSO. As a courtesy to the position I held I had been invited to sit on the platform. After the Saturday morning session I was looking for my wife Janine, so we could go for lunch together. However, two ladies approached me and asked me to pray as one of them had been diagnosed with cancer. I did pray briefly honoring their faith, then we went our way to the cafeteria. A year later at another conference the same two ladies approached me to share that the cancer was gone. Yes, she had had treatments and surgery but the cancer was gone. I credit her healing to their faith. Jesus heals cancer and all diseases.

### **Jesus heals backs**

A small group of us were in Attawapiskat, a native village on the James Bay coast. One of our members had prepared a teaching but it only took 5 minutes to discern that this was not what we were there for. Their parish priest confirmed this & we changed direction, forming teams to pray over the people for their needs. The Lord responded wonderfully to our obedience, healing many.

One I still remember was a man who had ruined his back lifting a 45 gallon drum of oil from the back of a pickup truck. The doctor had said that he would never be able to work again. He held onto the arms of the pews as he came forward painfully using his cane; his wife held him on one side and I helped him by taking his other arm. With great difficulty we managed to get him to a chair in front. As we prayed with him, the Lord poured out the Holy Spirit upon him in such an obvious way. When he got up after prayer he was able to stand without using his cane and to walk back to his seat on his own, again without his cane. The next morning, this man who had been told he would never be able to work again was back at work without pain. Jesus heals backs, hips, legs, and other body parts.

### **Jesus heals emotional hurts**

Many times as I have ministered to others the Lord has hinted at some past hurt, abuse or negative emotions. A

## **CCRSO MISSION STATEMENT**

To promote and participate in the ongoing renewal of the Catholic Church, witnessing to the reality of Jesus Christ and the love of the Father, under the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit, exercising the charisms received through release of the Holy Spirit.

person came for prayer for a chronic stomach ailment that had kept her in constant pain. I discerned that there was someone or a group of someones that she needed to forgive. I asked her about it; she shared the particular situation. I gave a brief explanation of the necessity of forgiving. She agreed and spoke out loud her forgiveness. Her stomach pain disappeared; we did not have to pray for that. Forgiveness set her free of her stomach ailment as well. Jesus heals emotional hurts and the effects of negative emotions. Jesus heals the broken hearted.

#### **Jesus heals our spirit**

After the trauma of a stillbirth I fell into a spiritual black pit, dark and depressed and having doubts about God. I became involved in a form of Tibetan Buddhism and various practices such as yoga and transcendental meditation. After five years I was still neither fulfilled nor satisfied. One evening, too tired to attend to the correspondence course I was taking, I sat on the couch. Janine, my wife, suddenly turned the television set on. There was Oral Roberts. The first words he said were, "Are you tired? Do you need a miracle in your life?" That described me and caught my attention. He continued speaking about God being a good God and the devil being a bad devil. He talked clearly about the salvation and satisfaction that is available in Jesus Christ alone. At the end of that half-hour special, I knelt on our living room floor and rededicated my life to Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Saviour. When I got up it felt as if a ton of bricks had been removed from my shoulders. The heaviness and darkness was replaced by God's light, love and joy. I knew that I knew that I knew that God loved me and had forgiven my sins. Now I had Jesus the real thing, which caused the Buddhism, yoga and transcendental meditation to lose interest for me. The Lord drew me back into relationship with Himself and drew me back to Church. He continued to teach me through the Bible, books and teaching tapes. Attending an evangelistic meeting I went forward to make a public commitment to Jesus Christ. That seemed to accelerate my spiritual growth. I learned about the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The passage from Luke 11:13 became very much alive to Janine and me: "If you being evil men know how to give good things to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him." That settled our faith so we knelt by our bed and quoting this verse we asked the Father to baptize us in the Holy Spirit. Although we felt nothing special, a few days later as I was shaving strange sounds started to form in my mind. I spoke them out yielding to the gift of praying in tongues for the first time. Jesus still heals wounded spirits and saves the lost and still pours out the Holy Spirit on those who ask in faith.

#### **Jesus still heals today**

Many more examples of the power of Jesus, the Mighty Healer could be shared. I believe that He is calling us back to that first love and to that audacious daring faith we had then.

Jesus needs us to be a people of faith; our faith gives him something to work with. Many times he said, "Your faith has made you whole." Or, "Be it done to you according to your faith." Or, "Become what you believe." Whatever the need, Jesus is still the Mighty Healer. Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. He has not changed: He still loves us; He still saves us; He still heals today. What are we waiting for? We need to make the prayer of the first Christians our prayer: "And now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus." When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness. (Acts 4:29-31)"

Lord Jesus, grant us the same audacious and bold faith that the first Christians had. Lord, anoint us and empower us so that we may proclaim your Word boldly and confirm the Word with signs following. Restore us to that audacious faith we once had that you may be glorified and that the multitudes may come to repentance, salvation, conversion, healing and deliverance. Be glorified in us today. Amen!

### **A B C's OF FAITH**

**Audacious** faith dares believe big and pray big. **Audacious** faith knows deep, deep within that **all things** are possible to God and all things are possible to the one who believes. **Anointed** faith steps out and is effective since it depends on God to do the work. Faith is never surprised when God acts but is always **amazed** at his power and the love with which He acts. **Amazed** faith **abounds** with joy and thanksgiving and eagerness to demonstrate the love of God in **action**. Since Jesus lives in us we are **arks** of His presence. We are **ambassadors** of reconciliation and we **act** in faith. We are called to be an **Alleluia** from head to foot.

**Bold** faith has no doubts that God will act. Therefore, **believing** that God can and will respond, such faith is **blessed** to receive what it **believes** for and to be a **blessing**. We are called to **balanced** faith, founded in Christ and in the scriptures and teaching of the Church. We recognize that we are God's **beloved**, and we make the Lord our **boast**.

**Confident** faith has no pretensions of personal ability but is founded firmly in **Christ** and His ability and is **committed** to Him. Such faith is firmly **Christ-centered, compassionate, consoling, clement and consecrated** to **Christ**. Since Jesus is the focus, such faith **conquers** the obstacles faced and the problems prayed for. Depending on **Christ** and on the power of the Holy Spirit we are open to **correction**. Jesus **crossed out** our sins! He made us **citizens** of heaven

and **children** of God. We need each other so we stay **connected** to other like-minded believers.

The faith we are called to live is **dependent** on Jesus the Lord, Saviour, and Healer. We realize that we are merely his **disciples, determined** and totally **dependent on Him**. He knows us and he **delights in us**. Not only are we **dependent** on Him but; we live and minister in such a way that we prove ourselves **dependable**. We are **diligent** in seeking God and his glory. Faith is not mere words but the **daring demonstration** of God's **dunamis dynamic** power lovingly exercised for his people.

Our faith should be **enthusiastic, effervescent, expectant and extreme**. We should be **enjoying our experience** as instruments of our Lord Jesus Christ on an ongoing basis.

Our faith being **firm** we can be **fearless** in our prayer and our actions. We do our best to stay **focused** on Jesus. Abraham is our **father in faith**; and we strive to imitate his **fully persuaded faith**. Our faith being **firm** we can be **farsighted** in what we expect from our Mighty Lord. We might even say that we are called to a **ferocious faith**. We are to be **forgiving** as God has **forgiven** us in Christ. We are to be **faithful** and **faith-filled**.

**Generous** faith serves even at personal cost and sacrifice. Such faith is **God-inside-minded**. Faith serves for the **glory of God**, and not for personal glory. Having experienced God personally like Moses we seek more of **God** and more of his **glory**. The faith that pleases God relies on his **good gifts, the graces and gifts** of the Holy Spirit. We are called to be **genuine** in every area of our lives and to let God keep us **growing** in his ways.

We are called to a faith that is **humble, honorable, honest, and holy**. We are called to be **happy** with the joy of the Lord as our strength. **Holy Spirit** is the one who leads us, teaches us, inspires us, and anoints us with his power. We **honour** the Lord our God, who has made us his **heirs, joint-heirs** with Christ.

Serving such a mighty God our faith is **impressed** with Him and not ourselves. As we serve we should be leading others to also be **impressed** with our Lord and **inspired** by Him as He does what seems **impossible**. **Inspired** by God we should in turn serve to **inspire** others with Him. We recognize that we are merely **instruments** in his holy hands. As Jesus **intercedes** for us at the Father's right hand, we **intercede** for others.

We are called to be a **joyful** people and **just**. We recognize that we have been **justified** by faith in Jesus Christ as a free gift. **Jealousy** is not to be a part of us.

We are **King's kids**; his royal blood runs in our veins. As his children we are **kind**. We **know** God and are **known** by Him.

Being **loving and loveable and level-headed** is part of God's call on our lives.

We are to be **merciful** for our Father in heaven is **merciful**. We are to minister his **marvelous works** and see his **magnificent miracles** worked through us. **Messiah Jesus** is our leader and our source. He is **Mighty Healer**; we serve him and his people **magnanimously**.

We are tuned in to our God so that we can perceive and cooperate with the **new thing** that He is doing. Since it is He who does the work we **never quit**. Imitating his humility we can rejoice in the **nobility** we have as his beloved people. We are **nurtured** in his presence and **nourished** by his Word. He has made us a **Holy nation**, a royal priesthood a people set apart. Blessed is the **Name** of Jesus, for every knee shall bow at the sound of His **Name**.

We are **open** to whatever way God wants to act. We are **obedient** to our Lord who inspires us and in whom we are more than **overcomers**. We don't get set in our ways; we let the Holy Spirit use us **out of the box**, in ways beyond our experience and beyond our comfort zone.

To be **patient, peaceful and prayerful** is our call. We **practice the presence** of God; we make ourselves truly **present** to Him and to those we minister to. We regard others and ourselves as **precious** in the Lord's sight. We are open to the **prophetic gifts**, remembering that we have been baptized **prophet, priest and king**. We are urged to **persevere** in the faith we **profess**. We are to keep ourselves **pure** and holy, and to be a **people of praise, passionate** for our Lord and his **purposes**. We know that we have not yet arrived so we **press on** that we may know Christ our Lord and be found in Him.

We **quiet** ourselves before God so that He may guide and instruct us. We are **quick** to hear from the Lord and **quick** to obey. We are **quick** to forgive. We maintain our **quest** for God and continually seek Him.

We are called to have a **radical** faith like the first Christians. We need to be living our personal chapters of Acts. We are to be continually **renewed and restored**. We minister **renewal and restoration** to others. We **reverence** God and show **respect** for others. We minister out of an intimate **relationship** with our mighty God. We are able to give the graces and gifts of God because we have first **received** them from Him. We seek God that He may give us **revelation** of his plans and purposes for our lives. He will **reward** us.

## What's Happening In Hamilton Diocese

**Serenity and satisfaction** should be among our characteristics. We are to be a **servant** people like our Lord Jesus who, though Lord and God, came to serve and not be served. We are **strong** in the Lord and in the power of his might. We rejoice that in Jesus we are **saved, sanctified and set free**. We follow Paul's advice to **stir up** the gifts of the Spirit and to be **steadfast** in faith and service.

**Trusting** God we can be **tranquil and at peace** in Him. We are **teachable and truthful**. We are reminded that we are **temples** of God & our bodies are **temples** of the Holy Spirit.

**Unshakable** is the faith we are to live, and **undeterred** in the endeavors the Lord assigns to us. We should so live that without us saying anything it will be **unmistakable** that we belong to Jesus Christ. He has made us **unique** and by his grace we can be **untiring** in his service.

**Victory minded** is the faith we are called to, after all, Jesus has already won the **victory**. We remember that we are to be the **voice** and hands and feet of Jesus on the earth. We do not box ourselves, or God into a particular pattern we are comfortable with; rather, we are open to a **variety** of ways He may choose to do things. We are **vocal** in sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with others.

We maintain a sense of **wonderment** like children, letting God and his ways amaze us. We are men and women immersed in the **Word of God**. We are **warriors** in prayer and fervent in **worship**. **Wholeness** is one of our aims for those we serve as well as for ourselves. We are **welcoming** to those we meet.

We are **not xenophobic** (fearful and distrustful of strangers). Strangers are not an unknown **"X"** to us, but rather are viewed as friends we haven't met yet.

We are those who have said, **"Yes!"** to the Lord and **yielded** to Him. Having experienced God personally we **yearn** for more of Him. It might be said that we are **yeomen** in his army.

We are **zealous** for the Lord and that He might be glorified in us and through us. We realize that without Him we amount to **zero** and that God is our all in all.

As we have seen our faith is multifaceted. We have explored a few of the attributes our faith in Jesus Christ should exhibit. We certainly are not there yet, but we have ideals to aim for. Let us continue to explore and grow in audacious bold confident demonstration of our faith from A to Z. To God all glory, now and forever. Amen.

*Deacon Stan Cor - President, C.C.R.S.O.*

### **LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINARS**

BLD Grand Valley Outreach Prayer Group in Kitchener has been committed to enriching the spiritual lives of their members and their families. For six weeks during September and October, Life in the Spirit Seminars were offered for adults who joined the prayer group. On the March 12-14 weekend, their *Youth Group*, aged 13-18, joined a Filipino Youth Group in Toronto for a weekend LISS under the guidance of a priest and adults. In May, there will be a *Youth in Christ* weekend retreat under the guidance of a priest and trained youth.

### **"CHANGE MY HEART, O GOD!"**

Lenten Retreat was held at Blessed Sacrament Church in Kitchener on Saturday, March 20, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. It was facilitated by Shirley Gatchene and hosted by Jesus, the Good Shepherd Prayer Community

### **PREPARATION FOR PENTECOST**

On Monday evenings, April 19<sup>th</sup> – May 31<sup>st</sup>, from 7 to 9 p.m., a **Holy Spirit Retreat** will be held at St. Anthony Daniel Church, 24 Midland Drive, Kitchener. For more information or to register, please call Margaret at 519-894-5424

### **LIGHT OF LIFE PRAYER GROUP**

In Hanover hosted Deacon Charles and Mary Fernandez to speak on the topic of *"Holy Living - practical suggestions for responding to the call of the gospel in simplifying the way we live"*. It was a great theme to explore leading into Holy Week. Deacon Charles and Mary are great examples of Catholics who witness to the faith, living simply and serving the Church through their family life.

## **Catholic Renewal Services Hamilton Diocese SPRING DAY OF RENEWAL**

St. Mary's High School, 1500 Blockline Rd., Kitchener  
**8:30 A.M. TO 4 P.M. - SATURDAY, 15 MAY**

\$15./person, payable at the door, to cover expenses.

Please bring your own lunch. Coffee and tea will be provided.

**Theme: TO JESUS THROUGH MARY**

**Keynote Speaker:** Fr. Wayne Lobsinger, Pastor at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Kitchener.

**Talk # 1** – Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

**Talk # 2** – Do whatever he tells you.

**Witness Talks** - by Fr. Malcolm Katzenberger from St. Paul's Parish in Burlington and by Mariann Dunn from St. Ann's Parish in Ancaster

**Praise and Worship** - Music Ministry Team from Holy Family Parish in Hanover

**Rosary and Consecration of Families to Jesus and Mary**  
**For More Information**

Phone Estelle at 519-745-1936 or Isobel at 905-304-0558

## THE BREAD OF LIFE MINISTRY

*is proud to bring you international pastoral counselor,*

*Neil Lozano*

*as he reveals the 5 keys that release you from bondage  
in the unique*

## **UNBOUND:** *Freedom in Christ Conference*

You don't have to struggle anymore with spiritual burdens such as unforgiveness, fear, anger or patterns of sin. Renew your hope. Find freedom for yourself or a loved one. Discover a new way to a deeper relationship with the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

**6:30 TO 9:30 P.M., FRIDAY, 7 MAY**  
**8 A.M. TO 9:30 P.M., SATURDAY, 8 MAY**

Holy Trinity High School,  
2420 Sixth Line, Oakville, Ont.

Registration: \$45. in advance / \$60. at the door  
Includes Saturday bag lunch & dinner.

### **SPEAKERS**

*Rev. Dr. Peter Coughlin,*

Editor of the Bread of Life magazine, has a Doctor of Ministry degree from the Graduate Theological Foundation. Currently pastor of St. Andrew parish in Oakville, he continues to serve the renewal of the Church through the Charismatic Renewal and the Ministry of Healing.

*Neal Lozano*

Has a Master's degree in religious education from Villanova University. He is the author of *UNBOUND: A Practical Guide to Deliverance* and other books. Neal and his wife, Janet have more than 30 years of pastoral experience helping people find freedom in Christ. They travel across the U.S. and the world presenting the Unbound Conference.

### **PERSONAL PRAYER MINISTRY**

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For information or a brochure, visit

[www.thebreadoflife.ca](http://www.thebreadoflife.ca)

## **What's Happening In St. Catharines Diocese**

The Association of Christian Therapists, Region 10,  
26<sup>th</sup> Annual Canadian Conference.

### **‘INTEGRATING’**

**The Healing Love of Jesus Into  
Our Clinical Practices and Ministries**

*“He who lives in me, and I in Him,  
Will bear much fruit”*

*John 15.5*

Mount Carmel Spiritual Centre  
Niagara Falls, Ontario.

**THURSDAY, 29 APRIL TO SUNDAY, 2 MAY**

### **Who should attend:**

Physicians, Nurses, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Social Workers, Counselors, Clergy, Religious, Healing Ministries and anyone connected to the promotion of Christian Holistic health care.

### **Conference Goal**

To reach out and invite our colleagues and associates to join us as “healers with the Heart of Jesus” and experience the fellowship and healing love of Jesus with its impact in our clinical work.

### **Presenters:**

Fr. Joseph MacDonald, O.F.M., Cap.  
Deacon Armand Danis  
Eva Staneff, R.N.,  
Dr. Kenneth Fung, M.D., M.B., F.R.C.S. (Eng.)

For further information contact:

Vince Kirton at 416-492-9593 or

Dr. Kenneth Fung at 416-291-2864

Email: [vkirton@sympatico.ca](mailto:vkirton@sympatico.ca)

# What's Happening In Alexandria/Cornwall Diocese

## PARISH MISSION

Catholic Lay Evangelist Tom Edwards, conducted a well attended Parish Mission at St. Peter's Church in Cornwall. For the past 10 years Tom has led mission trips to many countries with Renewal Ministries.

## PARISH MISSION – *THE PASSION OF CHRIST*

Guest speaker, Father John Bartunek, LC was well received at Precious Blood Church in Glen Walter where he spoke on Martha and Mary, Take up the Cross and Resurrection- Called to Love. Fr. John provided spiritual support on the set of Mel Gibson's *The Passion of Christ*. His most recent book is called *The Better Part, A Christ-Centered Resource for Personal Prayer*.

## SERVANT AT THE SUPPER – A PLAY

Eleanor Glenn took the audience into the very heart of the Upper Room, using over 20 direct Bible quotations to experience the final days of Christ.

## YOUTH ON THE MOVE – 4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY

The diocesan youth group meets for 7 p.m. Mass at Blessed Sacrament Church in Cornwall and for a gathering afterwards. Grades 7 to 12 teens are welcome for a teaching and social time.

## YOUTH MASS – 3<sup>RD</sup> SATURDAY

At the 5 p.m. Mass at Our Lady of Grace Church in Ingleside youth joyfully fill many different roles and praise God with their voices in the youth choir. Mass is followed by social time with food and games.

## 11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

### JOURNEY TO THE FATHER

#### Catholic High School Age Youth Conference

St. Raphael's Ontario  
16 TO 18 JULY

Space at this very popular youth conference fills quickly as space is limited to 500 participants – first come, first serve. JTTF will only consider placing others on a waiting list whose fully paid registrations are received no later than the deadline of **9 June**. Group leaders are encouraged to register their groups early to avoid disappointment.

Details and registration forms are available on the website [www.journeytothefather.ca](http://www.journeytothefather.ca) and a new promo video is posted on YouTube.



Speakers this year include

*Ken Yasinski* (Leader of Face to Face Ministries in Saskatoon; a Catholic recording artist and songwriter with the group Roadside Cry).

*Bishop Paul-Andre Durocher* (Bishop of Alexandria-Cornwall diocese; a gifted speaker and teacher with a heart for young people).

*Kevin McDonald* (Former teacher, currently a seminarian for A/C diocese, studying at St. Augustine's Seminary; and a popular speaker)

*Theresa Gilbert* (Executive Director of National Campus Life Network). She lives in Burlington with husband David.

*Marjorie Bratz* (Coordinator of Youth Ministry in London. She has a passion for speaking the truth to young people and getting out the message of love.)

*Sam Zettel* (Youth Minister to the Mustard Seeds Youth Group. Sam lives in Hanover with wife Michelle & son Jesse)

*Katie Lawson*. (Back for her second year as MC, she has served with NET Ministries and loves to share her faith.)

*Johnathan Crichlow* (Back for 2<sup>nd</sup> year as Disciple Leader and MC. He has served with NET ministries in several capacities over the past few years)

Musicians – Sam Zettel & The Mustard Seeds

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# What's Happening In Toronto Archdiocese

Ralph Martin and Sister Ann Shields of  
Catholic Renewal Ministries invites you to  
Join thousands of others at the 11th

## LIFT JESUS HIGHER RALLY

Metro Toronto Convention Centre,  
255 Front St. West

**8:30 A.M. TO 6 P.M. - SATURDAY, 24 APRIL**

A deeply fulfilling day featuring:

Marcus Grodi and Teresa Tomeo (EWTN)

Divine Mercy Celebration

Beloved Songs

Eucharistic healing Procession

Testimony of a documented miraculous healing

High Mass (with Sunday Readings) celebrated by  
Archbishop Thomas Collins and Bishop P. Lacey

Separate Youth Event (12 to 20)  
Music, skits, power-packed talks with  
Righteous B, Chris Bray Band,  
Father Graham Keep and others.

Tickets: Adults \$18 / Youth \$9.  
Call 416-251-4255 or 905-270-2510  
[www.lift-jesus-higher-rally-org](http://www.lift-jesus-higher-rally-org)

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## WHY WE SHOULD

### SING PRAISES TO THE LORD

Based on a teaching by Fr. Mark Goring on Food for  
Life (Submitted by Fr. Don Lizzotti & Frances Killen)

#### The Bible tells us to sing praises to God:

- a) Give to the Lord, you sons of God, give to the Lord glory and praise. Give to the Lord the glory due his name; adore the Lord in holy attire. (Psalm 29:1-2)
- b) Sing praises to the Lord, you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name. For his anger lasts but a moment, his good will lasts a lifetime. (Psalm 30:5-6)
- c) Exult in the Lord, you just; praise from the upright is fitting. Give thanks to the Lord on the harp, with the ten stringed lyre chant his praises. Sing to him a

new song; pluck the strings skillfully, with shouts of gladness. (Psalm 33:1-3)

- d) I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall be ever in my mouth. Let my soul glory in the Lord; the lowly will hear and be glad. Glorify the Lord with me; let us together extol his name. (Psalm 34:1-3)
- e) Other psalms and canticles also invite us to sing praises to the Lord our God: psalm 100, psalm 150, psalm 103, psalm 104, Luke 1: 46-55, Luke 1:68-79, Daniel 3: 52-90, Revelation 4 and others. Search these and others out for yourself.

#### The Church invites us to sing praises to the Lord:

- a) In the breviary, the prayer of the Church, we pray mainly the psalms and canticles of praise such as the canticle of Zechariah in the morning and the canticle of Mary in the evening.
- b) In the mass, the priest invites us, *"Let us give thanks to the Lord our God."* We respond, *"It is right to give him thanks and praise."*
- c) The priest also prays, "Father, all powerful and ever living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks and praise."
- d) Liturgical instructions tell us to sing the Gospel acclamation and not merely say it.

#### With all of heaven we sing God's praises:

- a) The priest reminds us in prayer: "With angels and archangels and the whole company of saints we sing our unending hymn of praise." And we respond with, *"Holy, holy, holy are you Lord, God of hosts. Heaven and earth are filled with your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest."*
- b) Praising God in song now is a preparation, a rehearsal for heaven. It helps us get accustomed to and to be comfortable with singing praises to God now, before we go to heaven. What glorious praises we will be privileged to share in when our life on earth is done!

#### God dwells in the praises of his people:

- a) You are holy, you who inhabit the praises of your people Israel. (Psalm 22:3)
- b) Our level of praise determines the extent that God will be present among us. Praise draws God's presence and his attention.
- c) When we sing praises to God, in effect we are building a throne for him to come among us.
- d) Let us build him a glorious throne of praise. Let's call down his presence by our praise.

#### Our praise or lack of it reveal where we are at spiritually.

- a) Our praise or lack of it reveal where we are at in our relationship with God – both as individuals and as a prayer group or a congregation

- b) A lack of praise reveals a lack of intimate relationship with the Lord, and a lack of appreciation for who he is, what he has done for us, and what he has provided for us.
- c) Conversely, a high level of praise usually arises from an intimate relationship with the Lord and from an appreciation of his mighty works on our behalf.

**Men do sing:**

- a) We can't use the excuse that men don't sing because we have the example of men in monasteries singing, the example of Gregorian chant, Taizé, the Companions of the Cross & others
- b) King David set a great example in singing praises to God. He composed many of the psalms, the praise book of Jews and Christians alike.
- c) Men do sing and should sing praises to God

**Praise gets our minds off ourselves:**

- a) Praise gets our minds off ourselves and helps us lighten up and relax.
- b) Praise helps us focus on God and his holiness, majesty, glory, power, love, compassion, goodness, generosity, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, and his other wonderful characteristics
- c) Singing praises to God helps us not be so serious and helps release in us a spirit of joy.

**We can sing in solitude:**

- a) The early monks went into solitude precisely so that they could sing the psalms to God without distractions.
- b) The contemplative life enhances singing
- c) We can and should sing praises in the solitude of our homes and in the solitude of our personal prayer.

**Singing praises creates and develops community:**

- a) As one of the early Christians said, "Singing praises to God helps us to live well together."
- b) We see that in monasteries as well as in other groups and in churches that sing joyful praises to the Lord.
- c) "In the words of a song, "I don't know what you came to do; I came to praise the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia, praise the Lord."

**We sing praises to God for Church renewal:**

- a) Singing praises to God helps renew us and therefore renew the Church.
- b) Joyful praise has been called a taste of heaven as the angels join us in praising God. Some have heard the angels singing and others have seen them as praises were going on.

**Praise is a powerful spiritual weapon:**

- a) Praise is an effective spiritual weapon because it focuses on God and his greatness.

- b) By drawing the presence of the angels among us, joyful praise brings us their heavenly help.
- c) Singing praises to God reminds us of his love for us & of his power at work in us. This builds up our faith in his loving & powerful protection from the enemy.
- d) "When he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the LORD and **praise** him in holy splendor, as they went before the army, saying, "Give thanks to the LORD, for his steadfast love endures forever. As they began to **sing and praise**, the LORD set an ambush against the Ammonites, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah, so that they were routed." (2Ch 20:21-22)

In Luke 15:11-32 we have the story of the prodigal son. When he returns, the loving father declares a celebration; he throws a party! The older son is caught up in a slave mentality and a condemning attitude toward his brother and toward their father for receiving him back. He refuses to come into the party. The party will go on with or without you – come into the party and sing praises to our loving and glorious God. You are invited to the party so come on in. Be free and be joyful as you participate in the party!

(See also: Psalm 100, Psalm 150, Judges 5:1-3; Judith 15:9-14, 16:1-20; Tobit 12:6 – 13:1-18; Luke 1:46-55; Luke 1:67-80;)

*Let's just praise the Lord, praise the Lord.*

*Let's just lift our hearts toward heaven and praise the Lord*

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