The Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
Dear God, I dedicate this work to you. Imprint Your mind upon it, Fly with it unto the heavens. Use it to shower Your love onto the world. Thank you for Your faith in me that such a glorious mission has been placed in my hands. AMEN.
In most parts, the renewal movements experienced have been "grassroots" movements, "bottoms up" so to speak, rather than "top down," that is, NOT planned from the "top" to seep down below.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal by Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
spontaneity
unpredictability
surprising
shocking
unorthodox
The most unlikely people have been instruments to initiate and to lead
and frequently, aroused the initial oppositions of the guardians of the established order, and only with much hesitancy have they been accepted as movements genuinely breathe in by the Holy Spirit.
Examples of Movements
which dates back to the early years of the Church

St. Anthony
in the 3rd century
of fleeing the city to run
to the desert to find
solitude there, which is
what we find now in
contemplative retreats
ascetical movements
of the 4th and 5th centuries
and their
science of perfection
Examples of Movements which dates back to the early years of the Church

spread of monasticism in the West with the Cluniac and Cistercian reforms and St. Benedict
Examples of Movements which dates back to the early years of the Church

Order of Friars Minor of St. Francis of Assisi and his brothers in the 12th century, inspiring a way of life that was thoroughly charismatic.

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All these involved something old, that is, going back basically to the challenge of the gospel but packaged in new wrappings through distinctive fresh approaches.
Examples of Movements
which dates back to the early years of the Church

It is this freshness, this newness that characterize the charismatic activity of the Spirit in the Church.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal by Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
17-19 Feb 1967

Duquesne University, a Catholic University in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, USA operated by the Congregation of the Holy Spirit

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal by Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
“baptized in the Holy Spirit”
marked by an outpouring of charismatic gifts
“You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes down upon you; then you are to be my witnesses.”

-Acts 1: 8
speaking in tongues
prophecy
discernment of spirits
power to drive evil away
New Pentecost
as prayed for by
Pope John XXXIII
and intimated through
the teachings of
Vatican II
Through this movement, the gentle breeze of the Spirit blowing has recharged and filled peoples’ lives with fresh spiritual energy and enthusiasm, touching countless laypersons, religious, priests, even bishops in the work of renewing the face of the earth.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal by Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
Main Characteristics of CCR

- **unity** between churches and groups
- **focus** on charism
- **centrality** of the lay vocation
- The spirit was poured out on students:
  - **importance** of the youth
“The Pentecostal grace was at work, and that is was not a question of a movement – there was no founder, no rule, no precise structure – but the breath of the Spirit, which was vital for many aspects of life and indeed for all movements.”
In summer of 1975, some 10,000 Catholic charismatics gathered at St Peter’s Basilica.
Pope Paul VI called Charismatic Renewal “the good fortune of the Church and the World” and gave his seal of approval to the movement.
“chance for the church and for the world”

“Nothing is more necessary than the witness of this spiritual renewal that we see The Holy Spirit evoking.”

Pope Paul VI
The initial reaction to the movement by the church hierarchy was cautiously supportive.
harbinger (noun) | 'hærbiŋər |
- a person or thing that announces or signals the approach of another
- a forerunner of something
Pope John Paul II stated that the movement “is integral to the renewal of the entire Catholic Church.”
Pope John Paul II, as well as Pope Benedict XVI, acknowledged the good aspects of the movement while urging caution, pointing out members must maintain their link to the Catholic church.
“I am convinced that this movement is a very important component of the entire renewal of the church”.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal by Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
On November 1990 the Pontifical Council for the Laity promulgated the decree which inaugurated the Catholic Fraternity of Covenant Communities and Fellowships.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal by Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
“The declaration is a most significant event in the history of Charismatic Renewal as it was the first time that the renewal has had formal, canonical recognition of Vatican.”
"The institutional and charismatic aspects are co-essential as it were to the church’s constitution. They contribute, although differently to the life, renewal and sanctification of God’s people. This providential rediscovery of the Church’s charismatic dimension that, before and after the council, a remarkable pattern of growth has been established for ecclesial movements and new communities."
“... the ecclesial movements and new communities which blossomed after the Second Vatican Council, constitute a unique gift of the Lord and precious resource for the life of the Church. They should be accepted with trust and valued for the various contributions they place in the service of the common benefit in an ordered and fruitful way...”
“The CCR is not a movement in the Church, but as the Church itself in movement.”

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal by Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
Some Catholic Charismatic Communities conduct healing services, bible study, outreaches and evangelization where the presence of the Holy Spirit is felt and healing and miracles take place.
The mission of the CCR is to educate believers into the totality of the declaration of the Gospels.
“... one with Him and walk into the fruit of the Holy Spirit”
- Galatians 5:22-23
“Ecclesial maturity isn’t about growing old in the spirit but staying forever young in the Spirit. Never lose your youthfulness, your capacity be amazed about the works of God and your commitment to the mission of the Church.”
remain youthful in mind and spirit
be continually amazed at God
be committed to the evangelization mission of the Church
The Catholic Charismatic Renewal

in the Ecclesiastical Province of Manila and the Philippines

Rev Fr Erick Y. Santos
A great number of leaders who thought of it as an answer to the spiritual thirst or dryness being experienced by many people received it with eagerness and enthusiasm.
However, others viewed it from a distance at first, with a wait and see attitude or with much caution, misgivings, or even distrust.
Many others on the sidelines, some even skeptics, were drawn to this Spirit-inspired movement as they witnessed supernatural changes happening in lives and relationships of people who have participated in the programs it offered.
There were many "loose" groups which gathered together not formally organized but came to worship God in prayer and songs, to read the Bible and share their personal experiences in finding peace and consolation in the Lord Jesus.
Subsequently, people who experienced a renewed awareness of God’s love felt the intense desire to share their faith and service to others. Thus, prayer groups and communities mushroomed everywhere.
The phenomenal growth of this spiritual experience was evaluated by the hierarchy of the Church, particularly, the Archdiocese of Manila.
On the one hand, it indicated an unqualified opportunity for evangelization, as its goal is to help the mission of the Church by helping people live renewed and powerful life in the Spirit.
On the other hand, there were risks and pitfalls involved, that is, if the movement was not guided or directed properly, it could result to many Catholics drifting away from the Church or proselytized by other ecumenical or denominational charismatic groups.
His Eminence
Jaime Cardinal L. Sin
issued on 25 January 1981
guidelines and
recommendations
to be observed by priests, religious
and lay people to help form
their proper attitude and those
of others regarding the charismatic
renewal movement.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Ecclesiastical Province of Manila and the Philippines
Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
The Cardinal emphasized that the charismatic renewal is **NOT** a new phenomenon, rather it **IS** a stress to the Holy Spirit’s **active role** and **presence** in our midst.
It is a heightened awareness of the power and gifts of the Spirit that had been so often disregarded or ignored.
“Its manifestations are varied: deep communion of souls, close contact with God in faithfulness to the commitments undertaken at baptism, in prayer that is often community prayer, in which each one, expressing himself freely, helps, supports and nourishes the prayer of others, and, at the basis of everything, a personal conviction.”
“This conviction has its source not only in instruction received by faith but also in a certain experience of real life, namely, that without God, man can do nothing, that with Him, on the contrary, everything becomes possible. Hence this need of praising Him, thanking Him, celebrating the marvels that He works everywhere around and in us.”
“The real presence of the Holy Spirit as not merely within the level of human emotions but affects the entire human person, his intellect, will, body and emotions. It is an experience of conversion, a conscious adherence to Jesus Christ, as Lord and Savior.”
a rediscovery of the person of Jesus Christ;
a spiritual freedom with progressive liberation
from certain bondages like alcohol, drugs, illicit sex,
habitual dishonesty; a new taste for the Holy Scripture;
a desire to evangelize; . . . to serve the poor and to change
the sinful structures of society; a renewed sense
of fraternal bonds uniting all Christians; a strengthening
of the family whereby homes affected by this stream
of grace are found to be renewed in fresh relationships
between husband and wife, parents and children.
Recommendations

To prepare people for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and for the fruitful participation in the charismatic renewal, prayer groups must use the Life in the Spirit Seminar approved by the Archdiocese.
On the matter of duration or number of days required to run an LSS, the regular eight evening sessions, as conceived by practically all the authors, is most ideal, two days from 8AM-5PM or so is permissible, with maximum tolerance, BUT one day is a NO, NO.
Only mature, stable persons with good pastoral sense should lead praying over people for the release of the power of the Holy Spirit and help them open up to receive the gift of tongues. Such praying should be done in an atmosphere of peace and always with propriety. Care should be taken that those who are prayed for, are not pressured into speaking in tongues, because of the false notion that one cannot receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit unless one speaks in tongues.
Leaders should encourage the exercise of the gift of prophecy and take full responsibility for every prophecy spoken in the prayer meeting. They show this by giving good feedback to those who prophesy in order to help them grow to maturity in the exercise of the gift and by correcting false prophecies. They should carefully discern prophecies spoken by emotionally unstable and unbalanced people, or prophecies from newcomers whom they do not know. They should promptly act and stop anyone who seems to be possessed supposedly by a saint, the Sto. Nino, etc. Any trance-like or hysterical behavior should be dealt with and corrected.
Leaders are responsible for the proper exercise of the prayer for healing. Only mature, prudent, and sensitive people who could keep confidential matters shared to them, especially in cases of praying for inner and emotional healing, are to be members of the healing team.
Leaders should see to it that they constantly grow in their knowledge of the faith, Scripture, the teachings and directions of the Church, and also the various elements of the charismatic renewal. They are to explain these things to their members.
It is essential that priests and religious, and men and women become involved in the charismatic renewal. 

But above all parish priests. It is through the ministry of the parish priest, above all, that the charismatic renewal can firmly be inserted into the local Church, receive full Catholic teaching, and sacramental ministry.
Catholic groups should be openly Catholic and be free to express themselves according to their Catholic beliefs, even if they welcome other Christians to come and pray with them. Non–Catholics should NOT be invited to teach Scripture to Catholic groups. Catholics with insufficient preparation and knowledge to judge the accuracy of the interpretation of the Scripture should NOT participate in non-Catholic Bible study.
Leaders who invite anyone from outside the Archdiocese to give retreats, workshops, hold rallies, etc., be these persons Catholics or non-Catholics, priests, religious or lay should first get permission from the Archdiocesan Charismatic Office. This is especially true when individuals attempt to invite speakers or evangelists, whether Catholic or non-Catholic from abroad to the Philippines.
Through the years, with the movement of people and events, coupled with problems solved and unsolved, modifications and innovations have become necessary to answer the challenges of the new wave of activities and time.
Federation of Transparochial Charismatic Communities Foundation, Inc.

Alliance of Parochial Charismatic Communities

Office Prayer Communities
Statistics gathered from the Archdiocesan Executive Council show that as of today, there are 34 accredited members of the Federation of Transparochial Communities; 27 very much alive and active Office Prayer Communities; and 268 prayer group members of the Alliance of Parish Rooted Prayer Communities (Ecclesiastical Province).
Pastoral Challenges for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
The Catholic Charismatic Renewal has now reached its 40th year of experience, the age of adulthood, and the stage ready to be engaged.

Pastoral Challenges for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
Its first decade was a period dedicated to discovering the love of God, the Lordship of Jesus, and the presence of the charisms of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers.
The second decade served to situate it in the heart of the Church and to construct with the charisms prayer groups and communities, which emerged around the whole world.
The third decade called us to bind ourselves together, to study, to learn and be equipped to respond to the call of mission.
Now, on the fourth year of the fourth decade, we, the charismatics in the Archdiocese of Manila, are asked to be engaged in mission. We are called upon to respond to the invitation of Pope John Paul II to join in a “New Evangelization”.

Pastoral Challenges for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
evangelization in its new ardor, new in its methods, new in its expressions.
We are asked to broaden our horizons and see that our brothers and sisters working with us in the same vineyard are not competitors but partners.
On Holy Tuesday, 3 April 2012, the Secretariat of ACCRM headed by its Director, Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos, together with the representatives of the three segments (APCC, FTCC, OPC) had an audience with Manila Archbishop Luis Antonio Tagle.
Archbishop Tagle gave the following challenges to the CCR in the context of the issues battling the Philippine Church today:

The need for imbibing the “sense of pride” as Catholics.

The need to face the growing number of those who have joined the Born Again Assemblies (like Victory Christian Fellowships) who enjoy the flexibility of time and convenience of the places of worship.

Pastoral Challenges for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal
Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
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To strengthen the social action and outreach dimension of the renewal

The role of the charismatic youth in leading their peers to the renewal and the Church

Pastoral Challenges for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal
Rev. Fr. Erick Y. Santos
Archbishop Tagle gave the following challenges to the CCR in the context of the issues battling the Philippine Church today:

A deeper “sense of mission” in the renewal

The never-ending need for evangelizer (and catechists)
What do we do, where do we go from here?

(1) The Catholic Charismatic Renewal has now reached its 40th year (updated) of experience, the age of adulthood, and the stage ready to be engaged. We saw its first decade as a period dedicated to discovering the love of God, the Lordship of Jesus, and the presence of the charisms of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers. (2) The second decade served to situate it in the heart of the Church and to construct with the charisms prayer groups and communities, which emerged around the whole world. (3) The third decade called us to bind ourselves together, to study, to learn and be equipped to respond to the call of mission.

(5) Now, on the fourth year (updated) of the fourth decade we, the charismatics in the Archdiocese of Manila, are asked to be engaged in mission. We are called upon to respond to the invitation of Pope John Paul II to join in a “new evangelization”. He speaks deeper, he seeks not just the re-evangelization of the continents but an evangelical in its new ardor, new in its methods, new in its expressions. It is the same challenge we find in Mt. 13:52 “the new as well as the old”. Evangelization is nothing new, we are still asked to transmit the Gospel to those who have not followed the path towards God. But in the process, we are asked to heighten our awareness in cultivating harmony and unity, peace and friendship in diversity. We are asked to broaden our horizons and see that our brothers and sisters working with us in the same vineyard are not competitors but partners. We are reminded that if we persist going the way we always had, many will surely never hear of Jesus Christ through us. Many who are also baptized Christians will never have a personal experience of Jesus Christ with us.

Pastoral Challenges:

(7) On Holy Tuesday, 3 April 2012, the Secretariat of the of the Archdiocesan Catholic Charismatic Ministries (ACCRM) headed by Fr. Erick Y. Santos, Director, together with the representatives of the three segments, Alliance of Parochial Charismatic Communities (APCC), Federation of Transparochial Charismatic (FTCC) and Office Prayer Communities (OPC) had an audience with Manila Archbishop Luis Antonio Tagle.

(8) He gave the following challenges to the CCR in the context of the issues battling the Philippine Church today:

(9) - The need for imbibing the “sense of pride” as Catholics.

(10) - The need to face the growing number of those who have joined the Born Again Assemblies (like Victory Christian Fellowships) who enjoy the flexibility of time and convenience of the places of worship.
(11)-To strengthen the social action and outreach dimension of the renewal.

(12)-The role of the charismatic youth in leading their peers to the renewal and the Church.

(13) - A deeper “sense of mission” in the renewal.

(14) - The never-ending need for evangelizer (and catechists)
The Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Through the ages, the Church has survived, but has experienced many ecclesial movements which played important roles in renewing her spiritual life at various crucial times in history. For just as how there are many mansions in the Lord’s house, so are there many ways by which the Holy Spirit initiates reforms whenever he pleases and with whomever he chooses for his own purpose. (1) In most parts the renewal movements experienced have been “grassroots” movements, “bottoms up” so to speak rather than “top down,” that is - not planned from the “top” to seep down below. Many were characterized with (2) spontaneity and unpredictability with usually something surprising or somewhat shocking or unorthodox about them. (3) The most unlikely people have been instruments to initiate and lead and frequently, aroused the initial oppositions of the guardians of the established order, and only with much hesitancy have they been accepted as movements genuinely breathe in by the Holy Spirit.

Some examples of said movements which dates back to the early years of the church are: the practice of (4) St. Anthony in the 3rd century, of fleeing the city to run to the desert to find solitude there, which is what we find now in contemplative retreats. (5) The ascetical movements of the fourth and fifth centuries and their science of perfection, (6) the spread of monasticism in the West with the Cluniac and Cistercian reforms and St. Benedict and his followers which gave renewal to the prayer life of the Church by the public recitation of the Divine Office. The widely spread (7) Order of Friars Minor of St Francis of Assisi and his brothers in the 12th century, inspiring a way of life that was thoroughly charismatic especially during its primitive years. The work of the Jesuits in their mission, teachings and retreats and the many other crusades of lay spirituality in the Middle Ages intended to renew Catholic life in the post-Reformation period.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement is one of many recent ecclesial renewal experiences after the Second Vatican Council together with others like the Focolare, Cursillo, Marriage Encounter and many more inspired by the Spirit to refresh spiritual life. All these (8) involved something old, that is, going back basically to the challenge of the gospel but packaged in new wrappings through distinctive fresh approaches. The same challenge of spreading the good news of salvation but in ways more appropriate to the needs of the times. (9) It is this freshness, this newness that characterize the charismatic activity of the Spirit in the Church.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal, “Catholic” to distinguish it from charismatic activities of other church denominations, has acquired large and devoted followings worldwide.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal we have today is the out growth from the retreat held from (10) February 17-19,1967 of several faculty members and students of Duquesne University, a Catholic University in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, USA operated by the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, a religious order founded in France in 1703. Many of the students, although not all, (11) experienced being “baptized in the Holy Spirit.” The students really prepared for the said retreat by praying and

(12) This event was marked by an outpouring of charismatic gifts like the apostolic experience recorded in the Book of Acts and the fulfillment of the promise in Acts 1:8, “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes down upon you; then you are to be my witnesses.” Those who were present testified to have received gifts like that of speaking in tongues or glossolalia, prophecy, discernment of spirits, and the power to drive away evil.

The event obviously manifested the Holy Spirit’s response to the expressed need of the Church to experience a **New Pentecost** as prayed for by Pope John XXXIII and intimated through the teachings of Vatican II, likewise, the later pronouncements of Pope Paul VI. The movement rapidly spread to the campuses of Notre Dame University and the universities in Michigan and Indiana. Like wildfire, it drew so many to a spiritual re-awakening in schools, parishes, convents, monasteries, offices in all parts of the world, the Philippines included. According to the Malines Document I, as of 1993 or a little more than twenty-five years later, it was estimated that some 60,000,000 Catholics have already experienced being “baptized in the Holy Spirit.” **Through this movement, the gentle breeze of the Spirit blowing has recharged and filled peoples’ lives with fresh spiritual energy and enthusiasm, touching countless laypersons, religious, priests, even bishops in the work of renewing the face of the earth.**

Catholic conferences began to be held drawing massive crowds as much as 30,000 in one gathering. It soon caught the attention of the church.

One of the early members of what became known as the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, or CCR, for short, Dorothy Ranaghan, highlighted **four main characteristics of the CCR:**

1. Unity between churches and groups
2. The focus on charism
3. The centrality of the lay vocation
4. The spirit was poured out on students: the importance of the youth

(15) **Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens**, leading Cardinal of the Catholic Church and one of the moderators of the Second Vatican Council gave the charismatic movement a major endorsement. He understood that “the Pentecostal grace was at work, and that is was not a question of a movement - there was no founder, no rule, no precise structure - but the breath of the Spirit, which was vital for many aspects of life and indeed for all movements.” He presented his findings to Pope Paul VI and recommended that the Pope invite the Catholic leaders of his renewal on a pilgrimage to Rome to find their faith and their faithfulness to the church.

(16) In summer of 1975, some 10,000 Catholic charismatics gathered at St. Peter's Basilica. Also present were Protestants who were in invited to take part, giving the movement an ecumenical dimension. In his homily, Pope Paul VI called Charismatic Renewal “the good fortune of the Church and the World” and gave his seal of approval to the movement. Cardinal Suenens was then asked to oversee the integration of the Catholic Renewal into the heart of the church which he
accepted. Pope Paul VI called the movement “spiritual renewal” and gave it significant support when he ascribed to it as a “chance for the church and for the world”. In his strongest statement he declared, “nothing is more necessary than the witness of this spiritual renewal that we see the Holy Spirit evoking.”

(17) The initial reaction to the movement by the church hierarchy was cautiously supportive. Some initially supported it as being a harbinger of ecumenism. It was taught that these practices would draw the Catholic Church and the Protestant communities closer together in spiritual ecumenism. Today the Catholic Charismatic Renewal enjoys the strong support of the hierarchy, from the Pope to bishops of dioceses around the world, as an officially recognized ecclesial movement. Three Popes acknowledged the movement: Pope Paul VI, Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. It was (18) Pope John Paul II who stated that the movement “is integral to the renewal of the entire Catholic Church.” He, as well as Benedict XVI, acknowledged good aspects of the movement while urging caution, pointing out members must maintain their link to the Catholic church. (19) Pope John Paul II made a numbers of the statements on the Charismatics Movements. He said “I am convinced That this movement is a very important component of the entire renewal of the church”. Noting that since age 11 had said a daily prayer to the Holy Spirit, he added “this was my own spiritual initiation so I can understand all these charisms. They are all part of the richness of the Lord. I am convinced that this movement is a sign of his action.”

On (20) November, 1990 the Pontifical Council for the Laity promulgated the decree which inaugurated the Catholic Fraternity of Covenant Communities and Fellowships. Elected President of the Fraternity, Brian Smith of Brisbane, called the declaration a most significant event in the history of Charismatic Renewal as it was “the first time that the renewal has had formal, canonical recognition of Vatican.”

Again in (21) March 1992, Pope John Paul II said, “At this moment of the Church’s history, the Charismatic Renewal can play a significant role in promoting the much-needed defense of Christian life in societies where secularism and materialism have weakened many people’s ability to respond to the Spirit and discern God’s loving call, Your contribution to the re-evangelization of society will be made in the first place by personal witness in the indwelling Spirit and by showing forth his presence through the works of holiness and solidarity.”

Moreover, during (22) Pentecost 1998, the Pope recognized the essential nature of the charismatic dimension: “the institutional and charismatic aspects are co-essential as it were to the church’s constitution. They contribute, although differently to the life, renewal and sanctification of God’s people. This providential rediscovery of the Church’s charismatic dimension that, before and after the council, a remarkable pattern of growth has been established for ecclesial movements and new communities.”
Pope Benedict XVI in his address to the participants in a meeting by the Catholic Fraternity of Charismatic Covenants Communities and Fellowships on October 31, 2008 said “...the ecclesial movements and new communities which blossomed after the Second Vatican Council, constitute a unique gift of the Lord and precious resource for the life of the Church. They should be accepted with trust and valued for the various contributions they place in the service of the common benefit in an ordered and fruitful way...”

Encouraged by the leadership of Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II and later by Pope Benedict XVI, many Catholic bishops of the United States, Canada, South America and Europe wrote pastoral statements supporting and encouraging the Renewal.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is “not a movement in the Church, but as the Church itself in movement” observed by Herbert Muhlen.

The charismatic element of the church is still evident today as it was in the early days of Christianity. Some Catholic Charismatic Communities conduct healing services, bible study, outreaches and evangelization where the presence of the Holy Spirit is felt and healing and miracles take place.

The mission of the CCR is to educate believers into the totality of the declaration of the gospels. A member is encouraged to talk to Jesus directly to have a one on one personal relationship with him and search for what the Lord is saying so that his life will be one with Him and walk into the fruit of the Holy Spirit. (Gal.5:22-23). This what the charismatic understands and responds by giving his life to Jesus. Conscience is seen an alternative voice of Jesus Christ.

As Cardinal Rylko said in an ICCRS event in 2006, “Ecclesial maturity isn’t about growing old in the spirit but staying forever young in th Spirit. Never loose our youthfulness, your capacity be amazed about the works of God and your commitment to the mission of the Church.”

So to stay active in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal one must:
1. Remain youthful in mind and spirit;
2. Be continually amazed at God;
3. Be committed to the evangelization mission of the Church.

There is no retirement in CCR. Michelle Moran correctly said, “CCR is for the whole Church and indeed for the world.”
The Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Ecclesiastical Province of Manila and the Philippines

The Catholic Church in the Philippines, particularly, the Archdiocese of Manila witnessed the swift spread of the movement not very long after it started in the United States and in Canada. (1) A great number of leaders who thought of it as an answer to the spiritual thirst or dryness being experienced by many people received it with eagerness and enthusiasm. (2) However, others viewed it from a distance at first, with a wait and see attitude or with much caution, misgivings, or even distrust. Many others on the sidelines, some even skeptics, were drawn to this Spirit-inspired movement as they witnessed supernatural changes happening in lives and relationships of people who have participated in the programs it offered.

In the beginning, (3) there were many “loose” groups which gathered together not formally organized but came to worship God in prayer and songs, to read the Bible and share their personal experiences in finding peace and consolation in the Lord Jesus. The Buklod Ng Pag-ibig Community formed by Fr. Pascual Adorable, SJ in 1972 started its first prayer meeting with only ten couples. The group grew substantially in number that they later conducted their weekly prayer meetings at the St. Mary’s College auditorium. The charism of this community is healing.

Another community that was known to be organized then, which offered schedule after schedule of Life in the Spirit Seminars (LSS) and conducted regular weekly prayer meetings at the Assumption Convent was the Ligaya Ng Panginoon Community which was founded in July, 1975 under the headship of Fr. Herb Schnieder, SJ. The Ligaya ng Panginoon Community then received continuous guidance from Ann Arbor, Michigan directly from some of the professors who experienced the weekend retreat of February, 1967. Today, the Couples for Christ and the Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals, two communities with international status, had their beginnings as outreach programs of Ligaya Ng Panginoon.

Other names and founders of big communities and prayers groups during the early period were Fr. Pedro Achutegue, SJ, Fr. Leonardo Polinar of Biyaya Ng Panginoon, Sr. Angelina Lim, Bro Paul Aguas of Baguio City, Bro Tony Vasquez, Bro PB Dionisio, Fr. John Chambers, SJ, and Bro. Joe Rona. Countless other names and faces had worked in setting the pillars and laying the blocks for building the Church through the renewal, may not now easily flash into my mind for recall, but are surely listed in God’s Book of Life.
The Catholic Charismatic Renewal continued to flourish in early 80’s. Among its early active supporters were Fr. Leonardo Polinar; Bro. Mike Velarde, who eventually founded El Shaddai together with Fr. Archie Guiriba, OFM, now of Shalom Community; the late Sr. Angelina Lim; the late Bro. Ronald Kookoorichkin a.k.a. Ronald Remy and Msgr. Fidelis Limcaco who later focused on the Parish Renewal Experience (PREX). Soon other communities followed. From the prison to praise, Bro. Bingbong Crisologo, now a member of the House of Representatives, who after experiencing a Life in the Spirit Seminar inside the prison, founded his own community, The Loved Flock, when he was released. When Sis. Techie Rodriguez left the Loved Flock, she founded Yhe Lord’s Flock with Fr. Larry Faraon, OP. Other communities blossomed, among them: The Spirit of Love Community from which the Rivers of Living Water branched out which lately gave birth to another community based at SM Megamall, simply named ACTS.

It seems that the Spirit allowed necessary divisions in some communities from which other entities experienced the same growth and richness in charisms: from The Loved Flock, the Beloved of the Lord Community was formed by Fr. Erick Y. Santos and Bro. Chito Jongco and wife, the late Jasmin Jongco whose charism for the missions and contemplative prayer have become their cutting edge. Other prominent transparochial communities are: Bukas Loob sa Diyos, Buklod ng Pag-ibig, Oasis of Love founded by Fr. Sonny Ramirez, OP and Christopher de Leon intended for people working in show business and The Light of Jesus founded by Bro. Bo Sanchez known for the Feasts being held in different parts of the country and the annual Kerygma Conference. These communities have their respective chapters and affiliates in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao and even abroad. There are also communities founded in the provinces.

(4) Subsequently, people who experienced a renewed awareness of God’s love felt the intense desire to share their faith and service to others. Thus, prayer groups and communities mushroomed everywhere. Many foreign speakers and guests were invited for congresses, conventions and healing explosions in the country. They helped put together the firm foundation of the Charismatic Renewal we have in the Archdiocese of Manila today.

Observers marveled at people who joined Life in the Spirit Seminars conducted in halls, homes, offices and parishes, who came by the hundreds, sometimes even thousands. (5) The phenomenal growth of this spiritual experience was evaluated by the hierarchy of the Church, particularly, the Archdiocese of Manila. The study presented both positive and negative results. On the one hand, it indicated an unqualified opportunity for evangelization, as its goal is to help the mission of the Church by helping people live renewed and powerful life in the Spirit. Likewise, its rich potential of reaching the many levels of the faithful cannot be shunned. On the other hand, there were risks and pitfalls involved, that is, if the movement was not guided or directed properly it could result to many
Catholics drifting away from the Church or proselytized by other ecumenical or denominational charismatic groups.

(6) His Eminence Jaime Cardinal L. Sin, the late prophetic Archbishop of Manila, in the spirit of collaboration for the building of the Church, issued on January 25, 1981 guidelines and recommendations to be observed by priests, religious and lay people to help form their proper attitude and those of others regarding the charismatic renewal movement. It is significant to note that after thirty-one years (updated) that said recommendations had been issued they are still very much applicable up to these days.

(7) The Cardinal emphasized that the charismatic renewal is not a new phenomenon rather it is a stress to the Holy Spirit’s active role and presence in our midst. (8) It is a heightened awareness of the power and gifts of the Spirit that had been so often disregarded or ignored. He clarified the signs of the Spirit’s presence in our age as he quoted (9) Pope Paul VI’s address on May 19, 1975 to a charismatic gathering in Rome where he said, “Its manifestations are varied: deep communion of souls, close contact with God in faithfulness to the commitments undertaken at baptism, in prayer that is often community prayer, in which each one, expressing himself freely, helps, supports and nourishes the prayer of others, and, at the basis of everything, a personal conviction. This conviction has its source not only in instruction received by faith but also in a certain experience of real life, namely, that without God, man can do nothing, that with Him, on the contrary, everything becomes possible. Hence this need of praising Him, thanking Him, celebrating the marvels that He works everywhere around and in us.”

He explained (10) the real presence of the Holy Spirit as not merely within the level of human emotions but affects the entire human person, his intellect, will, body and emotions. It is an experience of conversion, a conscious adherence to Jesus Christ, as Lord and Savior.

He described its clear positive sign and fruits by quoting the pastoral assessment on the (11) Movement by the Bishops of Belgium as: a rediscovery of the person of Jesus Christ; a spiritual freedom with progressive liberation from certain bondages like alcohol, drugs, illicit sex, habitual dishonesty; a new taste for the Holy Scripture; a desire to evangelize; . . . to serve the poor and to change the sinful structures of society; a renewed sense of fraternal bonds uniting all Christians; a strengthening of the family whereby homes affected by this stream of grace are found to be renewed in fresh relationships between husband and wife, parents and children.

To bring about real and solid renewal of faith, of loyal and committed service in the Church in the Archdiocese of Manila, the Cardinal issued recommendations some of
which I summarized and enumerate here under those still very relevant reminders today:

(12)1. To prepare people for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and for the fruitful participation in the charismatic renewal, prayer groups must use the Life in the Spirit Seminar approved by the Archdiocese.

I wish to explain in this connection that the various LSS Manuals being used then by communities and prayer groups in the Archdiocese of Manila were any of the following: The LSS Manual Catholic Edition from Ann Arbor, Michigan; You Will Receive Power by Ann Shields; Life in the Spirit Seminar by Fr. Leonardo Polinar and the Life in the Spirit Seminar by Fr. Faricy, S.J. All the above were considered valid and acceptable. However, Bishop Gabriel V. Reyes, the then Spiritual Director for both the National Service Committee Catholic Charismatic Renewal Philippines and the Renewal Movement of the Archdiocese of Manila particularly recommended the use of the LSS manual authored by Fr. Faricy which was released by the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Office (ICCRO) now renamed as International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (ICCRS).

In this regard, the ever-creative Filipino has come up with his own innovation, he has become eclectic meaning selective. With the various LSS manuals available, many leaders in the Archdiocese have not used only one particular approach rather added to the basic pattern of the Ann Arbor manual the topic on praise and worship from Fr. Polinar and the dear Jesus letter and commissioning rites of Fr. Faricy with emphasis on his treatment of the sacraments of reconciliation and the Eucharist. Other leaders with deep Catholic orientation included the topic on Mary in their syllabus.

(13)On the matter of duration or number of days required to run an LSS, Bishop Reyes then specified that the regular eight evening sessions, as conceived by practically all the authors, is most ideal, two days from 8:00a.m.-5:00pm or so is permissible with maximum tolerance, but one day is a no, no. He said it is too much of an abbreviated course and would not be able to attain much. He even requested us leaders actively serving in the Archdiocesan Secretariat as lay coordinators not to participate, as speakers, in any one day seminar to discourage organizers in conducting such.

(14)2. Only mature, stable persons with good pastoral sense should lead praying over people for the release of the power of the Holy Spirit and help them open up to receive the gift of tongues. Such praying should be done in an atmosphere of peace and always with propriety. Care should be taken that those who are prayed for, are not pressured into speaking in tongues, because of the false notion that one cannot receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit unless one speaks in tongues.
(15)3. Leaders should encourage the exercise of the gift of prophecy and take responsibility for every prophecy spoken in the prayer meeting. They show this by giving good feedback to those who prophesy in order to help them grow to maturity in the exercise of the gift and by correcting false prophecies. They should carefully discern prophecies spoken by emotionally unstable and unbalanced people, or prophecies from newcomers whom they do not know. They should promptly act and stop anyone who seems to be possessed supposedly by a saint, the Sto. Nino, etc. Any trance-like or hysterical behavior should be dealt with and corrected.

(16)4. Leaders are responsible for the proper exercise of the prayer for healing. Only mature, prudent, and sensitive people who could keep confidential matters shared to them, especially in cases of praying for inner and emotional healing, are to be members of the healing team. Emotionally unstable or unbalanced people have no place in the healing team. Seriously ill people should be encouraged and prepared to receive the sacrament of the anointing of the sick.

(17)5. Leaders should see to it that they constantly grow in their knowledge of the faith, Scripture, the teachings and directions of the Church, and also the various elements of the charismatic renewal. They are to explain these things to their members.

(18)6. It is essential that priests and religious, and men and women become involved in the charismatic renewal. But above all parish priests. It is through the ministry of the parish priest above all that the charismatic renewal can firmly be inserted into the local Church, receive full Catholic teaching, and sacramental ministry.

(19)7. Catholic groups should be openly Catholic and be free to express themselves according to their Catholic beliefs even if they welcome other Christians to come and pray with them. Non-Catholics should not be invited to teach Scripture to Catholic groups. Catholics with insufficient preparation and knowledge to judge the accuracy of the interpretation of the Scripture should not participate in non-Catholic Bible study.

(20)8. Leaders who invite anyone from outside the Archdiocese to give retreats, workshops, hold rallies, etc., be these persons Catholics or non-Catholics, priests, religious or lay should first get permission from the Archdiocesan Charismatic Office. This is especially true when individuals attempt to invite speakers or evangelists, whether Catholic or non-Catholic from abroad to the Philippines.
There was a time in the Archdiocese of Manila when leadership and areas of concern in the renewal were subdivided according to the already existing territorial ecclesiastical districts in the Church. The six (6) districts were: Cal-Ma-Na; Makati; North Manila; South Manila; Pasay; Quezon City. Within these districts came what we used to call parish-rooted communities. The Office Prayer Group, which was founded on February, 1986 at the height of the EDSA Revolution, and the Youth and Campus Ministry were also treated as “districts”. On the whole then, there were 8 subdivisions of territorial concerns. As of 1986, there were 398 registered parish-rooted prayer groups in 164 parishes and 80 registered active office prayer groups existing in the Archdiocese of Manila.

When Bishop Reyes bade farewell to the Charismatic Renewal to assume his new post as Bishop of Kalibo, Bishop Teodoro C. Bacani, Jr., Auxiliary Bishop of Manila took over the reign as Spiritual Director. One of his first significant moves was to gather together on September 2, 1988, through Bro. Willy Nakar, Presiding Elder of the Elim Community, all transparochial prayer groups and covenant communities based in the Archdiocese of Manila to organize them into a kind of a “district” so that they too may be properly represented in decision-making and activities of people involved in the Charismatic Movement.

(21) Through the years, with the movement of people and events, coupled with problems solved and unsolved, modifications and innovations have become necessary to answer the challenges of the new wave of activities and time. Under the guidance of Bishop Bacani, the Archdiocesan Secretariat has undergone series of reorganizations. Today, the Archdiocesan Catholic Charismatic Renewal Ministries has three segments: (22) The Federation of Transparochial Charismatic Communities Foundation, Inc., the (24) Alliance of Parochial Charismatic Communities or that which was originally referred to as parish based then as parish-rooted communities and the (25) Office Prayer Communities formed by employees of private and government organizations. According to Bishop Bacani this simplified organizational structure acknowledges the spectacular growth and dynamism of the Charismatic Renewal in the Archdiocese of Manila. It recognizes, the need to decentralize management of distinct cultures of communities organized in parishes, offices, schools and in the marketplace to give them the opportunity to grow separately yet united as one under the leadership of one Episcopal Head.

Membership in Prayer Groups and Communities

(26) Statistics gathered from the Archdiocesan Executive Council show that as of today there are thirty-four (34) accredited members of the Federation of Transparochial Communities; twenty-seven (27) very much alive and active office prayer communities; and two hundred sixty eight (268) prayer
Moreover, we record approximately 5,307,000 members of the Federation of Transparochial Communities alone (El Shaddai membership included), 11,250 members come from the Alliance of Parish Rooted Communities, 500 active young men and women affiliated with the YACM, and about 450 Samahang Manggagawa kay Kristo from the Office Prayer Group. We have an aggregate of 5,319,200 members of the Charismatic Renewal in the Archdiocese of Manila. A powerhouse of prayer warriors indeed!

With this number, if we come before the Father, with one heart made up of many hearts, with mind made up of many minds, as one family made up of many families, and as one community made up of many communities we can be very certain that he will hear us, for our Lord Jesus promised (Mt.18:19) “if two of you join your voices on earth to pray for anything, it shall be granted you by my Father in heaven”. We shall be able to get the answer to our prayers, not by might nor by power but by the Spirit of the Lord (Zec. 4:6) and our united prayers.