



# B.C. Renewal

(formerly B.C. Charismatic)

Serving the Catholic charismatic renewal in British Columbia

Spring 2023

## Reaching out to the West

### *CHARIS gathers charismatic ministries together*

Work has begun on a Western Canadian service of communion for CHARIS, the latest step in Pope Francis's reorganization of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

The regional body, one of four in Canada, will reach beyond prayer groups to embrace all the "expressions and realities" of the charismatic renewal that have sprung up over the past half-century.

Covenant communities, youth ministries, schools of evangelization, Bible colleges, publishing houses, religious communities, ethnic organizations, ministries to the poor, and interchurch initiatives will be welcomed, along with any other group that has its roots in baptism in the Spirit and wishes to be a part of CHARIS.

Participation is voluntary, but it is hoped that as many groups as possible will join in what the Holy Father intends as a united effort to preach the message of Jesus, promote baptism in the Spirit more widely in the Church, co-operate with other Christian churches, and serve the poor and needy.

The new regional service will cover BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

A three-member steering committee is collecting information on Spirit-driven ministries, and will be sending these groups a letter of invitation to share what they have seen the Spirit doing in their own work.

"When we look around us with the eyes of faith, it's clear that the Spirit is active in the Church in abundant, uniquely creative, and very

diverse ways," says the steering committee letter.

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"At the direction of the Holy Father, we are reaching out to the many ministries, organizations and groups through which the Holy Spirit is manifesting its power in the Church and in the world. It's time for the fire to fall once again."

CHARIS, created by the Pope in 2019, is organized into "services of communion"

at multiple levels. International and continental services already exist, and an interim national service for Canada was set up last year. The regional services are currently in formation.

Services of communion are not governing bodies, but will offer communication, service, fellowship and organizational leadership. Actual governing authority over all aspects of the Catholic charismatic renewal will remain in the hands of the Pope, bishops, and pastors, as it always has.

Provincial service committees such as Catholic Renewal Services of BC, which represent prayer groups, will be unchanged, although they will share in activities and initiatives growing out of CHARIS. The existing English- and French-speaking national service committees, which also represent prayer groups, will also continue to exist.

Melvin De Paz of Manitoba, Jim Anderson of Saskatchewan, and Richard Dunstan, chair of Catholic Renewal Services of BC, form the steering committee for the Western service of communion.

# Rejoice: God needs you—now!

You might not have noticed, but it's a great time to be a Catholic, says Father Mark Cherry.

Not an easy time, though. Far from it.

Father Cherry, a Halifax-based missionary speaker, told the 2022 Vancouver Catholic charismatic conference we're now moving into the final confrontation predicted back in 1976 by Pope

St. John Paul II. "We are now facing the final confrontation between the Church and the anti-Church, of the Gospel and the anti-Gospel," the then-cardinal Karol Wojtyla told an audience in Philadelphia, two years before he became Pope.

"Facing' implies future," Father Cherry told about 200 people at Immaculate Conception in Delta in November. "I believe we're in it now. We are approaching, not the end of the world, but the end of the age."

Christian values and the Church itself are under attack everywhere, and the attacks are getting worse and worse. Supports Catholics have always relied on have been stripped away from us, in the Church and in society.

But not to worry—God is in control. Remember, Father Cherry said, it wasn't the Devil that led Jesus into the desert at the beginning of His ministry—it was the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:1). And God is doing the same for us: "The only things the Lord is stripping from us is anything that is hindering our relationship with Him. Everything is being shaken, but we are part of an unshakeable kingdom." (See Hebrews 12:26-28).

So, we have work to do.

"You were born for just such a time as this," Father Cherry said. "If God had needed you in the third century, you would have been born in the third century."

As the world around us is shaken, he said, people need the Gospel more than ever, and we are called to be harvesters. We must pray daily, telling God "I'm available." "I find that God is putting people in my path, and I'm able to share the Gospel with them."

Citing the story of the raising of the dry bones in Ezekiel 37, Father Cherry said today's "dry bones" include lukewarm

Catholic, fallen-away Catholics, and people who have never heard the Gospel at all.

"God wants to breathe life into this, and He wants you and me to prophesy, to bring life back to them."

Father Cherry said we must never forget we are in a spiritual battle, and must use spiritual weapons. We can't fight spiritual powers with natural means.

"We have forgotten that we are the Church Militant," he said. "We thought that if we were nice, everybody would like us, and it would all turn out OK." That hasn't worked out very well, so we need to turn back to God and His power.

First of all, we must *know* Jesus—not just know *about* Him—and, just as with a human acquaintance, we become His friend only by spending time with Him. That means Mass, prayer, adoration, and Scripture reading. We must follow the Blessed Virgin into battle, ask our guardian angel for protection every day, and apply the blood of Jesus to our lives.

If we do our part, God will do His. He will put people in our paths who need our gifts, and He will supply those gifts. "The anointing of the Holy Spirit enables you to go beyond what your natural ability would do. The anointing manifests itself when we step out in faith and trust God to show up."

The conference was sponsored by Vancouver Archdiocesan Renewal Committee.

—Richard Dunstan

## Fr. Cherry to lead retreat

Father Mark Cherry will be back in BC this September for a weekend retreat in Victoria.

Titled Show Us Your Face, O Lord, the retreat will be held Sept. 29-30 (Friday evening and Saturday) at St. Joseph the Worker church.

The retreat will include three talks by Father Cherry, adoration, benediction, a healing service, and Mass. Confessions will be available. Lunch will be "bring your own."

Talk topics will be Beloved of God; Called and Chosen; and Anointed and Appointed.

For more information email [catholicretreat7@gmail.com](mailto:catholicretreat7@gmail.com).

**Vancouver  
conference**

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# ***BC committee listens to the Lord***

**“My heart aches for My people. My people need Me. Go forth, one by one and two by two. Reach out to this aching world. Soothe My aching soul.”**

Catholic Renewal Services of BC, the provincial service committee for the Catholic charismatic renewal, met face to face in February for the first time in more than three years.

The session was not a business meeting but a weekend retreat, held at Westminster Abbey in Mission, near Abbotsford. Rather than make specific plans and decisions, the committee gathered to seek God’s direction after the long disruption of covid.

God wasn’t slow in speaking. The prophecy in boldface type above came on the first evening. While committee members received many words of prophecy, scripture, and visual images during the retreat, this one stood out for the urgency of its words and the intensity of its delivery.

The other words were less intense, but they fit in with the same message: Our job is to share God’s love with God’s people, trusting in God’s power, and we need to get on with it.

## **Our mission to God’s people:**

Isaiah 60:1-3 Arise, shine—nations shall come to your light.

Matthew 12:34 “From the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks.” Our hearts must be full of the Lord so that we will speak of Him.

John 37b ff: [Jesus] cried out, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to Me, and let the one who believes in Me drink. As the Scripture has said, ‘out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’” Now He said this about the Spirit, which believers in Him were to receive. (Thus the Spirit is given to us that it may flow out to others as living water.)

God will send people who will challenge us, and they will be blessed through us.

We must remember that our every interaction with everyone we meet moves them a little closer either to heaven or to hell.

## **Our reliance on God:**

Image of a ship beset by huge waves, but it always rights itself. God says “I am the anchor; don’t worry about problems.”

“I will provide.”

The Good News progresses through signs and wonders.

Each of us has a special gift; united we will be strong. There will be losses and gains, and many surprises on the way. The world will resist more as it moves away from Jesus; we must prepare by staying close to Him.

Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. We must hang on to Him.

“I am in control.”

Hebrews 13:5 “I will never leave you or forsake you.”

Isaiah 61: 1 ff The spirit of the LORD is upon us...

Habakkuk 2:1-3 Stand guard—the LORD’s vision is still coming.

## **Reminders that we still need to do our part:**

“I could change the world in a moment, but I want your help.”

Mark 3:14 (Jesus appointing the Twelve)—we must, first, be with Him, and second, go out with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord is calling us out to the boat with Him. Most Christians are still on the land.

Romans 12:6-12 Do not flag in the exercise of our gifts and ministries.

Image of small sparks of light visible in prayer groups all over the province.

“Encourage one another.”

“Refresh My people”—gather those doing the work.

“Know the power of your praise.”

No formal motions were passed, but the committee agreed informally to continue seeking God’s will and looking for ways to serve the needs of individuals and prayer groups in their own areas and across the province. In addition, the committee hopes to add members from ministries beyond the prayer groups that form the background of the present membership.

Six members of the committee attended the retreat in person, with two others present via Zoom for the prayer sessions. Those staying on site also attended community prayer several times a day with the approximately 30 Benedictine monks who live at the abbey.

## National committee plans ministry tour to Newfoundland

Catholic Renewal Services of Canada, the national service committee for the charismatic renewal, will make a ministry tour of Newfoundland June 10-17.

Six members of the committee will visit St. John's, Marystown, Bishop's Falls, Corner Brook and Stephenville, along with charismatic leaders from the province. The team will host Masses and healing services, share prophetic words of encouragement, meet with local priests and bishops and listen to concerns from parishioners.

The committee will also hold its semi-annual business meeting in St. John's.

The committee consists of representatives of provincial and regional service committees from across English-speaking Canada; a similar committee serves the same role for French-speaking Canada.

The English committee meets in a different part of Canada each time. Newfoundland was chosen for this year's spring meeting because of the many challenges facing the Church in that province. The Archdiocese of St. John's has had to sell many parish churches to cover abuse settlements, and there is a shortage of priests in all three of the island's dioceses.

## Thursday Zoom prayer meetings resume for May

Nelson Diocese Renewal Service Committee will resume its Thursday online prayer meetings for the month of May.

The meetings will take place on Zoom at 1:30 p.m. Pacific time May 4, 11, 18 and 25, with prayer and praise, teaching, small group breakout rooms, and intercessory prayer. Teaching will include online presentations by Peter Herbeck and Dr. Mary Healy of Renewal Ministries.

Theme is Freedom—the freedom to open ourselves to God and allow Him to give us the grace to do whatever He is calling us to do. One of the prophetic messages received during planning for the meetings was “I want more from My people.”

The meetings last 90 minutes and are open to anyone, from any location in BC and beyond. For the link, email [lore.renewick@gmail.com](mailto:lore.renewick@gmail.com).

### PROPHETIC WORDS FROM NELSON ZOOM MEETINGS

For you will spread out to the right and to the left, Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed; do not be discouraged, for you will not suffer disgrace; But with great compassion I will gather you and with everlasting love I will have compassion on you, says the LORD, your redeemer.” Isaiah 54:3,7

I Hear the LORD say: “Do you not know you have My power? My power is My word wait to see what it is that you will do because we know that you are doing a new thing, and your call to us, Lord, is to abide, abide in You, which is near to you, in your mouth and in your heart. My word which goes out from your mouth is not empty; it shall accomplish My purpose and succeed in all things, for My word has power. Proclaim My power, whisper My name, in My Church, over My world, for My people. Listen to My word, live My word, proclaim My word and you shall see My saving power. My name is power, My word is power. Unleash My word.”

“Fight for our kinsmen today.” “All must go into battle today” 1 Maccabees 5:32, 42, The

battle belongs to the LORD, Yes! And He has won it, but it takes all of us on this earth to respond to God's call to battle, to be a part of His army. It takes all of us to stand up for God's kingdom. God's desire is still that not one would be lost.

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.” Isaiah 43:18-19. We wait, Lord!! We abide in Your word, abide in Your plan.

**I Am your God and you are My people; I have given you much; but there is *more*. There's always *more*; I need you, My people, to cry to Me day by day, for the *more*. You need *more* to be what the people need you to be at this time. Don't be satisfied with where you are or what you have now. Know that there's *more*. I have *more* gifts, I have *more* wisdom, *more* discernment. Call out to Me, my people, and I will bless you with *more* and *more*.**

# Back to a glorious future: Time for

By RICHARD DUNSTAN

Fifty-six years ago, a small group of Catholics rediscovered a neglected treasure of early Christianity, and decided to build their lives around it.

They started slowly, because to the average Catholic, the whole idea was too far-fetched to take seriously. But it was a valid concept all the same, a belief that had helped keep the very first Christians going through all the challenges they faced, and it was solid Catholic doctrine.

So that small group persevered, in their personal spirituality and in their lives in the Church, and more and more people began to see the point, from laity all the way up to the Pope. Today, that neglected treasure has become, in the words of Pope Francis, “a current of grace for the whole Church.”

The treasure was the tangible outpouring of the Holy Spirit, with all its outlandish gifts: praying in tongues, prophecy, healing, and miracles. And the current of grace is the Catholic charismatic renewal, the largest ecclesial movement in the Church with well over 100 million members.

I think it's time for history to repeat itself. There is another neglected treasure of the early Church waiting to be rediscovered, and another renewal that needs to happen.

This, too, is sound Catholic doctrine, and this, too, is being disregarded by most Catholics because it sounds so far-fetched (not to mention inconvenient). We proclaim it every Sunday at Mass, but most of us barely hear the words coming out of our own mouths: “He will come to judge the living and the dead,” or in the more detailed Nicene Creed, “He will come again in glory...”

What we need is a **Catholic eschatological renewal**: a return to a faith consciously centred on the fact that Jesus is coming back. That's the faith the early Christians had, and that's why Christianity survived and prospered.

Whoa! I can hear readers saying. Are you trying to scare us? Like the cranks on the street corners with the signs that say “the end is near?” No, that's not the point. The early Christians weren't afraid of the Lord coming back, or at least fear wasn't their main focus. They were eager, impatient, excited. (Is

Jesus here yet? Oh. Well, maybe tomorrow.) And in the meantime they lived their whole lives “in view of His appearing and his kingdom” (2 Timothy 4:1). We need to live that same way today, whether Jesus comes back this evening or long after our great-grandchildren are gone.

*Eschatology* comes from the Greek word for “last,” and refers to the study of the “last things.” For us as Christians, it refers especially to the second coming of Jesus.

When most of us think about eschatology, we think of it as a warning, and that's valid in itself. We'll be in big trouble if we aren't in good spiritual shape when Jesus gets here. But there's so much more to the message than just warning. We must never forget that the second coming of Jesus is part of the *Good News*, more of a promise than a threat, embraced with joy by Christians from the beginning. We need to renew that embrace, and recover that joy.

Catholics may not stand on streetcorners with signs that say “the end is near,” but the second coming of Jesus is unquestionably part of Church teaching. In addition to the creed, it takes up 12 paragraphs of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (668-679, plus other references elsewhere), and it's mentioned in every book of the New Testament except for a couple that are so short they don't even have chapters.

Well, I guess that's no surprise. But what might be surprising, if you don't pay close attention, is that the return of Jesus is no mere side note. One influential New Testament specialist, Ernst Käsemann, actually described apocalyptic (roughly the same thing as eschatology) as “the mother of all Christian theology,” and most academic scholars agree that the earliest Christians were actively and eagerly awaiting the return of Jesus.

St. Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians says in its first chapter that its readers “wait for [God's] Son from heaven,” and in its closing chapter urges them to stay “sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” In 1 Corinthians 15, St. Paul makes it clear that the very resurrection of Jesus, the basis for our entire faith, is to be interpreted as the “first fruits” of the general

# a Catholic *eschatological* renewal

resurrection of all believers at the time of Jesus' return. In 2 Peter chapter 3, we are even told that we should be "waiting for *and hastening* the coming of the day of God."

This was a completely new idea in the pagan religious culture that surrounded the first Christians. For the Greeks and Romans, religion was basically just an insurance policy for business as usual, a way of ensuring that nothing would really change. People sacrificed to their god of choice so that their crops wouldn't fail, so that their families would stay healthy, so that their livelihood wouldn't be taken away from them.

Christians, on the other hand, not only looked forward eagerly to total change; they also believed that everything had *already* changed in powerful ways. For Christians, business as usual is finished. Jesus has *already* turned the values of the world upside down: blessed are the meek; blessed are the persecuted; the last shall be first; those who would save their life will lose it, but those who lose their life for His sake will save it.

The first Christian community in Jerusalem, the Book of Acts tells us, went so far as to hold their possessions in common so that "there was not a needy person among them." St. Paul didn't make the Christians of Corinth go that far, but he did insist that they give up social climbing, greed, and lawsuits; follow a sexual and marital ethic unheard of in the society of the day; and stay away from the pagan temples and rituals which were tied in with almost every aspect of everyday life. No wonder they were hoping Jesus would come back tomorrow.

Well, Jesus hasn't come back for 2,000 years' worth of tomorrows, and if apocalyptic is the mother of Christian theology, her children seem to have stuck her away in a nursing home. Most of us recite the part of the creed about Jesus coming back on autocomplete, without giving it any serious thought. That's why it's time for a renewal.

The Lord is "patient with you, not wanting any to perish" (2 Peter 3:9), but the 2,000-

year wait hasn't cancelled the promise at all. We should *still* be living lives that reflect the changes Jesus has already made, and we should *still* be waiting eagerly for Jesus to return—tomorrow if He chooses, but in any case, on a happy day, not a sad one.

For now, we need to "purify yourselves, just as He is pure" (1 John 3:3), and "live for the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires, but by the will of God. You have already spent enough time doing what the Gentiles like to do." (1 Peter 4:2f). As St. Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 7, we must live as if we were not married, as if we were not mourning or rejoicing, as if we were not running our businesses or doing our jobs, "and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away."

Don't worry—this doesn't mean giving up the duties and joys of marriage and family life, the responsibilities of work, care for the poor, or the other proper activities of life in this present age. Those things are the good gifts of our good God. But all the same, they are *temporary* goods. The supreme, eternal good is yet to come, and that is what we should be thinking about above all else.

We must also prepare ourselves for the final trial that both the Bible and the Catechism warn us will take place in the last days. We must persevere under persecution and calamity, resist the deceptions of the world and the devil, and remember that it is only the power of God and not our own efforts that will win the ultimate victory.

And above all, we must *look forward* to the day Jesus comes back, not as an inconvenience ("it would spoil all my plans!") but as the greatest triumph in the history of the universe. Jesus has better plans for us than we have for ourselves, and we must take His promise seriously. "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him." (1 Corinthians 2:9). *Marana tha*—Come, Lord Jesus!



# ***Human promotion and charismatic renewal***

We must serve those most in need, physically and spiritually

**By FRANÇOIS PROTEAU**  
**Human promotion commission**  
**co-ordinator**  
**CHARIS International**

In CHARIS we believe that we can dream of a better future in the world if we are faithful to God's inspirations and work together following the teachings of Jesus in the Gospel.

This is what Pope Francis entrusted to us as one of the three priority missions at the launch of CHARIS at Pentecost 2019: in addition to sharing baptism in the Spirit with all in the Church and serving the unity of the community of believers in Jesus Christ that is the Church, Pope Francis gave CHARIS the mission to serve the poor and the most needy, physically and spiritually. To address this third dimension, the Human Promotion Commission was created in September 2021.

The first action of the Human Promotion Commission was to organise a meeting on line on YouTube on the 1st of July 2022 on the theme Charismatic Renewal, Social Action and Service to the Poor. About 1,000 people followed the event live and, to date, the video on YouTube has more than 3,500 views, in English, Spanish, French, Italian or Portuguese.

It shows how communities and individuals – connected to the Holy Spirit and to each other – can discover unexpected possibilities and participate in the coming of the Kingdom of God through social action and service to the poor in Paraguay (Kkotongnae), Brazil (Shalom), France and Togo (Fondaccio), Congo (Via Pacis), Uganda (Holy Trinity Community), India (Dhiya), Australia (Emmanuel) and many other regions of the world, through various projects to be developed and made known.

These achievements, together with the testimonies gathered in these mission fields, resonate with the teachings developed in this video: those of the Holy Father, Pope Francis, of Cardinal Raniero Cantalamessa,

ecclesiastical assistant of CHARIS, and also of Mgr Angelo Vincenzo Zani, then secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education. They aim to promote a more fraternal humanity, a universal and welcoming solidarity, concrete entrepreneurial, ecological and social commitments in the breath of the Spirit, and for the coming of the Kingdom of God on Earth.

We would like to continue to highlight the various projects and activities of the Charismatic Renewal in the world in favour of human promotion. Therefore, we would like to collect all the information on this topic during the next year through the national CHARIS services, and also complete our website with further three-minute videos dedicated to social action.

In early November 2023, we also want to promote a day of action in Rome with people living on the streets, in collaboration with the CHARIS Youth Commission and the Kkotongnae Community. Other events are being planned for mid-2024 in Africa (in Uganda in particular) with the Youth Commission, on the theme "Charismatic Renewal and Human Promotion". For more information, please contact: [humanpromotioncommission@charis.international](mailto:humanpromotioncommission@charis.international).

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## ***B.C. Renewal***

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