



The TRUMPET

Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services

The Mission of The Trumpet is to glorify God by nourishing our intimate relationship with our Lord, encouraging greater openness to the action of the Holy Spirit, and promoting more open sharing of our faith experience of Jesus and the gospel.

Diocese of Rockford, Illinois
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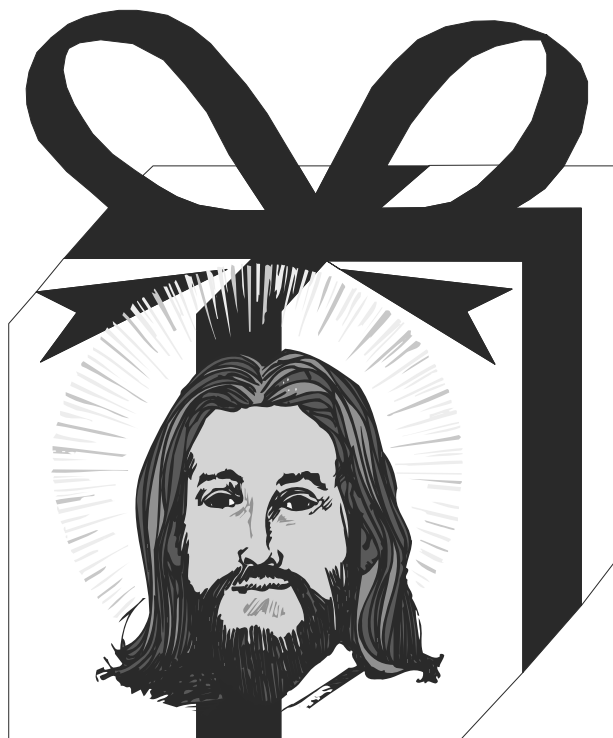
Newsletter

January/February/March 2009

THE GIFT IS JESUS

Happy the man who follows not the counsel of the wicked nor walks in the way of sinners, nor sits in the company of the insolent, but delights in the law of the Lord and meditates on his law day and night.

Ps 1:1-2



Now that we have been justified by faith, we are at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have gained access by faith to the grace in which we now stand, and we boast of our hope for the glory of God. ... And this hope will not leave us disappointed, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Rm 5:1-2, 5

Be still, and know that I am God.

Ps 42:10

The Trumpet

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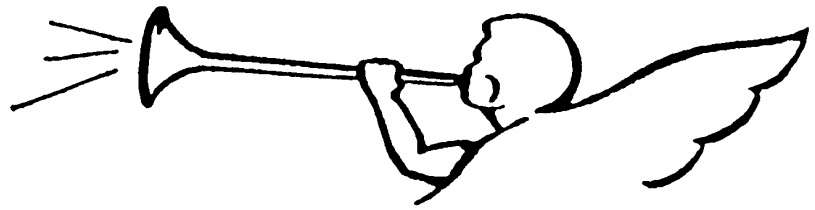
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Like shouting from the mountain tops let's ...
Blast forth that ...



JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ ...

We have begun a new liturgical year and as I write this we are anticipating the new calendar year. We have been through much turmoil and confusion recently and can look forward to it continuing. However, God has given us a great gift, the greatest gift possible. His name is Jesus. As Romans 5 says, "now that we have been justified by faith, we are at peace with God." We have hope for the future "because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit." "Happy [is] the man who ... delights in the law of the Lord." God calls us to rest in Him – "Be still, and know that I am God." We have hope for the future, and we are not shaken by the circumstances surrounding us.

Our articles begin with a page of "Reflections and Prophecies" by Nita Neu. Then Ron talks about God challenging us and calling us to change in "Change to Believe In' Is Not Just for Politicians." Next, I look at hope and gifts in "This 'n' That." Louise Hall writes about "Peace" and finding peace in God. Finally, Kate Elliott looks at "The Kingdom of God" – what it is, and how we might experience it.

We are in the middle of winter, and the cold and snow often cause us to close ourselves into our warm homes to sit out the winter. Let us remember that not all people have nice warm homes to retreat to. God wants us to love and provide for the cold, the hungry, and the homeless out of our abundant supply. May we be obedient and faithful servants.

We may be in a spiritual winter also – the world and the wicked seem to be overcoming the good. We cannot afford to retreat here either. We are called to be faithful witnesses to God's victory. The hurting people need us to provide for them too by loving them and sharing the good news of Jesus.

Remember, spring is just around the corner. Our hope is in eternal God who does not change. He is in control and he has won the victory. At the National Leaders' Conference in Nashville, we were told to be ready for something new from the Lord. "See, the earlier things have come to pass, new ones I now foretell." (Is 42:9) "Write down the vision clearly upon the tablets, so that one can read it readily. For the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment, and will not disappoint; if it delays, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not be late." (Hb 2:2-3)

Yours in Christ,
Linda

Reflections

By Nita Neu

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last.

I praise you, Almighty God. I worship you, Father, Son and Spirit.

In spite of difficulties and pain, still you love your God, you continue to trust me, you continue to have faith in me. Know that I am right beside you, giving you my love and strength, and working always on your behalf, working for your good.

Despite pain and suffering, I am able to use you when you are willing, and carrying your cross. Give me your burdens, and I will make your load light. The mountain in front of you is so high that it is snow-capped, but I am the mountain mover, and I am the one who can take you over the mountains before you, making them seem more like hills.

I will remove your mountains, or take you over them or around them, for my power is great to move mountains of any size. Sometimes you see the mountain in front of you as larger than it really is. No matter the size of the mountain, you can say to it "move, mountain," and it shall be done.

Johnny's mom put him to bed upstairs, and pretty soon he was calling down, "Mom, please come up here. I need a hug." His mom called back to him, "Go to sleep, Johnny, Jesus is with you." Johnny replied, "Please come up, I need Jesus with skin on."

Will you be "Jesus with skin on" today for someone in need?

Ezekiel 34

As I have told you, I myself pasture my sheep. I have many sheep in many pastures. I see what they need and provide it. My sheep are therefore content, grazing as I care for them and love them. Yes, some of my sheep are a little harder to graze, but they too are a part of my fold. I love my sheep very much, and when one of them wanders off it does not escape my eye. I go after those sheep and bring them back, lest they be lost, for all my sheep belong to my fold. Sometimes I prod my sheep a bit, but usually they understand. I graze my own sheep, watching them carefully, lest they be harmed. Not one of my sheep is out of my sight, out from under my watchful eye.

My granddaughter Emily is six years old and is a Daisy (Girl Scouts). Her mom is one of the leaders. At the meeting, each girl was asked to say what she was thankful for this Thanksgiving holiday. When it was Emily's turn, she said, "I am thankful for my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." Her mom knows that many of the moms that were there are Christians, and a collective gasp went up. Other times, over her young years, Emily has come up with very insightful things about God. God has put something very special inside her.

Wherever your treasure is, there your heart and thoughts will also be.
– Matthew 6:21

In the Garden

What was it like, Jesus, that night in the Garden of Gethsemane? You knew what was ahead of you, what awaited you if you said yes to your Father. You prayed to your heavenly Father, as you had so many times before.

In your agony, those who followed you, those closest to you, left you alone as sleep overtook them. Even as you asked them if they could stay awake with you one hour, they were unable to remain awake to support and encourage you in your time of great need. Yes, Lord, I, too, am weak. Give me strength in those places and situations that are

difficult for me, when the spirit is willing, the flesh weak.

It was my sin that caused you such great anguish, Lord, and there in that garden, you made the decision to die for me. To redeem me from the powers of sin and death cost you, who are innocence, your very life. Such great love, Jesus that you would even consider dying for a sinner like me, so I might live in you forever! Thank you for saying yes to your Father so that He might become my Father too!✠

'Change to Believe In' Is Not Just for Politicians

OK, so I borrowed that from our President-elect's campaign. Thanks, future Mr. President.

Doesn't it seem that the Lord always asks us to change — and to believe that it is for our "better"? It seems he never lets us stand still. As soon as we grow a little and overcome some part of our personality that tended to keep us from that intimate relationship we crave, he calls us higher, farther, wider, and deeper. He never lets us stagnate.

In our recent prayer meeting we heard a prophetic word that told us not to follow the crowd because the crowd was heading over the abyss. The word even challenged us to "rebel," if necessary, to keep from following that crowd. As we discussed the word it seemed that he was calling us to even ignore whatever pain or suffering we had to in order to not be swept over the brink with the crowd. Do you know of anyone who looks for pain solely for the purpose of hurting? Don't we all choose to ask the Lord to heal us of pain when it comes? Isn't it human to want to be free of pain? I think so.

The beginning of the New Year is the time for resolutions, those good intentions and worthy goals that we would like to reach. But how long does it take until most of them have fallen by the wayside? Was it good to try? Of course. But weren't most of those goals to be reached by our own will-power, our own accomplishments, by our own doing? Father Tom Forrest told the Great Lakes Men's Conference attendees last October that, if we think we can accomplish anything on our own, we are sadly mistaken. How are we to expect to accomplish worthy goals then? "Three little words," he said. "Come Holy Spirit."

I have also been hearing a lot about unforgiveness and the barrier to growth it causes within us, the power and grace we receive in the sacrament of reconciliation, and the need to humble ourselves by acknowledging that we cannot forgive, cannot accomplish, cannot do anything without the Lord. Father Tom suggested that, for well-intentioned reasons, we even try to grow by getting more education, spending more money, using more technology — even our iPods — and by working harder. He posed the thought that if we could reach salvation that way, why did Jesus have to die on the cross? A good question.

It is a fact that we grow most effectively when the Lord challenges us and allows us to have "crosses" to bear, which cause us to call upon his help in prayer and seek the graces, strength and

renewal power of the sacraments. It is often much easier to stay in our comfort zones than it is to actually seek change. But when the Lord, the Holy Spirit is calling us to buck the crowd, to turn from the abyss and seek his ways, we have the opportunity to change for the better. And the most wonderful part of that is that the Lord gives us the graces we need to appreciate change and growth, no matter how difficult it was to go through the process of getting past the tough times.

It seems that one of the problems we encounter with our growth spurts is that we are impatient with the methods the Lord gives us to get through them. Too often, when growth "events" come, we do what we have learned to do, pray about them asking the Lord for his help. But when they don't come as soon as we think they should we give up on him and seek the same solutions the vast crowd seeks. But remember, the crowd is heading over the abyss. However, we have to understand that the desire to be free of pain is merely human. So are we to reject our humanity in trying to follow the Lord?

I don't think so. On the contrary, I suggest that we should embrace it. Can we see our (weak) humanity as his gift to us so that it is absolutely necessary that we call upon him and rely on his power, grace and solutions to our problems in order to grow toward that intimate relationship mentioned earlier? We can always trust that the change he helps us with is, for sure, change we can believe in as the one and only way we can reach eternal happiness with him.

With his help and the Holy Spirit's power, we can embrace humility and we can seek to forgive in all circumstances — trusting that the Lord will bless us for trying to love as he loves. With the power of his Holy Spirit we can trust that his ways are, by far, the best way to grow.

Why not decide this year to "rebel" against that crowd that is heading over the abyss? Why not make it our "resolution" this year to make the effort to receive the sacraments more frequently, especially the sacrament of reconciliation, to add (even) a few minutes to our daily prayer time, to add a time of quiet listening to our daily routine? I suggest we will find that the change we experience will, for sure, bring us to a more intimate relationship with our loving Lord. †

**Blessings,
Ron**

This 'n' That

By Linda Daniel

I have been searching for my topic for this article for over a month, but there has been no great inspiration, probably because I haven't been able to settle down in peace with the Lord for any great length of time. My life has been a whirlwind this year. We buried my mother in March and my husband's father in July and in November attended the funeral of my husband's brother in Michigan. Over several months I have jotted down questions to ponder for possible articles. These include:

- Do we know the power of the Eucharist? Do we really believe that Jesus still heals today?
- Do we put God on hold? Are we too busy to listen?
- Are we blind to the signs of the times?
- Do we take up every new theory about lost gospels and the truth of Scripture?
- Why am I so afraid to suffer for Jesus? Which sufferings are unnecessary and which sufferings are redemptive? How should I prepare to suffer?
- What is God calling us to?
- What is grace?
- What is believing?

With that list, you would think I could have come up with something, but I have found that when I try to write it by myself, the article doesn't go anywhere or hold interest. So, I wait for the Lord's inspiration. Sometimes he waits to the last minute to guide me. Today, I just got the impression that he wanted me to do just what I'm doing now.

Hope: In November, I attended the National Leaders' Conference planned by the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (NSC) and titled "A Future Full of Hope." As with all conferences like this, I went with anticipation and expectation of being touched by the Lord. The conference was wonderful and rejuvenating. We were even blessed with Ron and Carole Bergman's testimony about how they met and planned their marriage. The conference was just a week after the national elections and in the midst of much national and economic turmoil, and the messages were encouraging. The speakers reminded us that our hope is in Jesus, not in the world. Jesus is the victor and has the power to take us over or through any difficulty, and he will provide for us when we fully trust in him. I can attest to the fact that Jesus provides, since God answered my prayer to give us a safe trip for the funeral in Michigan. Our travel time

to and from Michigan was clear and sunny, but the days on either side were full of lake-effect snow. He also blessed us because the timing of the funeral did not interfere with my attending the conference.

Hope, the dictionary defines it as follows: "To wish for something with expectation of its fulfillment. To have confidence, trust. To look forward to with confidence or expectation. To expect and desire." Job said with hope, "I know that my Vindicator lives ... and from my flesh I shall see God ... my own eyes, not another's, shall behold him." (Job 19:25-27) Then in Romans we read, "In hope we were saved. But hope is not hope if its object is seen; how is it possible for one to hope for what he sees? And hoping for what we cannot see means awaiting it with patient endurance." (Rm 8:24-25) Then, "Faith is confident assurance concerning what we hope for and conviction about things we do not see." (Heb 11:1) We indeed have a future full of hope because we know that our redeemer lives.

Gifts: In the animated film, "The Incredibles," the main character is depressed because he must hide and not use his "super powers" – his gifts. Could this be part of our problem today in the Charismatic Renewal? Are we hiding our "super powers" – the gifts of the Holy Spirit? Pope Benedict XVI said, "One of the positive elements and aspects of the communities of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal is precisely the importance given by them to the charisms and gifts of the Holy Spirit and their merit lies in having reminded the Church of the actuality [of these gifts]." (Audience Oct. 31, 2008. from Zenit.org/article-24123?I=english) "The charisms, the Pontiff continued, arise 'as visible signs of the coming of the Holy Spirit.' They are not, 'a historical event of the past,' but an 'always living reality.'" (Zenit.org)

All in all, I believe the message the Lord wants us to hear is to remain faithful and to be full of hope, for he is still the victor, still in control. The following words I found in my journal from 2001 sum up how I believe we are to proceed.

Be at peace. Be ready when I call. Be enthusiastic and loving in your dealings with people. Make yourself ready to represent me. You are the image I project in the world today. You are my representative. Be a faithful, accurate representation of me. †

Peace

By Louise Hall

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Then the God of peace will be with you.” (Phil 4:4-9)

“The peace of God will guard your hearts.” Isn’t that what we all yearn for – peace in our families, in our church, in our nation? Paul tells us how to achieve this by doing what we learned. That education came from our families, churches and schools. It also comes from our relationship to Jesus. How do I continue to grow closer to Jesus? It is in the same way I develop any relationship, by spending time with Jesus. I can do that by attending Mass, going to an adoration chapel, reading Scripture, attending a prayer group or study group or praying at any time in any place.

Recently our pastor offered Ignatian Exercises as a way of enhancing our time with Jesus. I found the readings stimulating, but I wondered if it really helped me grow more Christ-like. Have I been showing kindness in all I do? We do not get an automatic daily evaluation in our life. Even if I try to look at my day at bedtime, it is hard to be objective. But I can try to be kind, to think of other peoples’ needs. At work I often help out the busier part of the medical practice. I do not get kudos from those above me; occasionally someone says thank you. I think I do it to lighten the work load so the nurses and staff will not have to stay super late to finish their daily tasks. How does my reading Scripture help me in this way? I think I learn from the selfless way Jesus lived and the way the Apostles followed Jesus’ example.

One of my favorite prayers came on a card titled “Prayer for world peace”: “Lord we pray for the power to be gentle; the strength to be forgiving, the patience to be understanding; and the endurance to accept the consequence of holding to what we believe to be right. May we put our trust in the power of good to overcome evil and the power of

love to overcome hatred. We pray for the vision to see and the faith to believe in a world emancipated from violence, a new world where fear shall no longer lead men to injustice, nor selfishness make them bring suffering to others. Help us to devote our whole life and thought and energy to the task of making peace, praying always for the inspiration and the power to fulfill the destiny for which we and all men were created. Amen.”

As we start a new year with new leadership in America, let us pray for the peace of God to be with us as individuals, in our families, parishes, communities and in our nation. May we truly live by Paul’s words and have no anxiety because we talk to God, make our requests known, and then believe that God’s power will prevail.✠

Life is a fragile, wonderful journey of many colors. It’s very important to frequently stop along the way and take it all in.

Nita Neu



A Meditation

God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission – I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.

I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for nothing. I shall do good, I shall do His work.

Therefore I will trust Him. Whatever, wherever I am. I cannot be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him; if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends; He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me – still He knows what He is about.

Cardinal Newman

The Kingdom of God

In Mark's gospel, Jesus announces, "This is the time of fulfillment. The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the Gospel." (Mk1:15) The people of Jesus' time were eagerly awaiting a messiah who would free them from an oppressive government and change their lives. However, Jesus' type of kingdom was far beyond what the people envisioned. His kingdom would bring change, but that change would require something not only from Jesus, but also from the people. In his book, *Jesus of Nazareth*, Pope Benedict writes this about the Kingdom of God: "The core content of the Gospel is this: The Kingdom of God is at hand. A milestone is set up in the flow of time; something new takes place and an answer to this gift is demanded of man: conversion and faith. The center of this announcement is the message that God's Kingdom is at hand. This announcement is the actual core of Jesus' words and works." (*Jesus of Nazareth*, P. 47)

The change that Jesus brings is conversion and faith. It is this change that many of us have experienced after a "Life in the Spirit" seminar. When people are prayed over in that fifth week, something happens. Jesus becomes real and personal. The Holy Spirit brings power and God the Father is no longer abstract but near and approachable. People feel the need to frequent the sacrament of penance and to make atonement for past wrongs. Jesus breaks into our lives and faith moves from the head to the heart.

Pope Benedict states that there are three ways of looking at the Kingdom of God. 1. "Jesus Himself is the Kingdom. The Kingdom is not a thing. It is a person; it is He. 2. The 'Kingdom of God' is not to be found on any map. It is not a kingdom after the fashion of worldly kingdoms; it is located in man's inner being. It grows and radiates outward from that inner space. 3. The third dimension of the interpretation of the Kingdom of God we call the ecclesiastical: the Kingdom of God and the Church are related in different ways and brought into more or less close proximity." (*Jesus of Nazareth*, P.50) We then experience the Kingdom of God in these three ways: 1. Knowing Jesus becomes a new and deeply intense experience. 2. From this experience our faith grows; the Church, the Scriptures, and the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, become our focal point. 3. Our spiritual life is nourished and we reach out to witness for the Kingdom of God.

"When Jesus speaks of the Kingdom of God, he is quite simply proclaiming God, and proclaiming

him to be the living God, who is able to act concretely in the world and in history and is now even so acting. He is telling us: 'God exists' and 'God is really God,' which means that he holds in his hands the threads of the world." (*Jesus of Nazareth*, P. 55)

Jesus sends us out to proclaim the kingdom. Let us take up this task with a new resolve and announce: "God exists!" "God is really God, he changed my life and he can change yours."✠

Kate Elliott, DRE
Holy Spirit Church, Roscoe

My friends are my estate.

Emily Dickinson

Commitment Prayer

Jesus, I know now that I am yours and you are mine forever. Thank you for sending your Spirit to me that I might have the power to live this new life with you. Stir up your Spirit in me. Release your Spirit in me. Baptize me with the fullness of your Spirit that I may experience your presence and power in my life.

That I may find new meaning in your Scriptures.

That I may find new meaning in the sacraments.

That I may find delight and comfort in prayer.

That I may be able to love as you love and forgive as you forgive.

That I may discover and use the gifts you give me for the life of the Church.

That I may experience the peace and the joy that you have promised us.

Fill me with your spirit, Jesus. I wish to receive all that you have to give me.

Amen.

(Reprinted with permission from *The New Life in the Spirit Seminars Team Manual – Catholic Edition 2000* by *Therese Boucher*. National Service Committee, Chariscenter USA, Box 628, Locust Grove, VA 22508-0628. Page 134)

Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services
 Diocese of Rockford
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 Rockford, IL 61103

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 St. Bridget Parish Center, Rockford, IL
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