

From the Director

Prayer Meetings & Mass (Part I)

In 1982 I was introduced to the Charismatic Renewal by a co-worker who suggested I attend a "healing Mass." My inclination to attend was somewhat dubious since I was not aware that I was in need of healing." My understanding of healing was limited to physical healing, mediated by doctors. I was a practicing nurse and although I believed in God's power to heal, my experience of healing was mainly through diagnosis, treatment plan (medicine or surgery) an of course high doses of tender loving care. After experiencing the "healing Mass" a new dimension of faith entered my life. I became involved in the Charismatic Renewal, experienced baptism in the Holy Spirit, and cofounded the prayer group in my parish.

Prayer meetings became a source of life-giving experiences of God. When one of our members was diagnosed with a malignant tumor, we prayed for healing and God healed him. At first our members were fearful and resistant to the notion that God would move among us. Gradually that fear was removed and people were freer to praise God and eager to

share their faith, inner healings were taking place in women who had had abortions. Little by little individual lives were being transformed.

My experience of that first healing Mass brought a new awareness that every Mass reveals God's mercy and compassion and that his healing love is always available if we are open to receive. Our attitude and disposition plan an important role in the ongoing process of healing and conversion. According to Vatican II, the liturgy is the "summit" and foundation of the Christian's relationship with Jesus and other members of his body. (Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy, n. 10). As the faithful gather at the table of the Lord, Jesus saving work is made present and active for all believers through the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit.

In the fourth eucharistic prayer the celebrant prays: Father, you so loved the world that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our Savior. He was conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, a man like us in all thing but sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation, to prisoners, freedom, and to those in sorrow, joy. These words became our testimony for we are indeed being set free and our sorrow is held in hearts that are being transformed with job. As followers

of Christ in the celebration of the Eucharist, we, as the baptized, in a special way proclaim to one another that Jesu is alive and his saving action is ever present. Living in unity with the mind of Christ, we serve one another in love.

I recently came across the test of "The Eucharistic Liturgy and Charismatic Prayer," a presentation given several years ago by Father James Wood, now pastor of St. John Nepomucene, Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York. In the introduction, he states, "Event though he church has definitely responded to the call of Vatican II to have the liturgy 'express more the holy things which they signify,' (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, n.21) we have in no way exhausted the opportunity that liturgy gives us to grown in union with the Word and the Spirit of God." He continues by stating: "Just as the head and the body are one, it too is the same Spirit that blesses the Church with Charismatic gifts and liturgical prayer. It is not the role of charismatic prayer to improve on the liturgy; it is not the role of the liturgy to "legitimize charismatic prayer."

by Josephine Cachia.
She is a former member of the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Pentecost Today, April, May, June 2000.



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*Come Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of
Thy faithful and
enkindle in them
the fire of Thy love.
Send forth Thy Spirit
and they shall be
created and Thou
shall renew the face
of the earth.
AMEN*

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