

Sisters and Brothers, as a follow-up to my May 29th update I wanted to provide everyone more information about the Catholic Fraternity following the awesome International Catholic Fraternity meetings that were held in Augusta Georgia late June. Please review the information below and let me know if you have questions.

18th International meeting of Catholic Fraternity

The 18th International meetings of Catholic Fraternity met in Augusta Georgia hosted by our sister community Alleluia from June 25 to July 1. The Executive of the Fraternity met the first two days followed by two days of meetings of the Fraternity Council (the Council is composed by one representative and optional companion from each member community). Participating in the Council meeting were about 80 leaders from over a dozen countries and nearly every continent. After the Council meeting a General International Conference was held where about 350 people attended. Those attending the conference from God's Delight included my dad, Neil and Cathy Coward, Barry and Alice Clauss, Bob and Gretchen Montgomery, Rick and Linda Chapman, Chase, Laura, and Rebeca Dorsey, Laurie and me.

As I have communicated previously, Pope Francis is replacing the two current organizations that support the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) with a single new "One Service" reality to serve the worldwide CCR. That means that ICCRS (International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services) and Catholic Fraternity will not exist after Pentecost 2019 - which is the date for the launch of the new service entity, to be called: Catholic Charismatic Renewal International Service, CHARIS. It is being erected by our Holy Father Pope Francis through the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, with public juridical personality, effective June 9, 2019, the Solemnity of Pentecost. Its mission will be to unite all prior CCR activities such as ICCRS, Catholic

Fraternity, and all National Service Committees into a single effort to serve all expressions of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

With the recognition that this would be the last International Catholic Fraternity Conference these upcoming changes were obviously an important focus for the talks, homilies, and many informal discussions throughout the week.

Catholic Fraternity Executive meetings

The Executive met the first two days, prior to our arrival, and discussed both how to support CHARIS along with the desire to establish a new network of covenant communities, within scope of CHARIS. The desire was for interested communities to continue building fellowship and relationships as we have been doing since 1990 within the Catholic Fraternity. Members of the Executive shared that the Holy Spirit had prompted 4 or 5 different members with the same proposed name...so it was decided to call this new propose network *Koinonia* (a biblical Greek word translated as *communio* in Latin and *communion* in English).

The Executive asked five of its members to form a team to discern with the Council and draft a structure and guidelines for this new network. They are: Dan Almeter of Alleluia Community in Augusta, Jean-Luc Moens of Emmanuel Community in France, Shayne Bennett of Emmanuel Community in Brisbane, Bishop Andrzej Siemienieski of Hallelujah Community in Poland and Gilberto Barbosa who is the current President of the Catholic Fraternity from Brazil.

It is envisioned that the new network will be an ecumenical network such that, unlike the current Catholic Fraternity guidelines, ecumenical communities in the worldwide CCR will be able to participate without forming Catholic fellowships. It is desired that the *Koinonia* network

be in place at the time of Pentecost 2019 when the transition from the Catholic Fraternity to CHARIS takes place.

In parallel with the changes associated with CHARIS there have been ongoing discussions between other networks of covenant communities seeking common fellowship. It was suggested that those working to establish *Koinonia* could also continue discussing the possibility of establishing relationships with these networks. This could include networks that are Catholic or ecumenical. Two such networks in particular are the Sword of the Spirit and the European Network of Communities. The Executive requested that Matteo Calisi and Dan Almeter represent the Catholic Fraternity in these discussions with the leaders of the various networks to explore how to build an even larger Fellowship of Communities encompassing all such networks of communities.

Catholic Fraternity Council meetings

The next two days were devoted to meetings of the Catholic Fraternity Council. Early sessions included candid discussions about the emotions associated with the ending of the Catholic Fraternity. It is understood that the process of change has caused hurt feelings. We all know this from our own personal lives as well. Sometimes the change is significant enough to cause grief. It was clear from informal attendee discussions and from the questions that were asked that many attendees were in fact going through the stages of grief. Many of the talks and homilies, especially from Bishop Andrzej Siemienieski, did a great job of helping people through this process and focusing attendees on the future and going forward in hope and faith.

Nevertheless it was clear from the sharings that, whilst there is strong desire to have confidence in our Holy Father and the decisions that he has made relative to the One Service / CHARIS, there is still a strong desire to preserve and protect the fraternal relationships that

have arisen from the Catholic Fraternity. The regular meetings have enabled very strong relationships to emerge across all of those who have participated in the Catholic Fraternity. Everyone was united in their belief that this must be preserved. Since CHARIS is not a "member" organization but rather a "service" organization it will not directly fit the same model as the Catholic Fraternity. It does however enable a "network" to be created within scope of CHARIS and allows other existing networks to associate with CHARIS. This desire for continued fellowship and fraternity is behind the new proposed network to be called *Koinonia*.

For us as God's Delight, I am confident that we will benefit from our association with the new CHARIS entity in that we will be united with many other organizations across the worldwide Church in supporting the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and responding to the challenges that the Holy Father has placed upon this new entity. I am also confident that we will benefit from our association with the new *Koinonia* entity and its association with other existing networks of Communities, as it is expected to more than fill the fellowship void that will be created with the ending of the Catholic Fraternity. Even further, it is expected that the new *Koinonia* network and its association with other networks will significantly expand the ranks of those who are like-minded in their call to serve the Church, serve the mission of Covenant Community, and serve the cause of Christian Unity. This will be possible in part because the new networks will not be limited to membership by Catholic only communities but will also encompass ecumenical communities.

One of the downsides of CHARIS versus the Catholic Fraternity is that CHARIS will not itself provide canonical recognition to its members. CHARIS will be an entity to assist the CCR to serve the Church rather than an organization with members. Local communities that desire canonical recognition will need to secure that from the

bishop of their diocese. For us, we have already been canonically recognized by the Bishop of Dallas and are officially a Diocesan Private Association of Christ's Faithful.

Still, we are encouraged to continue prayers for all members of the Catholic Fraternity, especially those that may be more affected by these changes than we will. I am aware of some communities in the Catholic Fraternity that are isolated, some that do not have strong relationships with their local bishop, some that are located in countries that have policies against religion and religious association. These communities need our prayers and support, especially during this time of transition.

One of the sentiments that emerged from the discussion of the ending of the Catholic Fraternity and the starting of *CHARIS* and *Koinonia* is the freedom that comes with less structure. I have to candidly witness to you that I have struggled at times with the way the Church has shepherded the Catholic Fraternity. There have been times where the Council was nearly unanimous in desiring a change to the Catholic Fraternity processes or procedures, such as aligning the cycle of leadership selection with our meeting cycle; however the Church leaders who had responsibility for the Catholic Fraternity did not approve the change. Another example was when the Council recommended that we needed a formal process for nominating and electing the overall leader of the Catholic Fraternity. It was not possible to elect a leader from 100 multi-language international communities the same way that a leader was elected from 10 mostly English speaking communities as was the case when the Catholic Fraternity was formed. The procedures needed to evolve but we were held back from being able to address these important issues. It is therefore an anticipated advantage that *Koinonia* will be freer to move with the prompting of the Holy Spirit than has been possible under the Canonical structure that oversaw the Catholic Fraternity.

At the end of the discussion, after a lot of emotions were expressed, it was clear that the sentiment we needed to adopt was one of letting go and putting our trust in God and His Church. It was made clear by the leaders who had dialoged with Cardinal Farrell that the Church is not open to any changes regarding its plan to move from ICCRS and the Catholic Fraternity to CHARIS. It was agreed that we needed to move forward, put our hope and trust in God, in His Church, and its leaders and pray that the changes enable a new fresh outpouring of His Holy Spirit upon the whole Church.

Next Steps

It is expected that our Holy Father will appoint an interim CHARIS Moderator and Council, an initial representative group of 18 people, on December 8, 2018. He will then formally erect CHARIS on June 9, 2019 and appoint a prelate within the Dicastery of Laity, Family, and Life to formally accompany CHARIS.

My request is simply that you add CHARIS, *Koinonia*, and all the leaders that are working to form these entities to your personal prayer list. My prayer, and I am writing to enlist your help in praying, is that these new entities further the very specific charge that our Holy Father has placed upon the Renewal. This charge is to bring the Baptism of the Holy Spirit to the whole of the Church (Catholic and non-Catholic). Within the Renewal we have witnessed the transformative impact that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit has on one's personal commitment to God and His Son Jesus. Our Holy Father is asking us to be on the front line of bringing this spiritual awakening to every Catholic in every parish and diocese across the world. The Charismatic Renewal also has always been on the forefront of Ecumenism, as the Holy Spirit plays no favorites when it comes to unleashing God's love, grace and gifts. The Holy Father is specifically

asking us to continue working to fulfill the call in Jesus' prayer in John 17 that all Christians "may all be one".

May we each respond in real ways, every day and throughout each day to love, to witness God's love, to bring His Spirit to everyone we encounter - leading everyone to the Father through Jesus in the power of the Spirit.

God Bless,
David

Email from David A. Peterman Jr. dated May 29, 2018

Brothers and Sisters,

Over the past three years there have been changes going on regarding the Catholic Fraternity of which we were a founding member. The changes do not directly impact us as a Community but they are significant, so I would like to take this opportunity to catch everyone up.

"The call"

On June 12, 2015 Pope Francis sent a letter to the leaders of both ICCRS (the international service entity that support the worldwide Catholic Charismatic Renewal) and the Catholic Fraternity suggesting that the time might be right for the two Pontifically recognized entities to be united in pursuing the "one current of grace" of the Charismatic Renewal, which "should have one international extended service, here in Rome, where ICCRS, Catholic Fraternity and all the other realities are equally represented, and where the Holy Spirit can be the only guide and driver. This does not mean losing your identity, it means growing in the life in the Spirit, each with their own charism, in

mutual enrichment, all born from the Spirit in the same current of grace. And, it will also reinforce the unity in the International Charismatic Renewal, which, as you know, needs strengthening..."

Later, in October of 2015 on the 25th anniversary of the Fraternity, the Holy Father restated this call: "I believe now is the time to discern together, Catholic Fraternity and ICCRS, in light of the experience of communion you have already begun to live (referring to the earlier decision to merge the office of the Fraternity with the ICCRS office in Rome), the need to continue deepening in this communion forming one single service to the worldwide Charismatic Renewal, which represents the one current of grace, without losing each one's own characteristics."

CHARIS

In April of 2016 the Holy Father asked Michelle Moran (ICCRS President) and Pino Scafuro (Fraternity VP) to establish a "single new service" for all expressions of the worldwide Catholic Charismatic Renewal - including Statutes under the Dicastery for Laity, Family, and Life. In March of 2018 the first draft of the new Statutes was released. It states: "Catholic Charismatic Renewal International Service, also known as CHARIS, is the international service organism for all expressions for Catholic Charismatic Renewal, a current of grace whose appearance in the Catholic Church in 1967 came as a fruit of the Second Vatican Council." Its mission will be one of service: "CHARIS promotes and strengthens communion among all Charismatic realities, fostering a sense of the worldwide family of Catholic Charismatic Renewal." In that sense it will be organized more like ICCRS, which was as a service entity, rather than as the Fraternity, which was recognized as a Private Association of communities.

The Future

It is anticipated that other groupings of charismatic communities will come about based on regional, national, language, or similarities of mission. There already exists multiple networks of covenant communities around the world (both Catholic and Ecumenical), so it is possible that we might associate with others, in addition to participating in CHARIS, to expand even beyond the benefits we have enjoyed as part of the Catholic Fraternity.

In December 2018, the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life will erect CHARIS as a Public Association and approve its Statutes that will come into effect on June 9th 2019, the Solemnity of Pentecost. Until then, Catholic Fraternity and ICCRS will continue to exist and operate as normal. While this means that the Fraternity will not exist after June 9th, 2019 our Community will remain formally recognized as a Diocesan Private Association of Christ's Faithful under our bishop. Going forward we will explore possible new national and international relationships.

So, as previously announced, on June 29th through July 1st the (last) International Fraternity conference will be held in Augusta GA. The theme of the conference is Disciples Together in Mission. More details can be read at: <http://www.catholicfraternity2018.org/>. Many leaders from our Community plan to attend (and everyone is welcome...contact Alice Clauss if you are interested). At this conference we will be discussing the future and ideas for preserving the fellowship we have enjoyed for over 25 years as members of the Catholic Fraternity.

If you have questions about the Fraternity, please do not hesitate to contact me.

God Bless,
David