

ICCRS REPORT on

“Young people, faith and vocational discernment”

Real activities and projects already done by Youth in CCR - 2018

Young people’s activities in the CCR in the near past (by Christof Hemberger – ICCRS Youth Committee Chairman)

As the CCR is not a community or movement like others it is difficult to give a report about the activities of young people in the near past...

First of all I would like to mention the presence of young women and men in the prayer groups and prayer meetings that take place all over the world in many parishes and cities: What is not regarded as “activity” mostly is actually a very important fact in the life of thousands of young women and men in the CCR all over the world. They come together to pray and to study the bible, they have times of worship and adoration as well as times of intercessional prayer and prayer for personal intentions. They also read in the Bible, speak and share about their experiences they do in daily life and encourage each other to stay faithful to the Word of God and the teaching of the Church. In that way these prayer groups and prayer meetings become a place of spiritual home and a source for their personal spiritual growth. These meetings are not just for the sake of fellowship but of course for growing in Christian maturity, knowledge of the Lord and of the Church.

Many of those prayer groups and communities just do not meet for the sake of prayer and bible-study only. They also find ways to share their faith, to be salt and light in the world, especially to those who are in need, who are searching for the “true truth” and a meaning of life.

In that way thousands of young women and men are engaged in projects in universities, parishes and others that exist in order to enable young Catholics to share their faith with others in very different kinds of ways: sharing one to one, proclaiming the gospel in public, sharing faith in catechesis-courses in parishes etc.

As the CCR is that many in numbers and engaged in so many places it is difficult for me to name all those projects, groups and places. But I can testify that thousands of young men and women that belong to the CCR are, with enthusiasm, faith and zeal, part of those prayer meetings that build a foundation for the growth and maturity of young Christians.

Come to me!

One project (“Come to me!”) that is organized by young leaders only, took place during the last years, always at the 18th of February (= anniversary of the birth of the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church): Some CCR-youth-leaders from Europe started to encourage all CCR-youth-prayer groups to come together on the 18 th of February of a year for the sake of praise and worship, celebrating the Lord for his goodness and praying for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the world at these days. They managed, supported by the use of social media, to spread the invitation to all “corners” of the globe – this year a few thousand prayer-events took place. Young women and men in all continents participated, all according to their very specific possibilities (time, place, publicity etc.). We had “come to me!”-meetings with a few hundred participants but also those with just a few persons present, we had public rallies but also meetings in someone’s living room, especially in those areas where Christianity is persecuted and prayer meetings not allowed.

Some activities in America (by Andres Arango - ICCRS Youth Committee Member)

- Latin American Youth Secretariat: there is a Latin American representative and five regional representatives from the different areas of Latin America to promote service to the youth CCR. Some of their projects are: monthly intercession; leadership training, renewed universities ministry, street evangelization among others. The main project for 2018-2020 is called “Hearts on Fire” addressing four pastoral themes: prayer groups – mission – shepherding – holiness. This document is serving now in several countries as the base for youth trainings and conferences.
- Latin-American Training Youth and Young Adults CCR: A Youth Latin-American Leadership CCR Conference took place in Alajuela, Costa Rica from March 1 to 4, 2018. The theme was Hearts of Fire. More than 150 national young adult leaders from Latin-American attended it. It was a great blessing.

- Mexico: It has a national youth committee that organizes several national events such as ENJES (National Encounter of Young People in the Holy Spirit); as well as conferences for young leaders and trainers. ENJES has an average attendance of 20000 participants. To attend this event each participant is invited to bring one kilogram of food. During the event, one day is designed to visit the poor areas of the city and bring food to the poor and also to bring them hope in the love of Jesus.
- Panama: Every year the CCR host the National Youth CCR event in the city of Chitre. Around 8000 young people attend the conference.
- United States and Canada: The National Youth Secretariat has been working on several projects at the national and regional level, especially focused on a project called Joshua Generation. This project involves three components: evangelization – formation – leadership. It has been very successful bringing new generations to have a personal encounter with Jesus, provide them formation (discipleship), and empowering them to be leaders (missionaries). Each year, a bilingual (English – Spanish) leadership youth national conference takes place, bringing about 250 leaders from around both countries. Leaders attending the conference bring the materials to implement the process in their own dioceses.

A testimony by ICCRS President: Jim Murphy

I would like to testify to some of the great ways I have witnessed youth initiatives within the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

I lead a mission trip every 12 weeks into Mexico City. During the week long mission, my team serves 3 days in a garbage dump, a day at an orphanage, and one day at a home for the elderly.

On many occasions, my team mates are young people, ages 17- early 20's. Many of these individuals have had a powerful encounter with the Holy Spirit, and manifest many of the spiritual gifts often found in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. I am so impressed with these young people, as they use their gifts for the service of others.

On one occasion, I took a team of these students to the Guatemala highlands to help clear a jungle road which had been buried under a rockslide. These young people worked tirelessly, hour after hour, doing manual labor that I think many grown adults would have turned away from.

I have the opportunity to speak to many youth groups and assemblies within the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Almost without exception, these programs are being organized and run by a youth leadership team.....young people themselves. In these programs, I often experience young people giving very good teachings and testimonies.

In many areas of CCR throughout the world, a lot of the praise and worship, along with music, is being led by young people. In many of the organizations of the CCR, I see the appointment of a youth service committee or a youth executive committee which exists within the larger structure. Many of these groups have a fair amount of autonomy and while working with the parent organization in a cooperative spirit, also have the freedom to pursue goals as they deem necessary.

I believe that more and more of the earlier generation charismatics are increasingly more and more open to a new generation, not simply being there as spectators, but a new generation of leaders for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. I believe the involvement of younger people continues to grow in CCR, which can only be good news for this stream of grace, and indeed for the entire Church.

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