

**CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL  
GOLDEN JUBILEE 1967-2017**

**MASS  
“for peace and reconciliation”  
2 June 2017, 8:45 p.m. – Circo Massimo**

**HOMILY  
(Ez 37:1-4; Psalm 103; Jn 17:20-26)**

Dear brothers and sisters,

We have just been listening to the moving prayer pronounced by Jesus after the last supper. They are the last words he spoke before facing his passion. Jesus was looking towards the future when he prayed for all those who would believe in him after hearing the words of the apostles. In this prayer, Jesus was also praying for all of us. We all came to the faith because Jesus' words were conveyed to us by some of today's apostles, lay people and priests. It is Jesus' desire that all of us who believe may be one.

Jesus' prayer makes it clear to us that this unity

is not due to our efforts, and it is not simply an emotional coming together, an organisational agreement or a diplomatic compromise.

This unity has a divine, supernatural origin. Jesus said, “I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity”. The foundation of the profound union that binds all of us believers together is above all the presence of Christ in us.

He said, “I in them!”

It is only because Jesus is present within us that we can approach others with totally open hearts. It is Jesus' presence within us that creates a special kind of fellowship among us that gives us the same way of feeling, thinking and loving. It makes us a true family and, even more than that, a single body.

These words of Jesus help us to understand how this happens. He concludes the prayer by saying, “that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.” Jesus can dwell in us and be present in us only if the love that the Father shows to the Son is also bestowed upon us.

It is the love that reigns within the Trinity that brings Christ to be within us. However, this love that reigns in the Trinity is not an impersonal divine energy.

It is the person of the Holy Spirit! The Holy Spirit is the eternal exchange of love between the Father and the Son. The gift of the Risen Jesus to the Church is trinitarian love, the Holy Spirit! This is also your experience! All of you are here this evening because, at a specific time in your life, you received the immense grace to relive your Baptism through a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, whom you have welcomed with new readiness, has simply brought Jesus Christ alive in you.

We can say that through the Holy Spirit Jesus has been “rekindled” in you. All of you have perceived that the Holy Spirit has brought a new mysterious but real presence of the Risen Christ in you.

From this new consoling presence was born communion with many other brothers and sisters. It is the living Christ in you who created the unity that made you feel close to all those people who have received the same grace – grace that has touched you all deeply.

It is “Christ in you” who has given you the strength to accept your failures and to seek forgiveness for your sins, and also to accept the mistakes of others who have hurt you and to forgive them. It is, therefore, through the work of the Holy Spirit that Jesus’ prayer is fulfilled: “I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity”.

Indeed, the Holy Spirit is the creator of unity in every Christian community and in the universal Church.

Remembering this wonderful work of divine grace in us, this evening, as we celebrate this special jubilee, we feel the need to ask forgiveness for our shortcomings. We recognise, first of all, that so many times we have “grieved the Holy Spirit of God” (Eph 4:30), preferring the false consolations of the world and its vanities to the love of God the Father.

It is also necessary to seek forgiveness for our many failings regarding communion and the unity that Jesus desires for the Church. Failings caused by pride, impatience, imprudent words, hasty judgments, arrogance in believing that we are superior to others and becoming rigid defenders of our own ideas.

Shortcomings that have created tensions and divisions in communities, groups, parishes and dioceses.

Shortcomings due to our indifference to all those in difficulty that we have abandoned to themselves and have lost their way, drifting away from the Church, maybe also as a result of our lack of concern.

Today before God we ask for forgiveness for all of this.

May the Holy Spirit infuse the flame of divine charity into us again so that all our half heartedness, our wrongdoing and our infidelities may be burned away.

This Jubilee, however, is an opportunity for us to look forward. The Holy Spirit always generates newness, holiness, enthusiasm and missionary impulse in the Church. So, in addition to the gift of sincere conversion for past sins, it is important for us during these days of grace to reflect with new eyes on the vocation received.

First of all, your personal vocation. God came to meet you through the Charismatic Renewal so that you can fully live your vocation as spouses, priests, consecrated people and young disciples of the Lord. May your weekly prayer meetings with your community – those who have become your true “spiritual family” – help you to live in a true Christian way with full genuine dedication to the task God has entrusted to you at this time. God may be asking you to be mothers, fathers, educators, workers or students.

In the places where you live, bear, with simplicity of heart, the merciful love and the wisdom of life that the Holy Spirit is freely giving you.

In addition to our personal vocation, there is also a wider community vocation.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is one of the most beautiful fruits that the Holy Spirit inspired after the Second Vatican Council which gives new stimulus to the life and mission of the Church. After 50 years, the “current of grace” that you represent has reached its ecclesial maturity. That means that membership of the Charismatic Renewal cannot be limited to a spiritual experience that is simply “private” and “comforting”.

It must become a journey of faith that leads us to ever-growing awareness that the mission of the Church is our mission, the diocesan objectives are our objectives, and the problems of our parish are our problems.

Moreover, your new “baptism in the Spirit” took place through a community assembly that prayed for you. It did not happen in isolation. The Charismatic Renewal, therefore, is “genetically ecclesial”. That assembly, at the initial moment in your experience of faith, represented the entire Church praying for you.

So, all of you are born of the Church’s prayer and therefore you are called to live and act “in harmony” with the Church.

Always hold dear your communion with your shepherds, in parishes and dioceses; communion with all the other groups that refer to the Charismatic Renewal; and communion with other ecclesial movements.

In this way the Church will come to better understand and help the Charismatic Renewal and the Charismatic Renewal will greatly help the Church because the whole Church is and must remain “charismatic”.

By opening yourselves to and by becoming more and more “incarnated” in the everyday life of your parishes, you will help the whole Church to understand an aspect that has almost been forgotten by many Christians and that is an aspect that Pope Francis appreciates very much about the Charismatic Renewal.

It is that every activity in the Church – evangelisation, the celebration of the sacraments the care of the poor – all have as their foundation the worship of God. Adoration and praise of God bring us inner peace and fullness of charity that impel us to do the things we do.

Without adoration and without praise, our hearts cool and all activities in the Church become devoid of fervour, life and joy. They gradually become simply bureaucratic, and in time they die out.

Some months ago, the Holy Father asked me to lead the new Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life.

Allow me to share with you one more thought about the family to all of you who are engaged in catechesis and in Christian education, and also to all of you who live, daily, the blessed experience of being a family. The path of faith you follow in the Charismatic Renewal has helped many of you to better understand the beauty of family vocation. May your testimony help the young, in a special way, to experience the truth of what Pope Francis says in *Amoris Laetitia*, “the Gospel of the family responds to the deepest expectations of the human person: a response to each one’s dignity and fulfilment in reciprocity, communion and fruitfulness” (AL 201).

May the Holy Spirit help you to be living witnesses of the gospel of the family!

We entrust to Mary, Mother of Christ, and spouse of the Holy Spirit, your lives, your families, your groups and your communities, so that the will of the Father may always be fulfilled as you give praise and greater glory to God.

Amen!