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Intercession and Evangelisation

■ **Maria Figueroa de Góngora**

In ancient times the people of Israel held up Moses' arms when he was exhausted. They ran the risk of losing the battle if they neglected this detail. They knew his prayers were heard and were pleasant to God. Moses is an example of a great intercessory figure. Here was a man with a compassionate heart, who dared to ask Yahweh to always save his people, and to whom Yahweh always listened — opening doors, even the most unexpected! The Red Sea was parted like an open door. Even in the most difficult moments when the spoiled and rebellious people built an idol to adore it as if it were a god, Moses reprimanded them but also ran to intercede for them before the Almighty God, asking for mercy. This is the role of the intercessor in the evangelization of the people: to ask, to beg, to cry before God the Father, so that this people is not lost, so that it is saved, so that that foolish and hardened hearts may be transformed, so that it follows its God, the true God, so that among the noise and confusion it may follow only Him, the true and only God.

The mission of the intercessor has not changed through the ages. It has been always about keeping vigil, giving his/her life in constant prayer so that the people do not lose their way. The intercessor must be tireless in his/her mission to the very end. Moses, seeing how the people entered into the promised land could say, mission accomplished.

Intercession and evangelization are like a braid, they go together. They can not and should not be separated, one from the other. Without intercession, evangelization would have no force, and be inconsistent. Today, more than ever, we see how many people there are; experts in speaking, preaching, and elaborating on a subject. Many times they call this evangelization, but there is a great void — there is something missing! What is it that is missing, and why do they only seem to be words? There is no unction, there has not been enough intercessory prayer.

In the beginning, throughout the events of our blessed Catholic Charismatic Renewal, whether seminaries, conferences, meetings or other important events — there was always, without interruption, groups of intercessors praying

fervently for those events in an existing chapel or one that was prepared specially in that moment to hold the Blessed Sacrament. The results were apparent. Prayer permeated all that was taking place, from the smallest service to the greatest, all under the fire of the Divine Spirit. And of course it was this way, after the intercession of all of the workers actively participating as a living body, responsible for evangelising the people of God.

Intercession in love means that even if I do not know the others, I am responsible for their salvation. Once again we hear Yahweh's question, where is your brother? If I have found the precious pearl, the hidden treasure, my Saviour, it is because of these divine and blessed channels and tools. That is why intercession is so necessary and urgent — we cannot stop. Like our Holy Father Benedict XVI said to the OMP Directors in his message in 2008, "We have to be vessels communicating God's Grace". This applies to intercession that spreads to our hearts and is opened to the powerful action of the Holy Spirit: God's love that wants to reach out to everybody which is ultimately the mission of the Charismatic Renewal — that all may know the living Jesus Christ as their only Saviour, that He may be in every heart.

Some ways to intercede:

- The most privileged moment, the Holy Mass
- Kneeling in front of Jesus Eucharist
- Praying the Holy Rosary in community
- Personal prayer
- Offering our daily work
- Small resignations and daily sacrifices
- Fasting

Saint Paul teaches us in Ephesians 6:18, "With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints".

When we intercede with our heart, we surely please God the Father very much. He is not looking at us, but to Jesus in us, sons and daughters in the Son. Intercessors in the Intercessor who makes everything perfect. With Him, in Him and for Him



Intercession and Evangelisation *(continued)*

let us present to God the Father our humble prayers for the evangelization of this world, which has such an urgent need of the proclamation of the Good News. As our Holy Father John Paul II reminded us in Redemptoris Missio 30, “The Missionary activity, or we may say the evangelization, is still beginning”.

Together with Mary, our Mother, the powerful intercessor, let us cry out so that the breath of the Holy Spirit may come to renew the face of the earth, and may the hearts be completely open to the good and true news: Jesus Christ, our King and Saviour!



MERRY CHRISTMAS

FELIZ NAVIDAD

BUON NATALE

JOYEUX NOËL

FELIZ NATAL

FRÖHLICHE WEIHNACHTEN

ICCRS

ICCRS HOPE SACK PROJECT

In challenging times, International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services has called upon the people it serves for spiritual and material support in maintaining operations in service of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal worldwide. Every contribution, however big or small, went a long way in augmenting the efforts of ICCRS. The ICCRS Council remains grateful for the prayers and financial contributions that were collected from all over the world—a sack of hope, in a time of need.

Though the Hope Sack Project was borne out of crisis, it has proven its potential and necessity in the future efforts of ICCRS. In order to raise much-needed funds on an ongoing basis, the project launched in 2009 is just as relevant today in maintaining its important initiatives for the CCR.

ICCRS exists to serve the worldwide Renewal in all of its various streams and expressions. In 1993 the Holy See recognized ICCRS as a body for the promotion of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, with a juridical personality, according to Canon 116, and approved the Statutes of ICCRS. The ICCRS Office is situated in Vatican City, and operates as an information and communication centre serving the CCR worldwide, as well as being the link between the Renewal and the Vatican. There are about 125 million Catholics who have lived this experience and whom ICCRS has aimed at serving for the past 38 years.

Your help is critically necessary for ICCRS! We invite you to join hands with ICCRS in service and promotion of the CCR worldwide. Along with the constant prayer support that is needed, we ask you to become a partner of ICCRS by committing to a regular contribution through the Hope Sack Project. Your stable support is critical to the CCR, which we will match with the latest news on events, development, and growth of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal worldwide, in the form of our Newsletter and Leadership Formation.

Fill out the attached Hope Sack Project registration form and don't forget to renew your subscription for the ICCRS Newsletter Leadership Formation for 2011!

Love in Action: Mercy

■ Brother James Shin

Why the rich man fell into hell

There is a story of ‘the Rich Man and Lazarus’ in the Bible. A poor man named Lazarus used to beg at the rich man’s door, but the rich man did not show mercy on him. The rich man died and fell into hell where he saw the poor man, Lazarus, was sitting beside Abraham at the feast in heaven. He ended up miserably begging for mercy for a sip of water to Lazarus in the burning hell.

How did the rich man come to go to hell?

Cardinal Rosales of the Philippines explained the reason as follows: What Lazarus wanted was not a big thing. He did not ask to dine together at the feast. He did not ask for food at the kitchen. What he wanted was just the bits of food that fell from the rich man’s table. But the stingy rich man even refused this. That’s why he could not help falling into hell. Cardinal Rosales led ‘the 1 cent Collecting Movement’ to let the believers in the Philippines see, hear, and touch God’s love. 1 cent in the Philippines hold little value, like crumbs. However, he could save over 100,000 USD through this movement, and used this valuable money for the poor. Cardinal Rosales is helping Filipinos experience God’s mercy.

The Good Samaritan and the New Covenant

On August 16, 1978, Fr. Oh, who is a founder of Kkottongnae found a dying old man who had fallen into a coma on the Bridge called Jordan Bridge. Although many cars and people passed him by, nobody tried to help him, just as in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:30-35). Since his childhood, Fr. Oh had always tried to help beggars or people on the street, so he stopped his car to take a look at the man. As he was taking the old man to the hospital, he heard these words from Heaven, “Could another day be more joyful and delightful than today? With great joy indeed, I thank you for saving the life of my beloved son. I will make a new covenant with you. I will take care of everything else if you receive the least of my brothers in my name.” At that very moment, he experienced deeply that his action had truly pleased God. Since then, whenever Father Oh took the sick or homeless into his care, everything that was needed for their care began to appear; food, clothing, volunteers, money, and other necessities.

Grandpa Choi Gui-Dong and Kkottongnae


Choi Gui-Dong was born as a son of a rich family in Eumsung, South Korea. During the period of Japanese occupation, he was drafted by force. Upon returning to his home town he was sick and without a home, so he became a beggar. For 40 years he begged for scraps of food and took care of the other homeless people who had not even the strength to beg. On September 12th, 1976, Fr. John Oh encountered him on the street and realized that ‘Even if you have only some strength to beg for food, it is the blessing of the Lord.’

Therefore Fr. Oh started the Kkottongnae community for people who had no strength to beg and no place to rely on.

2009 ICCRS event of ‘LOVE IN ACTION’

The first ICCRS event outside Europe was held in Kkottongnae, Korea with the theme of ‘LOVE IN ACTION’. When we had the evaluation meeting of the event immediately after the conference, many leaders agreed that this style of event had been a turning point in the life of ICCRS and it had moved us to a new place. The cardinal Albert Vanhoye, who was one of the keynote speakers, opened the Conference with the first talk, ‘God is love’ (1John 4,16).

He concluded his talk by saying that we have seen that the charismatic inclination of “love in action” is original. This leads us to examine two issues, i.e. the relationship between love and charisms/gifts and the place of action in Christian life. In the first letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul teaches us that love of charity is more important than the great charisms/gifts of glossolalia and of prophecy, because without love/charity, they are worthless. However, with the theological virtue of love/charity, the charisms/gifts preserve all their value. We have seen that there are charisms/gifts that enable one to carry out particular acts of charity very well. As to the place of action in Christian life, we have seen that it is not a basic place. The only basis for Christian life is faith.

St. Paul excludes the works of the Law from this level. Faith, however, leads to action that is full of love. “What counts”, says St. Paul, “is faith working through love” (Gal 5:6). Without faith, love in action cannot be a true charism/gift. Without love in action, faith cannot truly come alive. 



Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.

Mt 25:40



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QUESTIONS TO THE ICCRS DOCTRINAL COMMISSION

The ICCRS Doctrinal Commission is headed by Bp. Joseph Grech (Australia) and is formed by Fr. Peter Hocken (Austria), Fr. Francis Martin (USA), and Dr. Mary Healy (USA). The ICCRS Doctrinal Commission is in consultation with theologians from around the world.

Is it OK to pray in tongues at Mass?

The ICCRS Doctrinal Commission has received several inquiries in response to a column published by the Zenit news service on August 24, concerning whether it is permissible to speak in tongues at Mass. The author of the column, Fr. Edward McNamara, LC, cited a 1994 document of the Brazilian bishops' conference and concluded that "it is not in conformity with the authentic charism of the Catholic Charismatic renewal to speak in tongues during Mass." However, the Brazilian bishops' document does not support this conclusion. We would like to clarify this matter to dispel any confusion it may have caused among members of the CCR.

The Brazilian bishops' document was intended to address specific pastoral situations in Brazil and does not apply to the universal Church, although it does contain some helpful guidelines. As Fr. McNamara notes, the document draws a distinction between "praying in tongues" (prayer addressed to God) and "speaking in tongues" (a message addressed to the assembly). However, he overlooks the relevance of this distinction for the question at hand. His conclusion refers to "speaking in tongues" during Mass without noting that what normally takes place at charismatic liturgies is "praying in tongues." The bishops do not say that praying in tongues should not take place at Mass, only that leaders should not specifically call for it. Nor do they prohibit "speaking in tongues"; they only say that it should not take place unless there is also an interpreter.


In considering the proper use of the gift of tongues, it is important to reflect on the teaching of St. Paul. Paul speaks about tongues in 1 Corinthians in the context of instructions on the church's liturgical assemblies (1 Cor 11-14). He describes tongues as a form of prayer under the influence of the Holy Spirit; it is praying or singing "with the spirit" (1 Cor 14:15). In saying that the tongue-speaker "utters mysteries in the Spirit" (1 Cor 14:2), Paul indicates that tongues is pre-conceptual, pre-verbal prayer—a prayer of the heart that expresses God's praise aloud but without words. Paul corrects certain abuses in Corinth in which tongues was being overemphasized to the detriment of prophecy and other gifts that have a greater capacity to build up the body of Christ (1 Cor 14:1-17). Nevertheless, he says, "I want you all to speak in tongues" and "I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all" (14:5, 18). Elsewhere Paul warns Christians, "Do not quench the Spirit... but test everything, hold fast to what is good" (1 Thes 5:19-21). And he specifically admonishes, "Do not forbid speaking in tongues" (1 Cor 14:39).

The writings of the Church Fathers also help illuminate this question. Many Fathers refer to jubilation (jubilatío), a form of praying and singing aloud without words. Their descriptions of jubilatío are remarkably similar to our experience of praying or singing in tongues today. St. Augustine explains: "One who jubilates does not

utter words, but a certain sound of joy without words: for it is the voice of the soul poured forth in joy, expressing, as far as possible, what it feels without reflecting on the meaning. Rejoicing in exultation, a man uses words that cannot be spoken and understood, but he simply lets his joy burst forth without words; his voice then appears to express a happiness so intense that he cannot explain it" (En. in Ps., 99.4). Augustine does not merely allow but urges his congregation to jubilate: "Rejoice and speak. If you cannot express your joy, jubilate: jubilation expresses your joy if you cannot speak. Let not your joy be silent" (ibid., 97.4). St. Gregory the Great adds, "But we call it jubilus, when we conceive such joy in the heart as we cannot give vent to by the force of words, and yet the triumph of the heart vents with the voice what it cannot give forth by speech. Now the mouth is rightly said to be filled with laughter, the lips with jubilation, since in that eternal land, when the mind of the righteous is borne away in transport, the tongue is lifted up in the song of praise" (Moralia, 8.89; cf. 28.35). Numerous other Fathers write in similar way. What more fitting occasion could there be for such joy overflowing into wordless praise than at those moments of the liturgy where there is room for a response of song or praise, such as at the alleluia or after communion? In fact, jubilation with improvised melodies was an ordinary part of the liturgy for centuries, and had a significant influence on the development of medieval church music.

This background helps us recognize that tongues is not something "external" introduced into the liturgy; rather, it is a way of singing or praying under the leading of the Spirit. Certainly there can be and sometimes are abuses of the gift of tongues at Mass. But tongues itself is a work of the Spirit, a gift that leads us into more fervent worship, deeper surrender and more intimate communion with the Lord. Countless people in the CCR can testify that this is the case.

It is also important to keep in mind that the popes from the earliest years of the CCR, from Paul VI to Benedict XVI, have strongly supported and encouraged the Renewal as a movement in the Church. On several occasions the popes have celebrated Masses with CCR groups in which there was singing and praying in tongues. Many bishops' conferences have also issued statements affirming the CCR and the spiritual renewal it has brought to millions of the faithful. Readers interested in finding out more about papal statements on the CCR may consult the ICCRS book *"Then Peter stood up..." Collections of the Popes' Addresses to the CCR from its Origin to the Year 2000*. Bishops' statements with specific guidelines should be read in light of these addresses.

Members of the CCR in every country are encouraged to maintain good relationships with their local church and to follow faithfully any guidelines given by their bishops. 

ICCRS receives many questions about the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, and we do our best to answer as many as we can with the help of the ICCRS Doctrinal Commission members who kindly take the time to check their references and credit their sources. The questions and answers featured in this section of the Leadership Formation each issue are selected for their relevancy and helpfulness overall for those involved in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

If you have a question about the CCR, please send it to newsletter@iccrs.org

