

# The Flame

January / February 2023

## Rediscovering the Malines Documents: An Overview

by John Gresham

In the first two decades of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, six documents emerged under the leadership of Cardinal Léon Suenens, Archbishop of Malines-Brussels in Belgium. This series of documents came to be known by their city of origin as the “Malines” documents. On more than one occasion, Pope Francis has encouraged the Charismatic Renewal to read the Malines documents, referring to them as a guide, a user’s manual and as a compass. The image of a compass is especially helpful. It is not as if these documents give the final word on the topics they address, but they point the way forward. Especially as Pope Francis calls the Renewal to remember our roots, it is helpful to return to these early documents to be sure we are still following the directions they set.

Cardinal Suenens was one of four moderators appointed by Pope Paul VI to guide the work of the Second Vatican Council, and it was his intervention that led the Council to present the charisms as gifts of the Spirit offered to all members of the Church. After hearing of the proliferation of charismatic gifts bursting forth and spreading among Catholics, Suenens began to investigate the Charismatic Renewal. After personally experiencing the Renewal he embraced the movement. His approval was crucial in winning the support of Pope Paul VI. Paul VI called Cardinal Suenens to shepherd the Charismatic Renewal and the Malines documents were part of Suenens response to that

call. The most important of the documents, and those specifically mentioned by Pope Francis, are the first three: Theological and Pastoral Orientations on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (1974); Ecumenism and Charismatic Renewal (1978); and Charismatic Renewal and Social Action (1979). They correspond to the three expectations Pope Francis has repeatedly expressed to the Renewal: to share the grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit; to foster unity among Christians and to serve the poor.

- The Malines Documents  
Theological and Pastoral  
Orientations on the Catholic  
Charismatic Renewal  
(1974)**
- Ecumenism and Charismatic  
Renewal  
(1978)**
- Charismatic Renewal and  
Social Action  
(1979)**
- Renewal and the Powers of  
Darkness  
(1982)**
- Nature and Grace: A Vital  
Unity  
(1985)**
- Resting in the Spirit  
(1986)**

For the first Malines document, Cardinal Suenens gathered a small international gathering of early leaders of the Renewal. Members from the United States included Ralph Martin, Kevin Ranaghan and Fr. Kilian McDonnell. Before the final draft, the document was submitted to theological consultants outside the Renewal, including Joseph Ratzinger, the future Pope Benedict XVI. This document presents the Charismatic Renewal as belonging to the Trinitarian foundation of the Church. The Renewal reminds Catholics that the Father constitutes the Church not only by the gift of his Son but simultaneously by the gift of his Spirit. The Spirit dwells in the Church as “a perpetual Pentecost” offering charisms to every Christian. The full range of charisms, not only gifts of service and teaching but also gifts of tongues, prophecy and healing, belong to the ordinary normal life of the church. The document responds to some criticisms of the Renewal: It is not emotionalism to emphasize the experience of the Spirit; it is not fundamentalism to

(Continued on page 6)

Dear Readers of the Flame,

**The marketing motto of Home Depot is *How Doers Get More Done*.** I confess that this logo appeals to me. Like many of us, my schedule is full and if someone can show me how to get more done, I'm for it. However, I have noticed that our culture seems obsessed on the *how* of life. We want to know how we can improve our gas mileage. We want to know how we can better insulate our homes, how we can make better investments, how we can stay healthy, how we can get the best deal, how we can...You get the idea.

This has impacted our educational system, which is mostly based on helping people to know how to do something: programming computers, diagnosing illnesses, providing food, building structures, et cetera. And in the workday world, it is all about knowing how to make a profit so that we can acquire the things necessary and desirable for a secure and entertaining life.

**At its root, this desire to increase our "know how" flows from some of God's first words to the human race: ... fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air and all the living things that move on the earth.** (Genesis 1:28) We need to learn how to *subdue* the earth. Of course, as stewards of creation, we are to use the resources of the earth to better our lives, mindful of caring for the earth while improving our lives.

However, beyond this desire to know how to get things done, we have a deeper and more important longing that needs to be fulfilled. **We know that life is not simply about acquiring "know how". In fact, our lives make the most sense when we switch the letters around.** Life is not so much about knowing how but knowing who. Learning how to live comfortably and securely on earth does not satisfy the human soul. Coming to know Jesus Christ and entering into genuinely loving human relationships is what life is all about. **Simply put: life is first about *Who* and then about *How*.**

**There are two keys to pursuing "who" above "how": prayer and love.** Prayer keeps us in touch with the ultimate Who. When Moses asked about God's name, *God replied, "I am who am". Then he added, "This is what you shall tell the Israelites: I AM sent me to you."* In John 8, Jesus appropriates this mysterious name to himself:

*For if you do not believe that I AM, you will die in your sins...When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I AM, and that I do nothing on my own...Amen, Amen, I say to you, before Abraham came to be, I AM." (John 8:24, 28 & 58)*

As human beings (not human doings) we connect to the Lord, who is ultimate Being, the One who is and who was and who is to come (see Revelation 1:4). We do so with humility, gratitude, praise and adoration.

**One of my more memorable experiences in prayer happened when I was a seminarian.** I was attending a charismatic Mass at St. Joseph Christian Life Center. For reasons I cannot recall, I was feeling a bit down and frustrated with

seminary life. My body was in the CLC chapel but my mind was out in left field. However, during the offertory collection (not the most solemn part of the Mass), out of the blue God spoke to my heart. He said, ***Bob, I love you for who you are and not for what you do.*** My whole being was shaken out of its stupor. And those words have stayed with me. On good days I remember them. Yes, I know that God has things for me to do. I seek them out and do the best I can by His grace and for His glory. However, I also know that I do not earn God's love. In prayer I seek to be present to the One who is always present to us and who loves us.

**The second way of putting *who* above *how* is by learning to love those made in God's image.** If the focus of our life is on the *how* we do things, we run the danger of using people and not loving them. In the eyes of some, people are valuable only to the extent that they can produce something or be of service in some manner. This type of thinking is the basis for the anti-life movements in our world. Euthanasia and abortion both categorize people according to *how useful and wanted people are*.

**Loving people means looking at *who* they are and not simply what they can do.** And, in fact, from the perspective of Jesus, the less people are able to do, the more he identifies with them. **From the lips of the Master Himself, *Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.* (Matthew 25:40).**

**In the eyes of some people, taking time to pray is a waste. Similarly, making time for the least and the lost is inefficient and not worth it.** However, we are human beings called to a relationship with the ground of all being: God. We are also commanded to love others for who they are and not for how useful they can be.

As we begin this New Year, let us ask the Holy Spirit to deepen our relationships with God and other people. *For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather of power and love and self-control.* (2 Timothy 1:8) This is what the Holy Spirit does - transforms us into lovers. **Desirous of fulfilling the Great Commandments of loving God and our neighbor, let us pray to put the *Who* above the *How*. This is the path to true joy and to eternal life.**

In Christ,

**Fr. Bob Franco**

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[crmweb.org](http://crmweb.org) / (440)944-9445

# Catholic Renewal Ministries Events

**Praise & Worship**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Liturgy begins at**

**7:30 p.m.**



**Healing Prayer  
teams will be avail-  
able after Mass for  
individual prayer.**

**Catholic Renewal Ministries'  
Traveling Charismatic Mass**

**Friday, January 20, 2023**

**All are Welcome!**

**St. Peter Parish  
35777 Center Ridge Rd.  
North Ridgeville, OH 44039**

**Fr. Bob Franco  
Celebrant**

**Please join us for  
a social after mass.**

**Come, Sing and Praise God  
With Joy in the New Year!**



**Contact:**

**Fr. Bob Franco**

**440-327-2201**

**or**

**CRM**

**440-944-9445**

**[crmweb.org](http://crmweb.org)**

**Catholic Renewal Ministries  
will host a  
Healing Mass**

**Friday, February 17, 2023**

**Come and bring a friend!**

**Queen of Heaven Church  
1800 Steese Rd.  
Uniontown, OH 44685**

**Fr. Bob Franco  
Celebrant**

**This will be a time to  
truly encounter the  
healing power of God.**

# Catholic Renewal Ministries Events



## WANTED - GENERAL SERVICE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Catholic Renewal Ministries is looking for a few new members for the General Service Committee. We meet once a month, usually the third Monday of the month, to discuss plans and events for the Renewal. Members are encouraged to provide ideas for the growth of the Renewal in the Cleveland Diocese, and to provide help as needed. Current committees are: Conference, Prayer Groups, Healing, Hispanic, Program, Music and Word Gifts.

If you are interested or have questions, please contact Ken Posavad at 440.319.9646 or [kposa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kposa@sbcglobal.net)

## *Prayer Group Information*

**Our Lady of Angles Prayer Group** meets each Tuesday evening from 7:30 to 9:00pm. We meet in the auditorium of the Primary School Building - behind Linus Hall - of Our Lady of Angels Parish at 3644 Rocky River Dr., Cleveland, OH 44111. We praise our Lord through the Holy Spirit with worship, singing, gifts of the Holy Spirit, sharing stories/witnesses and teachings. Refreshments, fellowship, and healing prayer teams immediately follow our meeting. ALL are welcome. We are also on Zoom. Please phone Don Lawrence, 1-740-424-4707 for updates and more information (leave a message!) or email [donlawrence603@gmail.com](mailto:donlawrence603@gmail.com).

**SS. Cosmas and Damian Charismatic Prayer Group** meets every Sunday at 7:00 p.m. in the church gathering area under the Holy Spirit Dove. The prayer meeting is also streamed live on SS. Cosmas and Damian Facebook page. Come and experience vibrant praise and worship, intercessory and healing prayer, and scripture sharing.

Do you want to know Jesus in a deeper way? Are you looking to go deeper in your faith? Come and check out our church community of believers. To contact us or be on the prayer group email list call 330-310-2595 or email [dennycarleton@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dennycarleton@sbcglobal.net)

**Holy Spirit Prayer Group** meets in the Fairlawn and Akron area. For information about dates, times and locations, please call Jim McGuire at 330-612-5969.

The **Holy Spirit Prayer Group** of St. Mary Church in Hudson is a Charismatic Holy Spirit led prayer group that meets the first and third Saturdays of the each month year around. We meet from 10am to 11:30 am in the chapel. The main focus of our meeting is to praise and worship the living God. We ask the Holy Spirit to minister to us and take us to the heart of the Father. We not only offer praise and worship but also periods of silent prayer to seek and hear God's words and His

messages to us. We share words of God, share stories, and offer intercessory prayers for hurting and suffering brothers and sisters.

Our prayer group offers a monthly healing prayer service. For more information, please contact us at [HealingPrayers@stmaryhudson.cc](mailto:HealingPrayers@stmaryhudson.cc).

The **Living Word Healing Prayer Ministry** at St. Ambrose Parish in Brunswick meets face to face on the first and third Tuesdays of every month from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in our Chapel.

We allow the Winds of the Spirit to flow over us as we praise the Lord through music, sharing, and group reflection. We allow time for God to open our hearts and minds as we listen to His Word both through Scripture and Word of Knowledge. Every meeting ends with healing prayer as we ask Jesus to come to us in a special way to heal our brokenness and touch us with His Love.

All are invited to join us as we praise and worship the Living God!

The **Bukas Loob sa Diyos** (BLD) or in English - **Open in Spirit to God** (OSG), is a Filipino Catholic Charismatic Covenant Community. While the majority of BLD members are from the Philippines, it also includes other brothers and sisters of many nationalities and heritage backgrounds. We meet every Thursday, at 6:30 pm at the Mary Queen of Peace Chapel, 4423 Pearl Rd, Cleveland, OH 44109. We hold weekly praise and worship service in-person. Also, on the first Thursday of each month, we celebrate a mass followed by a healing service.

We are a communion of families and a community of persons called together as one people through the moment of encounter and a process of renewal to a relationship of faith, hope, and love with God. We conduct marriage encounter programs, solo person encounters, single encounters, family encounters and life in the spirit seminars.

For more information, please contact Rudy and Fe Fontilla at (440) 403-5719 or email: [rudyfontilla1975@yahoo.com](mailto:rudyfontilla1975@yahoo.com).

# Catholic Renewal Ministries Events

## CRM and Prayer Group Events

**The Holy Family Healing Prayer Group in Stow** offers **Healing Prayer** the 2nd weekend of every month after the Saturday 5 PM and Sunday 9 AM Masses. We meet for prayer in the small chapel in the back of Holy Family Church, 3179 Kent Rd., Stow. All are invited for healing prayer. We are available for private and home bound prayer, inner, emotional, spiritual and Unbound healing by appointment. Call the Healing Prayer Group, 330-686-0017 to leave a message and schedule a session.

**Holy Family Healing Prayer Group in Stow** is conducting nine-week **Healing Prayer Classes** beginning in January thru February. Classes are held weekly on Mondays, 10-12 N and 6:30-8:30 PM, are in conformity with the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church and are *free*. We meet in the chapel in the back of the church at Holy Family Parish at 3179 Kent Rd, Stow. We are passionate about intercessory prayer – come join us - experience the healing power of Jesus and witness his healings. Contact Mary for more information: 330-687-8843.

**The Holy Spirit Prayer Group** of St. Mary Church hosts an in person **Healing Prayer Service** on the first Sunday of each month, except in July and September of this year. For those months the service will be held on the second Sundays. The service will be held in the chapel from 12:30-1:30 pm.

Our prayer teams will be available to pray for the healings of your body, body and spirit. Fr. Larry will, depending on his availability, offer an anointing for those seriously ill, preparing for surgery, or weak with aging.

We encourage you to submit your prayer requests to [healingprayers@stmaryhudson.cc](mailto:healingprayers@stmaryhudson.cc). St. Mary Church is located at 340 N. Main St., Hudson 44236, Tel: 330-653-8118.

The **Living Word Healing Prayer Ministry** at St. Ambrose Parish in Brunswick offers a monthly **Healing Prayer** event which takes place in the Church after the 4:30 p.m. Mass on the third Saturday of every month. Healing prayer ministers are available to offer prayer for spiritual, emotional, or physical healing. Please join us so that the Spirit of God can touch you with healing love!

Catholic Renewal Ministries' **Traveling Charismatic Mass** for January will be held at St. Peter Parish on **Friday, January 20th, 7:00 pm**. Fr. Bob Franco will be the celebrant. Praise and worship will begin at 7:00 and the liturgy will start at 7:30. Healing prayer teams will be available after mass for individual prayer, and there will also be a social after mass. For more information, please contact Fr. Franco at 440-327-2201 or CRM at 440-944-9445. Come, Sing and Praise God With Joy in the New Year!

Catholic Renewal Ministries will host a **Healing Mass on Friday, February 17th, at 7:00 p.m.**, at Queen of Heaven Church, 1800 Steese Rd., Uniontown 44685. Fr. Bob Franco will be the celebrant. Healing Prayer teams will be available after Mass for individual prayer. For more information, please contact Fr. Franco at 440-327-2201 or CRM at 440-944-9445. Come and bring a friend! This will be a time to truly encounter the healing power of God.

Many of you experienced the Spirit-filled ministry of Barbara Heil at this summer's **CRM Annual Charismatic Conference**. We are thrilled to welcome her back on **Saturday, March 25th** for a **Day of Teaching and Healing Prayer** with the theme, "Re vive: Time for More!". The program will run from 9 am to 4 pm, (doors opening at 8:30 am), and will be held in the Aula meeting room at the Center for Pastoral Leadership, 28700 Euclid Ave. Wickliffe 44092. The Aula is in the front building as you enter the seminary and there is nearby parking.

Registration for the day is \$30 and lunch is included. To register use the form printed in this Flame or use Paypal on our website: **[www.crmweb.org](http://www.crmweb.org)**. Registrations must be completed online or postmarked by March 13th to meet our deadlines. Please register early, since there is limited seating, and due to lunch, we will not be able to accommodate walk-ins.

Barbara's joy, passion and enthusiasm for the Lord and His people are electrifying. Mark your calendar and plan on spending the day with us as Barbara draws us deeper into the heart of our Heavenly Father.



**VISIT US ONLINE:  
[crmweb.org](http://crmweb.org)**

(Continued from page 1)

believe that miracles really happen; it is not elitist if all Catholics are invited to a life in the Spirit, which belongs to the very nature of the Church. The goal of Charismatic Renewal is not to create a special group within the Church but to renew the entire church through a rediscovery of the fullness of life in the Spirit and to empower the Church to proclaim Jesus as Lord.

The second Malines document presents the ecumenical movement and the charismatic movement as a “double current of grace.” The ecumenical movement seeks to end the divisions between Christians and the Charismatic Renewal brings a very special grace for uniting Christians. The shared experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit provides a meeting ground for Christians from diverse traditions. The experience of the power of the Spirit inspires faith in God whose power is needed to heal the wounds of division. Experiencing the diversity of charisms provides a vision of a pluriform unity which includes the gifts of each Christian tradition. Some of the practical advice given in this document may need updating but the theological vision remains relevant and inspiring.

The third document addresses an issue that is still with us, the divide between “spiritual Christians and socially committed Christians.” The document takes the form of a dialogue between Cardinal Suenens, known for his support of spiritual renewal and Brazilian archbishop Helder Camara, known as an outspoken advocate of the poor. Through the give and take, one quickly recognizes how both men share a common vision, exposing this false dichotomy between spiritual renewal and social concern. Works of justice and charismatic gifts are both signs of the in-breaking of the kingdom of God “already” present in Jesus. Archbishop Camara speaking of the role of small faith communities among the poor and Suenens speaking of the social impact of charismatic communities – both point to the communal dimension of spiritual renewal and social transformation. The dialogue is interspersed with powerful prayers composed by the two authors, prayers that could help us realize the full social impact of charismatic renewal attentive to the needs of the poor.

In the fourth Malines document *Renewal and the Powers of Darkness* (1982), Cardinal Suenens expresses concerns over extremes in the practice of deliverance prayer. He begins by affirming the reality of the evil one and gives a beautiful summary of how the sacraments liberate from the power of the

devil. He emphasizes that the fundamental spiritual combat is against sin in our individual lives and in our cultures. Turning to the actual practice of deliverance prayer he describes some problems and the need for theological and pastoral guidelines. With the 2017 publication of *Deliverance Ministry* (International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Service Doctrinal Commission), we finally have such guidelines.

The fifth Malines document, *Nature and Grace: A Vital Unity*, published in 1985 was not addressed directly to the Renewal but to the wider Church. In that work, Cardinal Suenens calls his contemporaries away from an extreme naturalism to a balanced view of the human person in which wounded human nature finds healing and transformation by divine grace.

In 1986, Cardinal Suenens published the sixth and final Malines document on *Resting in the Spirit*. He argues that the experience of people falling over when prayed for could be explained psychologically. Without denying it might in some cases be a work of the Spirit, the Cardinal ends up cautioning against the practice. More than thirty years later, this phenomenon is still with us. It could be that the Cardinal prematurely dismissed the possibility that this experience is an authentic human response to the touch of the Spirit, not subject to human attempts to curtail it. Even those who do not completely agree with his assessment can sympathize with his motivation. Cardinal Suenens was concerned that the practice might discredit the Renewal and he did not want it to become a fringe movement in the Church. In fact, he begins this final Malines document by reiterating: the Renewal is NOT a movement within the Church but a current of Pentecostal grace for the whole Church. It is that vision of Charismatic Renewal as a current of grace for the entire church that Pope Francis invites us to recall by re-reading the Malines documents.

John Gresham is Professor of Theology and Director of Distance Education and Online Learning at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, MI. He is the author of *Jesus 101: God and Man* and *Holy Spirit 101: Present Among Us* published by Liguori. He has served on the NSC Council since 2015.

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# Re·vive: Time for more!

*A Day of Teaching and Healing Prayer  
with Barbara Heil*

## TALKS/BIO:

Personal testimony  
Chosen by God  
Empowered by God  
Surrendered Disciples



Barbara formed *From His Heart* in 2014 with a desire to see this generation encounter the deep love of our Heavenly Father. She has spent the last few years traveling the U.S. and the world over conducting worship seminars, retreats, and conferences, leading missions trips, offering prayer and counseling, and

seeing thousands healed and set free inside and out, equipping lives for the Glory of God!

## DETAILS:

**Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup> 2023**

**9am - 4pm** (Doors open 8:30am)

AT

**The Center for Pastoral Leadership**

*Aula meeting room,  
located in front building of the seminary  
28700 Euclid Ave. Wickliffe 44092*

**\$30** includes lunch

## CONTACT:

For more information, please contact CRM at  
440-944-9445 or [crmcleveand@gmail.com](mailto:crmcleveand@gmail.com)

## RE·VIVE MAIL-IN REGISTRATION FORM

*Put name and \$30 fee for each person registering.*

*Registrations must be completed online or postmarked by March 13th to meet our deadlines.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### SEND INFORMATION AND CHECK TO:

CRM c/o Marge Zampino  
2747 Vincent Drive  
Seven Hills, OH 44131



# The Flame

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