

The Flame

July/August 2024

Peacemaker Extraordinaire

By Patricia Mitchell

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” (Matthew 5:9)

Have you ever found yourself having to take on the role of peacemaker? It’s not easy to bring opposing sides together and come to some kind of agreement. Even “lowering the temperature” in a situation can be difficult. And yet we all know that divisions inflict damage wherever they exist—whether that’s in our families, in our communities, or in the Church. That’s why Jesus calls those who are peacemakers “blessed” and “children of God.”

But how do we begin the work of healing the divisions that surround us? Rather than providing a set of instructions, it’s often better to look to someone who acted as a peacemaker and learn from them. We all know of modern-day figures like Pope John Paul II, Mother Teresa, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Yet we can also find an amazing example of someone in the New Testament whose efforts helped to save the early Church from breaking apart just as it was beginning to take off.

“Son of Encouragement.” This peacemaker’s name was Barnabas, a trusted companion of St. Paul. We are first introduced to him in Acts 4: *There was no needy person among [the community of believers], for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need. Thus Joseph, also named by the apostles Barnabas (which is translated “son of encouragement”), a Levite, a Cypriot by birth, sold a piece of property that he owned, then brought the money and put it at the feet of the apostles.* (Acts 4:34-37)

Why did Luke, the author of Acts, single out “Joseph...a Levite, a Cypriot by birth,” from among all the other believers who had donated their property (Acts 4:36-37)? This man must have stood out, both for his example and for his ability to build up the other members of the community. The apostles even gave him the nickname “Barnabas,” meaning “son of encouragement.” So already we know something important about Barnabas: he was a positive influence on the community, someone who helped the other disciples live their new life in Christ.

Barnabas Takes the Initiative. We next meet Barnabas in Acts 9,

after Paul’s stunning conversion. Paul had stayed with the disciples in Damascus for a time (9:19), but fearing for his life, he traveled to Jerusalem to join the disciples there. However, the Jerusalem community was still afraid of him (9:26). They didn’t quite believe his conversion story—what if Paul was planning to arrest them? But Barnabas decided to take matters in hand and meet up with this new disciple:

Barnabas took charge of [Paul] and brought him to the apostles, and he reported to them how on the way he had seen the Lord and that he had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus. He [Paul] moved about freely with them in Jerusalem, and spoke out boldly in the name of the Lord. (Acts 9:27-28)

Barnabas recognized the impasse between Paul and the members of the Jerusalem community. But rather than allow the situation to continue, he trusted in God and tried to work things out. Because of his respected status in the community, he was able to reassure the disciples in Jerusalem that Paul really had changed. And so Paul was able to live among them and preach the good news (Acts 9:28).

This story shows us two qualities that enabled Barnabas to broker the peace between Paul and the Jerusalem community. First, he was courageous. He didn’t hesitate to step out in faith even when he didn’t know what the outcome would be. Second, he refused to be a passive onlooker but instead took the initiative to seek out Paul.

Led by the Spirit. The early Church was growing quickly—even among the Gentiles. This must have been quite a shock to the Jerusalem disciples, who were Jews. How had that happened? Luke tells us that because of the persecution that followed Stephen’s martyrdom, some of the Greek-speaking Jewish disciples had fled to Antioch (Acts 11:19). The “hand of the Lord was with them” as they preached the gospel there, and many Gentiles converted (11:21). When news of these events reached Jerusalem, the disciples there sent Barnabas as their ambassador to investigate:

When he [Barnabas] arrived and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced and encouraged them all to remain faithful to the Lord in firmness of heart, for he was a good man, filled with the Holy Spirit and faith. And a large number of people was added to the Lord. (Acts 11:23-24)

(Continued on page 7)

Dear Readers of *The Flame*,

I believe it was Fr. Francis Martin (+2017), a scripture scholar, leader in the charismatic renewal and a priest of the Archdiocese of Washington DC, who once said, “Community is the work of the Spirit. Isolation is the work of the devil.”

This foundational principle of life is a good tool for discernment. Are my decisions moving me toward community or toward isolation? Have my words been building up Christ’s body the Church or have they sown seeds of mistrust, negatively influencing people’s opinions about their brothers and sisters, separating members of the Body of Christ?

Before His saving death and resurrection, Jesus prayed thus in the Upper Room:

I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father; are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. (John 17:20-21)

Just before Jesus was arrested, tried and crucified, He prayed that his followers would be unified.

At Pentecost, we see Spirit freeing the Apostles from their self-centered notions of ministry. The eleven stood as one as Peter proclaimed the gospel, (Acts 2:3) and by end the of the chapter the Holy Spirit inspired the newborn Church in this way:

They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers... (Acts 2:42)

The prayer of Jesus was being answered. The Holy Spirit was building community.

Relationships take intentionality. I remember Ralph Martin talking about the second most important commitment he made. (His most important commitment was to follow Jesus.) Ralph’s second most important commitment was to make time each day to pray. Over the decades that followed, his intentional decision greatly deepened his relationship with God.

Similarly, we need to be intentional about our relationships with each other. We need to do things that strengthen our relationships in Christ. This may mean making time for each other. It may mean striving for conversation that centers on the Lord. Sometimes relationships benefit by sending a note or card. Intentionality means committing to do things that build up the Body of Christ. All of these things take time, effort and sometimes sacrifice.

We also need to be intentional about resisting the temptations to say and do things that tear down the Body of Christ. I was struck by this reading from Midday Prayer (Saturday, week III) in the Liturgy of the Hours. It highlighted some things to avoid, as well as things to do, that will foster healthy, brotherly/sisterly relationships:

Let us never be boastful, or challenging, or jealous toward one another. Help carry one another’s burdens; in that way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 5:26, 6:2)

Many people are tempted to be boastful in a subtle way. They put down their brothers and sisters in Christ to make themselves look better than those they criticize. This ought not to be. We are to be

occupied with bearing the burdens of others and thus fulfilling Christ’s law of love. **This love is to be the hallmark of our relationships with each other.**

In the next couple of months, we will face again the onslaught of political campaign ads. There will be debates, editorials and an assortment of negative news reporting. We need to resist the negative affects of this kind of toxic news environment. If we soak up too much mudslinging, we will most likely stain our attitude. We can easily become negative toward people. It can easily bleed into our relationships and make us judgmental.

Our best response to this political climate is to pray, fast and do works of charity. Approaching people with the sweetness of grace will not only give witness to Jesus Christ, but it will also bring a bit of healing to the toxic atmosphere that often characterizes campaign season. We want to be instruments of holy community building. **We want to keep ourselves and others out of the isolation silos that we are tempted to hide in.**

Psalm 133 reads:

How good and how pleasant it is, when brothers dwell together as one! Like fine oil on the head, running down upon the beard, upon the beard of Aaron, upon the collar of his robe. Like dew of Hermon coming down upon the mountains of Zion. There the LORD has decreed a blessing, life for evermore! (Psalm 133)

The kind of unity that David speaks of here becomes a sort of platform for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Unity draws the fine oil of the Holy Spirit upon the people of God. Unity is the landing place for the dew of Mt. Hermon (the one snowcapped mountain on the border of Syria, Lebanon and Israel). In agrarian terms, this dew makes the land fruitful. In spiritual terms, this dew is the Holy Spirit who refreshes us and give us a taste of eternal life.

There are still a few days remaining to register for our 41st annual charismatic conference. This year’s theme is One Body, One Spirit. (Ephesians 4:4). I guarantee that you will be refreshed and equipped in the Lord. Many people who have had little or no exposure to the renewal often had profound encounters with the Lord. Details are inside this Flame. Do not hesitate to bring a friend.

Let us cooperate with the Holy Spirit and become agents of community, thwarting the devil’s desire to isolate and destroy the people of God.

In Christ,
Fr. Bob Franco



PS: I encourage you to participate in the upcoming CRM events including the July Conference. More information is found in this issue of the Flame as well as the CRM website: www.crmweb.org.

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CATHOLIC RENEWAL MINISTRIES
P.O. Box 360546
STRONGSVILLE, OHIO 44136
crmweb.org / (440) 944-9445

\$10 Boxed Honey Baked Ham Lunch

includes Chips & Chocolate Chip Cookie (except GF option):

- Turkey on Baker's Roll, Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese, Honey Mustard and Mayo on the side
- Ham on Croissant, Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese, Honey Mustard and Mayo on the side
- Chicken Salad on Croissant, Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese, Mayo on the side
- Vegetarian on Ciabatta Bread, Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese, Ranch on the side
- Gluten-Free Chef's Salad with Ham, Turkey & Cheese, Dressing on the side

\$17 Talerico's Dinner cafeteria style:

- MAIN: City Chicken (breaded pork w/light gravy)
GF Balsamic Glazed Chicken (w/red pepper & onion)
- SIDES: Herb Roasted Root Vegetables, Green Beans
- SALADS: GF House Salad, Broccoli Salad

1ST PERSON REGISTRATION. (Copy form for multiple registrations OR register online with PayPal*)

PRINT CLEARLY

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ - _____ 1st CRM conference? yes _____ no _____

\$10 Lunch (circle one): Turkey Ham Chicken Salad Vegetarian Chef's Salad (GF)

\$17 Dinner (circle one): YES NO

Pre-Registration \$35 ea. _____

Lunch \$10 ea. _____

Dinner \$17 ea. _____

TOTAL _____

Make check or money order to: CRM

Mail to: **Ruth Hug**
31935 Pondside Dr.
Avon Lake, OH 44012

*To register with PayPal go to www.crmweb.org

(online or postmarked by July 17th to meet our deadlines)

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Register by mail or with PayPal

on our website: www.crmweb.org

(online or postmarked by July 17th to meet our deadlines)

In advance

\$35 per person

At the door

\$40 per person
(cash/check only)

Youth (under 18)

FREE

Options for Lunch (\$10) and Dinner (\$17)
are available for purchase in advance only.

No group or senior discounts are available.

For further information,

Contact CRM at:

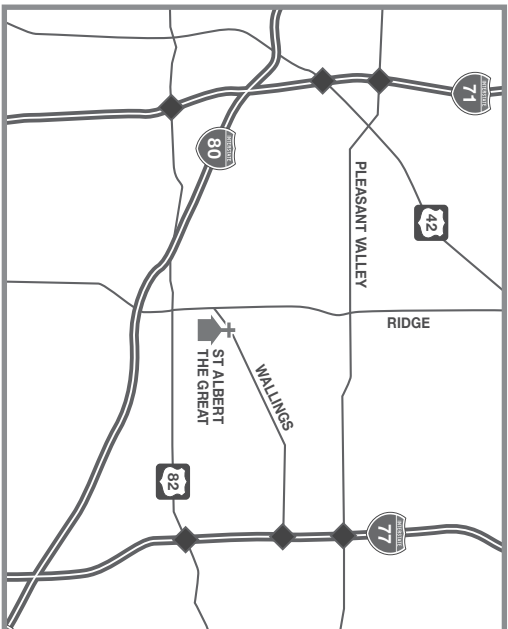
440 944-9445

e-mail: crmcleveand@gmail.com



St. Albert the Parish Life Center

6667 Wallings Rd, North Royalton, OH 44133



Sponsored by Catholic Renewal Ministries
Visit our web site at crmweb.org

CATHOLIC RENEWAL MINISTRIES PRESENTS:

ONE BODY • ONE SPIRIT

EVENT DATE

Saturday

July 27, 2024

Doors Open 7:45am, Close 9pm

St. Albert the Great Parish Life Center
6667 Wallings Rd, North Royalton, OH 44133

\$35 Registration

plus Lunch & Dinner options for purchase

EVENT ACTIVITIES

- Praise & Worship
- Morning Prayer
- Dynamic Teaching
- Saturday Vigil at 4pm
- Healing Prayer

Conference begins at 8:30am

Praise & Worship by Matt Fatrak



Check www.crmweb.org for details
call CRM: 440 944-9445 e-mail: crmcleveand@gmail.com

\$10 Boxed Honey Baked Ham Lunch

includes Chips & Chocolate Chip Cookie (except GF option):

- Turkey on Baker's Roll, Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese, Honey Mustard and Mayo on the side
- Ham on Croissant, Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese, Honey Mustard and Mayo on the side
- Chicken Salad on Croissant, Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese, Mayo on the side
- Vegetarian on Ciabatta Bread, Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese, Ranch on the side
- Gluten-Free Chef's Salad with Ham, Turkey & Cheese, Dressing on the side

\$17 Talerico's Dinner cafeteria style:

- MAIN: City Chicken (breaded pork w/light gravy)
GF Balsamic Glazed Chicken (w/red pepper & onion)
- SIDES: Herb Roasted Root Vegetables, Green Beans
- SALADS: GF House Salad, Broccoli Salad

2ND PERSON REGISTRATION. (Copy form for multiple registrations OR register online with PayPal*)

PRINT CLEARLY

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ - _____ 1st CRM conference? yes _____ no _____

\$10 Lunch (circle one): Turkey Ham Chicken Salad Vegetarian Chef's Salad (GF)

\$17 Dinner (circle one): YES NO

Pre-Registration \$35 ea. _____

Lunch \$10 ea. _____

Dinner \$17 ea. _____

TOTAL _____

Make check or money order to: CRM

Mail to: **Ruth Hug**
31935 Pondside Dr.
Avon Lake, OH 44012

*To register with PayPal go to www.crmweb.org

(online or postmarked by July 17th to meet our deadlines)

MASS CELEBRANT

FATHER DAMIAN FERENCE



is a priest of the Diocese of Cleveland and serves as Vicar for Evangelization, Secretary for Parish Life & Special Ministries, and as Professor of Philosophy at Borromeo Seminary.

ONE BODY • ONE SPIRIT

CONFERENCE PRAYER

Holy God, graciously grant us our prayer that we become one body, one spirit. In thanksgiving we come today to give you praise and adoration with the heavenly host for the gift of salvation and your church. Holy Spirit pour out your gifts upon those attending this conference and strengthen us today and in the days to come.

Encourage and inspire us through the teachings today that we use the gifts you bless us with to spread the love of Christ in the world. May the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be glorified throughout the world through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. We ask all this in the name of your son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

EVENT SPEAKERS

GRAESON DALL



has a zeal and drive to awaken the universal church to the transformative love of the Holy Spirit. Ministering and speaking nationally on a wide variety of topics, Graeson's heart burns for the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ, freedom in the Holy Spirit, and discovering God's original plan for our lives. Graeson earned his Bachelors in Theology from Benedictine College and currently resides in Des Moines, Iowa and works in ministry full time.

ALICIA HARTLE



serves as executive director of Pentecost Today USA (the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the US) and is a founding member of an ecumenical household, The Oakland Prayer Group, Abba's House, Unbound Pittsburgh-Greensburg, and Catholic Women's Fellowship ministries. Born into the fire of Renewal in the Pittsburgh area, she has worked in ministry and business development on local, national, and international levels. Knowing God and making Him known are her greatest passions.

REV. ROBERT FRANCO



has been active in the Charismatic Renewal since he was 19 and states that his vocation flowed from it. He has been the Bishop's Liaison for the Charismatic Renewal in the Cleveland Diocese since 1992. He served on the Fraternity of Priests Board of Directors as member, chairman, and editor of the Fraternity's Newsletter, *The Visitation*. He is currently the pastor of St. Peter and St. Julie Billiart parishes in North Ridgeville.

PRaise & WORSHIP BY MATT FAFRAK

For additional information call: 440 944-9445 or e-mail: crmcleveand@gmail.com or go to www.crmweb.org
Sponsored by Catholic Renewal Ministries.



Catholic Renewal Ministries Traveling Healing Mass

Friday, July 12th 2024

Holy Family, Stow

Fr. Bob Franco Celebrant

Praise & worship begins at 7:00
Liturgy begins at 7:30 p.m.

Holy Family Church

3179 Kent Rd.,
Stow, OH 44224

All are Welcome!

Healing prayer teams will be available after mass for individual prayer, and there will also be a social after mass.

Come, Sing and Praise God with Joy!

Contact CRM: 440-944-9445

Healing Prayer teams will be available after Mass for individual prayer.

crmweb.org

The Living Word Healing Prayer Ministry also 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!

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 7:00 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 at 7:00 p.m., we celebrate a mass followed by a healing service. For more information, please contact Rudy and Fe Fontilla at (440) 403-5719 or email: rudyfontilla1975@yahoo.com.

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 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 also 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. We encourage you to submit your prayer requests to healing-prayers@stmaryhudson.cc. St. Mary Church is located at 340 N. Main St., Hudson 44236, Tel: 330-653-8118.

Prayer Group Information

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. 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

The Community of Praise Prayer Group meets at St. Paul Catholic Church, 241 South Main St., North Canton, OH 44720. Their prayer meetings start at 6:30 pm on the second Monday of each month. They meet inside the main church in the area of the "old Sanctuary". Parking is behind the Church, and there is an elevator to the upper level where the Main Church is located. For more information contact Don and Rosemary Pfiffner at 330-499-9371 or email: pfiffner67@gmail.com

Our Lady of Angels Prayer Group meets on Tuesday evenings from 7:30 – 9:00PM in the Primary Building of Our Lady of Angels School (behind Linus Hall) 3600 Rocky River Dr., Cleveland, 44111. During the Summer, we will continue to meet on Tuesday evenings, praising God in song and moving in the Spiritual gifts. Each week we have a topic of teaching or a witness. We bring our own personal intercessions before the Lord each week. Refreshments and fellowship follow each meeting, along with an opportunity for personal healing prayer. Everyone is welcome! Please phone Tom Stamper with questions or for more information 216-536-6495.

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. 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!

Holy Family Healing Prayer Group (Stow) offers Healing Prayer after all masses the second weekend of the month (Saturday 5:00 PM, Sunday 7:30, 9:00 and 11:30 AM masses) and after Tuesday and Friday 8:00 AM daily masses. Prayer teams will meet you in the back of the church. If you are unable to attend one of the masses, we offer homebound private prayer. Private prayer for physical, inner healing and Unbound can be scheduled by calling 330-686-0017. Jesus is Alive! Come experience His healing power.

CRM and Prayer Group Events

CATHOLIC RENEWAL MINISTRIES PRESENTS:

EVENT DATE
**Saturday
July 27, 2024**
Starts 8:30 am
St. Albert the Great Parish Life Center

EVENT SPEAKERS

GRAESON DALL
Catholic Speaker & Youth Minister

ALICIA HARTLE
Executive Director of Pentecost Today

REV. ROBERT FRANCO
Bishop's Liaison for Charismatic Renewal

ACTIVITIES

- Praise & Worship
- Morning Prayer
- Dynamic Teaching
- Saturday Vigil at 4pm
- Healing Prayer

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Go to
www.crmweb.org
for registration details

Catholic Renewal Ministries' Traveling Charismatic Mass for July will be held at Holy Family Parish on Friday, July 12th, 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. The church is located at 3179 Kent Rd., Stow 44224. For more information, please contact CRM at 440-944-9445. Come, Sing and Praise God with Joy!

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF PRAYER ON THE BRAIN
with Dr. Jacqueline Phillips-Sabol, PhD
Discover how prayer influences brain activity.

JOIN US SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Holy Family Church - Stow, 3179 Kent Rd. Lower Church Hall | Registration 9:30 AM
RSVP: 330-687-8843

Dr Sabol, a devoted Catholic, is a successful neuropsychologist, trained to diagnose brain disorders, including dementia, psychiatric conditions, epilepsy and is former director of the Neurocognitive Disorders Center at the University of Texas at Houston. She has been a worship leader, prayer group leader and dynamic speaker in the charismatic renewal for over 20 years. Using her deep faith and medical and scientific background she explains the impact of prayer on the brain. Join us to learn the fascinating impact of prayer.

Doors open for registration at 9:30AM, followed by Praise and Worship, Teaching and an opportunity for Healing Prayer. Free Will donations are appreciated. For more information, please call 330-687-8843.

All are invited to attend Catholic Renewal Ministries' 41st Annual Conference to be held on Saturday July 27, 2024 at St. Albert the Great Parish Life Center, 6667 Wallings Rd., North Royalton 44133. This year's theme is "One Body One Spirit". Guest speakers will be Alicia Hartle who serves as executive director of Pentecost Today USA (the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the US), Graeson Dall, a national speaker who ministers with zeal and drive to awaken the universal church to the transformative love of the Holy Spirit, and Fr. Bob Franco, the Bishop's Liaison for Charismatic Renewal in the Cleveland Diocese. Fr. Damian Ference will be the celebrant for the Vigil Mass, and Matt Fafrak will lead us in contemporary praise music throughout the day and evening. Visit the CRM website: www.crmweb.org or call 440-944-9445 for more information. Advance registration postmarked by Wednesday, July 17th, is \$35, and at the door \$40. Come, as we praise and exalt Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit and celebrate this year of Eucharistic Revival.

CATHOLIC RENEWAL MINISTRIES & OUR LADY OF ANGELS PRAYER GROUP

Life in the Spirit Seminar

PRESENTATION:

The everyday Catholic says, "We attend Mass. We sometimes pray, especially when times are tough, or someone is sick. But is this enough? Isn't there something more for those of us who are baptized and desire a connection with our Lord?" Our answer, a resounding "YES!" This seminar will help you to make a commitment or re-commitment to Jesus through His Holy Spirit.

When the seminar finishes, we continue to meet weekly on Tuesday evenings to support each other in this new life with God.

Everyone is most welcome!

DETAILS:

Eight consecutive Tuesday evenings, beginning September 10th through October 29th, 2024 7:30 – 9:00pm
AT
Our Lady of Angels Parish
3644 Rocky River Dr., Cleveland, OH 44111
Primary Building (behind Linus Hall)
~ handicapped accessible)
FREE

CONTACT:

For more information, please contact:
Verna at 216-251-3560
or Tom at 216-536-6495

Catholic Renewal Ministries will host Dr. Jacqueline Phillips-Sabol, PhD on Saturday, August 10th, at Holy Family Church, 3179 Kent Rd., Stow. Doors open for registration at 9:30 AM, followed by Praise & Worship, Teaching and an opportunity for Healing Prayer. Free Will donations are appreciated. For more information, please call 330-687-8843.

Our Lady of Angels Prayer Group is excited to be planning our annual LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR. The seminar will begin on September 10, 2024 for 8 consecutive weeks on Tuesday evenings from 7:15-9:00PM. Please see our flyer in this issue of THE FLAME.

(Continued from page 1)

Gentiles and Jews had a long history of enmity between them, so Barnabas certainly could have been stepping into a volatile situation. Instead, he found a new community of disciples! It's interesting that Luke would interrupt his narrative in this passage to describe Barnabas as "filled with the Holy Spirit and faith" (Acts 11:24). Clearly, Luke thought it was important to include this observation! It was the Spirit who helped Barnabas be open to the idea that God was doing something new. Barnabas took the time to observe and listen rather than act rashly or make wrong assumptions about the people in Antioch.

Because they knew him to be a man of goodness, faith, and loyalty, the Jerusalem community thoroughly trusted Barnabas. And so they believed the positive report he sent back about these new believers. Thus, Barnabas became an agent of peace among the Jewish and Gentile disciples. He even brought Paul with him to Antioch to preach the gospel there: "For a whole year they met with the church and taught a large number of people" (Acts 11:26).

The Limits of Our Efforts. We can learn much from Barnabas' example. He shows us that in order to be peacemakers, we need to be faithful, trusted disciples, unafraid to take the initiative and open to the Holy Spirit. However, the reality is that even when we do all these things, we might not achieve the outcome we desire. One last scene shows us that Barnabas wasn't always able to make peace: *After some time, Paul said to Barnabas, "Come, let us make a return visit to see how the brothers are getting on in all the cities where we proclaimed the word of the Lord." Barnabas wanted to take with them also John, who was called Mark, but Paul insisted that they should not take with them someone who had deserted them at Pamphylia and who had not continued with them in their work. So sharp was their disagreement that they separated. Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus. (Acts 15:36-39)*

Paul considered John Mark unreliable; after all, he had deserted them in the middle of one of their earlier missionary journeys (Acts 13:13). But Barnabas wanted to give this young man, who was also his cousin

(see Colossians 4:10), another chance. So after a "sharp...disagreement," Paul and Barnabas—such close companions through previous missions—went their own ways (Acts 15:39).

Did Paul and Barnabas ever reconcile? Some scholars believe that they did because Paul mentions Mark several times in his letters. So it seems quite possible that Paul eventually forgave Mark for his desertion—and maybe by extension, reconciled with Barnabas as well. This episode shows us, however, that no matter how skilled or gifted we are as peacemakers, we can't always expect a peaceful solution. Many things are out of our control.

Called to Be Peacemakers. Barnabas is a hero of our faith, and maybe an underrated one at that. God used him in many ways to keep the Church united and help it flourish and grow. Who knows? Without his intervention in some of the Church's earliest and most challenging situations, we might not even be Christians today!

You might not want to compare yourself with a saint like Barnabas, but that doesn't mean you can't be a peacemaker. Perhaps your initiative and courage could help resolve an impasse among some groups in your parish. You might be called to help reunite two family members who haven't spoken in years. Or you could be the first one in a disagreement to step back and look at the situation objectively to see how you could break the logjam and bring about peace.

In all that he did, Barnabas was convinced that Jesus is the source of peace because he is the ultimate peacemaker. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus made "peace by the blood of his cross," reconciling us to his heavenly Father (Colossians 1:19-22). When we follow Barnabas'—and Jesus'—example and act as peacemakers, we are taking up a call that God has given to all his followers. Blessed are we when we do so!

*From The Word Among Us, May 2024 Issue, pages 53-58.
Patricia Mitchell is the content editor of The Word Among Us magazine.*

CRM Volunteer Opportunities

The Catholic Renewal Ministries Service Committee is looking for volunteers who would be willing to usher at the various events during the year including Charismatic Masses (usually on Friday nights), Healing Services, special events, and the annual Conference. You would not be required to serve at every GSC event during the year but would be called upon to serve as an Usher for various events at your convenience. Prayer groups please ask and encourage your members if they would help out in this ministry of service. If you are willing to Usher, please send your name, e-mail address, and/or phone number and what prayer group you are associated with. Even if you are not currently attending a prayer group, please consider helping out with Ushering.

Thank you,

Carolee and Rich Zentkovich, 440-221-8169, cjentkovich@gmail.com

Prayer Group Coordinators

Usher Ministry



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



The Flame

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MISSION STATEMENT: Catholic Renewal Ministries is the officially designated office for charismatic renewal activity in the Diocese of Cleveland that unites all prayer groups under the authority of the Diocesan Bishop and his appointed delegate to the renewal. Catholic Renewal Ministries, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in the power of Pentecost, fulfills the command of Jesus to evangelize all people, to make disciples of everyone, to accept the challenge of the gospel and to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives.