

# The Flame

November December 2012 Publication of The Charismatic Renewal Cleveland, Ohio

## Experiencing Union With God by Jane Guenther

A seven week Life in the Spirit seminar was scheduled and the speakers were all lined up. I was to give the third week talk on New Life. Ironically the night before my talk my brother died and I was forced to find a substitute and was able to trade weeks with the person giving the final week on Transformation.

The National Service Committee's Mission Statement expresses that the full role of the Holy Spirit is yielding to the Holy Spirit in order that we might experience union with God.

The sacred liturgy expresses the doctrine of divinization or *theosis* in the prayer said by the deacon or priest when preparing the Eucharistic chalice: "By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity." The Sacraments became the framework for my talk on transformation. Indeed the sacrifice of the Holy Mass is transformative and invites us to more deeply enter into union with God as we gather around the table and share in this sacred mystery with all those angels and saints and members of the family of God that have gone before us. In speaking about that union with God, I realized how



### Share in This Sacred Mystery

much I experience now a greater union with my deceased brother at every Eucharist than I ever had. His presence in the Lord has transformed my celebration of the Eucharist.

St. Gregory the Great expressed that God gives to some souls, even in the present life, a very special grace by which they can be mystically united to God even while yet alive: this is true mystical contemplation. This is seen as the culmination of the three states of perfection through which it is believed the soul

passes: the purgative way (that of cleansing or purification), the illuminative way (so called because in it the mind becomes more and more enlightened as to spiritual things and the practice of virtue), and the unitive way (that of union with God by love and the actual experience and exercise of that love).

St. Teresa of Avila speaks of her unitive experience with Jesus at the Scourging at the Pillar. One day as she recognized Christ's extreme loneliness she came to understand her own union with him at the scourging. She recognized that at this point Jesus stood between Judas who betrayed him and turned him over

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November & December, 2012

Dear Readers of the Flame,

I believe it was Karl Barth (1886-1968), a Protestant theologian, who said, "Christianity is a prophetic interpretation of reality." I have often thought about that statement.

There are many ways to interpret reality. One popular way today is through the prism of science. Many people believe that everything can be explained by science. To be certain, much can be understood by the biological sciences, the physical sciences and even the social sciences. However, does the understanding we gain by these sciences give us a true interpretation of reality?

Some people interpret reality in economic terms. Life is analyzed through the lens of profits and losses, wealth and poverty, those who have and those who have not. Yet, does this give the full picture of reality?

It is easy for us as believing Catholic Christians to see the shallowness of interpreting reality simply in terms of scientific or economic data. Unfortunately, many people are so busy that they do not stop to ask the question, "Is this all there is?" And, to be honest, there are those who do have the time to ponder that question, but are afraid of what they might discover. It might shake up their lives!

When Mary and Joseph presented Jesus in the Temple forty days after he was born, Simeon prophesied, "...this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted..." (Luke 2:34) And so it would be. The rejection of Jesus Christ would lead to the downfall of many. The acceptance of Christ would lift up the believer in ultimate victory.

The truth is that reality can only be interpreted through Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Eternal Word made flesh. It is in Jesus Christ we find the meaning of life. Science gives us an insight into the "how" of the universe. Economics gives us some insight into the "how" of the exchange on goods on planet earth. However, it is only through Jesus Christ do we have the question "Why?" answered. It is in Him we know why we are here and how we are to live.



BEHOLD,  
I bring you  
tidings  
of  
GREAT JOY!

We are drawing near to the season of Christmas. In the person of Jesus Christ, we celebrate the answer to life's most important questions. Who are we? Why are we here? Where are we going? As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, I pray that the wonder of this reality flood our souls in such a way that we really know:

+ who we are: *the beloved children of God*

+ why we are here: *to live for Jesus Christ and the fulfillment of his commands*

+ where we are going: *to the heaven Jesus promises*

We interpret reality through Jesus Christ. Therefore we are a hope that is unconquerable! By our Spirit inspired thoughts, words and deeds, let us witness to the world the whole of reality: Jesus Christ!

I want to wish each of you a Thanksgiving filled with gratitude and a Christmas filled with joy!

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Bob Franco

**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 10TH**  
**FESTIVAL**

**of**



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**P·R·A·I·S·E**

**STS. COSMAS & DAMIAN**

**TWINHAVEN HALL**

**10419 RAVENNA RD.**

**TWINSBURG, 44087**

**645PM - 930PM**

**CALL JERRY OR GRACE WROBEL**

**330-425-2678**

# Renewal Ministries Events

## The 2012 Catholic Charismatic Conference Distilled Prophetic Word

*“My Children surrender to the  
Fire and Power of My Holy Spirit.  
Blaze forth with  
My Love into the world.”*

The Catholic Renewal Ministries Intercessory Prayer Team invites you to an **Evening of Intercessory Prayer**. These evenings will be held at Presentation House located in the Issenman Building on the grounds of the Center for Pastoral Leadership, 28706 Euclid Ave., Wickliffe 44092. We will come together for prayer on **Thursdays, November 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.** We will pray for the many intentions of the church and Catholic Renewal Ministries. For more information, please contact Marge Zampino at 216-990-0919.

Join Walsh University and Queen of Heaven Church for a Retreat with Rwandan genocide survivor and New York Times bestselling author Immaculee Ilibagiza. The Retreat will take place at Queen of Heaven Parish in Green on November 9th and 10th. For more information, go to [www.Walsh.edu/immaculee](http://www.Walsh.edu/immaculee) or call 330-268-4395.

Catholic Renewal Ministries invites all to attend a Festival of Praise on Saturday, November 10th, at Sts. Cosmas & Damian Church, Twinhaven Hall, from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. This will be a special time to come together to praise and worship God through song and prayer. The church is located at 10419 Ravenna Rd., Twinsburg, 44087. Please call Jerry or Grace Wrobel at 330-425-2678 .

Catholic Renewal Ministries will host a Charismatic Mass on Friday, November 16th, 7:00 p.m., at St. Helen Parish, 12060 Kinsman Rd., Newbury 44065. 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. 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 Lord.

Catholic Renewal Ministries invites you to a Day of Renewal and Spiritual Freedom presented by Fr. Dave Pivonka on Saturday, February 2nd. Fr. Dave is a well-known conference speaker throughout the United States. He has served in a number of ministry positions at Franciscan University of Steubenville and is a popular speaker at the University's summer conferences. Currently, he is Director of Franciscan Pathways, an evangelistic/preaching outreach of his Franciscan Community. The Day of Renewal will be held at Sts. Cosmas & Damian Parish, Twinhaven Hall, 10419 Ravenna Rd., Twinsburg 44087. The day will include teachings by Fr. Dave, praise and worship, and a closing empowerment session. Registration opens at 8:30 a.m. and the Day will run from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The registration fee is \$20 for adults and \$10 for teens. Lunch is on your own. There are many close by restaurants. For more information, please contact Jerry and Grace Wrobel at 330-425-2678.

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WICKLIFFE, OH 44092 440-944-9445

CATHOLIC RENEWAL MINISTRIES PRESENTS



# *A Day of Renewal & Spiritual Freedom*

GUEST SPEAKER:

Fr. Dave Pivonka

Come for a day of teaching, praise  
and worship,  
and empowerment session

## LOCATION:

**Sts. Cosmas & Damian Church**

10419 Ravenna Rd, Twinsburg, OH 44087 at  
Twinhaven Hall

## DETAILS:

**Saturday, February 2nd**

Registration opens at 8:30 a.m., event  
runs from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
**Adults \$20 and Teens \$10**

## CONTACT:

Jerry and Grace Wrobel  
330-425-2678



Fr. Dave  
Pivonka

**Father Dave Pivonka, TOR**, is a well-known conference speaker around the United States. Fr. Dave also leads pilgrimages around the world to some of the holiest and most important sites in our Christian faith. He spends much of his time helping others come to know God's love for them through his preaching, writings, CDs, and other spiritual outreaches. Father Dave has held several ministry positions at Franciscan University in Steubenville, OH, and he was also the Director of Seminary Formation for his Franciscan Community in Washington, D.C. Fr. Dave is presently the Director of Franciscan Pathways an evangelistic/preaching outreach of his Franciscan Community.

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to the Sanhedrin and Peter who would deny him. St. Teresa says that if each of us were honest we would be able to name those in our own life who betray us and those who deny us. Instead of experiencing bitterness she turned this into an extreme gift of union with Christ. As a spiritual director I often use her words to help those for whom I have the privilege of walking a spiritual journey, so that they might gain the perspective of the Spirit's gift of union with God in these circumstances. Sometimes young people wonder about their desire to linger with friends. I associate this with the longing of our heart to linger with the Lord. We can grow in looking for the ways in which our God reaches out to each of us in a unitive way so as to experience his very presence here and now.

St. Augustine said "God was made man that man might be made God," saying that it was necessary for the restoration of the human race that the Word of God should become incarnate, since it is through Christ's humanity that full participation of the Divinity is bestowed on us. In our daily living do we recognize those opportunities to embrace our humanity in total union with God? One night in our parish Jonah Healing Prayer meeting one of the Jonah Ministers, Mike, told me of his experience. He asked if it was possible that as he was opening himself up as a vessel of healing for others that he himself could be healed. He told me that this particular week he was going to have an operation on his back the coming Friday and almost didn't come on Tuesday night because he was in such pain. He came anyway and in praying for others his pain was lifted. This experience had been happening many times over the past months. He told me how this sometimes lingers for hours after our prayer meeting and that he is



## *Love Caused Christ To Be Born*

literally pain free. We talked about the fact that his union with God in this experience was one that I think is often overlooked. Yes, Christ took on our sin and suffered but he also experienced the glory and love. In a small way Christ was sharing that love with Mike. Union with God can be intense loneliness, pain and suffering, however, it can also be glory and joy and love. Blessed Columba Marmion wrote a book entitled *Union*

*with God* where several of the letters he wrote to the many persons who sought his spiritual counsel with questions about prayer, faith, temptation, suffering and the struggles of daily life are shared. He too expressed, "LOVE brought about the Incarnation. LOVE caused Christ to be born in mortal and weak flesh, to accept the obscurity of the hidden life, and nourished the zeal of the public life. If Jesus delivers himself

up to death for us, it is because he yields to the excess of measureless LOVE; he ascends into heaven to prepare a place for us, and sends us the Paraclete so as not to leave us orphans. He institutes the Sacrament of the Eucharist as a memorial of his Love. All the mysteries of the life of Christ have their source in LOVE." It is in our souls that the Church is beautiful, St. Ambrose expressed. How is the soul touched with the gift of union with God? It is touched through the Holy Spirit.

***Jane Guenther is a member of the National Service Committee. She is currently serving the Archdiocese of St. Louis as the Coordinator the Catholic Renewal Center.***

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# CATHOLIC RENEWAL MINISTRIES



## **Dedicated to the Renewal of the Church in the power of our Lord Jesus Christ**

We would like to thank the Partners in The Renewal, who, for many years, have sustained Catholic Renewal Ministries. Without their dedication, our efforts would not be possible. Through our united labors, graced by the Power of the HOLY SPIRIT, many have been blessed with changed lives!

The mission of Catholic Renewal Ministries and Partners in The Renewal has been to provide much needed prayer, talent, time and financial help to support building the Kingdom of God.

If you are not currently a partner, please consider joining the mission to spread the Renewal in our Diocese.

## **Partners in The Renewal**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I would like to unite with the efforts of CRM and become a member of Partners in the Renewal. I will pray for this work.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I would like to contribute monthly:

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CRM will provide envelopes for you to mail in your monthly offering and prayer petitions to:  
CRM, 28706 Euclid Avenue, Box 4, Wickliffe, OH 44092, 440-944-9445.

# The Messiah



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