

*"His Life Within Us "John 5:54*  
REPORT ON CONFERENCE  
AT MOUNT ALLISON  
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IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY  
PRAYER GROUP, RIVERVIEW, NB

Are we, as Catholic, living the Mass to it's fullest? Are we responding to the call to faith with action?

What does the Canadian Council of Bishops have to say about the Catholic Charismatic Renewal?

Are we open to the Holy Spirit and are we willing to speak out regarding injustice?

All of these questions and many more, were discussed at the annual gathering of the Atlantic Charismatic Renewal during the weekend of August 1,2, and 3, 2003. The conference, held each year, in Convocation Hall at Mount Allison University, Sackville, NB, is eagerly anticipated by the regions prayer group members and other interested people.

The event was hosted by the Charlettetown Diocese of the Atlantic Charismatic Renewal, with Gerard MacDonald, ASC, President, serving as Chairman. This year's theme was, "Eucharist, His life within us!", John 6:54.

Father Lou

Cerulli of the "Peace, Healing and Freedom Ministry" from Montreal, Quebec was the guest speaker. Father Lou is well-known among Atlantic Charismatic Community, being a frequent guest over the years at the Between the hearts Renewal Center for numerous retreats. Father's delightful smile and natural abilities to relay information in an easy-to-understand manner, has made him one of our most respected and enjoyable teachers.

Friday evening was full of praise and worship, with Father Cerulli giving the attendees an over-view of what the weekend's conference entailed. Holy Mass was celebrated by the Most Rev. Andre Richard of Moncton, NB. Bishop Richard is very much loved and appreciated by his flock and the Atlantic Charismatics.

The music for the weekend was very well presented by the group, "Sing the Word," from Campbellton, NB. The group consisted of three

married couples (quite a testimony in itself!), Jan and Mike Guitard, Gail and Guy Martin and Claudia and Alan Muzzerall.

Here is Father Cerulli's teaching from his Saturday morning session:

In the Eucharist, His life is in us! Ultimately, we are called into communion with each other, through the Eucharist. Father then asked us to place our right hand on our heart and repeat, "His life is within me." Next he asked us to turn to each other and say "His life is within you" as we made the sign of the cross on each other's forehead.

John 10 tells us to have life and have it to the full! Our God is a God of abundance! There is always more! Father spoke about the Good Shepherd because they recognize his voice. Jesus tells us that, "I am the door. All those who come before me were thieves and marauders. I came that you may have life and have it to the full!" Father Lou spoke about two kinds of sheep folds. When sheep are "at

home in the village "they are kept in "communal folds". There are fences and entrance area that has a strong door. The guardian of the sheep has the key and is responsible for keeping the sheep safe.

However, when sheep are away from the village they are collected into sheep folds in the pasture. There is no actual door into these sheep folds like there was when they were kept in the village. The shepherd would block the entrance to the sheep fold in the pasture. The shepherd was "the door". Jesus is the door to God. Before Jesus came, God was looked upon as "being very far away". Jesus opened the way to God, that was, up to that point, blocked by sin. There is no other way to God except through Jesus. Through Jesus we can come and go freely, in safety. ( A Jewish way to describe a good life).

We now have a new sense of safety. We can turn to Jesus in times of suffering. We can thank God for being with us in the pain and suffering. He is always with us, in abundance! The way of Jesus is the way of love! The Holy Eucharist is love! Jesus, out of His love for us, continued to give Himself to us through the Eucharist.

The Greek word for "abundance" means something far beyond abundance. It means super abundance! To be a follower of Jesus means to have a super abundance of life! It's that very life that Jesus gives to us in the Eucharist!

When we try to live our life for ourselves, we live a "dispirited" life. It is only when we live with Christ, do we really live life in the real sense of the word.

It's His life, spirit and power drawing us deeper into Him!

We are a Eucharistic people!

John 6 refers to the miracle of the loaves and the fishes. There were leftovers! (12 full baskets!) They couldn't eat anymore! With Jesus, there is always more! Super abundance! "I have come that you might have life and have it to the full! He is a God of M-O-R-E! In John 6:35 which was the scripture theme for this weekend, Jesus says, "I am the Bread of life!" No hunger! No thirst! The more that we receive the Holy Eucharist, the more that we go deeper with Jesus and with each other! John is telling us in this scripture passage to not let go of the full humanity of Jesus! Yes, He was divine, but also human. Jesus was the mind

of God become human. God took human life upon himself and He faced all the usual human temptations and struggles. He always worked out these trails through the Holy Spirit and therefore always persevered. Jesus took all of humanity's pain upon Himself.

In Jewish thought, bread represents life. God is life. Blood belongs to God. Humanity belongs to God. Your family belongs to God. Give your family to God. Let them go and give them back to God! Then, the Lord can bless and anoint each family member and your relationship with that person. Then, God can give them back to you! God knows what He is doing! We must take Jesus into the very core of our being! As long as Jesus is a figure in a book He is external! When we take Him into our heart, then He is real. We are one with Jesus. When we receive Jesus in the Eucharist he transforms us! We become more and more Christ-like! St. Augustine said, "It is no longer I but Christ who Lives in me!" Saint Philip Neri's heart was so inflamed with his love for Jesus his ribs broke!

Father Cerulli closed with a very deep, powerful prayer for repentance, freedom and

healing.

During Father Cerulli's second teaching of the morning he spoke about who John the Baptist was and his attitude towards his work. "I must become little so that He is made known". Later in the morning, Gerard MacDonald, the conference chairperson encouraged everyone to go to confession. He challenged us to trust God's mercy and he reminded us that our God is so very gentle and loving. As in past years, the attendance for the Sacrament of Reconciliation was very high. Th priests heard confession over 2 hours!

Father Cerulli's early afternoon talk on Saturday was a challenge for us to truly open the doors of our soul to Jesus. Knowledge of God comes from possessing of God within ourselves. It's not in the knowing... it's in the possessing. We need to move from our heads to our hearts and be in a real relationship with Jesus. The Kingdom of God is within you! The person who cleanses their heart of every created thing will see the beauty of Divine Nature in the beauty of your soul! St. Philip Neri was so full of the love of God that light radiated from his face!

Are we aware, as we greet each other that we are

living tabernacles? If you are purified, you will see things that others cannot. Once sin no longer clouds the eye of the soul, you can see the Glory of God!

Over the past 2 years, the Lord has been talking to Father Cerulli about a "Society of Eucharistic Hearts" and asked us to pray about that.

Father concluded his teaching by giving an altar call. He led everyone in another very powerful time of spirit-led prayer.

The Bishop of Saint John, NB, Bishop Faber MacDonald (Love you, Bishop!!!) gave an excellent teaching and interpretation on the "Canadian Bishop's Pastoral Letter on the Charismatic Renewal in Canada-Pentecost 2003". The letter was published in full in the last edition of "The Atlantic Charismatic". He was so efficient in his explanation that the question period at the end of the session was full of many questions, other than in reference to the letter! Bishop Faber also shared that he has just completed a book on "Family Prayer" and 18,000 copies have already been circulated!

He stated also that:  
1) In order for the Charismatic Renewal to grow, good leadership and

sound doctrine must be present, 2) We have to experience "Creative Charity". We have to find new ways to bring the love of Christ to the world. With that, Bishop concluded his summary of the letter and added the following observations. He said that after being in the renewal for the past 33 years, he still sees a resistance to this "breaking in of God" through His Holy Spirit. In spite of the number of people involved in the various ministries in the dioceses, whose background is from the Charismatic Renewal, he says that there is still an "irrational resistance" - to God, to change and to being led by the Holy Spirit. "This resistance", Bishop Faber stated "is rooted in "ego".

The second personal observation Bishop MacDonald made was on "Authentic Christianity." Jesus said, "That on this rock I will build my Church" - not "you" will build my Church and certainly, "you" will not build "your own" Church!

So, that raises the question, "Why has it taken the Church so long to recognize tyhe features of authentic Christianity?" Some of it has to do with the power of secularization.

The Pope has been pleading with the European leaders to respect the Christian heritage and history of Europe. "I don't know of any other religious movement that has unmasked Satan and the mystery of evil like the Charismatic Renewal has!" he stated.

"In 1970 in PEI, we went through a difficult experience with exorcism. I have to say that I was shaken to my roots. After 3-5 years I was freed and it served as a wake-up call," Bishop Faber shared. "I'm currently writing a book titled, "Awakening" and it will be out in a couple of months (Fall 2003). He continued to give examples of the action of the devil from his personal experience and knowledge - 1976 in PEI, 2:30 am Dramatic Deleverance. In Lithowania & Mexico, he experienced similar things. In Saint John there is a young man 20 years old, being ministered to, who has been practising witchcraft for the past 7 years.

Bishop MacDonald spoke briefly about the legislations that are before Parliament and about social action. He then opened up the floor to us for questions regarding his talk. Surprisingly, not a single

question was in reference to his explanation of the Bishop's letter on the Renewal. (I will attribute this to his highly, fine-tuned teaching abilities!) Instead, question after question was asked to him about the state of the Church and the attack on the traditional family.

Bishop Faber challenged each of us to have a "face-to-face with our elected officials and to make sure we convey our concerns regarding these pieces of legislation.

Saturday evening was a time of healing. Praise and worship, a skit by the "Youth Track" Holy Mass and prayers for healing/laying on of hands were the main points of the evening. The Youth shared about their "call to action" regarding the legislation of homosexual unions through the judicial branch of our government. It was inspiring and challenging to those people who had the desire to do something regarding this attack on the family. The skit, called, "The Scrolls" was moving and touched us to the core. (Are you praying and fasting for our youth?) Father Cerulli gave the Homily at the evening Mass. What does the Eucharist mean to us? We give our agreement to take what we have heard in the

Scriptures and to live this word. Once we give our "fiat" we are then sprinkled with our Lord's blood! Jesus accepts our "fiat". First we "hear" and then we "do" as we commit to live what we have heard. We are then willing to be a "counter-sign" in the world. Our response to injustice and error must be, "No, that's not right!" We need healing if we are to be fully Eucharistic people. We need to surrender our way of doing things. We need to stop being God! We need to let go of the control. This frees Jesus to be one with us! The more that we surrender, the freer that we become! When we open our hearts, things change. During the mass, as the gifts are placed on the altar, so, too, do we bring ourselves, to the altar. Jesus places Himself in surrender, in sacrifice, to the Father. Jesus ask us, "DO you want to follow me? Then do what I do!"

When you place yourself on the altar with the bread and wine, you abandon all to God. For example, "I take my clenched fist and surrender it. In the cup, I place my anger-I pour it into the cup, with You, Jesus." Surrender is like forgiveness. It's a decision. You make a free-will, conscience decision to

"let it go>" Jesus now lifts us up to His Cross. He brings us to a point of healing and purification. Then, he brings us and presents us to His Father, in the purified state we are now in. Abba blesses us. He gives us back to Jesus. Now, Jesus is with us. We move into a Divine Exchange - The Lord receives - The Lord gives. Keep coming to Mass - to the Holy Eucharist in this way - prepared, surrendering, seeking healing and purification.

Following Mass, there was a time for prayers for healing. Prayer teams prayed with individual for their private needs.

Sunday morning Father Cerulli gave us some reflections on the Eucharist: Jesus comes to plant His Cross, not in the ground, but in our heart! Jesus comes mystically into our heart. We are called to be a link in the chain of love. He looks, not for golden chalices, but for golden hearts! Through the mystery of the Eucharist, He perpetuates the sacrifice of Calvary! It is a lifting up of our prayers - everything for the honor and glory of God! As the Eucharist is celebrated across the whole world, the whole church, the whole world benefits from this.

Pope Paul VI, in 1924, said that the miracle of Pentecost should continue throughout history. The Eucharist is an eternal event. It's not just for one hour! We are really taking part in what is already taking place in heaven. The Liturgy on earth is a foretaste of what is taking place in Heaven. The whole Heavenly court is present. Pope John Paul II says that the Eucharistic celebration does not stop at the doors of the Church. We are to take the grace of the Eucharist to the world.

Father Cerulli recalled a quote from one of the saints: "Christians should rise from the Holy Table of the Eucharist like lions, breathing fire and striking terror into the Devils." (Do we do that??? - ed)

The Mass is a poem written by the Blood of God. Feel the wind of God on your skin and let every morning be a Pentecost morning!

Father referred to the opening prayer and scriptures from Saturday evening Mass. The "Light of Truth" guides us (hear). In Jesus, when you have heard the "word of truth" and you believe in Him, then you were marked with the promise of the Holy Spirit. (action)

You hear but you must also respond!

"May the love of the Holy Spirit direct our hearts and lips and may we always act in accordance to your will," said Father. "It's like you are canvas, My heart is the paint and God in my heart is the painter". Through your Christ-centered interaction with other people, God can be made present to others.

You know that when you give a task to someone, you must give them the authority to do the job. The Apostles were given the authority to go out and to minister and proclaim the Gospel. They went out, proclaiming repentance, casting out demons and curing those who were sick. THAT IS FAITH IN ACTION!

Lord, help us to grow in holiness, faith and action. We are all instruments of God's healing power. There is this light - this Word of Truth. God will use us! Trust God for everything! You are an instrument of God! I pray that you will recognize your identity as a child of God. Now is the time, folks!, announced Father Cerulli. "May we be a shining jewel in the Temple of the Holy Spirit!"

The Sunday Mass was celebrated by Bishop Faber MacDonald. During the homily Bishop Faber

spoke about the people "belly-aching" to Moses. They complained about many things, including their steady diet of the manna from Heaven that was sent each day to feed them. In the Old Testament, God the Father fed the people with this manna from Heaven...He fed their bodies. In the New Testament, Jesus feed us with His Body, to feed our souls. The manna of the Old Testament was a prefigurement of the Body of Christ in the Eucharist.

Do we understand what we are accepting and eating when we receive the Host and the Chalice? Do we need to prepare more fully in anticipation of receiving Jesus' Body and Blood, His Soul and Divinity? As I completed the writing of this report, a full week after attending the conference, I can't help but reflect on the comments, sharings and testimonies from the people that I know who attended the conference.

Without exception each person that I spoke to this week, said that they had returned home with healing experiences regarding their marriages! They have noticed differences in attitudes. They see their husbands and themselves, moving differently. The

husbands are claiming a stronger, more confident role as leader and spiritual head of the family! Today, after Monday morning mass, five of us gathered at our favorite "after - mass breakfast restaurant" and we spent 1 1/2 hours talking about our experience and what God showed each of us at the conference.

God is doing something in His people! One person commented on the healing prayer for marriages that Bishop Faber felt inspired to pray on Saturday afternoon at the conference: "When he prayed that prayer, I felt something snap within me! Something happened! Something was healed! Things are different between my spouse and I." The others at the table agreed with this, each jumping into the conversation, adding their comments and enthusiastic response to these remarks.

The conference continues to speak to us, as we remember it's teachings and special private moments with the Lord.

Thanks to Rick Hartnett, Gerard MacDonald and the many volunteers for all your hard work, commitment and dedication. There has been much fruit! Thank-you Jesus! As

I spoke to Rick Hartnett in the foyer at Convocation Hall on Sunday morning, I asked him to give me a comment regarding the conference. He smiled, beaming and said simply, "God is good"! (All the time, my friend...all the time!)

God bless you, all! Amen!