

Charismatic Renewal Office Newsletter

3927 E. Lake Street Minneapolis MN 55406-2216 (612) 721-2543 E-mail: colinL@juno.com
Barb Ofstead, Administrator

April 1998

God of the Universe

by Larry Nawrocki

On the road again! Last summer, I shared in an article about my family's trip to France and Spain. During our son's recent mid-semester school break, we (my wife, Mary, our son, Paul, and our current Polish exchange student, Magda, and I) were again blessed to have the opportunity to travel. We went to Arizona for a week. We met Mary's father, Tiburcio, in Phoenix. Phoenix is centrally located in the state, so it served as our home base, although we made quite a few excursions to other points of interest.

Having the opportunity to travel and see and experience places away from our home is truly a blessing. Mary's dad was born and raised in Corozal, a small mountain town in central Puerto Rico. Throughout the trip, he kept saying, "Who would have thought Don Moncho's son, Tiburcio, would ever be here in 1998?" He said it at Phoenix; he said it at Sedona; he said it at Flagstaff; and he said it at the Grand Canyon. He said it so often that it almost became trite, but it really was a reflection of his humility and his gratitude for God's gifts. His refrain was a statement of his sincere belief that being where he was, was a wonderful present from the Lord.

On our second evening in Arizona, we arrived in Flagstaff at about 6:00 p.m. We were all hungry, but, on a previous trip there, we had visited the Lowell Observatory from where the planet Pluto was first observed. We had thought that our prior visit had been great, and we were looking forward to the next opportunity we would have to return. Consequently, before seeking out a restaurant for dinner, we decided to telephone the Observatory to see if anything was going on that evening. As it turned out, there was a special show at 6:45, so we piled into the van we had rented and drove up "Mars Hill" to where the Observatory is located above the city.

The bulk of the presentation had to do with the Messier Chart, a catalogue of heavenly bodies. The speaker talked about novas, supernovas, solar systems, nebulas and galaxies...and "astronomical" numbers - galaxies having millions to hundreds of billions of stars, many much larger than our own sun, and light from different heavenly bodies traveling for tens - even hundreds - of light-years to reach our eyes. (By the way, a light-year is approximately 6,000,000,000,000 miles.) I don't know how everyone else in the theatre was receiving all the information the speaker was presenting, but my very finite mind found it absolutely mind-boggling. The immense sizes, distances and brightness about which he spoke were absolutely incomprehensible. And then the thought occurred to me, "How big is our God?"

It is the same God whom we worship and serve in our little corner of the universe who created and continues to create. "We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen...". We believe that, through Jesus, "all things were made." And we believe that the Holy Spirit participated in the creative process. The first chapter of Genesis tells us that "God's spirit hovered over the water" when the earth was a formless void. We believe then that the triune God -- the Father, Son and Holy Spirit -- created all novas, established all supernovas, and ordered the movement of all the nebulas, galaxies and solar systems.

Yet creation wasn't the end of God's relationship with the heavenly

bodies. My primary study bible, The Jerusalem Bible, entitles Psalm 148 "**Cosmic hymn of praise**". I've always been intrigued by that title and the imagery that follows. **All** creation bows down in worship before the triune God.

Let heaven praise Yahweh:
praise him, heavenly heights,
praise him, all his angels,
praise him, all his armies!
praise him, sun and moon,
praise him, shining stars,
praise him, highest heavens,
and waters above the heavens!

Psalm 148:1-2

I'm not sure that this image of God, however, is one with which we're comfortable. Maybe it's that, in our human condition of which pride is a part, we see ourselves as the center of the universe; maybe it's that it's fine if God is out there in the cosmos as long as He is here in my life. No matter how it's stated, however, I think we all want to be assured that God knows me. ...And God gives us that assurance.

Yahweh, you examine me and know me,
you know if I am standing or sitting,
you read my thoughts from far away,
whether I walk or lie down, you are watching,
you know every detail of my conduct.

Psalm 139:1-3

In fact, God not only knows every little detail of my immediate, intimate life, but it was He who created my "inmost self", it was He who "put me together in my mother's womb". I've heard some people say that, when they received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, they got "zapped". When I was baptized in the Spirit, I got "RAPped". I came to know that God was REAL. I knew that all the bible stories I had read as a child and heard in the gospel every Sunday were true. I came to know that God was ALIVE. Decades ago, the "in" expression was "God is dead." Not so. Not only is God real, but He is also active and working in this world. Finally, I came to know that God was PERSONAL. At one time or another each of us has probably been asked the question "Do you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?" Hopefully, we can all answer this question in the affirmative, because it is what God wants for us. Yes, the God of the cosmos is the same God who has every hair on our head counted, and that's something that's nice to know.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Special Events

- Celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday at St. Odilia's Church in Shoreview
Sunday, April 29, 1998 (beginning with Adoration at 2:30 p.m.)
Healing teams lead by Virginia Yarusso
Contact: Sharon Hosier (639-1963)
- "Becoming a Bride of Christ" Retreat at Christ the King Retreat Center in Buffalo
Friday-Sunday, May 1-3, 1998
Speaker: Sr. Frances Clare
Contact: Carrie Beaudry (441-5297)

- Outdoor Mass and Picnic at Kordiak Park in Columbia Heights
Sunday, June 28, 1998 from 1:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m.
Celebrant: Fr. Martin Fleming

- Annual Summer Retreat at Sacred Heart in Yankton, South Dakota
Friday-Sunday, July 24-26, 1998
Retreat Leader: Bishop Paul Dudley
Contact: Gerard Hamilton ((605) 668-5396)

Life in the Spirit Seminars

- St. Patrick Church in Hudson, Wisconsin
Friday-Sunday, April 24-26, 1998 (beginning at 6:45 p.m. on April 24)
Contact: Bernie Gregerson ((715) 386-5797)

Healing Masses

- Holy Name of Jesus in Wayzata
Thursday, May 14, 1998 at 7:30 p.m. (Rosary at 7:10 p.m.)
Contact: Teresa Walker (553-1343)
- St. Therese Church in St. Paul
Monday, May 18, 1998 at 7:30 p.m.
Contact: Sr. Mary Anne Letendre (690-1501)

Conferences

- Catholic Men's Conference
Saturday, April 28, 1998 at St. Edward's Church in Waterloo, Iowa
Speakers: Jeff Cavins, Tom Edwards, Archbishop Jerome Hanus
Contact: Family Life Office at (319) 556-2580
- Regional Catholic Charismatic Renewal Office Conference
Friday-Sunday, May 29-31, 1998 at Northwestern Electronics Institute in Columbia Heights
Speakers: Fr. Robert Faricy, Sr. Linda Koontz, Francis MacNutt
Contact: Barb at the CRO (721-2543)
- National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference
Friday-Sunday, June 12-14, 1998 at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana
Contact: 1-888-645-9348

Announcements

- A bus is being planned to go to the National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference at Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana on the weekend of June 12-14, 1998. The bus will leave on early Friday morning, June 12 and return late on Sunday, June 14. For more information, call Arlene Kosak at 628-4911 or Bonnie Crema at 571-1446.
- The Charismatic Renewal Office is indebted to the Hans Rosacker Co. for their generous contribution of green plants for use in some of our past events like last year's Regional Conference and the Women's Retreat in February. They will be providing live plants for the upcoming Regional Conference in May. For anyone who might want to consider Rosacker's for their future flower or plant needs, the telephone number is (612) 789-3577.

¡Al Ataque con La Palabra de Dios! por Mary Sol Narwocki

Recientemente me encontré en una situación muy frustrante. Estaba trabajando de sustituta en el colegio de mi hijo y me toco dar una clase de religión. Pense aprovechar la oportunidad para hablar de la amistad que todos podemos tener con Jesus—de la relación íntima que nos ofrece. En la discusión que siguió, surgen varias preguntas a las cuales yo sabia que habia respuesta en la Biblia, pero en ese momento solo recordaba fragmentos de

versículos y no recordaba donde se encontraban. Recordaba que estaban más o menos en las epístolas de San Pablo, pero no sabía precisamente en donde. Me sentí desarmada y poco preparada para contestar sus preguntas. Traté de recordar versículo que me había memorizado en el pasado. Nada se me venía a la mente. El Espíritu Santo me sacó de apuro cuando uno de los estudiantes empezó a compartir un versículo en particular que le había impactado y cambiado su vida. La clase termino siendo muy espiritual, pero mas fué por lo que contribuyo el estudiante.

Al reflejar sobre lo que me pasó en la clase, se me hace mas claro a lo que se refiere San Pablo cuando dice en la epístola a los Efesios **"que la palabra de Dios sea la espada que les da el Espíritu Santo."** Hubiera podido atacar las preguntas y las discusiones que surgieron mas efectivamente con un mejor conocimiento de la palabra. Por eso mismo es que el programa de evangelización de la Universidad de Steubenville insiste en la memorización. Es la idea de estar siempre listos para presentar las Buenas Noticias en cualquier situación y en cualquier tiempo.

Hace unos cuantos años tuve la oportunidad de participar en ese programa. Uno de los aspectos del programa era la memorización de una presentación y de pasajes bíblicos claves. Yo resistí la memorización, como bien lo saben los que salieron conmigo a evangelizar. Quizas resistí con la excusa de que se me hace difícil la memorización o quizas fué por vagancia, pero en esa clase de octavo grado vi la consecuencia de no estar preparada.

El Papa Juan Pablo II escribe que "Cierta memorización de las palabras de Jesús, de pasajes bíblicos importantes, de los diez mandamientos, de las formulas de profesión de la fé, de los textos litúrgicos, etc.,...es una necesidad real. Debemos ser realistas.--Lo que es esencial es que los textos que son memorizados deben ser a la misma vez absorbidos y gradualmente comprendidos a profundidad de manera que sean fuentes de Vida Cristiana a un nivel personal y al nivel de la comunidad."

Les quiero recomendar algunos pasajes que, si se los memorizan, les serán beneficiosos para evangelizar.

--Todos somos hijos de Dios **"Miren cuanto nos ama Dios el Padre, que se nos puede llamar hijos de Dios, y lo somos" (1Juan:3:1)**

--Pero, somos pecadores **"Pues todos han pecado y estan lejos de la presencia salvadora de Dios" (Romanos 3:23)**

--Jesús vino para unirnos de nuevo al Padre **"El pago que da el pecado es la muerte, pero el dón de Dios es la vida eterna en unión con Cristo Jesús, nuestro Señor" (Romanos 6:23)**

--Solo hay que aceptar a Jesus y recibirlo **"Mira estoy llamando a la puerta; si alguien oye mi voz y abre la puerta, entraré en su casa y cenaremos juntos" (Apocalipsis 3:20)**

--La promesa de Dios **"Pues Dios amo tanto al mundo, que dió a su Hijo único, para que todo aquel que crea en él no muera, sino que tenga vida eterna." (Juán 3:16)**

Que su Palabra este siempre en nuestra mente, en nuestros labios y en nuestro corazón.

Queridos hermanos y hermanas,

Quiero tomar esta oportunidad para anunciar que como parte de la Conferencia Regional Carismática, se va a ofrecer un **Seminario de Vida en el**

Espiritu Santo en Español. Que yo sepa, esta es la primera vez que se ofrece este Seminario en Español a nivel regional. Se llevará a cabo los días sábado 30 de mayo de 9am a 6pm y domingo 31 (Pentecostés) de 10am a 1pm en St. Stephen Community Center (localizado en 2211 Clinton Ave. So., Minneapolis). Una donación de \$10.00 es sugerida. Para más información me pueden llamar al 574-0092 o pueden llamar a la Oficina Carismática Católica al 721-2543. Les pido oraciones por el éxito de este evento. Que Dios los bendiga.
Mary Sol

**Questions &
Answers**

Have any questions about the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, charismatic spirituality, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal as a movement of the Holy Spirit? Send them to:
Q & A CRO 3927 E. Lake Street Minneapolis,

MN 55406-2216

We'll do our best to answer all questions in a future issue of the CRO NEWSLETTER.