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## Charismatic Phenomena and Spiritual Discernment

Within the Church, the living presence of the Holy Spirit fosters dynamism in the spiritual lives of believers who are entrusted with the task to remain faithful to the Gospel message as they carry out their mission in the world. The Holy Spirit awakens in those who believe enthusiasm in professing the faith as well as the courage to follow Christ, strengthens charity and leads the faithful toward greater unity within the community of the Church. In the Holy Spirit's power, individual believers enjoy the charismatic privilege of His influence, which is manifested in their experience of His extraordinary gifts. The ability to discern these gifts is contingent on the ability to conceptualize them. This article, which discusses charismatic phenomena and spiritual discernment, presents how one can understand and interpret both in the spirit of the Catholic Church's doctrine.

**Key words:** Holy Spirit, charisms, charismatic movement, spiritual discernment, gifts, culture of the soul.

Two years before the celebration of the Jubilee Year 2000, on May 27, 1998 and during the World Congress of Ecclesial Movements in Rome, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger said that the history of the Church is none other than warp and weft that illustrates the Church's changing and unchanging structure. He stated that the Church's supernatural dimension is unchanging and that it is because of this dimension that the Church has Her own identity. The Bible, the sacraments, and the dogmatic nature of faith determine its dynamics. The changing structure points to the Holy Spirit's inspiration, which ensures dynamic

change in the natural dimension and provides color and newness.<sup>1</sup> Like a stormy sea, the Church forms its image through the experience of its vitality and activity. Cardinal Ratzinger distinguishes five waves that have created a movement within the Church. The first wave is the monastic missionary movement, which brought the Catholic faith to Europe. The second wave is the medieval monastic reform that took place at Cluny and contributed to monastic communities' liberation from feudal dependence. The third movement took place in the thirteenth century through the activity of St. Francis of Assisi, St. Dominic Guzman, and the communities that they founded. The fourth wave occurred with the Jesuits who, along with the Dominicans and Franciscans, evangelized Asia and Africa while the Americas were being discovered. The fifth wave took place during the nineteenth century as many new female congregations that ran hospitals, care homes, and orphanages and cared for the poor and suffering were founded. The Living Rosary founded by Pauline Marie Jaricot is included in this wave.<sup>2</sup>

In the contemporary Church, a certain phenomenon has been taking place with the founding of movements, communities, and associations. At the end of World War II, movements such as Focolare in Italy, the Flame of Love (among others) in France, the Neocatechumenal Way and Cursillo in Spain,<sup>3</sup> Light and Life in Poland, and the Charismatic Movement in the United States<sup>4</sup> were founded. This article discusses the latter. Two distinct movements have arisen in the Church. The first is called the Pentecostal Movement. This movement began during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the United States within the Protestant community, specifically Methodism, in the Holiness Movement.<sup>5</sup> The second pentecostal movement is known as the Charismatic Renewal or Charismatic Movement within the Catholic

<sup>1</sup> See J. Ratzinger, "Ruchy kościelne i ich teologiczne miejsce," *Communio* 19, no. 6 (1999): 89-91. This is a conference given by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger during the World Congress of Ecclesial Movements in Rome on May 27, 1998 in anticipation of the celebration of the Jubilee Year 2000.

<sup>2</sup> See A. Siemieniowski, M. Kiwka, *Na fundamencie apostołów i proroków* (Wrocław: 2018), 83-88; G. Bachanek, "Ruchy kościelne w perspektywie teologicznej Josepha Ratzingera," *Warszawskie Studia Teologiczne* 1 (2010): 282.

<sup>3</sup> See A. Scherk, *Potężny strumień łaski* (Cieszyn: 2019), 24.

<sup>4</sup> See B. Dembowski, "Stolica Apostolska wobec Odnowy w Duchu Świętym i innych nowych ruchów kościelnych," in *Ad imaginem Tuam t. II*, ed. W. Irek (Wrocław: 2012), 7.

<sup>5</sup> See S. Płusa, "Pentakostalizm czy odnowa charyzmatyczna Kościoła?" in *Kwestie dyskutowane w teologii dzisiaj*, ed. M. Jagodziński (Radom: 2017), 274.

Church. The purpose for this movement can be found in the prayer that Pope John XXIII recited on the vigil of the opening of the Second Vatican Council: “Renew in our days your miracles as of a second Pentecost; and grant that Holy Church, reunited in our prayer, more fervent than before, around Mary the Mother of Jesus, and under the leadership of Peter, may extend the kingdom of the divine Savior, a kingdom of truth, justice, love and peace. Amen.”<sup>6</sup> This council marked the beginning of many changes that took place within the Church thanks to the work of numerous theologians and pastors.<sup>7</sup> The conciliar work also pertained to charisms within the Church. The Constitution *Lumen Gentium* states that charisms are useful and appropriate and should be received with gratitude.<sup>8</sup> This seems all the more valuable because the topic of charisms has been included in the context of the Church’s constitution,<sup>9</sup> as if to suggest that they have moved from hagiography to ecclesiology.<sup>10</sup>

## The History of the Charismatic Movement in the Catholic Church

Some believe that the Second Vatican Council’s prerogatives were fundamental to the initiation of the Charismatic Movement, even though it did not exist as such and there was no sociological basis for it when the council took place. Others think that these very facts are a sign that the movement itself began because of the Holy Spirit’s assistance.<sup>11</sup>

The Charismatic Movement began in the United States in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania in 1965<sup>12</sup> or 1967.<sup>13</sup> At that time, a group of Catholic students and professors at the Catholic University of Duquesne participated in pentecostal prayer meetings where they experienced a

<sup>6</sup> John XXIII, *Humanae Salutis* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Vaticana), sec. 23.

<sup>7</sup> See E. Garin, “Odnowa charyzmatyczna i nowe wspólnoty: rzeczywistość profetyczna,” in *Duch Odnowiciel*, ed. L. Balter (Poznań: 1998), 283.

<sup>8</sup> Sec. 12.

<sup>9</sup> See E. Garin, “Odnowa charyzmatyczna,” 283.

<sup>10</sup> See R. Cantalamessa, *Pieśń Ducha Świętego. Rozważania na temat Veni Creator* (Warszawa: 2003), 229.

<sup>11</sup> See B. Dembowski, “Stolica Apostolska wobec Odnowy w Duchu Świętym i innych nowych ruchów kościelnych,” in *Ad imaginem Tuam t. II*, ed. W. Irka (Wrocław: 2012), 9.

<sup>12</sup> See S. Falvo, *Przebudzenie charyzmatów* (Łódź: 2015), 58.

<sup>13</sup> See B. Dembowski, “Stolica Apostolska ...,” 9.

great revival of faith. Their experience, however, did not lead them to conclude that they should leave the Roman Catholic Church. The movement grew. Every year conventions were organized, which increasingly more people attended. For example, in 1968, more than 100 people participated. By 1971, 4,500 participants attended; in 1973, 22,000 participants came; and in 1974—25,000 people participated. The participants came from different countries.<sup>14</sup> The International Communications Office (ICO) for the movement, which published formational material, was established at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. Representatives of the Catholic Church's hierarchy generally reacted positively as the Renewal Movement spread and developed dynamically in many countries.<sup>15</sup>

Cardinal Leon-Joseph Suenes played an important role in the development of the Charismatic Movement. Through his initiative, the Second Vatican Council discussed the question of charisms. He was also responsible for drafting Section 12 of *Lumen Gentium* and Section 3 of *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.<sup>16</sup> In February 1973, Cardinal Suenes met with Pope Paul VI and informed him in detail about the Renewal Movement. In October of the same year, Pope Paul VI met with 120 movement leaders from 34 countries. The International Conference of Catholic Charismatic Renewal convened the following year, which signaled the pope's approbation of the movement.<sup>17</sup> Cardinal Suenens oversaw the theological side of the movement, publishing six documents from Malines, Belgium. In 1974, the first document was published, the theological consultants of which were, among others: Yves Congar, Rene Laurentin, and Joseph Ratzinger. Cardinal Suenens also traveled throughout the world and spoke about the phenomenon of the Charismatic Renewal Movement to the church hierarchs of different geographical regions.<sup>18</sup>

The development of charismatic congregations also swept throughout Europe. These communities arose, however, on the margins of parish life.<sup>19</sup> In Poland, Fr. Marian Piątkowski, Fr. Marian Bronisław Dembowski, Fr. Adam Schulz, Fr. Józef Kozłowski, and Fr. Andrzej Grefkowicz, among others, began Renewal in the Holy Spirit in 1975.

<sup>14</sup> See A. Scherk, *Potężny strumień łaski* (Cieszyn: 2019), 38-42.

<sup>15</sup> See B. Dembowski, "Stolica Apostolska ...," 10.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> See A. Scherk, *Potężny strumień łaski*, 145-151.

<sup>18</sup> See B. Dembowski, "Stolica Apostolska ...," 10.

<sup>19</sup> See E. Garin, "Odnowa charyzmatyczna," 283.

The first gathering of the different Charismatic Renewal groups took place in Izabelin near Warsaw. In 1981, a coordination committee was chosen to serve all of the groups and represent the community before the episcopate.<sup>20</sup>

Dogmatic  
Theology

## Charisms in the Charismatic Renewal Movement

Is it possible to say that the Charismatic Movement seems to be characterized by the Holy Spirit's extraordinary presence? Cardinal Leon-Joseph Suenens wrote: "God does not love us with an ordinary love, from which He would make an exception sometimes through by making a gesture of extraordinary, overabundant love. No—extraordinary love is proper to God's essence: our God is the True God who loves people in a miraculous way."<sup>21</sup> Every action of God is supernatural; theology, however, speaks about the categories of "ordinary" and "extraordinary." Some people consider these categories a temptation because they are a measure determined not by God, but by man.<sup>22</sup>

Section 4 of *Lumen Gentium* states that the Holy Spirit equips and guides the Church "with hierarchical and charismatic gifts" that are bound together by a strict yet flexible bond.<sup>23</sup> In every time, the Holy Spirit enriches the Church with charismatic gifts so that She will be equipped to fulfill her mission.<sup>24</sup> The word "charism" comes from the Greek word "*charisma*," which is a term that St. Paul introduced and

<sup>20</sup> See J. Budniak, "Ruch Odnowy w Duchu Świętym w Kościele Rzymskokatolickim," *Śląskie Studia Historyczno-Teologiczne*, no. 1 (2007): 210.

<sup>21</sup> L. J. Suenens, *Nowe Zesłanie Ducha Świętego?* (Poznań: 1988), 67.

<sup>22</sup> See K. Guzowski, "Nadzwyczajność i nowość w Ruchu Odnowy Charyzmatycznej," *Studia teologii dogmatycznej* 3 (2017): 33-34.

<sup>23</sup> See John Paul II, *Message for the World Congress of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities*, May 27, 1998, accessed October 25, 2021, [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1998/may/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_spe\\_19980527\\_movimenti.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1998/may/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19980527_movimenti.html); Benedict XVI, *Address to Members of the Communion and Liberation Movement* [On the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its Pontifical Recognition], March 24, 2007, accessed October 25, 2021, [https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2007/march/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20070324\\_comunione-liberazione.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2007/march/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20070324_comunione-liberazione.html); Francis, Homily of Pope Francis [Solemnity of Pentecost Holy Mass with the Ecclesial Movements], May 19, 2013, accessed October 25, 2021, [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco\\_20130519\\_omelia-pentecoste.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20130519_omelia-pentecoste.html).

<sup>24</sup> See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* [Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church Regarding the Relationship Between Hierarchical and Charismatic Gifts in the Life and the Mission of the Church], sec. 1, accessed October 25, 2021, [https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_20160516\\_iuvenescit-ecclesia\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20160516_iuvenescit-ecclesia_en.html).

that generally means “gratuitous gift.” Colloquially, charisms are called “7G,” meaning the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit given freely for the good of others.<sup>25</sup> A particular feature of charismatic gifts is that, unlike basic graces (sanctifying grace, love, hope, and faith), charisms are not given to everyone, but only to those who the Spirit chooses (see 1 Cor 12:11),<sup>26</sup> “so that sacramental grace may be fruitful in Christian life and in different ways and at every level.”<sup>27</sup> These are special graces and “Whatever their character—sometimes it is extraordinary, such as the gift of miracles or of tongues—charisms are oriented toward sanctifying grace and are intended for the common good of the Church. They are at the service of charity which builds up the Church.”<sup>28</sup>

The Charismatic Renewal Movement’s particular charisms are: of the word, of works, and of knowing. The outpouring of these gifts is called “baptism in the Spirit.” The Doctrinal Commission of the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (ICCRS) defines this baptism as “a life-transforming experience of the love of God the Father poured out into a person’s heart through the Holy Spirit through the submission of oneself to Jesus Christ’s reign. It is manifested in the renewal of the power of the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, a deeper communion with God and one’s fellow Christians, a rekindling of evangelical zeal, and being equipped with charisms for service and mission.”<sup>29</sup> It is not, therefore, a second baptism, but rather—as a symbolic act through the special action of the Holy Spirit—a confirmation of the gift of divine childhood.<sup>30</sup>

Theologians interpret baptism in the Spirit differently. Thus far, it has been characterized in four ways: two-stage, sacramental, integrated, and top-down.<sup>31</sup> The “two-stage” approach is present in Pentecostal thought, which designates two stages to baptism. The first stage is conversion/regeneration either through the sacrament of baptism or

<sup>25</sup> See Gosia Janicka, “7D, Czyli o Darach Ducha Świętego,” *Moja Niniwa*, accessed June 6, 2021, <http://mojaniniwa.blogspot.com/2017/06/7d-czyli-o-darach-ducha-swietego.html>.

<sup>26</sup> See CDF, *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 4.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>28</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, accessed October 25, 2021, [https://www.vatican.va/archive/eng0015/\\_index.htm](https://www.vatican.va/archive/eng0015/_index.htm).

<sup>29</sup> See Międzynarodowej Służby Katolickiej Odnowy Charyzmatycznej. Komisja Doktrynalna, *Chrzest w Duchu Świętym* (Kraków: 2014), 13.

<sup>30</sup> See S. Płusa, “Pentakostalizm czy odnowa,” 280.

<sup>31</sup> See K. Guzowski, “Nadzwyczajność i nowość,” 38; see also A. Scherk, *Potężny strumień łaski*, 226-238.

through giving one's life to Jesus. The second stage is an experience of the Holy Spirit's presence, which is confirmed through the reception of the gift of tongues (however, not everyone agrees on this).<sup>32</sup>

The baptism in the Spirit is considered a release of "dormant" grace or the graces that exist in believers due to having received the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. The theological meaning of baptism is distinct from the experiential meaning. Theologically, the Holy Spirit descends during the sacraments, while experientially He is present in the realization of His presence and power at work in those who believe.<sup>33</sup>

The integrative approach upholds that, in addition to the first coming of the Holy Spirit, there can be new "descents." In this case, baptism in the Spirit is theologically and experientially distinct from the sacraments of initiation. Here, baptism in the Spirit signifies a new coming of the Spirit, a richer experience of God, as well as a spiritual turning point. Several such spiritual breakthroughs can occur in a person's life; therefore baptism in the Spirit is repeatable; it is a renewal of one's friendship with God; and it is the portal through which the charisms are poured out.<sup>34</sup>

The fourth approach is "top-down" because it entails the top-down perspective of the economy of the Holy Spirit's personal action: "The Father reveals himself through the Son in the Holy Spirit."<sup>35</sup> Charismatic activity, meaning the revelation of the power of Holy Spirit and the sanctifying action that is manifested in the fruits of a new divinized life, is part of this perspective. Divine Love is what interconnects these activities. Baptism in the Spirit as if "unlocks" the graces of the sacraments of Christian initiation through authentic faith in God's Presence. The sacraments graft man onto God, and baptism in the Holy Spirit invigorates and develops a person's life.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has spoken about baptism in the Holy Spirit. In the USCCB's statement to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement, it confirmed the good fruits of the grace of this baptism, which leads to the profession of Jesus as Lord and Savior, deepens people's relationship with the Persons of the Holy Trinity, and brings about an interior transformation that leads people to progress in every area of their Christian lives through an awareness of God's Presence. Baptism in the Holy Spirit "understood

<sup>32</sup> K. Guzowski, "Nadzwyczajność i nowość," 38.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 39.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 40.

as the reawakening in Christian experience of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit given in Christian initiation, and manifested in a broad range of charisms, including those closely associated with the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, is part of the normal Christian life.”<sup>36</sup>

## The Charism of Tongues

Each charism has its own characteristics. The first charism of the word includes the gift of tongues, the gift of interpretation of tongues, and the gift of prophecy (see 1 Cor 14). The Lord Jesus foretold this gift when He said, “they will speak new languages” (see Mk 16:17). This gift is also called glossolalia, the purpose of which is to glorify God or serve as intercessory prayer.<sup>37</sup> It comes to aid in weakness, when we do not know how to pray as we ought (see Rom 8:26-27), which means it preempts our ineptitude. This prayer expresses the language of the heart because, whether consciously or unconsciously, it enables a person to express more easily whatever moves him in relation to God: praise, petition, lamentation, joy, or—most importantly—love.<sup>38</sup>

Usually speaking in tongues manifests as an ability to speak peacefully to God with the freedom to begin or cease at any moment (see 1 Cor 14:19, 27) while remaining oneself and being completely with God the entire time. Praying in tongues most often takes place on an individual basis, although it occurs sometimes during communal prayer as recitation or singing. Such prayer leads to silence, to the depths, where one can hear God’s voice. During this prayer, a person becomes nothing other than a child before God because, by speaking without understanding what he is saying, man still expresses something. Praying in tongues is considered a meditative form of prayer.<sup>39</sup>

Studies on this charism indicate that the “tongues” (languages) can be either living or dead (e.g., ancient Hebrew or modern Italian).<sup>40</sup> Most

<sup>36</sup> See United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. *Grace for a New Springtime* [A Statement from the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops on the Charismatic Renewal], accessed September 15, 2021, <https://www.nsc-chariscenter.org/about-ccr/grace-english/>

<sup>37</sup> See A. Scherk, *Potężny strumień łaski*, 81.

<sup>38</sup> See Komisja Teologiczna Katolickiej Odnowy Charyzmatycznej w Niemczech (KTKOCN), “Duch daje życie,” in *Wiosna Kościoła*, ed. J. Salamon (Cieszyn: 2019), 190.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, 191.

<sup>40</sup> See S. Falvo, *Przebudzenie*, 79-80.



often, however, the “tongue” is an unknown language.<sup>41</sup> If someone is able to decipher the words of the foreign language, then this is known as the phenomenon called xenoglossia. In this instance, the speech in tongues may convey a message.<sup>42</sup> An individual in the group may also have the gift to interpret what is being said and share the message with others (see 1 Cor 12:27-28).<sup>43</sup> The person interpreting does not relay a literary message, but rather the general meaning of what has been said.<sup>44</sup> It seems like the gift of tongues has gradually waned within the Church. There are, however, indications that different Catholic saints and mystics were given this gift and that it is expressed even in the liturgy.<sup>45</sup>

The Episcopal Conference of Antilles states that the gift of tongues can be an authentic and true gift of prayer and that individuals should be open to it, but it should not be presented as a sign that is necessary to indicate that the Holy Spirit has “broken through” or “been released,” lest the importance of this gift be overestimated.<sup>46</sup>

## The Charism of Prophecy

In 1 Corinthians 14, St. Paul argues that the gift of prophecy is incomparable to the gift of tongues because prophecy builds up the community more. Since it is the inspired message that brings with it the transformative and creative power of the Kingdom of God and since it is communicated through the Gospel message, through the word of knowledge, through the word of wisdom, or through the teaching and preaching inspired by the Holy Spirit, prophecy is present in the Old Testament, in Jesus’ life, and in the life of the early and later Church up to this very day.<sup>47</sup> Prophecy is a special message that Jesus sends through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It can occur during communal prayer when someone feels the need to spontaneously say something as words readily come one after another.<sup>48</sup> Prophecy

<sup>41</sup> See A. Scherk, *Potężny strumień łaski*, 84.

<sup>42</sup> See D. Bergeron, *Charyzmaty* (Kraków: 2015), 17-18.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 19.

<sup>44</sup> See S. Falvo, *Przebudzenie*, 88.

<sup>45</sup> See A. Scherk, *Potężny strumień łaski*, 85.

<sup>46</sup> See Komisja Episkopatu Antyli, “Oświadczenie na temat Katolickiej Odnowy Charyzmatycznej,” in *Wiosna Kościoła*, ed J. Salamon (Cieszyn: 2019), 96.

<sup>47</sup> See D. Stayne, *Odnów swoje cuda* (Łódź: 2017), 66-84.

<sup>48</sup> See S. Falvo, *Przebudzenie*, 91.

has three elements.<sup>49</sup> First, it conveys information given by God. This information comes (is given) as an interior voice, image, vision, or outward gesture.<sup>50</sup> Second, prophecy necessitates interpretation of the information. And third, what God says must be put into practice.

A prophet must seek to be open unconditionally and completely to God. Such an individual also develops a spiritual sense, which is an ability to see from God's perspective. Such a prophet must verify the quality of the spiritual information received and seek the proper circumstances in which to share the information. Despite human involvement, prophecy always remains a freely given gift from God. The content of a prophecy can be an admonition, a promise, a consolation, or a discovery of what lies within the human heart (see 1 Cor 14:3, 25). Sometimes prophecy clarifies how God is leading a person in the present, and sometimes it pertains to the future.<sup>51</sup> The purpose of prophecy is to edify and comfort (see 1 Cor 14:3), pass judgment (see 1 Cor 14:24), instruct (see 1 Cor 14:31), guide (see Acts 13:2), or foretell the future (see Acts 27:10).<sup>52</sup>

The Antilles Episcopal Conference stated that the gift of prophecy is still present in the modern Church, but it also warned against false prophets. It lists accordance with Holy Scripture and the Magisterium as the criteria for discerning prophecy, since the Church has the authority to pronounce the authenticity of a given prophecy.<sup>53</sup>

## The Charism of Works

The charism of works includes intercessory prayer as well as prayers of healing and liberation. This prayer arises from the conviction and trust that the Holy Spirit has the power to heal physical illnesses and spiritual wounds. The one who prays hands over all illnesses to the Spirit and leaves them in His hands so that the Spirit can determine whom and to what extent He wills to heal. In a particular sense, this gift manifests when Jesus gives it to a specific person. This charism, however, always remains a gift from God and cannot be ascribed to the skill of the individual to whom the gift is given. A physician should

<sup>49</sup> See D. Stayne, *Odnów swoje cuda*, 97.

<sup>50</sup> See D. Bergeron, *Charyzmaty*, 49-52.

<sup>51</sup> See KTKOCN, "Duch daje życie," 191-192.

<sup>52</sup> See D. Stayne, *Odnów swoje cuda*, 87.

<sup>53</sup> See Komisja Episkopatu Antyli, "Oświadczenie ...," 96.

verify the healing, particularly in cases of serious illness.<sup>54</sup> During prayer meetings, the charism of healing should not be ascribed to a specific group of people (e.g., the leaders of the group). It is important, however, to remember that the Holy Spirit bestows His gifts specifically on some people and in an exceptional manner in order to demonstrate the power of the grace of the Risen Christ. It is also important to recall, however, that even the most ardent prayer cannot bring about the healing of every person from every disease or illness.<sup>55</sup>

The phenomenon of “resting in the Holy Spirit” can take place during intercessory prayer. This rest is a person’s psychosomatic reaction to the action of the Holy Spirit.<sup>56</sup> It is necessary to distinguish the gift of grace itself from the way in which it sometimes manifests. Authentic rest in the Holy Spirit can be compared to a “spiritual surgical operation” by which the Holy Spirit brings about a restful “cessation.” During this rest, God—with the person’s consent—places him into a state of submission in which a person relaxes so deeply that he collapses. Those who have experienced this phenomenon have testified that they do not feel any pain. Healing takes place during this “visitation” of grace. Most people experience the gift of peace and freedom, even though they cannot move. It is very difficult to verify rest in the Holy Spirit. The criteria by which to determine whether such rest is authentic are the fruits, particularly the development of one’s spiritual life and growth in charity.<sup>57</sup>

In Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement communities, “deliverance prayers” also take place. This prayer is a petition to God to provide His most effective help in healing deep-seated addictions as well as deliverance from demons that literally attack people. This prayer requires an individual to submit himself to the prudent and discrete care of a priest. It is important to avoid any abuses in this regard because exorcisms can be performed only with the consent of the local bishop.<sup>58</sup> The laity should not address the demons directly or

<sup>54</sup> See KTKOCN, “Duch daje życie,” 194-195.

<sup>55</sup> See CDF, *Instruction on Prayers for Healing*, sec. 5, accessed October 25, 2021, <https://www.nsc-chariscenter.org/about-ccr/grace-english/>.

<sup>56</sup> See Konferencja Biskupów Francji, “Nowe ruchy charyzmatyczne. Podejścia, rozeznanie, perspektywy,” in *Wiosna Kościoła*, ed. J. Salamon (Cieszyn: 2019), 122-123.

<sup>57</sup> See Sekretariat Generalny Konferencji Biskupów Francji, “Elementy rozeznawania dla Odnowy Charyzmatycznej,” in *Wiosna Kościoła*, ed. J. Salamon (Cieszyn: 2019), 136-139.

<sup>58</sup> KTKOCN, “Duch daje życie,” 196-197. See Can. 1172, Code of Canon Law, [https://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/cic\\_index\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/cic_index_en.html).

ask them to identify themselves and state how many are present. It is also forbidden to use the minor exorcism prayers of Pope Leo XIII.<sup>59</sup>

## The Charism of Spiritual Discernment

Discerning the authenticity of spiritual experiences that take place in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement is necessary in order to separate the wheat from the chaff; to draw attention away from experiences of God and place it on God Himself; and to ensure that the community does not become a “church within the Church,” which would lead to many divisions and conflicts. The Charismatic Renewal Movement itself requires pastoral care and formation.<sup>60</sup> It is the role of theologians to discern the criteria that are helpful in these proceedings.

From the beginning, it is necessary to distinguish between spiritual and psychophysical phenomena (e.g., resting in the Holy Spirit vs. shock).<sup>61</sup> Other criteria are: freedom—God never acts against a person’s free will—<sup>62</sup> and the fruits, meaning how the daily life of a converted and faithful Christian has changed.<sup>63</sup>

The Episcopal Conference of Germany has listed the following signs that, according to the truths of the faith, would be to some degree indicative of an authentic experience of the Holy Spirit:

- a love and attachment to the person of Jesus;
- a deeper relationship with God as Father (proper image of God);
- a devotion to the Trinity;
- a healthy fear of God;
- a discovery of the truth about sin and the practice of sincere contrition;
- a recollection of God’s care for man;
- a deeper meditation on the Word of God;
- an intensified sacramental life;
- a discovery of one’s self as a part of the community of the Church;

<sup>59</sup> See *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, December 12, 1985.

<sup>60</sup> See the text from Malines written by Cardinal Leon-Joseph Suenens.

<sup>61</sup> See Sekretariat Generalny Konferencji Biskupów Francji, “Elementy rozeznawania,” 134.

<sup>62</sup> See P. Samiczak, “Rozeznawanie i prawidłowe korzystanie z darów Ducha Świętego przez wspólnoty charyzmatyczne według wybranych dokumentów Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego,” *Studia Oecumenica* 20 (2020): 166.

<sup>63</sup> See Sekretariat Generalny Konferencji Biskupów Francji, “Elementy rozeznawania,” 137-139.

- adherence to the teachings of the Magisterium of the Church and acceptance of the Church’s hierarchy;
- a balanced spirit of criticism regarding matters pertaining to the community of the Church;
- enabling research on the revelation of achievements in the humanities.<sup>64</sup>

When analyzing whether a person has received certain charisms and whether they have had an effect on the person’s daily life, the Holy Spirit’s action in the life of the person can be identified in the following:

- faith, hope, and charity;
- an openness to God’s gifts, through which man realizes his dependence on God;
- clarity of knowledge and judgment;
- prudence, moderation, and wisdom;
- self-acceptance;
- obedience to God;
- conversion and contrition (penance) as well as practicing doing good (asceticism);
- a readiness to learn and to be corrected by others;
- the humility necessary to bear with one’s own and others’ weaknesses;
- the spiritual strength necessary to respond to God’s call;
- the decisiveness necessary to respond to recognized truth;
- fidelity to one’s daily duties;
- an ability to serve, to step away from service, and to submit to it;
- a readiness to carry one’s cross;<sup>65</sup>
- the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22-23).

## The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement— An Opportunity or a Danger?

Papal statements and Church documents endorse the gift of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement. The most important benefits of participating in charismatic communities are: commitment to prayer, striving to live a holy life full of charity and permeated by the Word of God, and good works manifested in an ability to share one’s

<sup>64</sup> P. Samiczak, “Rozeznawanie,” 168.

<sup>65</sup> KTKOCN, “Duch daje życie,” 176-177.

spiritual and material goods.<sup>66</sup> The Charismatic Renewal Movement has contributed greatly to the work of the New Evangelization.<sup>67</sup>

Those who view the movement with a critical eye are justified in their concern about the following dangers: its overemphasis on feelings, false directness (thinking that God's action is determined to take on a specific form according to the recipient's nature, or thinking that every negative occurrence has a demonic origin), biblical fundamentalism (literal understanding of the Bible), religious complacency (arrogance in believing that the movement is exceptional and stands out from other communities), and escape from reality (e.g. retreat into prayer at the neglect of one's duties).<sup>68</sup>

The aforementioned issues, among others, are the reason why theologians have different opinions about the movement. Members of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement have been accused, on the one hand, of wanting to create a universal religion for the whole world; of believing that all charisms come from Pentecostalism; and of thinking that they are part of the Pentecostal Movement, which wants to change the Church's Catholic doctrine and practice. These arguments, however, do not seem to be fully substantiated.<sup>69</sup> On the other hand, this movement is an "awakening"—a sign of the springtime for the Church.

It is important for theologians and Church leaders to maintain the proper balance between ensuring that movements do not persist in a strange and dangerous exhilaration and considering how they contribute to maintaining the Tradition and wisdom of the Catholic Church by remaining aware that God in His Providence uses new methods to bring about the Kingdom of God in the world, which is the Catholic Church's mission.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> See A. Scherk, *Potężny strumień łaski*, 142-204; A. Siemieniowski, *Na fundamencie apostołów i proroków*, ed. M. Kiwka (Wrocław: 2018), 83-106; B. Dembowski, "Stolica Apostolska," 10-25.

<sup>67</sup> See M. Kita, "Laboratoria nowej ewangelizacji," *Znak* 9 (2001): 40-46.

<sup>68</sup> See KTKOCN, "Duch daje życie," 206-209.

<sup>69</sup> See S. Płusa, "Pentakostalizm czy odnowa," 289-294.

<sup>70</sup> See E. Garin, "Odnowa charyzmatyczna," 291-293.

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