



EU-CHARIS-INFO-LETTER NO 7

CHARIS EUROPEAN SERVICE OF COMMUNION

3rd of March, 2023

In this issue: Report of the European meeting, organised by the coordinating team of the European Charis Service of Communion, 24 till 26 February 2023 in Zagreb, Croatia. The focus was on prayer, repentance, leadership, listening to the Lord and to each other, and praying for the different countries. How is Charis in European countries developing? What are the upcoming meetings for Europe?

The main goal of this weekend was to come together and to get empowered by the Lord by listening to Him and to each other and being open to get surprised by Him. There was a lot of worship and prayer, inspiring words from the Lord, both from Holy Scripture as well as through prophecy and meeting each other.

OUR IDENTITY AS KINGS, PRIESTS, AND PROPHETS

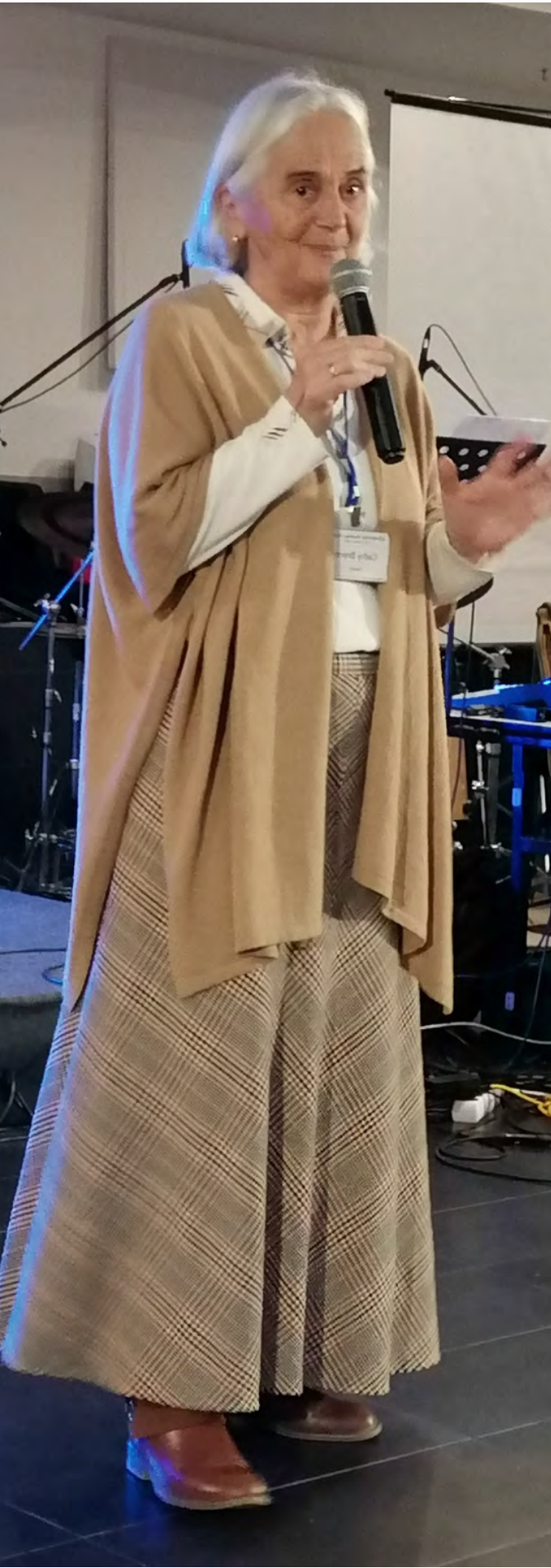
The word of the Lord, as it is written in Numbers was guiding us in a special way. Numbers 21: God is teaching and testing us. Do we long back to Egypt, back to earlier years of charismatic renewal? Or do we enter the promised land, admitting that we have fallen short? Are we properly related to the Lord, personally, as Charis on national level and on European level?



The Croatians led us into the whole evening of repentance, to heal the wounds of history*, identifying ourselves with the glory and the shame of the group and nation we represent. And we sang together: *Here I am, beneath Your cross, I repent, I give all to You, Jesus*. In the end we were encouraged to take back our identity as kings, priests and prophets (cf. Vatican II, LG 31, AA 2, AA 10).



VARIOUS STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT



Next morning, every national coordinator presented their delegation and the expressions of the renewal they represent. A whole mosaic of very different national stages of development of the Renewal appeared. From nations with the Catholic charismatic renewal history of half an age, till Bulgaria where the Renewal entered only ten years ago. It was great to see them coming for the first time to our continental meeting, with seven persons!

Several countries suffer because of the sins of sexual abuse in the past by ministers of the church itself, making healing possible for the finally recognised victims of this abuse, searching to avoid misuse of power positions in future.

We heard about strong new intercession initiatives, festivals for teenagers, training, formation and ongoing faithful prayer groups and communities. In a number of countries the Renewal is becoming more vibrant and alive, especially thanks to European inhabitants who were not born in Europe.



These countries were represented by their Charis National Service of Communion-coordinator: Bosnia & Hercegovina, Czech Republic, England, France, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Scotland, Slovenia, Switzerland. These countries were represented by any CNSC member: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Spain. These countries were represented by other persons: Albania, Bulgaria, Italy, Poland, Portugal. Among the present members of the Continental Service of Communion were also the representatives of communities, networks, young people and ministries.



RAISE UP YOUR PROPHETS

“The next teaching was based on Numbers 11:14-30. The people of God are complaining about the manna that keeps them alive. Moses complained: *I am not able to carry all this people alone; the burden is too heavy for me. If you will treat me like this, kill me at once.*

And the Lord tells him to bring seventy men before him in the Tabernacle, to give them a part of the leadership. Moses is obedient, and the Lord puts his Spirit on the seventy. And they start to hear and speak words of God, like Moses, they start to prophesy. Later on in this weekend the call *Raise up your prophets*, became one of the strong messages for us in this weekend.



FROM OUTSIDE OUR CATHOLIC CIRCLES

'The continuing story in Numbers 11 includes a lesson in inclusive thinking. Outside the ordination-meeting in the Tabernacle, two men also received the Spirit and prophesied. Not acceptable? Joshua suggested Moses to stop them. But he said: *I wish the Lord would give his Spirit to all his people so everyone could be a prophet* (Numbers 11:29). Teresa Lally, who gave this teaching, drew an ecumenical lesson from it. She said: 'I am fed up with Catholics who say that Protestants and Evangelicals do not have the right faith, yet their faith is at times stronger than ours, even Jesus said in Mark 9:39-40, when John says that they tried to stop someone doing things in Jesus name and Jesus replied "Do not stop him...for whoever is not against us is for us". We all have the desire to build the Kingdom of God.'

THE TRUTH IS THAT PEOPLE FROM OUTSIDE OUR CATHOLIC CIRCLES CAN SPEAK IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. THEY HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN THE DUQUESNE WEEKEND, THE VERY START OF CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL IN 1967!



Until today, many Catholics receive the full baptism in the Holy Spirit, thanks to brothers and sisters from outside the Catholic Church (cf *Evangelii Gaudium* 246**).

Also father Christoph Blin, who is like Teresa a member of the coordinating team, made a strong statement to illustrate the urgency of our ecumenical calling: 'Every time we are together with only Catholics, we feel we are missing the other half'. Teresa: 'Be happy with what the Spirit is doing outside your programs, like the Spirit is doing nowadays in developing missionary parishes.'



WE CANNOT AFFORD TO BE LAZY

We can identify ourselves with seventy in Numbers and the seventy in Luke, and we cannot afford to be lazy. In the following worship time - led by a wonderful worship team, composed out of different music ministries in Croatia - we sang:

'My life is not my own, to You, I belong'.



TEACHING ON LEADERSHIP

Zoltan Kunszabó from Hungary gave a teaching on leadership, comparing Moses with Joshua. Moses received the Torah, the foundation. He was the overall leader for 40 years of crisis after crisis in the desert.



Zoltan Kunszabó



A new generation in the promised land needed another leadership: Joshua, a team-leader, dealing with the political issues in the Land, both spiritual and practical. In the same way the charismatic renewal of the Church needs new types of leadership in new circumstances. In Europe the circumstances changed dramatically through the war against Ukraine.

Zoltan explained that leaders see the common goals, make friends and create willingness to die for each other. And he addressed the question: Are we the army of God, did most of our groups developed into 'everybody is happy and relaxed and the charisms are toys in our hands'? Do we have common goals?

FOR ALL EUROPEAN NATIONS

After this we prayed specifically for all the European entities, both present and absent. All members of Charis National Services of Communion and key leaders of other networks of the Catholic charismatic renewal in Europe were invited for Zagreb. Altogether, we were with about seventy persons. For all European nations it was a time to pray and prophesy over them.



"Worship
meets
Heaven!"



"Praying is
talking to
God."

CHARIS ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Step-by-step the Charis National Services of Communion are developing with the available possibilities and limitations in their own area.

In the final session, the composition of the national services was clarified by Etienne Mellot, who is for Europe member of the Charis international service, together with Paolo Maino.

ALL GROUPS WITH BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT AS BASIS FOR THEIR LIFE' ARE TO BE INVITED TO COME WITH A REPRESENTATIVE TO A NATIONAL CHARIS-GATHERING.



If possible, this national gathering or council, has to elect members of the Charis National Service of Communion for a period of three years. But the statutes give a lot of needed space, freedom and flexibility, also on the national level.**

In large countries with many communities, it may be not be possible or helpful to have them all represented in the national service of communion. In smaller countries with only a few groups from the Renewal or with a lot of small expressions of the Renewal, not all of them are able to send a representative to the national council. And not all who come to the national council are able to participate actively in the national service of communion.



WHO IS ABLE TO PROVIDE THIS SERVICE?

The national service has to discern what kind of service is needed and possible in their country or area. At this point in several countries the question is: who is able (with time, energy, money...) to provide this service, in order to create more communion and to work more together for the challenging objectives, formulated in the statutes of Charis***?



Etienne Mellot suggested the national services to have an ecclesial assistant, like there is one on the international level (Cardinal Cantalamessa). This national ecclesial assistant, appointed by the National Bishop conference, can be adviser, but will not have the right to vote.

NEXT MEETINGS IN 2023

Next off-line meeting is the general assembly, 29 till 31 October 2023 in Rome, in the Pope Paul VI-hall with Pope Francis. All national coordinators have the right to vote during the election in the general assembly. A new moderator and the members of the Charis International Service of Communion have to be elected for the upcoming period of three years. The general assembly has also to discern what are the needs to address in the next three years. Probably more important will be the informal part: meeting leaders of Catholic charismatic renewal from all over the world.

All other members of the National Services of Communion will be invited to participate in the general assembly as auditor. After the general assembly, in the first days of November, Charis will provide a program of several more days in Rome.

The European Charis Continental Service of Communion will meet online via Zoom on 23 September 2023.

Kees Slijkerman

*Repenting for the sins of the past to heal the wounds of history, Mgr. dr. Peter Hocken 2004, English, French, German, Dutch.

**Pope Francis: 'Given the seriousness of the counter-witness of division among Christians, ..., the search for paths to unity becomes all the more urgentIf we really believe in the abundantly free working of the Holy Spirit, we can learn so much from one another! It is not just about being better informed about others, but rather about reaping what the Spirit has sown in them, which is also meant to be a gift for us.' Evangelii Gaudium 246

***The statutes of Charis with content table have Art. 3 on general objectives and Art. 15 and 16 for the national level. Helpful guidelines to create a national service of Communion.

Two minutes video of the worship in Zagreb February 25th, 2023
<https://youtu.be/9JXVz2FBUBQ>

Previous editions of this info-letter: <http://isidor.se/ccreurope/documents>

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