

Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Sweden, Newsletter Nov. 2023

from Bengt Malmgren

In this letter: *Called, Transformed and Sent - International Charismatic Conference in Rome. Synod on Synodality in Rome, what did they say about the spiritual movements? Pope Francis wants CHARIS to promote Life in the Spirit seminars. Deacon Erik Kennet Pålsson and the Charismatic Renewal. Worship in the Catholic Cathedral. Life in the Spirit seminars, intensive weekend in Järfälla.*

Called, Transformed and Sent - International Charismatic Conference in Rome.

On November 2-4, this international event took place organized by CHARIS with 3000 participants from charismatic groups from all over the world. Among the speakers were Card Raniero Cantalamessa, spiritual advisor to CHARIS and Patti Mansfield, a pioneer from the student group in the United States where the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church began in 1967.

One participant from Sweden and Uppsala was Ylva Weibull. She describes her impressions: *"It was a fantastic meeting, when several thousand people sang in tongues, we were all deeply moved. It was also wonderful and uplifting to hear the various lecturers from all over the world describe all the charismatic gifts and as the Pope finally summed it up: 'All charisms are for the whole Catholic Church, it is important to allow yourself to be led by the Holy Spirit.'"*

On Saturday afternoon, November 3, everyone was gathered in Paul VI's audience hall at the Vatican. Card Cantalamessa spoke, saying: *"Pope Francis is the gift that the Holy Spirit has given to the whole Church, but especially to us in the Charismatic Renewal. [...] What does the Holy Father expect from the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and especially from its service organ which is CHARIS? - To contribute to the evangelization of the Church. To be at the mercy of the poor and those most in need. To work for Christian unity."*

The meeting was then visited by Pope Francis himself, who, after the customary greetings, invited CHARIS to reflect on what has already been achieved, and what tasks lie ahead. He said:

"How's the work of CHARIS going? How is the work on local service communities progressing? [CHARIS national services of communion, CNSC, in the Nordic countries, work is underway to create a Nordic Service of communion, my note] What messages are coming from them? What about the health of Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the world? Does it grow in ecclesiastical maturity? The latter is the main purpose of your service, which must always be kept in mind, first of all prayerfully."

The Pope said that he wanted CHARIS to contribute to the promotion of charismatic gifts- in the whole Church. He also specifically mentioned the Life in the Spirit seminars, which he would like to see widely disseminated at the local level. My interpretation is that the Pope is impatient and thinks CHARIS is doing too little. He is anxious for the Church to take steps forward in its evangelization effort, and the charisms are a necessary for this aim.

[\[A YouTube video of Saturday afternoon's program can be found here\]](#), first Card Cantalamessa's speech, then the papal audience about 50 minutes into the video.

The Synod on Synodality in Rome, what did they say about the Spiritual movements?

A synthesis report from the Synod, which this time consisted not only of bishops, but also of priests, religious and laity, has been published. [[I wrote about the report here](#)]. Here I would like to tell you what was said about the spiritual movements in the Church, which include the Charismatic Renewal.

In general, the report states that the communion of the Church includes all the baptized, that the diversity of charisms and ministries is distributed among all by virtue of baptism and confirmation, and that, as has been emphasized in ecclesiastical documents since VCI, everyone is responsible for evangelization. This excludes any form of misused clericalism and implies close cooperation between ordained office-bearers and all of God's people in the ministry of building up the kingdom of God. To promote this, the movements in the church play an important role. The document states:

"Lay associations, ecclesial movements and new communities are a precious sign of the maturation of the co-responsibility of all the baptized. They hold particular value because of their experience in promoting communion among different vocations, the impetus with which they proclaim the Gospel, their proximity to those on the margins economically and socially and through their promotion of the common good. They are often models of synodal communion and of participation for mission."

It is also noted that the movements are not spared from the abuse scandals that have shaken the church:

"Cases of abuse of various kinds experienced by those in religious life and members of lay associations, especially of women, signal a problem in the exercise of authority and demand decisive and appropriate interventions."

It is also said that it is important to deepen the understanding of how the movements, through their charisms, contribute to the mission of the Church at the local level. In education at all levels, and especially for priests, there is a need to emphasize the charismatic dimension of the Church so that they can promote and strengthen it at the local level.

"The variety of charismatic expressions in the Church underscores the People of God's commitment to being a prophetic presence in proximity to the least of our sisters and brothers, and to providing contemporary culture with a deeper sense of the spiritual aspects of life. There is a need to develop a more profound understanding of how consecrated life, as well as lay associations, ecclesial movements, and new communities, place their charisms at the service of communion and mission in local churches, augmenting existing paths towards holiness with a presence that is prophetic. [...] In theological formation at all levels, above all in the formation of ordained ministers, the prominence given to the Church's charismatic dimension should be monitored and strengthened where necessary."

Life in the Spirit seminars – a priority initiative

Life in the Spirit seminars are a proven form of evangelism and helping Christians grow in the charismatic gifts. The Pope also mentioned this in the audience with CHARIS on November 3 and hoped that CHARIS would contribute to making the seminaries available throughout the Church. He said they can also be given locally in smaller groups, not just in larger contexts with well-known speakers.

It feels like the right thing to do to is to give priority to setting up seminars in the parishes. We have previously reported that these were given in Malmö last year, and now in September an intensive

course is given in Järfälla. I am in the process of putting together a leader's manual in Swedish, and participant booklets are already in stock to order from me.

Deacon Erik Kennet Pålsson and the Charismatic Renewal

Deacon Kennet has now gone home to his heavenly Father, and we cherish him in dear memory. He has meant a great deal for Catholic evangelization, among other things through his contributions to catechesis education, pioneering efforts in parish building in the southern Stockholm region and through his writing. [[Read here commemorative article on Katolsk Observatör](#)]. He has also meant a great deal to ecumenism and charismatic life. In the funeral mass in the Catholic Cathedral on November 8, Card Anders Arborelius mentioned that he was one of those who were part of the bilateral discussion group between Catholics and Pentecostals in Sweden. And at the gathering afterwards in the Cathedral Hall, Pastor Lalle Eriksson from Tyresö Pentecostal Church praised his efforts in ecumenical cooperation within the Tyresö Ecumenical Cooperation Council. Among other things, there were joint introductory courses for those who are curious about the Christian faith (Alpha courses), which led to many becoming Christians, some becoming Catholics, and others entering other churches.



In January 2010 I met Kennet in the center of Tyresö to discuss the work with the Jesus manifestation. He told me about the cooperation within the Tyresö *Christian Cooperation Council* and the good contact with the local community in Tyresö. In addition to Alpha courses, there is a second-hand shop, and in the center of Tyresö there is a nativity scene and a prayer box where people can put down notes with prayer requests that they then pray for in the churches. In a display case there is also a rosary that Pope John Paul II donated to the

Cooperation Council in connection with a visit to Rome at the turn of the millennium. [[Read the article in AKKS's newsletter Jan 2004 by Maria Fisher about the ecumenical cooperation in Tyresö](#)] (Picture: Deacon Kennet shows exhibition of nativity scenes in Tyresö center, Jan 2010)

[[The Jesus Manifestation](#)] was an annual national ecumenical project that took place on a Saturday in May and ended with a large service in Kungsträdgården during the years 2008-2014. From 2008 to 2010, Deacon Kennet was the Catholic representative appointed by the bishop in the central management group, after which I took over that role.

Worship services in the Catholic Cathedral.

The intercession group in the Cathedral has begun to invite people to worship services with worship, worship and intercession. One was held at the beginning of October, and the next one will take place on 15 November. Evaluation will take place, but so far the experience is positive, and there will most likely be a continuation during the spring semester of 2024.

Life in the Spirit - intensive course in Järfälla 24-26 november

Welcome to Life in the Spirit seminars in the Holy Trinity Parish in Järfälla, Järfällavägen 150. (Walking distance from Jakobsberg station) led by deacon Pancho Chin a Loi. [[More information here](#)]

/Bengt Malmgren

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