Chapter 3 – Charism (New Movements)

• 4. Discernment or Higherarchy
  o Pope Benedict XVI is quoted as saying: “…new forms of life are being born in the Church, just as moreover, they were born down the ages....”
  o The history of the Church shows it to be a permanent tension between charism and institution.
  o The Spirit has historically given rise to new charisms which the Church has institutionalized and thereby wither integrated them or annihilated them, or rendered them useless
  o Fortunately the Spirit does not allow itself to be controlled, it blows where it will, and revitalizes the Church continually in spite of the fact that there are those who want to cage it in within laws and dogmas.
  o The very purpose of the charisms makes the existence of control and a certain amount of discipline necessary so that those in charge won’t be driven by interior motives – It is also good counsel to control them for the common good.
  o Discipline is not opposition to the God Who inspires, but rather an adaptation to the purpose of the inspiration.
  o The layperson is the discoverer of hot topics, the one who raises attention to the present, the one who reveals the problems that need special study and clarification and attention.
    • The Church has always recognized the what has been called the “Sense of the Faithful”
  o The layperson can discover and begin a topic.
  o The theologian reflects and gathers facts from the experiences of the baptized and then the Magisterium confirms what has been reflected and organized by the theologian.
  o The Church equally needs both the laity and the clergy – They share an equal dignity as baptized.
  o Charism and Institution are like two arms of the cross.
    • They are coessential; neither of the two can exist without the other.
      • The charisms without the institution are headed for chaos
      • The institution without the charisms is headed for immobility
    • The institution is that which is established – The charism is that which is unexpected
  o The higherarchy of the Church does not pretend to have a of the gifts f the Spirit – All the faithful receive gifts of Grace, whose diversity is a great good for the Church and the entire world.
The Cursillo Movement - Study of the Charism
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- The final word with respect to the authenticity of the charism and their use falls to bishop, that is, the hierarchy of the Church.
- Paul always insists on the necessary insertion of charisms into the ecclesial body and his authoritative way of speaking to the charismatics clearly shows that he does not consider the charisms to be gifts that give the right to a ministry autonomous of the Church.

5. Problems of the Charisms
- The Lord has given us wonders to contemplate and we then turn them into problems to argue about.
- Like any lie form – Charisms have above all a positive aspect, but they can also create problems.
- The Corinthians made popular use of the word charism and used it only for referring to the most noticeable gifts such as the gift of tongues, to the detriment of the gifts of wisdom, understanding and faith.
- It is evident and almost unavoidable that the more attractive charisms easily give rise to a disproportionate enthusiasm that can lead to false illusions.

6. Use of Charisms
- It is necessary to care for the use of charisms for their development as much as to examine this with respect to their corresponding purpose as designated by God.
- St. Paul intervenes to impose concrete rules upon the use of charisms in the gatherings of the Christian community and he warns the women and men of today by means of what he wrote to the Corinthians regarding the danger of misusing charisms.
- Charisms are misused:
  - When charisms are intended to replace the effort and responsibility of ordinary life.
  - When attention is focused on the charisms, making them a spectacle, creating disorder and distraction from the disposition to sacrifice.
  - When possession of charisms is taken with avid interest in possessing them for selfish motives, (pride, competition, fame, etc.)
- On the other hand – The exercise or practice of virtues like obedience, humility, and charity, contribute in a direct manner to keeping the charism healthy, in order that it may serve the common good.
• 7. New Movements
  o The awakening of the charisms is a return to the origin, the continuation of a phenomenon that has never ceased, no matter what the opinion of theologians is on this matter.
  o History is full of charismatic awakenings.
  o There are intense manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit whenever it is His moment or His time: the blood of the martyrs of the Church, the explosion of monasticism, the first evangelization of Europe, the Franciscan movement, Theresa of Jesus, etc.
    ▪ And each one of these awakenings is attributed to the charism of its founder.
  o In particularly difficult times, the Lord has not ceased to give rise in the Church to people gifted with the most diverse charisms in order to help her come out of problematic situations and resume her life in history.
  o It has been said that new movements are not sensitive to theology, but they are nonetheless, to those ideological formulas and teachings that assume that which should not be assumed.
  o The movements are much more related to practical theology, which is not incompatible in any way, but rather a more wonderful embrace in harmony with the fundamental truths of faith and life.
  o How many believers have abandoned the Church or have distanced themselves from her because they understood her to be or were told she was a suppressive corset of cold and abstract ideas that in no way appreciated their existence!
  o The Church continues to need charismatic people who preach the word of God like St. Paul did, with the power of the Spirit.
  o But there is a far greater need for people who incarnate the Word of God and become the “Good News” for the good of the community.
  o If there is a time and need for charisms, it is out time, it is the 21st century.
    ▪ No one and nothing has the power to distort a charism.
  o “Lord send forth Your Spirit, and You renew the face of the earth...”