



Voice of the Spirit

NSW CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL NEWSLETTER

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Issue 63

February 2011

Worldwide Service



Allan Panozza, who has served the CCR as the first full-time co-ordinator since 1985, retired at the end of 2010. Allan was Chairman of the CCR in Melbourne for over 25 years and, as a member of ICCRS for seventeen years, travelled overseas, especially during his seven years as President.

Allan writes, "I have been blessed by the leaders and members of the Renewal whom I have met at home and overseas, and have witnessed world-wide the fruits of the simple message we are called to proclaim through Baptism in the Holy Spirit namely, that Jesus is Lord. I have always held that we are privileged to live at an exciting time in history which I like to describe as a second 'Acts of the Apostles'.

I further believe that, in these days, the Holy Spirit is guiding the Catholic Church through a refining process from which it will emerge a much stronger body. I have no doubt that the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, along with other ecclesial movements, has been raised up by Almighty God during these days to take a major role in this process of restoration and the transformation of lives.

A new Chairperson will be appointed for the CCR in Melbourne in early 2011. It is my intention, with God's grace, to remain active in the Renewal, especially with my own Prayer Group. I will be happy to continue with teachings and talks with Prayer Groups - and elsewhere - if and when I am invited to do so".

Allan offers a final blessing in the words of St Paul, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit is with you all". (2 Cor.13.13) And we gratefully respond, "And also with you, Allan".

■ ■ Sr. Margaret Knagge

"Create a new heart, O Lord"



Why Ashes on Ash Wednesday?

As we know, Jesus retreated into the wilderness and fasted for forty days in preparation for his ministry. It was for Him a time of contemplation and reflection. By observing Lent, most Christians join Jesus on His retreat.

Lent consists of the forty days before Easter. In the western Church, we skip over the Sundays when we count the days of Lent, because traditionally, Sunday is the joyful celebration of the Resurrection. Because of this, the first day of Lent in the western Church is always a Wednesday. Biblical examples of this may be found in 2 Samuel 13:19, Esther 4:1-3, Job 42:6, and Jeremiah 6:26.

In ancient times during Lent, Christians mourned their sins and repented of them; therefore, it was appropriate for them to show their sincerity by having ashes on their foreheads. Although secular society around us has changed, this custom has persisted in the Church. Ash Wednesday (March 9) heralds in that time for us when, with Jesus, we too retreat into the "desert" embarking on our own journey of reflection, contemplation and Spiritual renewal. ■ ■ Sr. Margaret Knagge



**Sr. Margaret
Scully rsc**

Editorial

Special Tribute to Bishop Joe Grech

“Goodbye” is a precious word. I understand it to mean, “God be with you”. We use it a lot in our daily lives with different emotions colouring it – on the telephone, in farewelling another and, maybe, when someone close to us is dying or has died.

Upon learning of the death of Bishop Joe Grech, the Bishop of Sandhurst, Victoria, I have found it difficult within my spirit to formulate a “goodbye”. And my guess is that I would not be the only person to feel that way.

Bishop Joe, as he preferred to be known, was what we refer to as a “people person”. You would meet him and feel at home with him. You would number him as one of your friends. I did!

In the Press release regarding his untimely death headed: *“The Beloved Bishop of Sandhurst Tribute”*, he was spoken of as a “generous, warm and passionate man of God. He was a friend to all.” It goes on to say “He was very committed to the priests and people of the Sandhurst Diocese.” ... to whom he made himself available in a variety of ways. “He was a prominent leader in Bendigo and was well known in diplomatic circles. He was respected by all with whom he came into contact.”

He was a great advocate for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and we have been so blessed through his ministry here in NSW. Bishop Joe had a huge heart for the young – and for the “oldies” as well – but especially for the young. This is well documented, stemming from his years as a Diocesan Priest in Melbourne. How often have I heard him say, “God doesn’t make rubbish – there is good in each of us and we have to find it.” I can still hear him saying it. On behalf of the Bishops of Australia, he was responsible for Youth.

It was some years ago, during Fr. Emilian Tardiff’s visit and ministry to the Australian CCR that the concept of a “School for Evangelisation” was born. With typical enthusiasm, the then Father Joe took it up and the now well known Schools for Evangelisation began in Melbourne. These have since spread nation-wide and Bishop Joe, to a lesser degree, continued to be involved.

Upon reading his profile and his many responsibilities, I wonder how he ever managed them all; surely by the grace of God. He was a member of the Bishops’ Commission for Pastoral Life particularly in the area of care of Migrants and Refugees. This, too, would have been dear to his

heart, having migrated from Malta where he had begun his priestly studies and which he then completed in the Melbourne Seminary. He was also a member of the Bishops’ Commission for Mission and Adult Formation with particular responsibility for Catholic Missions. And last, but certainly not least, he was a member of the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Council, based in Rome.

It was my privilege, representing the NSW Catholic Charismatic Renewal, to be at Bishop Joe’s Funeral Mass in the Sacred Heart Cathedral, Bendigo, on Thursday, January 6 – the 40th anniversary of his arrival in Australia! It was said more than five thousand people were expected in Bendigo; and they were certainly there! Cardinal Pell was the main Celebrant, having ordained Bishop Joe in Melbourne to the Bishopric. In addition, a large number of Bishops and Priests concelebrated. It was a most prayerful, dignified, joy-filled celebration of Bishop Joe’s life.

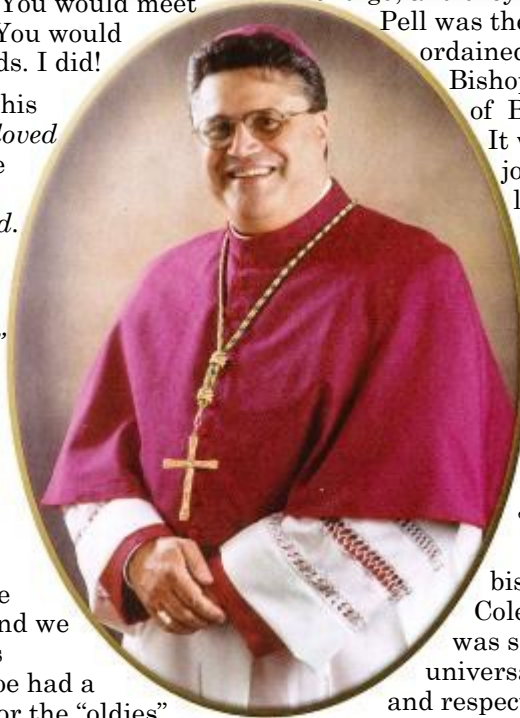
At the beginning of Mass, the Apostolic Delegate, His Excellency, Most Reverend Giuseppe Lazzarotto, read a message of condolence from Pope Benedict XVI, after which His Excellency, Mr Francis Tabone, High Commissioner for Malta, gave a moving tribute to Bishop Joe’s life.

In the Homily given by the Archbishop of Canberra -Goulburn, Mark Coleridge, we heard how Bishop Joe was seen to be a servant of the universal Church. He was well known and respected throughout the world. He had such a simple, open, holistic outlook on things; when appointed to the Sandhurst Diocese, he saw himself as a “bush Bishop”, and loved it! It was wonderful to hear the Archbishop’s comment on Bishop Joe’s life as a reflection of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal’s move from being marginal to integral to the Church’s life. His ministry was seen to be the Holy Spirit’s work of art!

But it is not only what this great man of God **did** which we will sadly miss, but more so the generous, warm-hearted, loving person **he was**. He was a great witness to the love of Jesus for each.

I pray we will not only remember him and how he touched our lives, but that we, too, in being caught up in the power of the Holy Spirit –as he surely was – will dare to walk in his footsteps. Bishop Joe made a difference in our world; may you and I do likewise.

Goodbye, Bishop Joe!
Rest in peace now with your God!



Leadership Day “Coming Back to Praise & Worship”

By Anne Marie Gatenby, CCR Service Team



One of the discussion groups at our recent leadership day

The theme for our recent Leadership Day: “*Coming Back to Praise and Worship*” was a response to the Prophetic Workshop organised by the National Service Committee (March, 2010). The purpose of this Workshop was to seek the Lord’s direction as to what he may be saying to us at this time in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Through a prophetic word, it was discerned that the Lord is calling us to renew our experiences of Praise and Worship. And so, at the Leadership day, we did just that, spending the first part of the day in Praise and Worship of our God. The participants were then posed certain questions to which the following are some responses. We believe it would benefit all Prayer Groups to reflect on these, that we might grow in the use of this wonderful gift given to the Renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Question 1.

During the Praise & Worship, what did the Lord say to you about the importance of Praise & Worship?

- Let the Holy Spirit plan our prayer.
- Be open and humble, surrendering to the Spirit.
- Continue praising and worshipping until breaking through into the presence of God.

Question 2.

What currently enhances the Praise & Worship in your Group/Community?

- Bonding with each other and being open together.
- Praying and singing more in the Spirit (Tongues).
- Prayerful preparation before Praise and Worship.
- Freedom to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Allowing more time for Praise and Worship in our meetings.

Question 3.

What prevents your Group/Community from entering into the fullness of Praise & Worship?

- Shyness in the use of Tongues.
- Lack of preparation by the Leader and Music Ministry.
- Lack of openness to the leading of the Spirit.
- Lack of unity; lack of Music Ministry.
- Lack of the use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

- Doing one’s own thing; imbalance between structure and freedom.

Question 4.

As Leaders, what is your next step for Praise & Worship in your Group/Community?

- To encourage Leaders to grow in Praise and Worship.
- To provide more training in Praise and Worship.
- To commit to starting on time.
- If no Music Ministry, to use DVD’s or CD’s .
- To be more open to the Holy Spirit’s leading in Praise and Worship.
- To be in tune with the Holy Spirit in choosing songs.
- To sustain the singing of hymns thus maintaining an atmosphere of Praise and Worship.

Question 5.

How could other Groups/Communities or NSW CCR State Service Team further support you?

- Having a Workshop re down-loading music for Praise and Worship CD’s
- Having regular events bringing leaders together.
- Having prayer support set up with other Prayer Groups.
- Being visited by CCR representatives.
- Conducting Seminars and discussion groups for training and/or problem solving.

As a result of your suggestions, we are planning to conduct more workshops dealing with Praise and Worship, eg. downloading music for those who use CD’s as Music Ministry; arranging for help in Praise and Worship etc. The SST is more than willing to serve the Prayer Groups in any way, but particularly in the area of Praise and Worship. **Please do contact us at the Centre.**

We have been called by the Lord to “Come Back to Praise and Worship”, into a greater experience of this God-given gift. Let us pray for each other and our Prayer Groups, seeking the Lord’s direction as together we lift up our voices in praise of him. ■■

“Praise the Lord.

*Sing to the Lord a new song,
his praise in the assembly of the saints” Psa149:1*

The Gift of Prophecy

By Michael van Ommen, CCR Service Team

Introduction

God has an intense desire to speak to his people, yet over and over again, God's people show they do not believe he will speak to them. If you do not believe God is willing to speak to us, then you do not understand God. All through scripture, God tells us how he desires to be intimately involved with us. In his prayer at the Last Supper, Jesus expressed this desire when he said: *"Father, just as you are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us"* (John 17: 21). Intimate relationship with someone means that we speak to each other; intimate relationship with God is with a God who speaks to us.

One way God speaks to us is through scripture but, in a more direct way, he speaks to us through prophecy. The early Christians prophesied regularly when they met together: *"In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers."* (Acts 13:1)

It must be noted, however, that prophecy has at times come into disrepute through abuse; and this can happen even today. In the early church, prophets were held in honour, but today when we speak about prophets, people become worried about false prophets. On the contrary, we need to pray that the Lord raise up prophets as there is a great lack of prophecy.

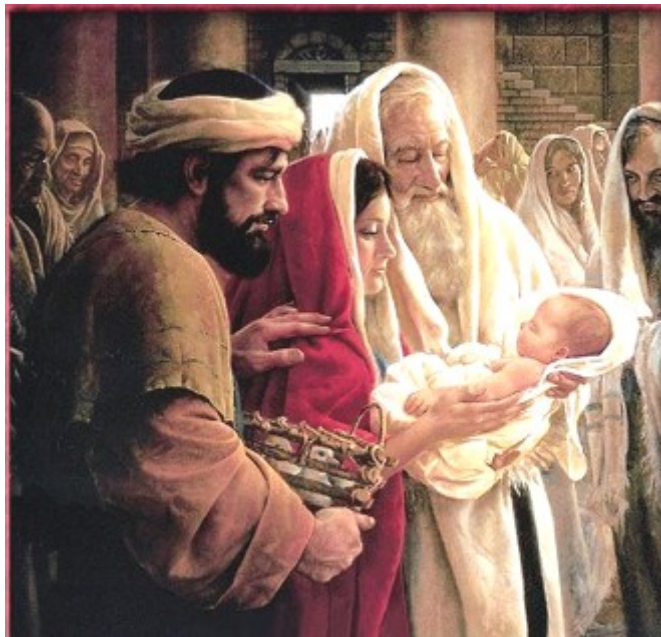
The community can judge the words of a prophecy only **after** it is spoken, but **let it happen first!** There were false prophets even in the early church, but Christians were taught how to deal with them: *"Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world"*. (1 John 4:1)

What is a prophet?

Some Christians consider a prophet to be a moral leader or a visionary who can see into things. They derived this view from the prophets of the Old Testament. But those prophets spoke only of what was revealed to them by God, and never claimed to be moral leaders or visionaries. Today, many people consider a prophet to be one who can predict the future. Predictions **can** occur in true prophecy, but that is only **part of the gift**. St Paul in 1Cor 14: 3 describing the purpose of prophecy, mentioned encouragement,

consolation and building up God's people, but **not** predictions.

In the Old Testament, a prophet was unique amongst God's people because of the Holy Spirit's action in him. It was he who was in direct communication with God, while the people, as a whole, were not. But, in the New Testament under the New Covenant, **all of God's people have received the Holy Spirit**; all of God's people are in direct communication with God. A prophet awakens God's people to hear his word, not that they are unable to hear that word themselves, but they often just don't hear it!



Simon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Look he is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is opposed and a sword will pierce your soul too so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare. (Luke 2: 34,35)

prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said. (1Cor.14: 29)

... For Inspiration

Prophecy functions as a source of inspiration. It is not so much that the Holy Spirit wants to speak to us, but rather to lead people into worship. The following is an inspirational prophecy which was given to a Community, impelling them to glorify God.

"Yes my people, my beloved children, come into my presence, be with me today.

Worship me for I am here among you.

Open your hearts to me: let me fill you with my love.

Let me clothe you in my righteousness as you bow before me. I am the Lord your God, the mighty God of all."

.... For Guidance

St Paul states that it was through the prophets that he received the Gospel for the Gentiles. *"..... you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other*

Purpose of Prophecy

Very often God's word through prophecy is a message of **encouragement** to his people, or **exhortation** to revive their spirits, to strengthen them and to give hope. Any Christian can exhort and encourage other Christians, but a prophetic exhortation is more than that; it is inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

... For Correction

The Holy Spirit can reveal to us our failures; this revelation can be directed to either a group or an individual. This type of prophecy is very much **subject to the discernment of the community**. *"Two or three*

The Gift of Prophecy continued

generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets." (Eph. 3: 4-6)

The guidance St Paul received is also available to us as we need it. However, relying on prophecy for guidance can create problems and many a time, especially during prayer ministry, there have been instances of abuse. No prophet is his/her own authority. **Prophecy must be submitted to the Christian community for judgement.** This principle is fundamental to the exercise of the prophetic gift. We need to beware of any prophet who will not accept the judgement of others concerning the word he has spoken. No individual has the ability to determine with full certainty that he has spoken the word of the Lord. Each one of us, without exception, can be deceived.

The Prophet's Role

Before we can claim an individual to be a prophet, the person must needs be seen to manifest the prophetic gift in a consistent and powerful way. Only when an individual has prophesied a number of times, should we begin to consider him or her as a prophet, given that the use of the prophetic gift **produces good spiritual fruit.**

The Process of Discernment

Many Christians shy away from all prophecies because of the dangers of false prophets. But that is a serious mistake. The people of God need to hear God's voice in prophecy. Paul warned the Thessalonians: *"Do not stifle the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test everything; retain what is good".* (1Thess.5:19-21). St Paul is telling us not to stop prophecies but to **hold on to those only which are good.** Rather than approaching the concept of prophecy with fear or untoward caution, let us do so with **faith, wisdom and discernment.** If we do not desire God's word in prophecy, it will not come. We need to develop a climate of faith and expectation if we are to receive that which God is ready to give. Most prophecies, being exhortation and encouragement, do not require great discernment as they are for the building up of our faith.

However, sometimes a prophetic word does demand a specific response. When this happens, the Lord will be speaking through several people and not through one person only. Important decisions rarely proceed on the strength of a single prophetic statement. We need always ask ourselves, "Is this from the Lord? Does it proceed from the Holy Spirit and glorify God?"

Delivering the Prophetic Message

In speaking out a prophetic message, we need to observe a few simple guidelines. Firstly, we **speak so we can be heard**, using a microphone and/or standing up. Secondly, **prophecy in the appropriate place and time.** If the gathering has never heard a prophecy and one is given during a talk or teaching, it may create confusion and embarrassment.

Testing Prophecy

In testing prophetic words, we need to ask ourselves, "What kind of life does the person who gives the word, live?" Jesus said: *"You know a tree by its fruit"* This principle applies to every area of the Christian life. When St Paul mentioned the qualities required in the

elders or bishops of a Christian community, only one "spiritual gift" is mentioned (1Tim. 3:1-7, Tit. 1:5-9). What counts is not spiritual experience or extraordinary gifts, but the manner in which the person lives.

Another area for testing prophecies is: Is it in line with Christian teaching? Nothing contradicting Christian teaching can be admitted as true prophecy. We need to judge the spiritual tone in the giving of a prophecy, and its effect. A frightening, harsh,

condemning or critical prophecy seldom comes from God. The Lord speaks to us as a loving Father, sometimes stern, sometimes pleased, sometimes directing us to change. **But he always speaks in love.**

Growing in the gift of Prophecy

If a true ambition to serve our brothers and sisters leads us to desire the gifts of the Holy Spirit, our ambition is holy. If ambition for our own status or reputation leads us to seek those gifts, we stand condemned and will be unable to serve God's people. If we do know God has called and gifted us into a prophetic ministry; if he has assigned us to this ministry in the community, then we need to desire to serve as fully as we can. The desire to be a prophet will surely come once we have learned God has given us that responsibility. All of this must needs be discerned to be **God's will, and not our own.**

In the desire to serve, it is also important God's people be encouraged to listen to and hear His word, that they may rejoice when that word is spoken, no matter who may be the speaker. ■ ■

Ref: "Prophecy" by Bruce Yocum, servant books 1976



News from Around and About

Participants at Sr Margaret Scully's Healing Weekend



The Healing Weekends led by Sr. Margaret Scully continue to be well attended and much appreciated. Over the years, people have testified to the great blessings received through this journey of healing; an experience described as life-changing. Whilst Sister emphasises it is Jesus who is the Healer, she is also aware of how he uses her, and is in awe at the wonder of his ways. Sr. Patricia O'Loughlin assists with the weekends mainly, but not only, through caring for people's general needs, an essential aspect of the healing experience. Sister Margaret conducts three Healing Weekends a year at the CCR Centre; registration is essential. ■ ■

State Service Committee Meeting with Ann Brereton Chairperson National Service Committee



On November 4, the Chairperson of the National Service Committee, Ann Brereton, was the special guest at our State Service Team meeting. Ann has taken over from Allan Panozza who, for many years, was the chairman of the NSC. In her new role, Ann is very much involved in the organising of the Leaders' Training School in Townsville and the ISAO Conference in New Zealand. Next year, Ann and Anne Marie Gatenby will be attending the Colloquium in Rome. The above picture shows Ann (far right) with members of the SST and Sr Margaret Scully. Fr Michael Butler, our liaison Priest, who always makes himself available to celebrate the Eucharist before our State Service Team meetings, is a real blessing to the CCR. ■ ■

Some Students and Facilitators at one of our Elijah House Prayer Ministry Schools



Every year the CCR Centre conducts six Elijah House Prayer Ministry Schools. These Schools consisting of different levels: A, B, C and D, are each conducted over two weekends, the first including Friday. The yearly programme includes two levels of A and B and one level of C and D. Those who participate come from all walks of life and embrace all Christian denominations. The Schools are very well attended; many, having been made aware of them through those who have already participated, give testimony to the wonder of God's healing love. There could be hundreds of such people who have been likewise blessed. Quite a number return for follow-up ministry realising that, with God, there is always more - more healing, more love. God is never finished with us as we are ever in need of his healing touch in our lives. ■ ■

Dorothy O Sullivan



Have you, like so many others, wondered where Dorothy is? Well, she hasn't faded away like the well known cowboy riding into the sunset! But neither is she so well. Dorothy had already come to that point when she realised she needed to slow down. But, even with that slowing down, on one of her visits to the CCR Centre, she had a fall resulting in three fractures to her right elbow. She is now recuperating in hospital, and is learning to use her left hand! This has created quite an upheaval for her, putting into question her living alone and her independent lifestyle. Dorothy has a great love for and trust in Jesus. Let us pray for her at this time that she may know the peace of Jesus in whatever may transpire. God bless you, Dorothy! ■ ■

News from Around and About contd.

Election of New Service Team for Newcastle



(L-R) Helen Rozenfeld, Patricia Musialik, Margaret Abdo, Fr. Bill Burston, Robert Copas, Lita Fenech, Lita de Luca, Wayne Caruana, Tina Martinelli, Paul Gleeson, Fr. Tony Brady. Other members include Mary-Anne De Luca, James Abdo.

The Service Team of the CCR in Maitland / Newcastle recently held elections for a new Service Team, providing for representatives to come forward from each affiliated Prayer Group. In addition, a number of Ex Officio members was appointed. A day of Retreat and Planning has already been scheduled for early in the New Year. The Committee had co-ordinated plans for Fr. McAlear's visit. Despite the necessary cancellation of this, the gathering, attended by about 200 people, went ahead with Mass followed by Healing Ministry. Subsequently, we have received ardent requests for us to conduct more of such gatherings. Our Thanksgiving Mass was celebrated on Wednesday, Dec.8 at our Carrington Centre. ■ ■

MGL Spiritual Association Meeting (Sydney)



The final MGL Spiritual Association Meeting (Sydney) for 2010 was held on October 30 at the historic St Benedict's Church, Broadway. Fr Ken (MGL) came to celebrate the Mass with at least 50 people attending. Sr Patti Jo Crockett represented the MGL sisters. It was also great to have musicians to lead us in Praise from the Disciples of Jesus, South Community. Following Mass, afternoon tea was held in the sunny Notre Dame University courtyard; then there was Adoration, Rosary and Benediction. It was a great day of renewal and fellowship. For more information about the MGL Spiritual Association (Sydney) contact: Maureen Richardson: 0417042790 or email Jenny Scott jennytscott@hotmail.com if you want to be added to the mailing list. See also the Face Book Events Group Page. ■ ■

Healing Weekend : Jesus Light of the World Prayer Community



Fr. Varghese Parackal

The Community organised an Inner Healing Weekend Retreat on November 13-14, 2010 in the Parish Hall, Rockdale. Approximately 150 attendees on each of the days experienced the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit. The speaker, Fr. Varghese Parackal, is a 34-year-old Parish Priest of the Vincentian Order, based in the Holy Family Parish, Maddington, W.A. The Vincentians, whose charism is preaching the Gospel and giving retreats, conduct a Retreat Centre in Kerala, India,

housing over 10,000 pilgrims from around the world on any given week during the year. On special occasions, the numbers surge as high as an estimated 25,000 people. During the Inner Healing Weekend, participants heard talks about God's plan for marriage and were given the opportunity to reflect on their own marriages and relationships. Taking advantage of the grace of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, participants were invited during Eucharistic Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, to forgive one another and, by making new decisions for the future, to enable fruit to grow from the experience. Planning for 2011 Retreats in Sydney are in progress. (See upcoming events) ■ ■



Intercessory Prayer Meeting at the CCR Centre

Every fourth Friday of the month, the CCR conducts an Intercessory Prayer Meeting at the CCR Centre at Rozelle from 10.30am to 12.00 noon. You are most welcome to join us in Prayer, Praise and Worship.

Voice of the Spirit

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This newsletter is published quarterly. Articles, news items and other contributions are welcome and should be forwarded to:

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Pictures from Bishop Joe Grech's Funeral

