

THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL MOVEMENT AND ITS ROLE IN EDUCATION

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Abstract

The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) envisaged the overall renewal of the Catholic Church. The Charismatic Renewal Movement (CCRM), which began in 1967, considers itself as the fruit of the prayer of the Council. CCRM has indeed touched the lives of millions of people. It is estimated that around 12% of the global Catholics are affiliated to various CCRM prayer groups. The primary aim of CCRM is spiritual renewal. It encourages the faithful to spend more time in prayer, read scriptures, aim to live a holy life and enjoy fellowship within a community. In this paper, we shall study the contributions of the Charismatic Movement in the renewal of the Church especially for those involved in education. We shall consider these questions in the light of the documents of the Magisterium and theologians regarding Renewal Movements. In addition, we shall study some actual cases to assess the contributions of the Charismatic Movement for those involved in the field of education in Catholic institutes.

1. Introduction

The members of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) prayed for the renewal and reformation of the Catholic Church. Catholic

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Charismatic Renewal Movement (CCRM), which began in 1967, considers itself as fruit of that prayer. CCRM has spread to more than 236 nations across the globe and millions of people holding different occupations are associated with it.¹ Even though the Charismatic Renewal Movement is mainly a spiritual movement, it continues to influence all facets of human life. Education is an important field for human development. In this paper, we shall attempt to study the influence and contribution of the Charismatic Renewal Movement in the field of education. For our purpose, we shall study the link between its characteristic features and contributions in the overall development of education and educationists.²

2. Characteristic Features of the Charismatic Renewal Movement

Charismatic Renewal Movement focuses on the renewal in the Holy Spirit, commonly known as baptism in the Holy Spirit and use of charisms.³ It relates this experience to the dynamism found in the life of the early Christians. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit filled the disciples of Jesus with power and charisms. The Acts of the Apostles is full of reports of the prodigious works done by the early Christians. The Charismatics believe that the Holy Spirit continues to empower people with charisms like working miracles and healings even in present times.⁴ Unlike Protestant Pentecostals, Catholic Charismatics do not consider speaking in tongues as a necessary sign of having received baptism in the Holy Spirit.⁵ Even though among the Catholic Charismatics there are different theological interpretations of the phenomenon of baptism in the Holy Spirit, they all agree on the effects it brings in the lives of Christians.⁶ The effects of this

¹David Barrett, George Kurian and Todd Johnson, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, 20.

²Education is a wide field. For our study purpose, we shall restrict the scope of education to Christian institutes of education. Further, educationist will refer to Christians working in the field of education.

³See ICCRS Doctrinal Commission, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, Vatican: ICCRS, 2012, 15-16.

⁴See J. Rodman Williams, "Baptism in the Holy Spirit," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Maas, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003, 360.

⁵See Edward O'Connor, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1979, 125. See also Walter Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Development Worldwide*, Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997, 66.

⁶See International Dialogue Between Some Classical Pentecostal Churches and Leaders and the Catholic Church, "On Becoming a Christian: Insights from Scripture and the Patristic Writings with some Contemporary Reflections, Report of the Fifth Phase of the International Dialogue Between Some Classical Pentecostal Churches and Leaders and

phenomenon are the distinctive features of the Charismatic spirituality.

3. Link between the Characteristics Features and Contributions of the Charismatic Renewal Movement in the Field of Education

Mainline Protestant Churches criticized early Pentecostals for taking anti-intellectual stand.⁷ Some early Pentecostals did consider theological pursuits as anti-spiritual. They preferred experience of God as the sole criteria for leading a holy life. However, the CCRM right from the beginning took a balanced position. The Charismatic Renewal began at Duquesne University when four faculty members and a group of students gathered for a weekend of prayer and reflection.⁸ Unlike early Pentecostals, Catholic Charismatic Renewal began among people associated with education.⁹ Further Léon Joseph Cardinal Suenens, a prominent figure at Second Vatican Council supported the Charismatics and took special interest in promoting this movement. He organized a team of theologians to study the theological aspects of this movement. Thus, right from the beginning the CCRM gave importance for education.

The involvement of educationists with the Charismatic Renewal has helped to bring renewal in the field of education. One of the striking examples is that of Michael Scanlan, a priest of the Third Order Regular Franciscans, who was involved with the Charismatic Renewal since 1969.¹⁰ Scanlan, as the President of Steubenville College brought the fire of the Holy Spirit in the campus. He emphasized on the centrality of the lordship of Jesus, in every aspect of the college education. His efforts helped to reignite the flame both in the field of evangelization and academic standards.¹¹ Thus, we can

the Catholic Church (1998-2006)," *Information Service* 129 (2008/3) 206-207. See also Ralph Martin, "A New Pentecost? Catholic Theology and 'Baptism in the Holy Spirit'," *Logos* 14, 3 (2011) 18-38.

⁷Paul Lewis, "Why Have Scholars Left Classical Pentecostal Denominations?," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 11, 1-2 (2008) 72-73.

⁸Paul Thigpen, "Catholic Charismatic Movement," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Maas, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003, 461. See also Mary Barbara Agnew, "Charismatic Renewal," in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, ed. Michael Downey, Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1993, 143.

⁹Vinson Synan, "Classical Pentecostalism," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, 553-555.

¹⁰Peter Hocken, "Scanlan, Michael," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, 1041.

¹¹Peter Hocken, "Scanlan, Michael," 1041.

see that baptism in the Holy Spirit, which is the central characteristic of the Charismatic Renewal, brings a radical change not only in a person's spiritual life but also in every aspect of his or her life. Following are some of the effects of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, which have contributed in bringing renewal in the field of education and leadership.

3.1 Conversion, Personal Experience of God and Witness

On the day of Pentecost, when the crowds heard Peter's sermon, "they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, 'Brothers, what should we do?' Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 2:37-38). Conversion of heart and baptism are inter-related. Baptism in the Holy Spirit brings a genuine change in a person's life.

A Christian is a changed person, a convert: he has turned away from himself, so as to adhere to Jesus of Nazareth who, for his sake, died and rose from the dead. He has made a personal discovery of Jesus, and acknowledged him as the Christ, the unique Son of the Father, the Anointed One of the Holy Spirit. He has found in Jesus the Saviour and Lord of all mankind.¹²

Charismatic Renewal emphasizes on repentance and having a personal relationship with the Holy Triune God. God is no longer a concept of abstract philosophy or doctrine but a loving person, in whom "we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). A person who has an encounter with the living God finds a big change in his or her personal life. All his or her actions are no longer for personal self-glory, fame or riches but the greater glory of God.

Catholic educationists and leaders, who have profound experience of God in their lives, can be strong witnesses of God in their places of work. All their work will be God-centred and hence, their priority will be to spread the Kingdom of God. Declaration on Christian Education (*Gravissimum Educationis*) notes, "Teachers by their life as much as by their instruction bear witness to Christ, the unique Teacher" (GE, 8).

The goal of education is integral development and dignity of human persons. Educationists and leaders who make Christ as the centre of their lives, can impart to their students not only knowledge

¹² Léon Joseph Suenens, *A New Pentecost?*, New York: The Seabury Press, 1975, 117-118.

but also values of Christ, based on the Word of God.¹³ “The Catholic school loses its purpose without constant reference to the Gospel and a frequent encounter with Christ. It derives all the energy necessary for its educational work from Him.”¹⁴

In present times, society uses knowledge and information as tools for strengthening one’s power and authority. It promotes a culture of unhealthy competition where a person sees his or her neighbour not as a fellow human person but a challenger, who threatens his or her promotion. In such an atmosphere of cutthroat competition, students need teachers who not only preach Christ by their words but also by their actions. Catholic schools must be centres where Christ and His values are of paramount importance. Moreover, to achieve this purpose, the Catholic schools must have teachers who have the ‘mind’ and ‘heart’ of Christ. “Teachers and educators fulfill a specific Christian vocation and share an equally specific participation in the mission of the Church.”¹⁵

Charismatic Renewal stresses the importance of being living witnesses of Christ. Teachers who have experienced the grace of the Holy Spirit can become models of faith to their students.

Teachers, just like every person who lives and works in a scholastic environment, educate, or they can also dis-educate, with their verbal and non-verbal behaviour. The central figure in the work of educating, and especially in education in the faith, which is the summit of the person’s formation and his or her most appropriate horizon, is specifically the form of witness.¹⁶

They can bear testimony of the presence of God, even in a world, which puts material things above the spiritual. Their faith and courage can prepare their students to use the knowledge gained for

¹³Edward Hayes, “The Biblical Foundations of Christian Education,” in Werner C. Graendorf, ed., *Introduction to Biblical Christian Education*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1981, 25.

¹⁴The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School, March 1977*, no. 55. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_19770319_catholic-school_en.html [accessed on October 28, 2013]

¹⁵ Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of Third Millennium, December 1997*, no. 19. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_27041998_school2000_en.html [accessed on October 28, 2013]

¹⁶Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educating Together in Catholic Schools, September 2007*, no. 38. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_20070908_educare-insieme_en.html [accessed on October 28, 2013]

the promotion of true humanism in Christ. Thus, we can note that the conversion, personal experience of God and witness to Christ are of utmost importance for educationist and leaders to impart education based on the Bible and values of Christ.

3.2 Openness to the Workings of the Holy Spirit

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "The wind blows where it wills" (Jn 3:8). Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit, who blows like the wind. No human force can control or subdue it. The workings of the Holy Spirit are truly mysterious. Paul notes, "For what human being knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God" (1 Cor 2:11). Only those who humbly open themselves to the Spirit of God can experience His powerful presence and follow His promptings. Perennial openness to the Holy Spirit is a distinctive effect of the phenomenon of baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Jesus promised His disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit, the *Paraclete* who would be with and in the disciples of Jesus to defend them (Jn 14:15-17). The Holy Spirit would reveal Jesus to the future disciples (Jn 14:26) and guide them at all times (Jn 16:12-15). Hence, the Holy Spirit can be the guide and teacher for all educationists. Especially in the present times, with the advancement of science and technology, educationists often struggle to show the relevance of Christian faith and moral values. In such difficult times, the Holy Spirit can lead the educationists to take right directions in their academic fields. The Holy Spirit can help them to grasp the "signs of the times" and the wisdom to act according to the will of God.¹⁷

Educationist need to have a formation of heart for enhancing their spiritual lives, without which they cannot convey the message of the gospel. They need to nurture their spiritual lives by being open to the workings of the Spirit, who leads them to Jesus (Jn 15:26). In order to form their students as integral persons, the educationists themselves need to be Spirit-filled persons. The Spirit "acts as an interior power that harmonizes the hearts of believers with Christ's heart and transforms the heart of the ecclesial community, so that it becomes a witness before the world to the love of the Father."¹⁸ Educationist will have to rely on God and not merely on intellectual pursuits, for bringing freshness in the education structures and institutions.

¹⁷Educating Together in Catholic Schools, 31.

¹⁸Educating Together in Catholic Schools, 45.

Educationists cannot dream of bringing reformation in their institutions by over-emphasizing strategic planning and management skills. They need the guidance of the Holy Spirit to bring genuine change and reformation. "Only from God does true revolution come, the definitive way to change the world."¹⁹ It is the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit, which can effectively make a path for genuine Christ-centred education for furthering development, peace and harmony in the society.

3.3 Prayer and Discernment

Prayer is the backbone of healthy spiritual life. It is only in prayer and reflection one can discern the will of God. Prayer and discernment go hand-in-hand. Charismatics insist on making prayer as the font from which all the activities of a person flows. This is because "the breath of the divine life, the Holy Spirit, in its simplest and most common manner, expresses itself and makes itself felt in prayer."²⁰ Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 18:3). Genuine prayer helps a person to be like a child in deep union and fellowship with God. Prayer aids a person to trust in God, in all situations of life.

In our age, life has become very sophisticated. The routine of life brings a tremendous amount of stress and pressure on a person's life. Especially educationists and leaders have to shoulder enormous responsibilities in the society. They spend a lot of their time in planning and preparing goals and strategies for their institutes. In the humdrum of life, they risk to cut down their time for prayer and focus more on their human strengths, planning's and resources. However, without the power of the prayer, which is the power of the Holy Spirit, they will run out of energy to carry on their responsibilities. They may find no meaning in their work, and all their efforts may go in vain. It is in these situations, they must follow Jesus, the model Teacher. Jesus carried His mission in the power of the Holy Spirit. Even though He was the Son of God, He drew strength from long hours of prayer (see Mt 14:23; Mk 1:35). He prayed before choosing apostles (see Lk 6:12-13). His intimacy with God, the Father helped Him to accomplish His mission even in the face of struggles and sufferings (see Lk 22:41-44; Jn 12:27-28). All

¹⁹ Benedict XVI, Address on the Occasion of XX World Youth Day, Youth Vigil, August 2005, AAS 97 (2005) 885.

²⁰ John Paul II, Encyclical, *Dominum et Vivificantem*, no. 65 AAS 78, 1 (1986) 894-895.

those involved in imparting Christian education must be aware of the importance of being people of prayer. Like Jesus, they must form their spiritual lives in order to carry on their work of imparting education. If educationists do not have sound prayer lives, they will find it difficult to be witnesses of Christ and spread His kingdom through the medium of education. An educationist without a life of prayer may be able to give lectures about God rather than sharing one's intimate experience of God.²¹

More than ever this demands that witness, nourished by prayer, be the all-encompassing milieu of every Catholic school. Teachers, as witnesses, account for the hope that nourishes their own lives (1 Pt 3:15) by living the truth they propose to their pupils, always in reference to the one they have encountered and whose dependable goodness they have sampled with joy.²²

Educationists have to be innovative and find new means of education, to keep them abreast with the changing world scenario. The rapid development and changes taking in the field of science and technology have seriously challenged the traditional means of imparting education. Educationists face constantly the need for drawing up strategic plans to make their institutes more attractive and viable. In these situations, relying on human cleverness alone would prove detrimental. The psalmist says, "Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help. When their breath departs, they return to the earth; on that very day their plans perish. Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God" (Ps 146:3-5). As human beings, educationists must accept their limitedness. In the book of Isaiah, the Lord says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Is 55:8-9). Educationist need to rely on the power from high, to discern what the Lord wants and to do everything according to His holy will.

Institutes of education aim to help their students to assimilate and integrate values based on truth, life, liberty and dignity. However, schools and universities face increasing opposition from present day culture, which promotes relativism in the garb of protecting individual's opinion. Radical relativism and subjectivity is gaining

²¹Christopher Howe, "Spirituality: It's Matter of the Heart," in *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice* 2, 2 (1998) 129-130.

²²Educating Together in Catholic Schools, no. 31.

upper hand in all fields of education. The increasing influence of relativism can endanger the very basis of moral, ethical and social values. Teachers would find it increasingly difficult to teach their students principles and norms for discerning between good and evil. To water down the need for discernment, shakes the very foundation of our human society. It is worth to remember that "it is plainly impossible for human beings to form a community of any kind whatsoever when all their judgments are relative. For taken to the natural conclusion, the relativist position on any subject will always result in a collision of private viewpoints and in human disconnection."²³ Hence, it is very important to learn the art of discernment to sift wheat from weeds and promote the best for the enhancement of humanity.

The art of discernment is a complex process and no one can claim to have a quick access to impeccable discernment. It is in this context, Charismatics stress on the need of guidance from the Holy Spirit to make a proper discernment. Prayer, reflection on the Bible and study of principles of discernment handed by saints down the ages are indispensable for discernment. Moreover, there is also a great need to attentively listen to the voice of conscience, which is the basis of moral law. "And when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left, your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it" (Is 30:21). Thus, prayer and discernment are indispensable for educationist to spread the values of Christ through the medium of education.

3.4 Use of Charisms

The early Christians actively used the various charisms of the Holy Spirit for building the kingdom of God. However, with the passage of time, the over-bureaucratization and politicization of the church stifled the use of charisms. Even during the deliberations of the Second Vatican Council, some members led by Cardinal Ruffini argued that the Holy Spirit bestowed charisms on the early Christians for spreading the Kingdom of God in different continents. They maintained that charisms are extremely rare. According to them, the Holy Spirit may give spiritual gifts to a select few for a particular purpose and in a particular situation, as seen in the lives of saints.²⁴ Cardinal Suenens did not subscribe to this view. He maintained that

²³Gairdner William, *The Book of Absolutes: A Critique of Relativism and a Defence of Universals*, Montreal: McGill Queen's University, 2009, xii.

²⁴Acta Synodalia Vaticani II, 2.2 (1972) 629-630.

the Holy Spirit continues to bestow charisms, both ordinary and extra-ordinary to all people of every age.²⁵ Council members endorsed the view of Cardinal Suenens and therefore, paragraph 12 of the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium)* noted on charisms of the Holy Spirit as follows.²⁶

It is not only through the sacraments and the ministries of the church that the Holy Spirit sanctifies and leads the people of God and enriches it with virtues, but, allotting his gifts to everyone according as He wills, (1 Cor 12:11) He distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks and offices which contribute toward the renewal and building up of the church, according to the words of the Apostle: 'The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit' (1 Thes 5:12,19-21). These charisms, whether they be the more outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation for they are perfectly suited to and useful for the needs of the church. Extraordinary gifts are not to be sought after, nor are the fruits of apostolic labour to be presumptuously expected from their use; but judgment as to their genuinity and proper use belongs to those who are appointed leaders in the church, to whose special competence it belongs, not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to that which is good (Jn 11:52) (LG, 12).

Charismatics emphasize on the use of the charisms of the Holy Spirit, which are instruments of divine power. They insist on gratefully receiving the charisms because it is the Holy Spirit who gives charisms for common good and up building of the community (1 Cor 12:8).²⁷ "The true Christian teacher is a person who has been gifted by the Holy Spirit with the *charisma* of teaching and who is, in a very significant way, wisely guided and energized by the same Spirit."²⁸

All those in-charge of institutes of education must make every effort to recruit qualified teachers and to create a cordial atmosphere for nurturing their teaching gift. "[T]he educational community makes room for the gifts of the Spirit and acknowledges these diversities as wealth."²⁹ Teachers, on their part must recognize the

²⁵Acta Synodalia Vaticani II, 2,2 (1972), 175-178.

²⁶Suenens, *A New Pentecost?*, 30-31.

²⁷Walter Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Development Worldwide*, Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997, 156-157. See also Thomas Csordas, *Language, Charisma, & Creativity: Ritual Life in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal*, New York: Palgrave, 2001, 133.

²⁸Edgar Lee, "What the Academy Needs from the Church?," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 3, 2 (2000) 315.

²⁹Educating Together in Catholic Schools, no. 17.

gift of teaching, which God has given them for common good (Eph 4:11). They must be grateful to God for the gift. They must humbly use this gift because they are not the masters but custodians of this gift.

Each member of the teaching faculty must be grateful for their own gifts as well as the various gifts, which others have. Teachers must bear in mind that envy and unhealthy competition among themselves would defeat the very purpose of their teaching mission.

The shared mission, besides, is enriched by the differences that the lay faithful and consecrated persons bring when they come together in different expressions of charism. These charisms are none other than different gifts with which the same Spirit enriches the Church and the world.³⁰

Leaders of schools and universities must be cautious not to allow divisions among teaching faculties because of gifts. There must be no class of specially gifted teachers; otherwise, disorder can creep in the schools, which would adversely affect the quality of education. God does not will such disharmony. "God is a God not of disorder but of peace" (1 Cor 14:33). Gifts or charisms are not for personal edification or self-glory.³¹ The Holy Spirit gives gifts for the good of the society. Gifts are essential for growth of the institution but they are not everything. Gifts must be gratefully accepted and used for the good of all.

3.5 Ecumenism and Evangelization

The Second Vatican Council set the tone for ecumenical dialogue with Christians belonging to other denominations (Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*). The Council also promoted inter-religious dialogue, to promote peace and harmony in the society (Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church, *Ad Gentes* and Decree on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, *Nostra Aetate*). Ecumenism and evangelization are a priority for the church. The church longs to re-establish the fellowship with Christians of other denominations, so that disunity among Christians may not become a scandal to people of other faith or people having no religious affiliation.

³⁰Educating Together in Catholic Schools, no. 36.

³¹George Montague, *The Holy Spirit: Growth of a Biblical Tradition*, New York: Paulist Press, 1976, 147-148.

Charismatic Renewal prayer meetings were ecumenical right from the beginning. As Protestant Pentecostalism heavily influenced CCRM, there are many commonalities between them. Since 1972, the Catholic Church has held series of meetings with Pentecostals to promote ecumenical dialogue.³² Charismatics have taken active part in the church's mission of evangelization.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal has helped many Christians to rediscover the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in their lives, in the life of the church and in the world; and this rediscovery has awakened in them a faith in Christ filled with joy, a great love of the church and a generous dedication to her evangelizing mission.³³

Ecclesial Movements like the Charismatic Renewal Movement must give prime importance for promoting ecumenism and evangelization.

Besides cultural dialogue, a Catholic University, in accordance with its specific ends, and keeping in mind the various religious-cultural contexts, following the directives promulgated by competent ecclesiastical authority, can offer a contribution to ecumenical dialogue. It does so to further the search of or unity among all Christians. In interreligious dialogue it will assist in discerning the spiritual values that are present in the different religions.³⁴

The Catholic school participates in the evangelizing mission of the Church and is the privileged environment in which Christian education is carried out. In this way 'Catholic schools are at once places of evangelization, of complete formation, of inculturation, of apprenticeship in a lively dialogue between young people of different religions and social backgrounds' (John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa*, n. 102).³⁵

Charismatics apply the experience of the Holy Spirit in their activities of daily life. There is no compartmentalization between their Christian experience and daily life. They are Christians filled with zeal for spreading the Kingdom of God both in their prayer groups as well as places of work. They do not hesitate to share their joy in the Holy Spirit to people around them.³⁶ Catholic education

³²Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Development Worldwide*, 165-180. See also Wolfgang Vondy, ed., *Pentecostalism and Christian Unity: Ecumenical Documents and Critical Assessments*, vol. 1, Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2010, 101-227.

³³John Paul II, Address to the Participants in the International Conference for Catholic Charismatic Leaders, *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, 21.2 (1998) 886-887.

³⁴John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, AAS 82 (1990)1500.

³⁵The Catholic School on the Threshold of Third Millennium, December 1997, no. 11.

³⁶See Miguel Alvarez, "Distinctives of Pentecostal Education," in *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 3, 2 (2000) 283-284.

centres too, have a similar role to play. By the means of education, they must bring the gospel of Christ to their students. John Paul II notes the following on Catholic Universities' role in the work of evangelization.

By its very nature, each Catholic University makes an important contribution to the Church's work of evangelization. It is a living institutional witness to Christ and his message, so vitally important in cultures marked by secularism, or where Christ and his message are still virtually unknown. Moreover, all the basic academic activities of a Catholic University are connected with and in harmony with the evangelizing mission of the Church: research carried out in the light of the Christian message which puts new human discoveries at the service of individuals and society; education offered in a faith-context that forms men and women capable of rational and critical judgment and conscious of the transcendent dignity of the human person; professional training that incorporates ethical values and a sense of service to individuals and to society; the dialogue with culture that makes the faith better understood, and the theological research that translates the faith into contemporary language.³⁷

To share the message of Christ means to put into action the love of Christ. Educationist must bear in mind that they have God's grace to be His instruments to spread His message of love and peace. They must not hesitate to reach out in love for their neighbours especially the weak, infirm and underprivileged. Such an approach to evangelization can touch the lives of the students seeking education in Christian institutes.

3.6 Challenging Unjust Structures and Working for Promotion of Good

Charismatics stress on the spiritual renewal of a person's life. Some people criticize the Charismatic Movement for being insensitive towards the injustice and pain in the society. They consider them as a bunch of overly religious people, oblivious to the existential problems surrounding them.³⁸ A true Christian, all the more a Charismatic, cannot take refuge under the garb of "spiritualism" to escape one's social responsibility. He or she needs to follow Jesus, the Master, who began the proclamation of Kingdom by reaching out to the needy (Lk 4:18-19). Jesus integrated the love of God and love of neighbour in his ministry. "Charity... gives real substance to the personal relationship

³⁷Ex Corde Ecclesiae, 1501.

³⁸See Léon Joseph Suenens and Helder Camara, *Charismatic Renewal and Social Action: A Dialogue*, London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1979, 78. See also Larry Christenson, *A Charismatic Approach to Social Action*, Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1974, 9.

with God and with neighbour; it is the principle not only of micro-relationships (with friends, with family members or within small groups) but also of macro-relationships (social, economic and political ones)."³⁹

However, not all criticism against Charismatics is justified. There are charismatic groups especially in Latin America and Asia that have taken extra efforts to reach out to the weak and needy. They have organized themselves to challenge the unjust socio-political systems of the society.⁴⁰ They are seeking not only spiritual renewal but also renewal of the society in which they live. Charismatics are trying to channelize their energy for challenging the unjust structures, which deprive a human person of dignity and life. Catholic schools and universities too must follow the model of Charismatics, who are trying to integrate their work for spiritual renewal and social transformation. Educationists may face opposition for challenging the rampant injustice in our society. However, they must courageously support the weak in their struggle for justice. "A Catholic University must have the courage to speak uncomfortable truths which do not please public opinion, but which are necessary to safeguard the authentic good of society."⁴¹

Catholic institutes of education must not become centres for advocating the cause of the elite and the rich. They must be faithful to their Christian vocation. They must become centres of education for all, irrespective of their societal position or wealth. All must get equal opportunities to fructify their potentials. They must not hesitate to challenge and oppose any discrimination or injustice, which defeats the very purpose of education.

[T]he Catholic school is particularly sensitive to the call from every part of the world for a more just society, and it tries to make its own contribution towards it. It does not stop at the courageous teaching of the demands of justice even in the face of local opposition, but tries to put these demands into practice in its own community in the daily life of the school.⁴²

If the Catholic school were to turn its attention exclusively or predominantly to those from the wealthier social classes, it could be

³⁹Benedict XVI, Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* no. 2, AAS 101 (2009) 642.

⁴⁰Walter Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Development Worldwide*, 204-207. See also Andrew Chestnut, "A Preferential Option for the Spirit: The Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Latin America's New Religious Economy," in *Latin American Politics and Society* 45, 1 (2003) 55-85.

⁴¹Ex Corde Ecclesiae, no. 32, 1493.

⁴²The Catholic School, no. 58.

contributing towards maintaining their privileged position, and could thereby continue to favour a society which is unjust.⁴³

The Christian spirit of service to others for the *promotion of social justice* is of particular importance for each Catholic University, to be shared by its teachers and developed in its students. The Church is firmly committed to the integral growth of all men and women. The Gospel, interpreted in the social teachings of the Church, is an urgent call to promote 'the development of those peoples who are striving to escape from hunger, misery, endemic diseases and ignorance; of those who are looking for a wider share in the benefits of civilization and a more active improvement of their human qualities; of those who are aiming purposefully at their complete fulfilment.' Every Catholic University feels responsible to contribute concretely to the progress of the society within which it works: for example it will be capable of searching for ways to make university education accessible to all those who are able to benefit from it, especially the poor or members of minority groups who customarily have been deprived of it.⁴⁴

Educationists must use their gifts for the integral development of their students. In this process, they must not shut their eyes from the various problems, which plague our society. They must dare to be the 'light of the world' and the 'the salt of the earth' challenging every form of injustice and promoting the reign of God in the society.⁴⁵

Educationists must also dare to question the unjust practices within their respective institutions. They must not be like sycophants in Hans Christen Andersen's story, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, who did not dare to say that the emperor was wearing no clothes.⁴⁶ They must take courage to stand for the cause of truth, in spite of stiff opposition or threat. It is only when educationists challenge injustice, wherever it exists, can they inspire their students to take up the task of building a more just society.

3.7 Fellowship and Communion

The Trinity is the heart of Christian spirituality.⁴⁷ The love and fellowship among the three divine persons of the Trinity is the basis for a Christian's fellowship and communion. A Christian cannot

⁴³The Catholic School, no. 58.

⁴⁴Ex Corde Ecclesiae, no. 34, 1494.

⁴⁵James Heft, "Catholic Education and Social Justice," *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice* 10, 1 (2006) 16-21.

⁴⁶Hans Christen Andersen's story *The Emperor's New Clothes*. http://www.andersen.sdu.dk/vaerk/hersholt/TheEmperorsNewClothes_e.html [accessed on October 29, 2013]

⁴⁷Catherine Mowry LaCugna & Michael Downey, "Trinitarian Spirituality," in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, 968.

practice his or her spirituality in vacuum or isolation. All Christians are members of the body of Christ and related to each other (Rom 12:4-5). Fellowship and communion was the gift of the Holy Spirit to the early Christian community. Love bonded them together. Even in the face of trials and persecutions, they continued their fellowship and encouraged each other. They freely shared their resources, so that there were no needy persons among them (Acts 4:34).

Love, fellowship and communion must be the hallmarks of a Charismatic prayer community.⁴⁸ Charismatic prayer groups must be places where the different gifts are gratefully accepted and celebrated. Each member must feel at home.⁴⁹ However, Charismatics must take caution that they do not restrict fellowship only to group members. All must be included in this fellowship. The primary reason for this fellowship is unity in Christ. It is only in a spirit of true fellowship a community can make discernments in the light of the Word and the teachings of the church.⁵⁰ Again it is only in genuine fellowship members find their fullest development as human persons.

Catholic institutes of education must primarily be places of building fellowship and communion. The three essential dimensions of the Christian faith, namely orthodoxy, orthopraxis and orthopathy are best transmitted in a spirit of fellowship and communion.⁵¹

A Catholic University pursues its objectives through its formation of an authentic human community animated by the spirit of Christ. The source of its unity springs from a common dedication to the truth, a common vision of the dignity of the human person and, ultimately, the person and message of Christ which gives the Institution its distinctive character.⁵²

Education aims at the integral development of a human person. "[And] because [education's] aim is to make man more man, education can be carried out authentically only in a relational and community context."⁵³ Extreme individualism and ego centeredness can destroy the very purpose of education.

⁴⁸Brian Smith, "A New Missionary Zeal," in *Movements in the Church*, ed. Pontificum Consilium Pro Laicis, Vatican: Pontifical Council for Laity, 1999, 168.

⁴⁹Michel Santier, "A Grace for Community," in *Charismatic Renewal: a Grace, a Challenge and a Mission*, ed. Nancy Kellar, Vatican: ICCRS, 2000, 38-39.

⁵⁰Lutheran Church in America, "Anointing and Healing," in *Presence, Power and Praise: Documents on the Charismatic Renewal*, ed. Kilian McDonnell, vol. 1, Collegeville: St. Paul Publications, 1980, 32, 46.

⁵¹Paul Lewis, "Exploration in Pentecostal Theological Education," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 10, 2 (2007) 168-169.

⁵²Ex Corde Ecclesiae, no. 21, 1488.

⁵³Educating Together in Catholic Schools, no. 12.

The Catholic school acts as the Christian ferment of the world. In it, students learn to overcome individualism and to discover, in the light of faith, that they are called to live responsibly a specific vocation to friendship with Christ and in solidarity with other persons. Basically, the school is called to be a living witness of the love of God among us.⁵⁴

A human person cannot develop his or her gifts without being in communion with fellow human beings. He or she needs affirmation from others. At the same time, he or she must affirm others, for their giftedness. It is only in such an atmosphere of mutual acceptance and affirmation; human beings can actualize their potentials and use their gifts for the betterment of the society. Catholic schools and universities, keeping true to its ecclesial commitment, must be centres to promote a spirituality based on fellowship and communion.

Spirituality of communion means an ability to think of our brothers and sisters in the faith within the profound unity of the Mystical Body, and therefore as 'those who are a part of me', and the Christian community's ability to make room for all the gifts of the Spirit in a relationship of reciprocity between the various ecclesial vocations. Even in that special expression of the Church that is the Catholic school, spirituality of communion must become the living breath of the educational community, the criterion for the full ecclesial development of its members and the fundamental point of reference for the implementation of a truly shared mission.⁵⁵

Promoting a spirituality of communion in Catholic schools will help students to build unity among them, in spite of differences in gifts and social status.

4. Conclusion

Charismatic Renewal Movement may not have direct relation with education, but Charismatic spirituality can greatly influence the educationists. It is not necessary that educationists must be associated with Charismatic Renewal to promote an authentic Christian education. However, from the above study it is evident that the characteristic features of the Charismatic spirituality can greatly contribute in the content and quality of Christian institutes of education. Educationists associated with the Charismatic Renewal have been instrumental in promoting a Christ-centred education and spreading the Kingdom of God in every facet of human life. Educationists must rely on the guidance of the Spirit of wisdom, knowledge and understanding to make education more meaningful and building a more human and just society.

⁵⁴Educating Together in Catholic Schools, no. 46.

⁵⁵Educating Together in Catholic Schools, no. 16.