

Editorial (カリスインディア 5月号記事) シリル・ジョン

**POPE FRANCIS  
AND  
THE CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL**

**教皇フランシスコとカトリック・カリスマ刷新**

After Pope Benedict XVI stunned the world by announcing his resignation from Papacy on 11 February, 2013, the Cardinals from all over the world started assembling in Vatican much ahead of the official Conclave that began on 12 March, 2013. From 8 pm on the evening of February 28, when the resignation took effect, the Church was headless and travelled through *sede vacante* until 19 March when Pope Francis was officially installed as the Successor of Peter in St. Peter's Basilica. As the red-hatted 'princes of the Church' from around the world moved into the Sistine Chapel, the betting markets, bookies and the media came out with probable 'papabili' or list of Papal candidates. In none of the lists I had accessed, did I find the name of Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, Argentina being mentioned as a likely candidate for the Papacy. Number-wise there were more Cardinal electors from Italy, USA, Germany and India than from other nations. When the Conclave consisting of 115 Cardinals under the age of 80 began with the Eucharistic celebration and prayers on 12 March, 2013, the Vatican watchers expected a prolonged conclave with no leading Papal candidate in sight. In the history of the Church, there were Papal elections that prolonged indefinitely. For example, in 1268 the Conclave of Cardinals lasted for over two years ending with the election of Pope Gregory X. In the modern history too, the Papal election in 1740 took 181 days and finally chose Pope Benedict XIV. This Conclave started with one round of voting on 12 March, ended with the 5<sup>th</sup> round on 13 March. The Church and the world had not expected the two thirds majority to be reached so soon. The choice of 76-year old Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio – who was far from being a front-runner - on the second day of the conclave came as a big surprise to all.

What do you think led to such a quick choice of the new Pope? People all over the world prayed more fervently this time than ever before for a Spirit-filled and Spirit-led shepherd to be chosen to lead the Church confronted with daunting problems in one of the most difficult periods in its history. With the advancement of media, today there is facility for more effective mobilization and networking of prayer than before. As the Coordinator of ICCRS Sub-Committee for Intercession, I had sent repeated requests to National Service Teams/Committees all over the world through ICCRS Councilors to step up mobilization of prayer for the election of Pope. There were a number of other prayer networks besides committed intercession by millions of faithful. For example, a simple website allowing users to randomly adopt a Cardinal in the lead-up to the Papal election had received more than half a million responses. The home page of [www.adoptacardinal.org](http://www.adoptacardinal.org) had this message: "Are you infinitely thankful to God for having given us such a wonderful, wise and benevolent Pope in Benedict XVI? Do you sincerely hope that the Church will be granted a worthy successor: a rock of faith, a leader open to the Holy Spirit, a Pope prayerful and holy? Do you as an important part of the Body of Christ wish to contribute

through the power of your prayers so that the Holy Spirit may guide, protect and enlighten our Cardinals when they determine the next successor of St. Peter?" The users were then invited to adopt a Cardinal, assigned randomly, and offer for him the prayers and sacrifices they chose. The Cardinals themselves were aware that they were being 'spiritually adopted' and had commented on the initiative. In all, there were 5,52,383 adoptions of Cardinals by people willing to intercede. Once the Conclave concluded, the website said, "*Habemus Papam*, thank you all for praying".

Pope Francis has not been the choice of the media, nor the world at large, but the choice of the Holy Spirit. It is the fruit of fervant intercession of millions of lovers of the Church and, as such, he carries with him the spiritual mandate and anointing required to sail the Church through difficult times. What Pope Francis himself told the reporters who were covering the events connected with the election is pertinent: "In everything that has occurred, the principal agent has been, in the final analysis, the Holy Spirit. He prompted the decision of Benedict XVI for the good of the Church; he guided the Cardinals in prayer and in the election." Can anyone who is a witness to this great miracle, ever say that the Holy Spirit is not active in the Church and that the new Holy Father isn't someone enjoying the fullness of the Holy Spirit? The surprise choice of Pope Francis is a confirmation of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the Church. When Pope Francis appeared on the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica on the night of 13 March and delivered his first speech, "Urbi et Orbi", to an estimated 1,50,000 cheering crowd packed into St. Peter's Square even in the inclement weather and all those watching it on TV all over the world, he spoke very little. In his first public act as Pontiff, Pope Francis broke with tradition by asking the people to pray for him, rather than him blessing the crowd first: "Now I would like to give the blessing, but first – first I ask a favor of you: before the Bishop blesses his people, I ask you to pray to the Lord that He will bless me: the prayer of the people asking the blessing for their Bishop. Let us make, in silence, this prayer: your prayer over me." The first favor that the new Pope asked from his people was to pray for him. Don't you think that the election of Pope Francis has opened the doors of a new age of simplicity and humility in the Roman Catholic Church?

I chose to write about Pope Francis because several people enquired about the relationship the new Pontiff has with the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. I consider that what I have thus far described speaks volumes of the proximity of the new Pope with the Holy Spirit and accordingly with the movements guided by the Spirit. The fact that he is the first Pope to choose the name, Pope Francis after St. Francis of Assisi, the saint who was called by the Lord to repair the Church that was in ruins, is a clear indication of the priority in his mind for bringing about revival within the Church. As you know, St. Francis was a great reformer of the 12th century who tried to help the Church to recapture her apostolic zeal. The name is fitting for the new Pope for more than one reason. When he was leaving for the Conclave, his friends, seeing the state of his battered old shoes, requested him to accept their gift of a new pair. Wearing the new shoes he travelled to Rome, but with a return ticket. As the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, he chose to live in an apartment rather than in the Archbishop's Palace, took public transport every day and cooked his own meals. Like St. Francis of Assisi, the Pope wants the Church to be poor in spirit, humble and Christ-like in her prophetic service to the weak and the defenseless.

Cardinal Bergoglio was strongly supportive of the Renewal in Argentina. On the very day of his election, one of the ICCRS Council Members from Chile, Maria Jose Cantos de Ortiz, e-mailed a photograph of Cardinal Bergoglio in the company of Oreste Pesare, Director in ICCRS Office, Vatican; Jim Murphy, USA and Pino Scafuro, Argentina - all charismatic leaders - and herself. He is accustomed to praying with people and used to ask people to pray for him. Because of his openness and warmth, relations between evangelicals and Catholics in Argentina is very strong. He encouraged from its beginning in 2003-04 the movement known as CRECES (literally, Renewed or Restored Communion of Catholics and Evangelicals in the Holy Spirit). At their 2007 Conference, when Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap was one of the speakers, Cardinal Bergoglio knelt down and was prayed over by Fr Raniero and a group of city's pastors. After his election as Pope, a Pentecostal minister posted on the web the picture of evangelical pastors praying over him with Fr Raniero standing at his side adding: "I'm overjoyed with the election of Bergoglio, a man filled with the Spirit and with a deep commitment to ecumenism." Father Peter Hocken from Austria, a member of the Doctrinal Commission of ICCRS, who happened to visit the Cardinal right before his departure for the Conclave in Rome says: "When I visited Cardinal Bergoglio, I was with a Messianic Jewish pastor and at the end we prayed for his journey to Rome and for the Conclave. I understand that the Pentecostal pastors from CRECES were going to visit the Cardinal to pray for him before his departure." Fr Hocken says, "We can be confident that Pope Francis will be a strong supporter of the Renewal and that he understands the ecumenical inter-church character of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our days."

Charles Whitehead from UK, former President of ICCRS, said: "We're going to see a more relaxed, open and simple Papacy, a more collaborative and collegial approach to the government of the Church, a simpler and more direct proclamation of Jesus the Saviour of the world." Elaborating the reasons why he thinks so, Charles said that when he had visited Buenos Aires in 2005 with some members of the International Charismatic Consultation on World Evangelisation, "we found him to be a gracious, humble, humorous, courageous and very intelligent man, pastorally sensitive, prayerful, and totally committed to the Person of Jesus Christ and the task of making Him known to all." Charles says that as their discussion came to an end and they were preparing to leave, Cardinal Bergoglio knelt down and asked them to pray for him, particularly the women who were accompanying the leaders as their prayers were always very powerful! Hands were laid on him as they prayed for him and with him. His biographer, Matthew Bunson has reported that the daily schedule of the Pope has been rising between 4.30 am to 5 am and spending several hours in prayer.

We see the hand of God at work in the choice of Pope Francis at a very crucial time in the history of the Church. The parting message of Pope Benedict XVI came on 14 February, 2013 considered to be his theological last will and testament, when he called for a "real renewal" in the Church in the spirit of the reformist Second Vatican Council. When Pope John XXIII called the Second Vatican Council on 25 January, 1959, he said he wanted to open the windows of the Roman Catholic Church to let in some "fresh air." *Aggiornamento* was the task proposed to the Vatican Council by Pope John XXIII. Etymologically, the word meant 'bringing up to date' or renewal. Hence he exhorted the entire Church to pray, "Renew Your wonders in this our day, as

by a new Pentecost” in the prayer he gave to the Church on 25 December, 1961. When Pope John XXIII announced the decision to convene the Council in less than three months after his election, he surprised everyone. The words and actions of Pope Francis, right from the moment of his election, have been surprising many within and outside the Church. The new Holy Father is living the *aggiornamento* that Pope John XXIII dreamt and is working towards the “real renewal” that his predecessor called for. Pope Francis is the man, “for just such a time as this” (Esther 4:14). It is going to be an event-full and historic Pontificate. We look forward to the Holy Spirit working through Pope Francis in surprising ways to renew the Church. On our part, let us pray and support the Holy Father that through his Petrine ministry, he may be able to bring about “a new heaven and a new earth” (Rev 21:1)!

新たらしい教皇さまは教皇ヨハネ23世が夢見た“現代化”を生きておられ、先代の教皇さまたちが求めていた“まことの刷新”に向かって働いておられる。

**The new Holy Father is living the *aggiornamento* that Pope John XXIII dreamt and is working towards the “real renewal” that his predecessor called for.**