

AG Pastor: Pentecostals and Catholics Have 'Many Points of Agreement' About Gifts of the Spirit

You've heard of charismatic Catholics. Many of them attended Kathryn Kuhlman's healing meetings decades ago. In fact, you'd often find a row of nuns sitting right up front drinking deep of the Spirit of the Living God.

It turns out, more Catholics are embracing "charisma" than we once thought. Indeed, that was the conclusion of the fifth session of the sixth phase of the International Catholic Dialogue, which recently concluded in Rome.

The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity appointed participants to discuss various issues surrounding the theme "Charisms in the Church: Their Significance, Discernment and Pastoral Implications," with what they call "classical Pentecostal" churches and leaders. Specifically, they discussed common ground between Catholics and Pentecostals, healing, discernment and prophecy.

Sounds like the makings of a good old fashioned Holy Ghost camp meeting. Well, sort of. It's a little academic.

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"Through the scholarly papers that were presented, honest and respectful discussion throughout the dialogue, and our prayer time together we grew to a deeper understanding of areas of agreement as related to charisms, healing, prophecy and discernment, as well as points of divergence," said Catholic Co-Chair of the Dialogue's Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge.

“We also identified together pastoral challenges and opportunities as we go forth to invite others to a deeper reliance on the gifts of the Spirit, who is always at work within us.”

Despite all of the attention on Kenneth Copeland’s meeting with the Pope and Francis’ move to apologize for the persecution of Pentecostals, these talks are not exactly new. The Dialogue started in 1972 to “promote mutual respect and understanding in matters of faith and practice.” The goal is to set the stage for a “genuine exchange and frank discussion” about the positions and practices of the two traditions. At least one Assemblies of God pastor is encouraged by the outcome.

“This current round of dialogue has revealed that the teaching of Pentecostals and Catholics on the charisms or gifts of the Holy Spirit have many points of agreement,” said Cecil M. Robeck, the Pentecostal co-chair of the Dialogue, who is affiliated with the Assemblies of God.

“Both traditions recognize that every believer has been given one or more gifts by the Holy Spirit to be used to build up the church and to minister to the world. These gifts have been present in the church since the time of the New Testament,” he continued. “Given the problems posed by society in the current culture, we acknowledge that we face common challenges in which our people must rely upon the help of the Holy Spirit to exercise these charisms in thoughtful and creative ways as they seek to extend the message of love and forgiveness that Jesus Christ brought to the world.”

What’s your take on these talks?

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Awakening; Mornings With the Holy Spirit, Listening Daily to the Still, Small Voice of God; The Making of a Prophet and Satan's Deadly Trio: Defeating the Deceptions of Jezebel, Religion and Witchcraft. *She is the co-founder of and a leader in the New Breed Revival Network. You can visit her w*