

# How Pope Francis Reacted to 50,000 Charismatics Praying Over Him, Speaking in Tongues

The pope has not always been a friend of the charismatic movement. On June 1, he remarked that, years ago when the Catholic Spirit-filled movement began, he “did not have much love for charismatics.”

But meeting with more than 50,000 Catholic charismatics in Rome’s Olympic Stadium, the pope willingly knelt onstage as those present prayed for him with singing and speaking in tongues, according to Catholic News Service.

Pope Francis admitted he was uncomfortable, but he let the charismatic multitude carry on.

As he knelt on the stage, the crowd prayed for the Holy Spirit to fill the pontiff and sang with hands raised in his direction. When the song ended, many kept their hands up, singing and continuing to pray in tongues.

Over time, the pontiff has come to see the benefits that they have brought to the church.

Yet the pope also had some words of rebuke in one speech he gave, warning those within the movement not to attempt to control God’s Spirit, but rather serve as His conduits.

“Be dispensers of God’s grace, not controllers. Don’t be the Holy Spirit’s customs agents,” Pope Francis remarked.

For some, putting “Catholic” and “charismatic” in the same sentence is an oxymoron. But since the charismatic Catholic renewal began in 1967 in Pittsburgh, it has purportedly grown to 119 million followers worldwide.

Watch the Catholic news agency's video of the event:

*(Video credit: Robert Duncan/Catholic News Service)*