

# A House of Prayer

Mark 11,17

*Prayer Initiatives  
and Houses of Prayer*



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Charismatic Renewal  
in the Catholic Church

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## Introduction

From its beginnings the Charismatic Renewal was a community of prayer. The theological and pastoral guide, *The Spirit Gives Life*, emphasizes this: “A new love of prayer, both personal and community, is a characteristic of the Charismatic Renewal ... In families, prayer groups and communities the wealth and variety of prayer are rediscovered: fixed times for prayer, and spontaneous prayer during the day life; set prayers and extempore prayers and songs; daily office and other forms of prayer; bible reading, meditation, contemplation and thanksgiving,” as well as prayers of intercession and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.<sup>1</sup> Of course, part of the riches in forms of prayer are also those gifts that characterize prayer in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in a very special way, praise and praying in tongues (cf. *ibid.*). The Charismatic Renewal was newly endowed in recent years with a very old tradition, the tradition of constant prayer. All over the world, at very different places and with very different backgrounds, houses of prayer arose, with prayer around the clock on every day of the week, open day and night, 24/7, — to praise and worship; to give thanks and intercede; to give glory to the Lord; to ask for His mercy and to call down His blessings, and to pray for renewal of the Church and society. Of the many initiatives we will name only four of the better-known ones here: the International House of Prayer Kansas City, USA, having a global reach, founded and directed by Mike Bickle; the prayer initiative of Kim Kollins, “Burning Bush, Return to the Upper Room in Adoration and Intercession”; the tradition-rich Anglican Holy Trinity Church Brompton in London with Pete Greig, renowned for the Alpha Course; and in Germany, under the umbrella of the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church and also of the Diocese of Augsburg, the House of Prayer Augsburg, under the direction of Johannes Hartl, which is both catholic and ecumenical.

Houses of Prayer with constant prayer, 24/7, is a demanding program (often a desired but not yet attained target). Or more biblical with Luke 14:28-30: You have to sit down and take account. Are there sufficient resources for the project? That means: Is there sufficient spiritual experience and expertise, enough “manpower?” The Spirit of God always gives in abundance, no question, but: Can we accomplish it and how? This study guide will serve to answer these questions.

First, a look at past and present: What is there now and what has been before? In the Church nothing starts from scratch. The Spirit has always been at work, and this treasure of spiritual experience is unabatedly precious today and tomorrow: “Pray Constantly — the Tradition of Constant Prayer.”

Next is an overview of past and present initiatives: What is where with what profile and which direction, which priorities? Whether Catholic or in the field of ecumenism: “The Diversity of Prayer Initiatives and Houses of Prayer.”

We will then look at the construction of a tower in the Gospel of Luke: What needs to be considered? In leadership and style of leadership, in the selection of staff, in dealing with the tiresome finances and of course, first and foremost, a good knowledge, choice and guidance in the various forms of prayer: “Comments and Suggestions for Catholic Houses of Prayer.”

Finally, in form of a digression, a look at the sisters and brothers in the non-denominational Charismatic Movement, specifically the International House of Prayer Kansas City and its end time focus. In the appendix there is a statement of the Theological Committee regarding different worship styles in the Youth of the German CCR.

“Yes, dear brothers and sisters, our Christian communities must become *genuine “schools” of prayer*, where the meeting with Christ is expressed not just in imploring help but also in thanksgiving, praise, adoration, contemplation, listening and ardent devotion, until the heart truly falls “in love.”<sup>2</sup>

This applies not only to parishes. The invitation of the Pope is addressed to all communities. It is our common mission that the Charismatic Renewal is and increases to be a “genuine school of prayer” and is the service the house of prayer movement provides.

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## Part 1. Pray Constantly – the Tradition of Constant Prayer

### 1.1 The Yearning for Perpetual Prayer

The question of how to pray without ceasing (1 Thes 5:17) is at the beginning of the widely read book “The Way of a Pilgrim,”<sup>3</sup> written in 19th century Russia. Guided by a spiritual leader from the monkhood, a *starez*, the “sincere pilgrim” discovers the “Jesus Prayer.” It is from the *hesychasm*, a tradition of the Eastern Church.

The simple prayer, “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me” becomes connected to breathing, a part of life, natural, like inhaling and exhaling. The Jesus Prayer or prayer of the heart is one of many examples to realize the word of Paul quoted above. The one who looks at the traditions of Christian practice of prayer encounters a very wide variety of forms of prayer, all having one goal: to give permanence to Christian prayer in all its aspects and dimensions — in the Church, in public spaces, in the various communities and living conditions, in their own personal life. Prayer is to become permanent in time and space, thus rooted in life. The invitation, “Pray constantly” becomes reality in time steeped in prayer and in particular in designed spaces for prayer.

Among the variety of ways to give permanence and continuity to prayer there are forms of constant prayer like “perpetual adoration” or the 24/7 prayer. In the variety of ways and forms of prayer they are prominent examples among many to follow the above words of Paul: “Pray constantly.” Let us glance at the variety of prayer. The fourth part of the Catechism of the Catholic Church is dedicated exclusively to Christian prayer and is an excellent introduction to different forms of prayer. Besides the presentation of different prayer traditions and a long interpretation of the Lord’s Prayer, the following forms of prayer are described: blessing and worship (§ 2626ff), petition (§ 2629ff), intercessory prayer (§ 2634ff), thanksgiving (§ 2637ff) and the prayer of praise (§ 2639ff). These five forms of prayer will be addressed below under the aspect of the quest for everlasting prayer.

### 1.2 Blessing, Worship

Each prayer is about the encounter between God and man. This has two directions: first, by the Father in Christ to man. He gives grace and salvation. Secondly, through Christ from man to the Father. The basic attitude of man is the awesome and grateful adoration of the greatness, beauty and goodness of God. In prayer, man as a creature positions himself in the presence of the Creator.

God and his glory are to be worshipped, praised and exalted for His own sake. This form of prayer corresponds to the first and greatest commandment, as given in the Gospel of Mark: “Listen, Israel, the Lord our God is the one, only Lord and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength” (Mk 12:30, Dt 6:4f). In many prayers, hymns and songs of the Church this prayer intention is expressed. The so-called doxologies at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer, at the end of each psalm in the Divine Office or a hymn, indicate the destination of all prayer. The destination of prayer, this encounter between God and man, is to be so imbued with the presence of God that all action is shaped by His very nature. The worship of God is the basic attitude that serves as the foundation of all other forms of prayer.

A Catholic tradition of permanent adoration is prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, whether in the tabernacle, or exposed for the veneration of the faithful. There are different forms, for example, the *Forty Hours, perpetual adoration or eternal prayer* that moves from parish to parish. There are also specific churches for worship and religious communities, which maintain the Eucharistic Adoration in a special way.

*The Forty Hours* devotion, introduced by the Jesuits in the 16th century, arose from the Forty Hours devotion of the Holy Sepulcher in Holy Week. The Blessed Sacrament was taken to the place of the Holy Sepulcher or the local altar. Later, the Forty Hours was understood as a prayer of atonement and supplication.

*Perpetual adoration or eternal prayer* grew out of the Forty Hours Prayer. The most common form is that in the course of a year the Blessed Sacrament is exposed and venerated at least one day in every church of a diocese. “Every day individual parishes and communities take on representatively the task of worshiping Christ in the Blessed Sacrament and to pray for the intentions of the Church and the world.”<sup>4</sup> This is to be specially organized and it should be ensured that “until the completion of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament there are always faithful praying there.”<sup>5</sup>

In many churches it is also customary to have at least one day a week, usually on Thursday, a time for Eucharistic adoration. There are special *churches of adoration* where the Blessed Sacrament chapel is exposed constantly and is worshipped. Especially in large churches there is a Sacrament Chapel, where there is always the possibility of sacramental worship.

There are few religious orders and congregations that maintain the practice of perpetual adoration and are numerous enough to do this day and night every day

of the week. “In most convents worship is now held from morning to evening, on Thursdays, Sundays and religious solemnities, mostly in the form of exposition. At these times there is — when it is not the time of the monastic Divine Office — at least one sister in the Church, present in front of the Eucharistic presence of Jesus Christ. This mere presence as a form of continuous prayer without any other meaningful things at hand, has a great importance for us and characterizes the whole lifestyle. What has emerged recently, just in the last two decades, is the lively participation of people from outside of the monasteries in the worship ...”<sup>6</sup> The worshipful adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in front of the tabernacle or by exposition in the ciborium, i.e. the container with the consecrated hosts, or in the monstrance.

On the context of worship and attitude of living, of “actual adoration” and life, Mechtilde de Bar, founder of the Benedictines of Perpetual Adoration says, “it is not enough, to stay there for an hour ... to dwell in his presence in the choir. Our worship must endure always, because the same God that we worship in the Blessed Sacrament is continually with us present in every place.”<sup>7</sup>

### 1.3 Petition

Of particular importance is the prayer for mercy and forgiveness. Petition is perhaps most natural to us. It is an immediate expression of all our needs, fears, anxieties and afflictions. But praying to God is already an expression of faith in him and trust in him. Even people who are far from a religious or ecclesiastical life find in times of distress and despair the way to prayer, even if only in the form of lighting a candle and in wordless pleas. Prayers in the Bible and the prayer of the Church also feature supplication prominently. The aforementioned Jesus Prayer is a summary of Christian supplication: “Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me.” In this simple formulation, it is excellently suited, with abundant repetition, to become a constant prayer. It then prays in us, day and night with every heartbeat, every breath, regardless of what we are busy with.

The “Hail Mary” also contains two petitions which each relate to the two most important moments of our lives: Pray for us *now* — in this ever-new current moment — and in the hour of our death. Here petition to God takes place through the mediation of Mary, through entering in her intercession for mankind.

### 1.4 Intercession

While petitions to God are for our own concerns, the praying person opens him- or herself to the needs of others in intercession. Intercession is the realization of

charity. For a Christian, this intercession is done through Jesus, with him and in him, for he is *the* intercessor before God. “Christ Jesus, who died, yes and more who was raised from the dead and is at God’s right hand and who is adding his plea for us” (Rom 8:34). “It follows then that his power to save those who come to God through him is absolute; since he always lives forever to intercede for them” (Heb 7:25). This knowledge frees and strengthens us because it is not our intercession that will save the world, but we can participate in or enter into the universal prayer of Jesus for the world.

Intercessory prayer covers all dimensions of life: prayer for salvation, petition for the Church, for peace, for those responsible in government and society, intercession for all who are close to us, for the sick, the suffering and the dead. The “Great Intercessions” in the liturgy of Good Friday, facing the Lord who was struck for us and for our salvation on the cross, are the epitome of Intercession of the Church.<sup>8</sup>

As in all of Christian life, the Holy Spirit comes to our help in intercessory prayer: “The Spirit too comes to our help in our weakness, for, when we do not know how to pray properly, then the Spirit personally makes our petitions for us in groans that cannot be put into words. And he who can see into all hearts knows what the Spirit means because the prayers that the Spirit makes for God’s holy people are always in accordance with the mind of God.” (Rom 8:26-27). Christians familiar with praying in tongues (1 Cor 14)<sup>9</sup> know a form of intercessory prayer that relies totally on God’s help even in formulating the concerns. Concerns are briefly named and then entrusted to God praying in tongues, in the knowledge that he himself knows best what is for the best of the people in this very situation.<sup>10</sup> In this way certain concerns can be addressed with a lot of perseverance. Another possibility to entrust concerns over a long time to God is to name them at the beginning of the rosary or a decade of it and thus present them in each petition of the “Hail Mary” trustingly to God.

### 1.5 Thanksgiving

Every need can be not only cause for a request but also for thanks. Better yet “tell God all your desires of every kind in prayer and petition shot through with gratitude” (Phil 4:6). Thanksgiving is directed first to God’s great deeds for the salvation of men, to the greatness and love of God shining forth in them. Our thanksgiving, of course, is also for all the good that God has done in the life of an individual or a community: the gift of life, experiences of happiness, rescue, help in need and distress, health, healing of diseases, and the many daily experiences of God’s kindness and care. Many psalms express that. Similarly, in

hymns such as: “Now thank we all our God, with heart, and hands, and voices, who wondrous things hath done, in whom this world rejoices; who, from our mother’s arms hath blessed us on our way with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today”.

A good way to express thanksgiving daily for example, is found in the prayer of loving attention that comes to us from Jesuit spirituality, known as the Examine. Before going to bed we look back on the day and seek, among other things, what we are thankful for this day. Whoever practices this regularly will grow into a constant attitude of gratitude, which allows him to direct short prayers of thanksgiving to God in everyday life.

Ultimately, thanks relates to God himself, his greatness and glory, his love and his goodness. This takes place in the Gloria of the Mass: “We give thanks to thee, for great is your glory.” This is the basis of all praise.

### 1.6 Praise

Prayers of Praise are given to God not because of what He has done for us, but because of who He is. “We saw his glory, the glory that he has from the Father as only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth” (Jn 1:14). The Gloria of the Mass distinctively expresses this orientation towards Christ. The Sanctus of the Mass combines praise and worship of God, taking its lead from the great vision of the prophet Isaiah (6:1-5), the eternal glorification of God through the angels who, as it says in the Latin version at the end of the Preface, call out the Threefold Holy without end.

It is a great strength of the Charismatic Renewal that it has given to this prayer form its proper place again.<sup>11</sup> With old and continuously newly composed songs it sings every day the praise of God all over the world. Worship services are a way to express this praise for a long time. But also in personal prayer it is good to praise God with songs, reading psalms of praise or composing them oneself or expressing His praise spontaneously with our own words. This usually results in an experience of silent and reverent wonder and worship before the glory and goodness of our God. Thus we come full circle. Adoration as a starting point and basis of all prayer (see Section 2) is also its goal and will find its fulfillment in eternity.

### 1.7 Holy Times – Holy Places

Praying gives structure to the day, the week, the year. Morning prayer, prayer at meals and evening prayer form the cornerstones of daily life. The Angelus prayer,

combined with these other daily prayers recalls the mystery of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ born of the Virgin Mary. In the Easter season it reminds us in a special way of the resurrection of the Lord. As Sunday interrupts the week, it forms a time frame and rhythm that — in our part of the world — keeps alive the remembrance in our consciousness of God’s presence and God’s deeds in creation and salvation history.

There are three liturgical seasons in the church year: the Paschal Season with Lent and Easter; the Christmas Season, which begins with Advent; and the Sundays and weeks of Ordinary Time. In addition, there are special solemnities such as Corpus Christi and All Saints, observances and feasts of the saints, especially the Marian solemnities, the Apostle solemnities, the solemnities of St Joseph and John the Baptist. Certain forms and contents of prayer are traditionally connected with certain seasons, May is the month of Mary and October is the Rosary month. The Feast of Pentecost invites us to the novena to the Holy Spirit. Before the Feast of the Ascension of Christ there are still in some places processions through the fields. The year is transformed from a mere succession of days to a time continuum filled with prayers and celebrations, shaped by the annually repeated reminder of God’s deeds. Time becomes sacred time.

These examples show the desire to give constancy and permanence in time to prayer, if only for the duration of the Rosary, the duration of the Mass, the duration of a pilgrimage or of the prayers structuring the day. With pilgrimages and processions, but especially with the Mass usually celebrated in a church building or with services that take place there the structuring of place complements that of time, the *temporal continuum* is joined by the *spatial continuum*. Walking on a pilgrimage or in a procession also shapes the space we walk through, traditionally with flower arrangements, stations with altars, trail markers or special places and churches on established routes of pilgrimage.

The sacred space of a church is an image of the temple as a place of the presence of the glory of God and as the foreshowing of the new and eternal Jerusalem. However, we must remain aware that the new and eternal Jerusalem will have no temple: “I could not see any temple in the city since the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb were themselves the temple, and the city did not need the sun or the moon for light, since it was lit by the radiant glory of God, and the Lamb was a lighted torch for it” (Rev 21:22ff). Because everything refers to the revelation of the glory of God, the design of the room should be beautiful to present some of that glory. However, the room can also be kept simple and almost empty, to allow prayer to focus on Jesus Christ, the center envisioned in reading and prayer. Relatively new ways to form sacred spaces and special prayer times are, for

example interdenominational, the “Night of Open Churches” or events such as “Night Fever”<sup>12</sup>.

Structured space as complementary to structured time includes special places such as destinations of pilgrimages and sanctuaries, which are visited repeatedly and with a certain regularity. There are also little holy places such as roadside crosses, icons, crucifixes, domestic shrines, or a prayer corner in one’s own home.

Some prayer forms faded in their traditional expression, but have experienced a renaissance in a different form, such as the Camino de Santiago, or the Way of the Cross for youth. Pilgrimages enjoy a new interest. They are made to Marian shrines, chapels of the Cross or other holy places. The journey is a movement to a final and crowning goal that can be reached only after several hours or days. It is a symbol of one’s own life and an expression of the quest for the encounter with God. Due to its temporal duration, embedded in the rhythm and structure of the day, combining change and permanence, a pilgrimage is a formative experience of sacred constancy in time and in space. A pilgrimage provides opportunities for a whole variety of forms of prayer and prayer intentions. With every step constant prayer can be practiced.

A distinct form of constant prayer using pre-formulated texts originated in Taizé. Short prayers and invocations are repeated again and again in song. The harmonies help internally to connect to the call to prayer and to be deeply permeated by the sung Bible verses. Again, here it can happen that the person continues singing and praying after the prayer time. In this way everyday life is steeped in prayer.

### **1.8 Common and Individual Prayer**

The form of constant prayer most common in the Church is the Divine Office, formerly called “the breviary”, today “liturgy of the hours” (Liturgia horarum). Following Jewish and early Christian traditions, the practice developed in communities, especially in religious communities, to pray day and night at specific hours and times. The Rule of St. Benedict and the practice of Benedictine monasteries and convents shaped the style of the Divine Office in the Western Church.

The three-fold prayer in the morning, at noon and night developed into a comprehensive all day prayer cycle. The practice of the Divine Office evolved primarily in two forms: the Divine Office of the monasteries and convents structuring the day, often starting at night, and the prayer of the clergy.<sup>13</sup> All 150 psalms of the Book of Psalms are prayed now on a four-week basis. In monasteries of Benedictine spirituality, often all 150 psalms are prayed every week. The

order of the liturgy of the hours is based on the great festivals, especially Easter and solemnities of the saints. Recently, there have been attempts to make the Liturgy of the Hours also the prayer of the parish, at least Lauds and Vespers.

Many Christians align themselves with this prayer of the Church, by participating in it individually. At selected times of the day, they turn to the prayer of the hours and so themselves become with their private prayer part of the prayer of the universal Church. There is the “Small Book of Divine Office.” In the Protestant Church this tradition was taken over by the Michael Fraternity and transferred into their own context, to “find a working form for their common prayer, which turned out to be permanently viable in practice.”<sup>14</sup>

Prayer in the above-mentioned concerns and in all its forms is to shape the whole of life; public life, the Church, communities, and personal and private life. Both public and private prayer are in an inseparable correlation. The public and regular prayer of a community creates a temporal and spatial continuum of prayer, a social habitat determined by prayer. The variety of these public prayer forms revives personal prayer. Private prayer puts down its roots inside of man, in his heart and in his whole life, and in turn has effects on common prayer, by giving it greater intensity and personal involvement. The aim of both forms of prayer is to become more and more an all-encompassing attitude of prayer. This is a path with many stations, some setbacks, periods of drought and exhaustion. But if we succeed in permeating everyday life with prayer, that is, the awareness of the presence of God, it is a source of great strength and deep joy.

### **1.9 Preformulated and Freely Formulated Prayer**

The traditional prayer treasure of formulated prayers has become richer over the centuries: starting with the psalms and songs from the Old Testament; through the prayers and hymns, which have been handed down to us in the New Testament, litanies, traditional prayers to Mary and current prayer collections, containing possible prayer texts for all situations. Many Catholic hymnals contain, in addition to songs, a wide range of preformulated prayers. Also, the aforementioned Prayer of the Heart, the rosary and the Divine Office are based on formulated prayers. A recommended set of impulses for prayer in various everyday situations by Madeleine Delbrêl was recently published by the publishing house Neue Stadt.<sup>15</sup>

In addition, it is important to put one’s own prayer requests in one’s own words, in private and in community prayer. In the Charismatic Renewal *free* prayer is the usual form of prayer, not only in the personal prayer of the individual, but also in

meetings and religious services — in small and large groups. Free Prayer means that the people who gather have the option during prayer times of using their own words to formulate and utter prayers: prayer of thanksgiving, of praise, of adoration, of petition and intercession. Often the prayer of one person is a source of inspiration for the prayer of the others.

Of course, many have to overcome a certain shyness first, to express themselves in this personal way in prayer in front of others. But this kind of prayer often is straight to the point; it expresses what really moves somebody. It helps to open up and to enter into a relationship with God with heart, emotion and intellect and to respond to His love personally. When people see how others turn to the Triune God, this can be a witness and a starting point for their own, personal experience of God.

Free Prayer can, just like any other prayer, become superficial, for example by repeating set phrases. It can also be one-sidedly individualistic if the worshiper circles only around his personal concerns. Good direction from the leader of such prayer times and appropriate catechesis can counter these dangers.

Holy Scripture contains not only a wealth of prayers and hymns, it is also the source and food for all our prayers. In it God has revealed himself and through it he reveals himself today. If prayer is talking with a friend, as Saint Teresa of Avila defined it, we can always get to know that friend better through the Scriptures. The better we know Him, the more vivid Scripture becomes. To also root Bible reading in a temporal continuum, it is good to follow a reading plan, such as the daily readings of the Holy Mass. From the Protestant tradition there are different reading plans that lead in 1 to 4 years through the whole Bible. This model is now being offered by Catholic groups too.<sup>16</sup> A less time-consuming form is the “Watchwords” that have been issued since 1731 by the Moravian Church. Each day is placed under a single Bible verse that is to shape the thinking, action and prayer on this day.<sup>17</sup> It is not always possible to put all concerns spontaneously in one’s own words. An exaggerated claim to authenticity and personal involvement can also become a too excessive demand and render praying very hard. Therefore, it is good to alternate periods of freely formulated prayer with already existing texts, to combine spontaneity with rituals. Some favorite prayers accompany us for a lifetime and become a kind of home with God.

### **1.10 The Eucharist und Eucharistic Adoration**

The climax of prayer is the Holy Mass. In it all forms of prayer can find a place. The order of the Eucharist provides for all prayer intentions in the combination

of the liturgy, of the Word and of the Eucharist: worship, praise, thanksgiving, petition and intercession. Some prayers are prescribed and are spoken or sung together, others can be freely formulated (e.g. the request for forgiveness, prayers, thanksgiving). After communion, there is opportunity for personal silent prayer, which can be continued after the celebration, for example as Eucharistic adoration. The readings, the homily and the celebration of the Eucharistic prayer in every celebration of Mass is focused on the central mysteries of the faith and is nourished by the wealth of Christological revelation. The basic attitude of all Christian prayer becomes wonderfully clear in the Eucharist: Jesus Christ is present in an extraordinary way and gives himself to mankind. We are invited to open our hearts and to receive Him and His grace. Then we must take the second step and respond with belief and love. What Pope Benedict XVI wrote at the beginning of *Deus Caritas Est* about “Being Christian,” can be directly transferred to prayer: At the beginning of prayer “is not an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person who gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction” (no. 1).

### **1.11 Perpetual Prayer**

Those who pray set out on a journey in search of God and an ever new encounter with God. This requires an appropriate orientation in lifestyle and life. The desire for constant prayer can only be realized in concrete forms and structures. We need to create free spaces for prayer in time and space. In addition to times for personal prayer we need opportunities for common prayer, for example, in the liturgy. Conversely, common prayer should be enriched through personal prayer, i.e. prayer in private or as the French say, *de coeur à coeur* (from heart to heart). If the different forms of prayer, praise and adoration, thanksgiving, petition and intercession all find their place here prayer remains diverse and does not risk becoming one-sided.

Different spiritual traditions have already been mentioned. In conclusion, we will briefly refer to the tradition of Carmel. Its whole life is geared to grow into an attitude of inner prayer. For this purpose, the members of the Carmelite family keep in addition to liturgical prayers, long periods of silence, in which they remain in an active passivity in God with no other goals and tasks but to be with the one who is the fullness of all being. This form of prayer eventually also leads to a life fully permeated with the awareness of God's presence.

Anyone who sets out for a life of constant prayer starts a process of repentance. Prayer on a permanent basis is only possible if it is supported by the serious effort to live according to God's instructions. This is easier said than done in the

rush and complexity of everyday life. At whatever stage of the journey we may be, however perfect or imperfect we may be, God is always approachable and comes to meet us with His grace or more precisely, he anticipates us. “Striving for perfection in Christian life is not to do something abstractly more perfect, but to do what is actually possible. The point is not to reduce the mountain, but to reach the summit with our own steps ... And prayer that is possible for all has to come first.”<sup>18</sup>

## Part 2. The Diversity of Prayer Initiatives and Houses of Prayer

In the late 20th century — partially independently of each other — different prayer initiatives formed around the world that take up the desire for constant prayer at a particular location or at a particular time. Not least, thanks to media exposure, some of these initiatives have achieved prominence and significance. Below are some concrete examples. It is an incomplete selection.

### 2.1 Examples in the Catholic Church

#### 2.1.1 Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration

The tradition of Perpetual Adoration and prayer vigils and weeks is so prevalent in the Catholic sphere and so traditionally rooted, that at this point only a few recent initiatives can be mentioned.<sup>19</sup>

In 1977, Don Pigi Perini became the pastor of the Basilica **St. Eustorgio, Milan** that can be dated back to Roman times.<sup>20</sup> Encouraged by contact with a parish in Florida that was inspired by Charismatic Renewal, he developed with the support of Cardinal Martini a cell group system for the purpose of the new evangelization, which eventually spread in all of Milan. Don Pigi headed the parish until 2012. Since then, Don Giorgio Riva is pastor. In a separate chapel continuous Eucharistic adoration takes place, and on Fridays it also takes place in the Basilica. The model of the parish cell system in combination with Eucharistic adoration has since seen widespread use.

In the **parish of Untertürkheim in the Unterallgäu, diocese of Augsburg**, this form of worship is held in the Loreto Chapel day and night with great success for several years now. There are also conferences to promote the cell group concept. There has been for 325 years in Untertürkheim the Corpus Christi Brotherhood, from which the project “perpetual adoration in the parish” emerged. The purpose of that old foundation is still valid today: “The Blessed Sacrament of the altar, instituted by Jesus Christ out of infinite love as the constant reminder of his bitter suffering and death and as a memorial of His infinite love, is to be worshiped every hour of day and night with utmost reverence, and due thanks are to be given to the Savior. Merciful intercession for infidels, heretics and sinners is to be joined to this worship that they may come to the knowledge of the truth and partake of the merits of Christ and be saved for heaven.”<sup>21</sup>

Since the World Youth Day in Cologne 2005 there is “**Night Fever**” with the vision of an open church (often a cathedral) in the heart of a city in which a directed Eucharistic Adoration takes place on some evenings. Those who pass by in front of the church are invited to enter the church to receive a personal prayer or simply light a candle. The combination of prayer, a low-threshold experience of the atmosphere of a spiritual space, and the evangelistic outlook made Night Fever a widespread phenomenon in German-speaking countries.<sup>22</sup> On All Saints Day in 2013, the then archbishop of Cologne, Cardinal Meissner, initiated at the suggestion of the Night Fever Teams a perpetual Eucharistic Adoration in the chapel of the **Maternus House in Cologne**.

### **2.1.2 Burning Bush Initiative**

During a time of prayer in Rome with a group of European leaders of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in March, 1997, Kim Catherine-Marie Kollins received the spiritual impulse to call and to encourage urgently a “Return to the Upper Room in Adoration and Intercession,” as a contribution to the call for a New Evangelization by Pope John Paul II. This experience was the origin of the Burning Bush Initiative — International. She refers explicitly to the letters of the Blessed. Sr. Elena Guerra to Pope Leo XIII<sup>23</sup> and to the Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II, “*Novo Millennio Ineunte*” of 2001.<sup>24</sup>

An important aspect of the Burning Bush Initiative is constant Eucharistic Adoration in various forms — as a prayer day and night, for several days, a week or at fixed sites of constant prayer. The close collaboration of Kim Kollins with the Renewal in the Spirit in Italy (Rinnovamento nello Spirito Santo (RnS))<sup>25</sup> and other initiatives played a major role in their formative phases of responding to this call. In the First Vespers of Pentecost 2004, Pope John Paul II encouraged this initiative to the whole Church.<sup>26</sup> Lecture tours by Kim Kollins in many countries, her book “*Burning Bush*,” which was translated into numerous languages and the articles about the Burning Bush Initiative for the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (ICCRS) were all important source of inspiration for others. The call of the Burning Bush Initiative includes the shared vision “to Return to the Upper Room.” The structuring of a response takes place under various names, forms, and models by diverse groups and communities, which take up this call, for example: in prayer schools, prayer networks, houses of prayer and worldwide day and night prayer events, especially in the context of the Charismatic Renewal.<sup>27</sup>

### **2.1.3 Prayer Initiative in the Basilica of St. Anastasia, Rome**

The Church of St. Anastasia is a famous old basilica in Rome from the 4th century. It was reopened in the Holy Year 2000, after more than 30 years of

renovations. The rector of the church, Rev. Alberto Pacini, began Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration on March 2, 2001, which continues to take place today. He also initiated Perpetual Adoration in nine other places in Rome. His efforts received the blessing of Pope John Paul II in 2001 and Pope Benedict XVI in 2007. Rev. Pacini became an important initiator for Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration in many of the more than 80 parishes in Italy and in some 10 in East Africa. With the blessing of Cardinal Vallini (the Vicar of the Pope) for the Jubilee Year of Mercy, the Basilica is involved in a ministry of promoting schools of evangelization, and a ministry which is now leading each of the 36 pastoral areas of Rome to have Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration. He also introduced the “*Burning Bush*” Pentecost Novena in St. Anastasia, which continues yearly. Today St. Anastasia is known as a center of prayer for all, including various spiritual movements and ethnic groups, who celebrate their religious services, prayer meetings and night vigils there. St. Anastasia has developed a variety of services of mercy for children, teens and couples; retreats; and pro-life initiatives. There are ecumenical links to Protestant and Free Church Communities.<sup>28</sup>

### **2.1.4 Prayer Initiative Burning Bush, Switzerland**

Encouraged by the call for a “Return to the Upper Room”, Deacon Urban Camenzind and Fr. Leo Tanner wrote a booklet entitled *Burning Bush. A Prayer Initiative* in 2006 to motivate parishes where faith courses were held to start Eucharistic Adoration. In Lucerne, the church *Mariahilf* (Our Lady of Help), closed for ten years, was given in 2010 by the Bishop to the association, *Verein Pro Mariahilf* under the leadership of Camenzind for use as a House of Prayer with Eucharist Adoration, a School of Prayer and other ministries.

Also in close proximity to this church is the Royal Chapel of St Leonhard, which in 2010 began Eucharistic Adoration, beginning every week on Monday night, lasting day and night, until Sunday morning, alternately carried out by around 200 worshippers.<sup>29</sup>

### **2.1.5 Initiative Pentecost of the Nations**

ICCRS (International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services) is an international organization, serving the worldwide Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church (CCR) as a center of coordination, information and communication and is the connecting link of this movement with the Vatican.<sup>30</sup>

The initiative Pentecost of the Nations was started by ICCRS.<sup>31</sup> The first Pentecost and the Upper Room in Jerusalem is the beginning, “a beginning that continues,” as Pope Francis said in the Eucharistic celebration at the Pentecost meeting with the Ecclesial Movements in 2013.

The Pentecost Novena is fed out of deep wells of grace. In 1895, at the urging of the Blessed Sr. Elena Guerra, Pope Leo XIII asked all believers to pray permanently a solemn novena (i.e. a nine-day prayer) between Ascension and Pentecost for the unity of Christians. Leo XIII proposed a special prayer from Ps 104:30 for it: “Send forth Your Spirit and the face of the earth will be new”.

“Pentecost of the Nations” consists of two parts: the Upper Room Project, a nine-day Pentecost Novena, if possible, day and night; and celebratory events on Pentecost in every country and every nation. It is an answer that the worldwide CR gives to the intention that Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis repeatedly gave expression to: the spirituality of Pentecost should spread a new “culture of Pentecost” in the Church that contributes to a new evangelization. ICCRS spreads the initiative “Pentecost of the Nations” on its website and in its International Newsletter in five languages.<sup>32</sup>

### **2.1.6 House of Prayer Augsburg**

The House of Prayer Augsburg was founded by young charismatic Catholics led by Jutta and Dr. Johannes Hartl in 2005. Inspired by a variety of prayer movements, including the International House of Prayer Kansas City (see below), the vision included from the start a strong ecumenical orientation carried predominantly by Catholics. The House of Prayer grew particularly quickly since 2008, so the 24/7 Prayer has not been interrupted since September 2011.<sup>33</sup> Twenty full-time staff and about 70 volunteers help keep continuous prayer from falling silent. Their annual “MORE” Conference attracts thousands of participants. Through the travelling ministry of Johannes Hartl and a strong presence on the internet, the House of Prayer Augsburg has become known in Europe and has inspired many other new Houses of Prayer, especially in the Catholic context. Houses of Prayer in Switzerland, Croatia, Romania and prayer groups in other European nations are influenced by Augsburg. The House of Prayer Augsburg is part of the Charismatic Renewal and specially associated with the diocese of Augsburg.<sup>34</sup>

### **2.1.7 24/7 Prayer of the Loretto Community**

The Loretto Community was founded in Vienna in 1987 by a group of three students. After a pilgrimage to Medjugorje, they met once a week to pray the Rosary. There are now about 30 Loretto youth prayer groups in Austria and beyond. The community consists of priests and married and single lay people. The group has grown to 340 members, including 13 religious and diocesan priests, as well as 63 postulants. In 2012, the Community was recognized by the Austrian bishops as a “private association of the faithful” *ad experimentum* for 5 years. Up to 6,000 young people come to Salzburg for the annual “Festival of Youth.” Since 2010 there is an increasing praxis of 24/7 prayer developing. In 2011, leaders

of Loretto came in contact with the House of Prayer Augsburg. Meanwhile, Loretto organizes every other week a 24/7 prayer week in Salzburg and Vienna, where dozens of young people participate. There are 24/7 opportunities in other cities, also 24/1 offers, i.e. 24 hours on one day. Characteristic of Loretto is the connection of Eucharistic Adoration with creative elements, as in 24/7 and the praise dimension. In Salzburg, Loretto works in ecclesial spaces with strong support of the Diocesan leadership. Meanwhile, a similar prayer center within the Spiritual Center Operngasse Vienna (under the direction of Loretto) is being established.<sup>35</sup>

### **2.1.8 In the Beginning**

Interestingly, the model of “Houses of Prayer” was discussed and implemented experimentally in several places at the beginning of the Charismatic Movement in the Catholic Church.<sup>36</sup>

## **2.2 Examples from the Protestant Sphere**

Specific places where intercession and praise are maintained over many hours are currently spreading on every continent, particularly among charismatic Christians in various denominations. Most often, the vision of 24-hour prayer is at least being considered. There are still no official figures, but a conservative estimate is that there are at least 300 houses of worship in the US and 50 in Europe, which often developed independently from each other. To date, there is no umbrella organization, however, there have been various attempts to make contact between leaders of Houses of Prayer at national or international level. In general, this movement is dominated by non-denominational Christians who are open to the participation of Catholics.

### **2.2.1 24/7 prayer**

In 1999 the young Briton Pete Greig started a movement that aims to enable especially young people to have a creative experience in prayer. The concept involves the installation of “prayer rooms”, where day and night hourly prayer shifts are taken on. The free design of this time has priority: you can play music, paint, dance, keep silence or attach prayer notes to a wall. 24/7 prayer became renowned world-wide by Pete Greig’s book “Red Moon Rising”<sup>37</sup> and has since been presented as single prayer weeks in thousands of places. Pete Greig, himself and the 24/7 prayer movement are generally in close proximity to the Holy Trinity Church in Brompton, London (HTB), where also the famous Alpha courses originated.<sup>38</sup>

### **2.2.2 International House of Prayer Kansas City (IHOPKC)**

In 1999, the International House of Prayer Kansas City started in Kansas City, USA, under the direction of Pastor Mike Bickle. He was already known at that time in the world's charismatic scene as a non-denominational pastor, speaker and author. He and his team developed a "prayer liturgy," which he called "Harp and Bowl" and began 24 hour prayer, day and night, with live non-stop music<sup>39</sup>. IHOPKC has never interrupted the 24-hour praise since September 1999. Through live web streams, famous worship musicians, large conferences and Mike Bickle's extensive teaching, IHOPKC has meanwhile become internationally known. IHOPKC has inspired many other houses of prayer. Better known and established IHOPKC inspired Houses of Prayer are Atlanta House of Prayer (24/7 live worship since 2006) and Sukkat Hallel in Jerusalem (24/7 since 2004)<sup>40</sup>.

### **2.2.3 House of Prayer Freiburg**

In the late 90s, a non-denominational Christian, Rainer Harter had the impulse to create a service of prayer and reconciliation in Freiburg. He and his team began to organize worship evenings, which have taken place every two months in various Catholic, Protestant and Free Church communities in Freiburg and attract several hundred visitors. Since 2003, the heart of the work of the House of Prayer is in an inner city church, with prayer more than 100 hours a week. Some prayer meetings have predetermined concerns (Israel, the city of Freiburg, youth, etc.), others are more spontaneous. Different forms of prayer are used and the focus of the hour can vary: intercession, praise and worship, silence, meditation with the Bible. The prayer meetings are usually led by volunteer Christians from different denominations. Catholics participate, too.<sup>41</sup>

### **2.2.4 Mountains of Prayer and Prayer Rooms**

The Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, South Korea, under the direction of Paul Yonggi-Cho is one of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God and supposedly has about one million members, for a long time the largest single church in the world. Prayer played an important role here from the beginning. In 1973 a plot of land in Seoul was inaugurated as "Prayer Mountain." Since then hundreds of thousands of people have made pilgrimages there to pray in one of the many small "prayer grottos" or in even larger meeting rooms. Yonggi-Cho's book "Prayer: Key to Revival" made the idea of prayer mountains, prayer nights and constant prayer day and night, known internationally, especially in the non-denominational world.<sup>42</sup>

In Germany a "Prayer Mountain for all Nations" began in Lüdenscheid (within the context of "Free Christian Youth Community" of Walter Heidenreich). The "TOS-Services" headed by Jobst Bittner set up prayer rooms in Tübingen and later in Leipzig, in which individual intercessors pray alternatingly day and night.

### **2.2.5 Global Day of Prayer**

In the 20th century, the global ecclesial landscape had changed dramatically through the massive growth of Evangelical and Pentecostal Free Churches. In July 2000, the businessman Graham Power in South Africa began a movement called "Global Day of Prayer"<sup>43</sup>, which particularly appealed to these communities. The vision was to gather Christians of different denominations into a global prayer network. Initially mainly African nations were reached but now there are prayer meetings in 220 nations with millions of participants.

In Germany, the prayer network "Watchmen" (Wächterruf) was established in 2000 by Ortwin Schweitzer.<sup>44</sup> It has 240 groups covering every hour of the week through prayer in different places.

## **2.3 Ecumenical Examples**

### **2.3.1 Week of Prayer for Unity and Alliance Week of Prayer**

The idea for worldwide ecumenical prayer at an agreed time came as early as the ecumenical movement of the early 20th century. The worldwide "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" is traditionally held from January 18th to 25th each year. In consideration of the Week of Prayer of the Evangelical Alliance, also in January, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is sometimes held in the period from Ascension to Pentecost. Responsible are the World Council of Churches, founded in 1948, and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The materials are always prepared by the senior ecumenical bodies of a specific country (in Germany, the Council of Christian Churches, ACK<sup>45</sup>).

The Week of Prayer continues the "Octave for Christian Unity" begun in 1908 and promoted by Popes Pius X and Benedict XV. This prayer initiative reaches all member churches of the ACK. In addition to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January, there is in the week before, the already mentioned Alliance Week of Prayer.<sup>46</sup> It reaches all churches, communities and works that are connected to the Evangelical Alliance in Germany. Memberships overlap frequently in the ACK and the Evangelical Alliance.

## **2.4 The Diversity of Prayer Initiatives – A Conclusion**

Apart from the examples mentioned here, there are countless other prayer initiatives worldwide. Many of them were inspired by the Charismatic Renewal, which occurs in almost all Christianity around the world. The experience of personal renewal through the Holy Spirit ("baptism in the Holy Spirit"), which

many people experience in the Charismatic Renewal worldwide, also leads to a renewal of their personal prayer life.<sup>47</sup>

Many people are drawn to these new prayer initiatives as a help in their desire to spend more time in every type of prayer — blessing, petition, intercession, thanksgiving and praise. The various prayer groups and prayer meetings that have arisen are a great encouragement to those who seek to “pray constantly”.<sup>48</sup>

## **Part 3. Comments and Suggestions for Catholic Houses of Prayer**

The quest for perpetual prayer that Christianity has always been characterized by, is currently being rediscovered in many denominations. Previously, you entered the monastery or became a hermit if you wanted to dedicate your life to prayer. Now, lay people who live in the world look for new ways to pray in common and individually over a longer period of time. This development, which can also be observed in the Catholic Church, appears to be a surprising fruit of the Vatican Council II. It might be called a prayer movement that has diverse faces in different parts of the world. In the previous chapter we gave several examples.

This development is perceived with great joy. Its universality is a good indication that it is a work of the Holy Spirit. Many young people are enthusiastic about it and committed to faith and prayer. A special form of this prayer movement is the so-called “house of prayer” where Christians from a whole region can gather for prayer. This is a fairly recent development, which is still trying to find its form. In the following text we want to clarify some aspects of this form, in order to prevent any, due to youthful enthusiasm, from deviating from the right path and accidentally drifting into areas that are not for the glory of God and the good of the people. We want to highlight and form an awareness of this, so as to avoid the occasional possible “accidents”.

### **3.1 Houses of Prayer**

First some aspects are mentioned which are typical of those houses of prayer with prayer around the clock (or desiring it). Charismatic prayer forms like praise, inspired singing, free praying, and the use of the gift of tongues are important elements in the structuring of the prayer times. Intimacy with Jesus is sought and promoted. This is about a personal encounter with Jesus, who is perceived as alive and present. Here the renewal of bridal love with the Lord also plays a prominent role. Other houses of prayer have almost exclusively Eucharistic adoration.

- Full-time staff and volunteers develop a form of communal life around the house of prayer, building on the experiences of prayer groups and new spiritual communities.
- Many houses of prayer are open to members of other denominations. So there are ecumenical and inter-denominational prayer times. In some places trans-regional ecumenical houses of prayer arise.
- Many who pray there are strongly aware of the afflictions in the world and the urgency of our times. This helps and influences their motivation

for intercession, seeking to have a positive impact on this world. Part of that is the practice of prophecy by speaking into concrete geopolitical situations that reflects inspiration regarding the perspective of God. In some places, prayer is intertwined with an expectation of Christ's imminent return.

- Some houses of prayer use the full spectrum of modern technology, for example, for praise (sound) or creating a special atmosphere during prayer times (light). The communication channels of the Internet are also used for live streaming, to provide videos, audios and text materials and to rapidly disseminate information.

We will discuss each of these areas, listing as an overview: possibilities and dangers<sup>49</sup>. Each topic should be individually treated in depth, to determine where there is a chance of problems developing, where caution is currently required, and where there is urgent need for action to avert a dangerous situation.

### 3.1.1 Forms of prayer

Whoever wants to pray for a long time, can't help but draw on the diversity of different forms of prayer and prayer traditions.

- Houses of prayer that are strongly steeped in worship, music and spoken prayers, should not forget the value of silence. On the other hand houses of prayer that mainly have silent adoration might gain another dynamic through times of praise. This might attract an additional circle of other worshipers. (See also the statement of the Theological Committee on different worship styles in the Youth in the appendix to this brochure.)
- Where there is mainly free prayer, the rich treasure of already written prayers (psalms, songs, litanies etc.) could bring relief and enrichment. Where mainly traditional prayers are in use, the experience of freely formulated prayers can bring renewal and give a more personal note to the prayer.
- Especially for young or vulnerable people there is a danger that prayer becomes escapism. A person who is afraid of the social and ecclesial life with all its demands, may be tempted to seek a safe haven in prayer. A person who does not like himself and/or has difficulty building relationships with others, may choose to spend his time in prayer in order to avoid uncomfortable situations. Caution should be exercised when these individuals devote several hours a day almost exclusively to prayer.
- Strong praise can change the atmosphere and open up the heart for God. But long-lasting, monotonous rhythms, repeated frequently, often cause changes in consciousness that make people susceptible for mass

phenomena and manipulation.<sup>50</sup> Again, it is important to find the right measure, so that the music really serves the prayer.<sup>51</sup>

### 3.1.2 Community aspects

Where people have a common goal, group dynamics will be involved. These situations provide an opportunity and a source of strength, but also a challenge and a risk for manipulation.

- Each group has its leader. The clearer his or her role is defined, the easier life together becomes. Different styles of leadership include different possibilities and dangers.
  - a) For houses of prayer that are primarily dealing with lay people who in addition to the work in the house of prayer have their everyday life, a coordinating management function is certainly more appropriate than structures that include obedience like in a religious community.
  - b) The notion that there is no leader necessary is an illusion. The problem is that someone will be forced to hide his/her leadership and will have to manipulate instead of being able to lead an open process of decision-making.
  - c) There should be clearly identified persons responsible for each prayer time. This task can be taken over by many: the coordinator of the prayer house, full-time and volunteer staff, priests and lay persons.
  - d) The risk of religious abuse<sup>52</sup> must be named explicitly. It is particularly big if the exercise of prophetic gifts and leadership are in one hand or if spiritual guidance and personal advice are combined with leadership functions.
- For full-time staff, financial security must be ensured, including provision for sick leave, medical insurance and old-age pensions. In addition, the legal rules of occupational safety must be observed. Also, for volunteers who spend a lot of time in the house of prayer, there is a duty of supervision. They are to be encouraged and supported to make sure they also have the above mentioned securities sufficiently provided for.
- Experience has shown that there is a potential for conflict if full-time and volunteer staff work together. There should not be a two-class society.
- Dealing with property and finance requires care and attention, since temptations are great in this area. Jesus warned already against the negative influence of mammon (Matthew 6:24). The best protection against abuse in the financial field is a maximum transparency with

both the staff and superordinate supervisory authorities. In most cases it will be the appropriate diocese. The financial responsibility should not be exclusively in the hands of the leader, but jointly with (an) other responsible person(s) (economist, accountants, etc.). The audit by an outside firm grants additional protection against misuse.

- The involvement and consultation of consecrated persons, who already have a living experience with communal life and in leadership of communities allows an enlargement of the perspective. They can attest to what is time-proven and what has proven to be a wrong track. It is a mistake to believe that in the new prayer models everything is done better than in traditional religious or other new spiritual communities.

### 3.1.3 Ecumenical involvement

A house of prayer does not have to be ecumenical in order to be called a house of prayer. But there is a blessing on the coming together of Christians and their common prayer. The great intercessions of Jesus before his passion and death are tied to the prayer that all who believe in him may be one (Jn 17:21-23).

- Purely Catholic houses of prayer may open up to invite other groups to participate in times of prayer or to have their own prayer times in their house<sup>53</sup>. Where perpetual adoration is held, it might be considered to have occasional prayer times without the Blessed Sacrament exposed possibly enabling members of other denominations to participate.
- Catholic houses of prayer whose emphasis is on ecumenism need to take special care to assure they are bound to the local Church and are approved by the diocese. Thereby ecumenism will start from the Catholic roots and from there opening to other confessions and denominations. The so-called “grassroots” ecumenism, which consists in common practice (prayer) must be complemented and supported by knowledge of the theological issues and differences.
- Theological influences from other denominations can be enriching and offer new impulses for reflection but they must be discerned in an appropriate way. A simplistic ecumenism, which only consists in praying together, will not last in the long run.<sup>54</sup>
- One temptation must be stated explicitly: ecumenical openness cannot provide a blank check for everything that has difficulties to find its place in the Catholic Church. Catholic houses of prayer are not a new structure that can grow independently from the existing local church.

### 3.1.4 Dealing with visions for the future

In American houses of prayer such as the International House of Prayer Kansas

City the exercise of prophetic gifts, as they are in use by the prophetic movement, plays a decisive role.<sup>55</sup> This understanding of prophecy is not without problems for Catholics.<sup>56</sup>

- With the above mentioned understanding of prophecy often comes a special understanding of the end-time. An overview of various expressions of end-time understanding can be found in the digression in part 4 of this booklet.
- Not everything that is presented as prophetic is actually prophetic. Discernment is essential here. This is not always easy and therefore takes time and energy. Unfortunately it is not always practiced sufficiently.
- So-called “prophesying” can be abused to gain power, prestige, recognition or similar things. It then rather serves personal gains instead of building the Kingdom and serving the good of others.<sup>57</sup>
- Prophesying involves something really exciting: God himself speaks apparently directly (immediately) to us (to me). There is danger that this could become a short-cut to avoid the difficult path of discernment and personal decisions. Especially new converts can easily be drawn into this direction. The dangers of abuse and spiritual pride on the part of those who exercise the gift must not be overlooked: Who can speak with certainty on behalf of the infinite God?
- There is the danger that those who hear and receive prophecies into their life may begin to make them a primary source of their spirituality, becoming excessive in their search for the supernatural and immediate experiences of God.
- In statements about the end time, the people of the First Covenant often play a crucial role in the understanding of these end times and the return of Christ. This can lead to problematic interpretations of current Middle East policy and the role of Israel as a nation. Rather than embracing alleged prophetic statements too quickly, it is necessary to know the official positions of the Church and to take a good look at them (see note 99).
- One temptation is to want to understand and interpret everything. Even Jesus has not answered all questions. He only promised that there will be a day on which the questions come to rest (Jn 16:23). Trustful surrender to Him, entering into peace despite great life issues that we do not understand, is a sign of a certain spiritual maturity.
- The tasks and spirituality of a house of prayer must not be bound to a special eschatological model. About this we offer the digression in part 4 of this booklet.

In conclusion we note that authentic prophecy will include a call to prayer and a call to action, which means it contains concrete impulses for action and encourages and enables us to practice charity.

### 3.1.5 The use of technology

Contemporary technical capabilities include great opportunities, but how to use them must be learned. As in everything, “too much” provokes certain dangers.

- High decibels cause increased release of adrenaline, which can lead to ecstasy-like states of mind.<sup>58</sup> This stimulation in the brain, for example caused by constant loud praise with strong basses, is not to be mistaken for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Especially in times of musical “smog” unplugged music gains a new value. If only a few people are present in a prayer time or a prayer room, from time to time all electronically reinforcing technology should be eliminated to facilitate another dimension of authenticity and immediacy.<sup>59</sup>
- Because of the possibilities of global networking and the high speed of dissemination of information, the responsibility for what is distributed becomes greater. For example, the information may need to be differently nuanced because in other regions and countries the life situations can be quite different and the same message might imply quite a different meaning.
- In some houses of prayer, prayer times are directly broadcasted via live-stream. Where such a transmission is received the opportunities and challenges are similar to transmissions of Mass on television. It can facilitate a real participation in the prayer, but it can also lead to profanation of prayer as a background while people are busy with other things. When do watching or listening cease to be prayer and become a disregard of something inherently holy? This question arises both for the private reception at home and for common reception in the prayer room.
- If prayer times are broadcast via live-stream, it increases the number of recipients. Primarily this is an opportunity to give absentees a chance to participate in the grace. However, at the same time there is a danger of self-elevation and a feeling of omnipotence. An ample inner maturity is needed in order not to succumb to these temptations. Through use of the media, private prayer becomes public prayer. This can sometimes be appropriate, but must be balanced by private and common times when everyone goes into his or her room and closes the door behind them (Mt 6:6).
- From the International House of Prayer Kansas City (IHOPKC) it is known that people with computers and smartphones are present in the prayer room, while others have times of praise. Especially the use of

smartphones arouses the question of the distinction between sacred and profane places and times. Fasting has always played an important role in Christianity — now new forms of “fasting from technology” might be developed. A person who intends to use a computer or smartphone with internet connection only for Bible reading and Bible study during a prayer time has to be strong in order to withstand the other temptations and distractions.

### 3.2 Psychology of young movements

Many emerging groups and movements succumb to the temptation to think the novelty of their approach is better than what there has been before in the Church. Then they will look down on others and believe themselves to be the future (of the Church or the world) and to feel tremendously important. This tendency of self-aggrandizement is quite normal and it is hard to prevent. Still, it is good to point it out and to warn of it, so the responsibility can be taken to handle it consciously. The following might be helpful:

- Houses of prayer are only one element in a much bigger prayer movement. They are just one recent formation of a great prayer tradition that has existed throughout the centuries.
- Use the expression “the house of prayer” with caution as it may lead to a simplistic biblical understanding. It will always be only one place of prayer, among many others, part of a long tradition. The promise from Isaiah 56:7 picked up again by Jesus himself (Mk 11:17) “My house will be called a house of prayer for all peoples” is by no means exclusive to one place, but realized in the whole Church.
- Keep the awareness alive that Jesus is the savior of the world. He is the intercessor before God, in whose prayer we may share and in whose prayer we can enter. The Church also prays everyday all over the world for all people and all intentions. The prayer of the individual in a house of prayer is important, but not decisive for the salvation of the world. Here also lies a danger of self-elevation, which is especially a temptation for people with inferiority complexes.
- Prevent the tendency to look down on other groups in the Church. It is best to be in a lively dialogue with them, not so much to show them our own gifting, but to learn from them and listen to them. Beside the young vine of an emerging house of prayer there are many old vines that have proven themselves well over the years, even if they have become somewhat knotted and twisted and have suffered some scars.
- It can be very revealing to contemplate failed attempts at prayer and

community life – and this not to think oneself better, but to learn from their mistakes and keep the possibility in mind that one's own foundation might fail as well. This is a very effective remedy for fantasies of megalomania and grandeur.

- The way reports of events are formulated is revealing regarding the underlying self-image. Adjectives like amazing, extraordinary, unique, significant, outstanding, excellent, special, one of a kind, meaningful, super, hyper, epochal, phenomenal, splendid, spectacular, brilliant, overwhelming, considerable, and the like are good evidence of an exaggerated self-perception. The handling of figures also is revealing. Jesus did not count followers. Only his disciples did that in two situations. The Gospels rather give the impression that he pulled back from large crowds. Every temptation to be made their superior or king he escaped. The value of a prayer meeting is not decided by the number of participants. On the contrary, large numbers of participants increase psychological mass phenomena, making it difficult to distinguish what is human and what is inspired by the Spirit.
- Young foundations right from the beginning need to be accompanied intensively by individuals outside of the community. Here different points of view are of great advantage. A good indicator for spiritual health and human maturity is the handling of inquiries and of possible criticism. The person who is willing to let himself be questioned in order to search for new and more mature answers, is on a good path

### 3.3 Considerations regarding the House of Prayer Augsburg

A lively presence in the media, a rapid development, the size of the conferences and the traveling activities make the House of Prayer Augsburg seem to be a lighthouse to people who yearn for more prayer. Many are motivated to launch similar initiatives in their regions. This pioneering role enables learning by modeling and the exchange and sharing of experiences. Yet it must not be overlooked that even Augsburg is still a young model on its way to maturity, and that its integration in the local structures of the Catholic Church is still in process. As in the previous topics there are chances and dangers in this.

- A lot can be learned from pioneers that serve as a model. But when sharing with people from other houses of prayer it has to be discerned between what proved itself to be good elsewhere and what the Spirit wants to inspire for your own place.
- Those who are inspired or guided by the House of Prayer Augsburg or the International House of Prayer Kansas City, should not feel under

pressure because of the multitude of their programs: not all houses of prayer need to teach and publish as they do. There can be houses of prayer without big conferences and live-streams, etc.

- Prayer around the clock (24/7) is a desirable goal, but need not be realized everywhere. It is better to move in small steps, to take time to grow into the depth, instead of asking too much of those motivated to pray and exhausting them in an atmosphere of "it is not yet enough."
- Just as houses of prayer are only one expression of the prayer movement, House of Prayer Augsburg is only one example of how houses of prayer can be organized. It is never good when one expression becomes exclusive, either in organization or in teaching. After Pentecost the new converts kept "to the teaching of the apostles." Note the plural! On one hand, the examples and suggestions given in this study guide offer the possibility to become acquainted with different houses of prayer and prayer styles. On the other hand, the Endnotes include important source references and literature recommendations that will be useful for those who would like to study some of the subjects in depth.
- As already mentioned, the ecumenical orientation of a house of prayer brings its own challenges. A first step therefore might be the development of a Catholic house of prayer that is integrated locally, enabling a variety of local groups and a variety of different spiritualities to participate and approach each other in prayer.

### 3.4 The House in the Storm

In conclusion it should be emphasized once again that we see in the desire for houses of prayer and their implementation a work of the Spirit for our time. The above-mentioned challenges and potential dangers are not meant to be a fundamental questioning of these developments; but an effort to protect and guard a precious treasure. The dangers lurk where there is one-sidedness and over-emphasis. If the balance is lost, things get off track. Awareness and appreciation of diversity in the kingdom of God are essential. Persons who are receptive for differences and for otherness will eventually encounter the entirely Other in new and surprising ways.

The discernment of spirits is a great art. In Matthew's Gospel we hear of the good tree which is recognized by its good fruits (Matt 7:15ff). But how is the *quality* of the fruits recognized? This discernment is not easy and takes time. The number of fruits is certainly not a sufficient criterion. In this context, Jesus specifically warns of false prophets, who even called him "Lord" and yet never enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt 7: 21-23). A key to the distinction is provided by the

subsequent parable of the house on the rock: only the storm that was survived gives evidence that a house is built on solid ground and anchored solidly. The one who has personally undergone severe trials knows that he has not suffered bravely, but could only live through them trembling. Afterwards he is filled with an astonishing gratitude for the fact that the house is still upright after the storm and that faith and trust have been supporting him. In other words, the one who has gone through the storm is aware of his limits and has become more humble in new ways. Humility is the decisive factor in the discernment of newly emerging works, especially if they want to have a certain impact on others and expand their work as they mature. The one who has not gone through the storm yet should beware of pride, for he cannot know if his house will remain steadfast. But those who have the storm behind them have been so shaken that they know deep within, it is only grace that can give stability to their work and their prayer.

## Part 4. Digression: The International House of Prayer Kansas City as an End Time Movement

The first Christians lived and prayed with a joyful expectation, “Maranatha – come, Lord Jesus.” For today’s worshipers and praying people, the question arises of how such a joyful mood can be newly obtained. For it is an undeniable fact that many centuries have passed since the early Church. It is therefore not surprising that over and over again throughout the centuries and strongly so since the 19th century many models have emerged, which are supposed to fill the gap between a near expectation of the Lord and the coming kingdom. In view of very specific end-time models in parts of the house of prayer movement, it is important to us to note, in the first place, that tasks and spirituality of a house of prayer must not be necessarily bound to a specific eschatological model.

### 4.1 Millennialism in Christian tradition

In many churches and communities of evangelical, Pentecostal and charismatic orientation “millennialism,” the expectation of the Kingdom that lasts 1000 years (the Millennium) according to the Book of Revelation (Rev 20:2-7) is an integral part of the eschatological faith.<sup>60</sup> This also applies to the International House of Prayer Kansas City (IHOPKC). In its practice of 24/7 prayer the end times and the closeness of the millennium plays an important part. Numerous lectures of Mike Bickle deal with this subject, and the prayer movement under its formative influence is embedded in the events of the near end, is an active part of its preparation. The House of Prayer movement often understands, it is helping to shape the time until the end and even to hasten and bring it about. It sees itself as an “End time Prayer Movement” and sees itself as “Forerunners.” Therefore, here is some information on millennialism and its specific expression in IHOPKC.

There are two forms of millennialism — also called chiliasm, from the Greek word “*chilia*” for thousand — postmillennialism and premillennialism. According to the so-called “*postmillennialism*” the return of Christ is to take place *after* the 1,000 years of the millennium, therefore *post*. According to *premillennialism* a first coming of Christ is *before* the 1,000 years take place, i.e. before the millennium, therefore *pre*. In both cases there is after the millennium, after the 1,000 years, the second and final coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment, and then the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. Today, the widely dominant belief is premillennialism, the first eschatological coming of Christ will take place before the millennium.<sup>61</sup>

While some church fathers championed millennialism, it was no longer a tradition of the Church at least since Origen (185-254) in the East and St. Augustine (354-430) in the West, who initially advocated millennialism. Justin Martyr (100-165), the Bishop and Martyr Irenaeus of Lyons (130-202) and Lactantius (240-320) are usually named as early representatives of millennialism. Irenaeus advocates in his five books “Against Heresies” (Adv. Haeres.) a premillennialism that sees the millennium as a time of preparation for the final creation of a new heaven and a new earth, as well as the time when the promises to Israel are fulfilled (Adv. Haeres. V, 31-36).<sup>62</sup> The great Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-1988) sees important fundamental concerns of Irenaeus represented, not least in the dialogue with Judaism and with today’s experience of the world, but at the same time speaks of “as the perhaps clumsy conclusion of his fundamental Christian anti-Platonic endeavor of (Irenaeus, the authors) to tie God’s salvation to man, to the earth and to history.” The critical part is the doubling of the end time expectation: “His insertion of this transfigured earth in between the resurrection and the judgment is admittedly awkward, and yet anti-spiritualising tendency of his eschatology (*nihil allegorizari potest, sed omnia firma et vera*) is heartening.”<sup>63</sup> It is therefore probably less the so-called “Constantinian shift”<sup>64</sup> which led to the end of millennialism in the Church, but the doubling in eschatology connected with it. A variety of millennialism became historically significant once again in the Middle Ages with Joachim of Fiore (ca. 1135-1202). He expected the dawn of a “Third Kingdom” of the Spirit for the year 1260, but understood the number thousand symbolically.<sup>65</sup> Since then, millennialism is found only in communities at the margins of the traditional churches.

The Protestant churches or denominations after the Reformation like Lutheran, Reformed (Calvinist), Anglican rejected millennialism, championing the so-called “amillennialism.” On the Catholic side there was in 1944, a request to the Holy Office from Chile, what to think of a “moderate” chiliasm (whether premillennialism or postmillennialism) that received a negative answer: “The system of moderate chiliasm cannot be taught with certainty” (DH 3839)<sup>66</sup>. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) confirmed and accentuated the rejection of a realization of the messianic kingdom in historical time, known as “messianism”: “The Church has rejected even modified forms of this falsification of the kingdom to come, under the name millenarianism.” The CCC emphasized particularly the rejection of “secular messianism,” i.e. salvation ideologies for this world (CCC 676).<sup>67</sup>

Millennialistic beliefs are found in communities such as the Anabaptists, in parts of Puritanism and later in parts of the Protestant revival movements, initially in the form of postmillennialism.<sup>68</sup>

## 4.2 Postmillennialism and Premillennialism

Postmillennialism since the 17th/18th centuries expects the return of Christ after the Kingdom of thousand years, the millennium.<sup>69</sup> The order of events before the millennium is imagined approximately as follows: after a number of positive developments like a great revival, the conversion of the Jewish people, the downfall of the papacy (the Pope was often seen in North American Protestantism as the Antichrist), a widespread Christianization of state and society follows (maybe smoothly) a transition into the millennium. Then, *after* the millennium, there is the return of Christ. Renowned postmillennialists were the important Württembergian pietist and Lutheran prelate Johannes Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752), known from the Greek Nestle-Aland edition of the New Testament; the great North American revivalist Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), involved with the First Great Awakening in America (in the 30s and 40s of the 18th century); and in the 19th century, the protagonist of the second revival in the US (from about 1790 to about 1840) Charles Grandison Finney (1792-1875). The strong social commitment of Finney, e.g. abolition of slavery and the prohibition of alcohol, was based on his postmillennialism.

## 4.3 Premillennialism and Dispensationalism

The profound social, economic and cultural changes at the end of the 18th and throughout the 19th century also led to a change of religious beliefs.<sup>70</sup> The removal of Pope Pius VI from office in 1796 in the wake of the revolutionary wars and thus the expectation of the end of the papacy that was considered anti-Christian with the death of the Pope in 1799, anti-Christian tendencies in the wake of the French Revolution, the de-Christianization in the emerging industrial centers, not least rationalist tendencies in theology led to a revival of millennialism. In contrast to the more optimistic postmillennialism before, in the 19th century premillennialism prevailed more and more. A 1791 track of the Chilean (former) Jesuit Manuel Lacunza (1701-1801) on the return of Christ, published under the pseudonym of a Jewish rabbi, was significant.<sup>71</sup> It was the co-founder of the eschatologically oriented Catholic Apostolic Church, the Scottish Presbyterian minister Edward Irving (1792-1834), who translated it into English and thus influenced especially the English-speaking millennialism of the 19th century. This millennialism spread widely, primarily through John Nelson Darby (1800-1882), a former priest of the Anglican Church of Ireland, the founder of a Brethren movement that kept itself strictly apart from all existing churches and founder of dispensationalism.<sup>72</sup>

Dispensationalism regards all of history — and reads the Bible in this sense — as a succession of divine salvation periods, known as “households” or

“dispensations.” Classically, there are seven dispensations. In this scheme, the expectation of the millennium is inserted in the form of premillennialism. We are at the end of the sixth dispensation, near the millennium. Of particular importance is the relation of the fifth and sixth dispensations, on the people of Israel i.e. the Old Testament and on the Church.

The sixth dispensation of the Church that is about to end, approaches the impending return of Christ *prior* to the millennium. There is a specific end time scheme: the Rapture of the Church (1 Thess 4:17), the time of the Great Tribulation (Mk 13:5-32), the gathering of Israel, the appearance of the Antichrist, the punishment or even destruction of unbelieving Israel, a terrible final war ending in the battle of Armageddon (Rev 16:16), the return of Christ, the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom with the redemption of the promises made to Israel regarding land and Temple and the binding of Satan for 1,000 years. To identify the events preceding the millennium and with regard to the redemption of the promise made to Israel, especially the prophetic and apocalyptic texts of the Old Testament, primarily the book of Daniel, and the New Testament, primarily the Book of Revelation, are used. Characteristic of dispensationalism is the separation of the salvation history of Israel from that of the Church. The salvation history of Israel is interrupted by the time of the Church and continued in the Millennial Kingdom and brought to its end. Here the Old Testament prophetic promises given to Israel find their fulfillment. The time of the church appears as an interlude between the dispensation of salvation for Israel and its fulfillment in the millennium.

This premillennialism which is now widespread is a product of the 19th century. It was widely circulated through the Reference Bible by Cyrus Scofield (1843-1921). It is estimated that about a third of evangelicals in the US are adherents of dispensationalism (evangelical is understood here in the broad sense, including Pentecostals and non-denominational charismatics).<sup>73</sup> The denomination in their statement of faith for dispensationalists is usually evangelical. A typical example is one of the most important dispensationalist schools in the US, the Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS). In it a general evangelical statement of faith is binding for all students, the “Essential Doctrinal Commitments.” Teachers and staff have a dispensationalist creed, which can be electronically verified, in the sense of the Scofield Bible: known as the “Full Doctrinal Statement.”<sup>74</sup> Dispensational premillennialism found wide popularization by best-selling authors such as Hal Lindsey (“Late Great Planet Earth”), who is an alumni of DTS; and the “Left Behind” book series by Tim LaHaye, et al. It is characteristic, that here not only Old Testament, prophetic and apocalyptic texts are used to understand the millennium and the events preceding it. These texts are also

applied to the present and especially the near future, in some cases there are very realistic war scenarios of the premillennialistic end times, especially in the Middle East.<sup>75</sup>

#### 4.4 Mike Bickle and IHOPKC

The founder and director of IHOPKC, Mike Bickle, is without doubt a self-confessed premillennialist. He also shares the premillennialistic expectation of the Lord’s imminent return, which is widespread in evangelical circles. Many patterns and schemes of dispensationalism can be also found in his writings, even though some of them have another emphasis. There is no need to discuss here how far his quite drastic applications of biblical texts on modern wars and future war events especially in the Middle East are prevalent in dispensational circles. Critics such as Andrew Jackson see Mike Bickle in the tradition of Hal Lindsey and his popular dispensationalism.<sup>76</sup>

Differing from the usual dispensational premillennialism Mike Bickle lacks their pessimistic view of the end-time. With him other hopes and visions dominate and here probably is a special position of his premillennialism, and also of his 24/7 project, providing an important reason for his appeal especially for young people. Before the end that is to come soon, there is still something to do and great things are to come. Nothing less is expected but the “greatest revival in history.” An ultimately “victorious Church” will pass through the End Times despite all the afflictions and persecutions. Here the influence of the “prophets” that left a mark at his beginnings, especially Bob Jones and Paul Cain, may be visible.<sup>77</sup> Therefore, in the premillennialism of Mike Bickle, we find obvious elements of the optimistic postmillennialism. At the center of this combination of premillennialism and postmillennialistic motives is the “victorious Church.” This is the cornerstone of his premillennialism.

Mike Bickle has concisely presented his position in regard to this in a systematical doctrinal text of 2011: “Historic premillennialism and the Victorious Church”.<sup>78</sup> The Millennium is provided with the subtitle “Heaven on Earth.”<sup>79</sup> In this text Mike Bickle declares himself and his project first as part of the “historic premillennialism,” rejects the pessimism of dispensational premillennialism and expressly embraces elements and strong points of postmillennialism, namely its faith in the creative power of the Church even and especially in the premillennial end time. Ultimately victorious, the Church is going to meet her King and Bridegroom who accedes his 1000-year Kingdom in Jerusalem. Also, Mike Bickle explicitly adopts spiritual aspects of amillennialism (as indeed is consistent practice in all the major churches). He thus combines the strengths of

post, pre, and amillennialism and deduces from those what the Church will be and is to become in this premillennial end time.<sup>80</sup>

Mike Bickle, like the Dallas Theological Seminary, differentiates between end-time teachings mandatory for students, staff, etc. that are more general and correspond to evangelical standards, and those that apply to those who teach at the University of IHOPKC, the IHOPU: “Core Convictions.”<sup>81</sup> The end-time teachings of Mike Bickle himself correspond to the “Core Convictions,” as can be seen in the answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ).<sup>82</sup>

#### 4.5 The Millennium in Theological Debate

Contemporary exegesis in the historic churches understands the millennium predominantly as “symbolic,” i.e. in the context of the imagery originating from the prophetic and apocalyptic tradition of Revelation.<sup>83</sup> Whether and to what extent the Book of Revelation refers to concrete historical events, is judged differently. The longtime chairman of the Theological Committee of the German CCR and biblical scholar Norbert Baumert: “It is therefore absurd to try to tie up individual scenes of this chapter with certain events in history.”<sup>84</sup> In contrast, the respected Anglican exegete Richard Bauckham, who seems open to evangelical concerns rejects a “merely” symbolic timeless interpretation. He wants to preserve the reference to the time of the author of Revelation and the churches as addressees. But he considers it a composite mistake to see the Book of Revelation as a “too literal” description of present and future reality.<sup>85</sup>

Both reject a “literal” interpretation of the millennium.<sup>86</sup> Baumert: “Even the binding of the dragon for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1ff) does not mean that there would be a time on earth, when neither the exponents of Satan ... nor he himself would have influence on the world.”<sup>87</sup> According to Bauckham, a literal understanding results in misunderstanding the meaning of the term: “The millennium is incomprehensible if we take the picture literally.”<sup>88</sup> As can be seen, the question of the millennium leads immediately to the question of the interpretation of the Book of Revelation as a whole.<sup>89</sup>

Even in the evangelical sphere there are, similar to the understanding of the creation story, different interpretations of and responses to the Millennium. The American theologian Wayne Grudem, very respected in evangelical circles, discusses in detail in his “Systematic Theology” the various interpretations of the millennium.<sup>90</sup> Although Grudem votes for a literal understanding of the millennium as a future event in the sense of premillennialism he is cautious with respect to details: “If we are convinced of this position, it really is an incidental

question, whether the thousand year period is thought to be a literal one thousand years or simply a long time of indeterminate duration. And though we may not have much clarity on all details of the nature of the millennium, we can be reasonably certain that there will be a future earthly reign of Christ that will be markedly different from this present age.”<sup>91</sup>

Roland Hardmeier, also with an evangelical background, discusses in great detail the various traditions of interpretation with respect to the millennium.<sup>92</sup> By stating that neither Jesus nor the apostles, nor Paul or Peter had spoken in their letters of a millennial Kingdom, he rejects a literal acceptance.<sup>93</sup>

#### 4.6 The Millennium – a Lasting Question

So what remains? It is obvious that the question of the millennium leads to highly contentious terrain with a number of open issues. Is the millennium, therefore, definitely dealt with in the Church or does something thorny remain with the subject of the millennium? The problems with the millennium are obvious: the potential doubling of end time expectations, the difficulties of interpretation of the Book of Revelation, and the absence of the millennium in the other New Testament writings.

In the tradition of the Church, the millennium has little relevance at least since St. Augustine. It is even rejected formally more or less explicitly in the Catechism in the Catholic Church (§676). This applies to the teaching of the Church, and it applies to the interpretation of Scripture. Hans Urs von Balthasar, who showed a certain sympathy for the millennialism of Irenaeus (see above) mentions in that context interpretations “that were recognized early as *deviations* (Italics added by the editor).”<sup>94</sup>

As regards the teaching of the Church the assertion is definite “it cannot be taught with certainty” (DH 3839). And: “The Church has rejected this distortion of the Messianic kingdom, even in its moderate variety of ‘millennialism’ (CCC §676). This is to be heeded and is binding. And therefore we have to differentiate in every case between an acknowledged ecclesial magisterial teaching tradition and a *theological* discussion of the topic.

But even in evangelical tradition there is, as we have seen, not *the* teaching or *the* only interpretation. Beside a clear rejection there are a variety of options. Wayne Grudem writes to evangelical addressees, that although he himself stands for the historical premillennialism, it is important also for evangelicals to realize, “that this area of study is complex and to extend a large measure of

grace to others who hold different views in regarding the millennium and the tribulation period.”<sup>95</sup>

There are various approaches to the subject. The Catholic theologian Medard Kehl, a member of the Theological Committee of the German CCR for several years, sees a permanent actuality in Irenaeus and his expectation of the millennium, insofar as it aims “despite its contemporaneous (apocalyptic) depiction” at a “*new form* of living together of the people in Christ’s kingdom on earth” and “believes the risen Jesus Christ capable of a creative power *in history*, which supersedes everything attained in the past and future.”<sup>96</sup> However, he adds elsewhere that “even this hope can only be lived in the sign of Christ Crucified” and that this hope must always reckon with the “lasting resistance of the powers of sin and death” until the general resurrection of the dead.<sup>97</sup> A similar line of argumentation is found with R. Bauckham, and Norbert Baumert presents the same view under the heading “looking for consolation in the beyond or ethics of the here and there.”<sup>98</sup> Here, the literal interpretation of the millennium is indeed rejected, but related contents are also taken up.

Authors that leave open the possibility of a “literal” interpretation of the millennium or at least do not want to deny the possibility, go one step further. They cite as their reason that this is most consistent with the literal sense of the Book of Revelation. Reference is also made to the promises given to Israel that are yet unfulfilled. Finally, as in the texts of St. Irenaeus, there is the hope for a more “earthly” realization of the kingdom of God, far from any spiritualization.<sup>99</sup>

To what extent this could be discussed theologically, should remain at least an open *question*.

Maybe it is not primarily the expectation of the millennium in itself that is problematic. The problem is the concrete content it is filled with, especially in view of the difficulties of interpretation. What is not possible for Catholics is the large extent to which Old Testament prophetic promises to Israel are disconnected from the history of the Church, as is done in dispensational premillennialism (see above).<sup>100</sup> This would be something entirely new in Church history. Very problematic are also the immediate applications of expectation of the millennium and other statements of the Book of Revelation to very concrete events of the present and the near future, possibly with a precise timetable. And that includes at least a part of the end-time teachings by Mike Bickle. The history of such applications and transfers is also a history of canards, of warnings not come true and expectations disappointed.

#### 4.7 A New Heaven and a New Earth

In expecting the millennium a key aspect of Christian and Jewish end-time expectation is preserved. With the words of the second Letter of Peter: “What we are waiting for is the new heavens and new earth where uprightness will be at home” (2 Peter 3:13). It is what Hans Urs von Balthasar emphasized regarding Irenaeus, the “Christian anti-Platonic fundamental desire to bind the salvation of God to the earth and history” (see above). “The End” is not something otherworldly, it applies to this earth. And “at the end” all the great prophetic promises and images of hope that Israel and the Church with Israel have received will be made true. These promises and hopes, too, are not merely for the beyond and the future. They are a light for us and for our world today, at the same time they have the markings of the invitation for us to strive in the here and now in our best endeavors for the re-creation of the world, for “justice, peace and preservation of creation.” Undoubtedly we find impulses with Mike Bickle here, which are important even without his premillennialism and his partially problematic hyperrealism.<sup>101</sup> Whether hope of the millennium is necessary to live up to the standard of an “earthly” manifestation of end-time expectation, it is an important issue in the dialogue between the Catholic Church (and also other churches, from the Lutherans and the Reformed to the Orthodox) and a not negligible part of evangelical, Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity.

At the end of his books on the City of God, “*De Civitate Dei*”, St. Augustine gives a moving description of the end, the “eternal eighth day of the Lord”. “There we shall rest and see, see and love, love and praise. This is what shall be in the end without end.”<sup>102</sup> This focus on the vision of God must remain linked to the promises, which are made in the final chapters of the last book of the Scriptures. “Then I saw *a new heaven and a new earth*; the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride dressed for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice call from the throne, Look, here God lives among human beings. *He will make his home among them, they will be his people*; and he will be their God, *God-with-them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes*, there will be no more death, and no more mourning, or sadness, or pain. The world of the past has gone. Then the One sitting on the throne spoke: ‘Look, I am making the whole of Creation new’” (Rev 21:1-5).

This paragraph is full of allusions to Old Testament prophetic texts and indicates here how all promises made to Israel are “suspended” as well, in the sense of having been transformed and filled with new meaning. The vision of St. Augustine and the Book of Revelation meet in the image of the new and eternal Jerusalem, whose light is God himself: “They will see him face to face and his

name will be written on their foreheads. And night will be abolished; they will not need lamplight or sunlight, because the Lord God will be shining on them. They will reign for ever and ever." (Rev 22:4-5).<sup>103</sup>

## Appendix

### **Opinion of the Theological Committee of the German CCR on Various Styles of Worship in the Youth of the German CCR (JCE)**

At any given time there have been different styles of worship and developments in the German CCR. This does not always occur smoothly, especially if there are different expectations for the style of worship within a group.

Recently, there are some groups that are inspired by the worship style of the House of Prayer Augsburg. The smooth transitions from song to song, the frequent repetitions and the spontaneous elements are a great help for some in prayer. Others feel, particularly the repetitions over a long period are straining.

Therefore it is generally recommended to:

- a) Practice different styles in the group, permitting different worship leaders with different styles to guide through it.
- b) Test out in the group which forms are helpful and to agree on sensible compromises.
- c) Use different styles of worship for different situations: very long repetitive times of worship are likely less suitable for prayer evenings open for all but very suited for prayer nights when only those come who like to pray for a long time

Essentially, everything should serve the community gathered and the worship leader is not to expend his favorite style, but to create a framework where as many participators as possible can be led as comprehensively as possible in the praise of God.

Feb. 2, 2013

## Endnotes

### Introduction

1 *Der Geist macht lebendig* [The Spirit gives Life — John 6:63], is a theological and pastoral guide of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Germany, 1987, chapter VI, No. 2, p.43-45: Gifts of Prayer. Downloadable: <http://erneuerung.de/index.php/cede-download/category/8-grundlagendokumente-der-ce>. An English edition was published by ICCRO (now International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Service – ICCRS), *The Spirit Gives Life*, Charismatic Community Renewal in the Catholic Church in the Federal Republic of Germany: A Theological Guide, [www.iccrs.org](http://www.iccrs.org).

2 Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, January 6, 2001, No. 33, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_letters/2001/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_20010106\\_novo-millennio-ineunte.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20010106_novo-millennio-ineunte.html)

### Part 1. Pray Constantly – the Tradition of Constant Prayer

3 See also Emmanuel Jungclaussen (editor), *Aufrichtige Erzählungen eines Russischen Pilgers* [Sincere stories of a Russian Pilgrim or often known as, The Way of a Pilgrim], Freiburg i.Br, 2000.

4 See Archdiocese of München and Freising, *Eucharistieverehrung und Ewige Anbetung* [Eucharistic Worship and Perpetual Adoration], No. 8, also: <http://www.liturgie-muenchen.de/Download/rf6-Anbetung.pdf>

5 Ibid., No.10.

6 Sr. Johanna Domek in: *Mechtilde de Bar* (1614-1698), *ein Jubiläum und die Benediktinerinnen vom Heiligsten Sakrament* [Mechtilde de Bar, A Jubilee and the Benedictine Nuns of the Blessed Sacrament]. In, *Monastische Informationen* [Monastic Information], 2014/ 3, also in *Recherchen* [Research] XXXII, p.39–55, Cologne 2014.

7 Ibid., quoted from: *Conférence sur la vocation d'adoratrice* (Conference on the Vocation of Adorer), in, Joseph Daoust, *Mère Mechtilde du Saint-Sacrement* [Mother Mechtilde, the Blessed Sacrament], Paris, 1979, p.96. Sr. Veronica Krienen, *Eucharistisch leben – der Liebe Antwort geben* [Living the Eucharist – Responding to Love], in, *Erbe und Auftrag* (Inheritance and Mission)] p.70, 1994, p. 453-482.

8 The last prayer is “for those in tribulation”. “Almighty ever living God, comfort of mourners, strength of all who toil, may the prayers of those who cry out in any tribulation come before you that all may rejoice, because in their hour of need your mercy was at hand. Through Christ our Lord”. The concluding, “Amen” in the answer expresses faith and certain hope in God’s assistance.

9 Background information to the prayer in tongues (praying in the Spirit) can be found: Doctrinal Commission of ICCRS, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, Vatican City, 2012 p.48-49, 1 Cor 14; cf. Rom 8;26,27 and Paul Joseph Cordes, *Call to Holiness, Reflections on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal*, The Liturgical Press, 1997, p.12, 1Cor.12, 14.

10 In Appendix 3 of Kim Kollins’ book, *Burning Bush, Return to the Upper Room in Adoration and Intercession*, 1997 p.144-149, she describes possible ways of intercession with praise und praying in the Spirit (the gift of tongues). [www.burningbushinitiative.com](http://www.burningbushinitiative.com) Downloadable - Burning Bush Models.

11 See *The Spirit Gives Life*, Ch.VI, No. 2: Gifts of Prayer, English edition, p.43-45 (See footnote 1)

12 <http://de.nightfever.org>

13 Basic texts of the Liturgy of the Hours are the Book of Psalms; Hymns; Scripture readings; texts from the lives of Saints, the New Testament “Canticles” of Zechariah (Benedictus), Mary (Magnificat) and Simeon (Nunc dimittis); the Our Father; and a closing prayer. Important prayer times was: the night time Matins or Vigil. In the common book of the Prayer of the Hours, there are now the Office of Readings, which can be prayed at any hour of the day. Lauds is prayer in the morning; Prime was prayer in the early morning, nowadays only common in some religious congregations; Terce at mid-morning; Sext at noon; and None at mid-afternoon; Vespers in the evening, possibly with a ceremony of light; and Compline as night prayer. The Liturgy of the Hours unfolds further in a weekly rhythm with special emphasis on Sunday.

14 See, [https://www.michaelsbruderschaft.de/Messen\\_inDeutschland/pdf/Gesamt/Infos/Kirche\\_bauen.pdf](https://www.michaelsbruderschaft.de/Messen_inDeutschland/pdf/Gesamt/Infos/Kirche_bauen.pdf) .

15 *Anders beten – Impulse von Madeleine Delbrél* [Praying Differently – Impulses from Madeleine Delbrél], edited by Rosemarie Nürnberg, ed. Verlag Neue Stadt, München, Zürich, Wien, 2015.

16 See <http://www.franziskanerinnen-thuine.de/html/bibelleseplan.html>

17 More about the history, prevalence and publications see <http://www.losungen.de/>

18 Italian Catechism for Adults, Rome 1995, p.446.

### Part 2. The Diversity of Prayer Initiatives and Houses of Prayer

19 The website of [www.therealpresence.org](http://www.therealpresence.org) shows the significance in the USA of Eucharistic Adoration in the Roman Catholic Church; in many places there is prayer “around the clock” (perpetual adoration).

20 More information at [www.santeustorgio.it](http://www.santeustorgio.it); annotation: in 1164 the relics of the Three Wise Men were taken from this basilica and transferred to Cologne, in 1906 part of them were returned there.

21 See [http://www.maria-himmelfahrt.de/html/ewige\\_anbetung.html](http://www.maria-himmelfahrt.de/html/ewige_anbetung.html)

22 See <http://koeln.nightfever.org>

23 Patti Gallagher Mansfield, *As by a New Pentecost*, Franciscan University Press, 1992; Beate Beckmann-Zöller, *Pfingsten ist nicht vorbei. Sr. Elena Guerra – ihr Leben und ihr Briefwechsel mit Papst Leo XIII* [Pentecost is not over, Sr. Elena Guerra – her life and her exchange of letters with Pope Leo XIII], 2009, available in German from [www.erneuerung.de](http://www.erneuerung.de); Renata Taddioli, *Elena Guerra, Die*

*Frau des neuen Pfingsten und des Abendmahlssaales* [Elena Guerra, The woman of a New Pentecost and the Upper Room], Danielis Verlag, 2005

24 John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, Apostolic Letter, January 6, 2001; No. 33-38, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_letters/2001/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_20010106\\_novo-millennio-ineunte.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20010106_novo-millennio-ineunte.html)

25 Salvatore Martinez, *Per un Roveto Ardente di Preghiera. Suggestimenti per un'animazione spirituale* [The Burning Bush of Prayer, Suggestions for Spiritual Animation], Edizioni Rinnovamento nello Spirito Santo, 2002, Introduction, p.5-6.

26 Pope John Paul II at the First Vespers of Pentecost on May, 29th 2004 on St. Peter's Square: "... I hope that the spirituality of Pentecost will spread in the Church as a renewed incentive to prayer, holiness, communion and proclamation. In this regard, I encourage the initiative known as "Burning Bush", promoted by Renewal in the Spirit. This involves perpetual adoration, day and night, before the Blessed Sacrament; it is an invitation to the faithful to "return to the Upper Room", so that, united in contemplation of the Eucharistic Mystery, they may intercede for full Christian unity and for the conversion of sinners. I warmly hope that this initiative will lead many to rediscover the gifts of the Spirit, whose original source is Pentecost". [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/2004/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_hom\\_20040529\\_vigil-pentecost.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/2004/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_20040529_vigil-pentecost.html)

27 Kim Catherine-Marie Kollins, *Burning Bush, Return to the Upper Room in Adoration and Intercession*, [www.burningbushinitiative.com](http://www.burningbushinitiative.com).

28 More information: [www.adorazioneperpetua.it](http://www.adorazioneperpetua.it).

29 Urban Camenzind und Leo Tanner, *Brennender Dornbusch, Eine Gebetsinitiative* [Burning Bush, a Prayer Initiative] WeG-Verlag 2006. See: [www.mariehilfkirche.ch](http://www.mariehilfkirche.ch), Verein Pro Mariehilfkirche [Association for the Church of Our Lady of Help].

30 ICCRS is acknowledged by the Holy See as a Private Association of the Faithful under Pontifical Right with its venue in Rome in Vatican territory.

31 See <http://www.iccrs.org/TerLiv.php?id=225>

32 More Information: [www.iccrs.org](http://www.iccrs.org)

33 24/7 prayer is 24 hours of prayer — 7 days a week, i.e. around the clock

34 More information: [www.gebetshaus.org](http://www.gebetshaus.org)

35 More information: [www.loretto.at](http://www.loretto.at)

36 A proof for this is the Topos paperback published in 1973 by Bernhard Häring, *House of Prayer* in the series *Impulses regarding the Charismatic Renewal*, where several projects are presented that were called a "House of Prayer".

37 Pete Greig/Dave Roberts, *Red Moon Rising, How 24-7 Prayer is Awakening a Generation*, Relevant Books, 2013, Lake Mary, FL.

38 See <http://alphakurs.de>

39 Based on Rev. 5:8, the harps are interpreted as "worship and praise accompany by music" and the bowls as "spoken prayers of intercession", therefore, a combination of music and intercession.

40 In Mike Bickle's recently published a book, *Growing in Prayer*, Charisma House, 2014, you will find in the appendices of his book more information on IHOPKC.

41 Rainer Harter, leader of the House of Prayer Freiburg, published the book, *Gebet nonstop, Die Gebetshausbewegung* [Non-stop Prayer, the House of Prayer Movement] Asaf, 2013.

42 Paul Yonggi-Cho, *Prayer that brings Revival*, W Pub Group, 1984

43 See <http://www.globaldayofprayer.com>

44 See <http://www.waechterruf.de>

45 See <http://www.oekumene-ack.de/themen/geistliche-oekumene/gebetswoche/2015/>

46 See <http://www.ead.de/gebet/allianzgebetswoche/gebetswoche-2016.html>

47 "From the first days of (Charismatic) Renewal, people came together in groups to pray under the direction of the Holy Spirit," in A Theological Guide on Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church, (ICCRS, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*).

48 An overview of prayer groups and meetings of the German CCR can be found on [www.erneuerung.de](http://www.erneuerung.de).

### Part 3. Comments and Suggestions for Catholic Houses of Prayer

49 Already in 1987, the Theological Guide of the German CCR, *The Spirit gives Life*, pointed out five dangers were within the Charismatic renewal: 1. Over-emphasis on Emotions, 2. False Immediacy, 3. Fundamentalism, 4. Religious Self-satisfaction and 5. Flight from Reality. English edition, p.62-64, (See footnote 1).

50 "Integrating new forms of musical expression, the Church purified and adapted what it received from the surrounding culture. Especially, music must remain servant of the Word. It can have the tendency to take the first place and to saturate the consciousness of a crowd with its intensity, its character and its aspect of repetition. Then the necessary space for personal freedom will no longer be respected. Even though it is good to address all aspects of a human being, emotions must not eliminate the ability to take free decisions." From a pastoral letter of the French Bishops regarding new charismatic trends, quoted in: *Les nouveaux courants charismatiques*, [New Charismatic Currents], Bayard, Cerf, Fleurus-Mame 2010, p.157ff — translation from H. A. Schulz.

51 An article worth reading by M. Pierre Benoit, Deacon and Dr. Phil., can be found in: *Emotions musicales et expérience spirituelle: Comment accompagner?* [Music, emotions and spiritual experience: How to accompany and discern?], p.127-153.

52 For further study we recommend a publication of the German Protestant Charismatic Renewal, *Religiöser Missbrauch – Ursachen – Auswirkungen – Heilung* [Religious abuse – causes – consequences – healing], Lorenz Reithmeier (ed.), 2006. In this context especially, Kriterien zum Erkennen eines missbrauchenden Systems [Criteria for Reconizing an Abusive System], p.20ff; Indikatoren für die Gefährdung einer Gemeinde [Indicators for Endangered Communities], p.75ff, and Phasen im Erleben von religiösem Missbrauch [Phases in the Experience of Religious Abuse], p.119ff.

53 See *The Spirit Gives Life*, Chapter VII, No. 6, Ecumenism, English edition, p.59, (see footnote 1).

54 On ecumenical dialogue within the charismatic movement: Prof. Dr. Norbert Baumert, s.j., *Endzeitfieber? Heutige Prophetien und biblische Texte im ökumenischen Dialog* [End-time Fever? Today's Prophecies and Biblical texts in Ecumenical Dialogue, CE-Praxishilfen 3], Vier-Türme Verlag, Münsterschwarzach, 1997, p.51-84. English Translation of Excerpt of p.51-84: <http://www.erneuerung.de/index.php/cede-download/category/7-theologisches?download=55:end-time-fever>

55 The Prophetic History of IHOPKC, <http://www.mikebickle.org/resources/series/38>

56 See *The Spirit Gives Life*, chapter VI, No. 3, Instruction, Consolation and Prophecy, p 45-47 (See footnote 1 - English); Prof. Dr. Norbert Baumert s.j., *Endzeitfieber? Heutige Prophetien und biblische Texte im ökumenischen Dialog* [End-time Fever? Today's Prophecies and Biblical texts in Ecumenical Dialogue, CE-Praxishilfen 3], Vier-Türme Verlag, Münsterschwarzach 1997, Chapter 5, Umgang mit prophetischen Worten heute [Dealing with Prophetic Words Today], p.102-121.

57 A very good presentation of the biblical understanding of various forms of prophecy can be found in: Raniero Cantalamessa, OFMCap, *Sober Intoxication of the Spirit, Part Two, Born Again of Water and the Spirit*, Servant Books, 2013, The Witness to Jesus and the Spirit of Prophecy, chapter 5, p.87-110.

58 Psychology summarizes altered states of consciousness under the general term “trance”: “To induce trance – without the use of drugs or a trauma – stimulating patterns are repeated multiply and in loops. The trance increases with a high number of repetitions. Most stimuli are based on repetitive linguistic and rhythmic stimulation of the senses by drumming, dancing, singing, flashing lights and mantras as well as repeated vocal manipulation. This includes the combination of rhythmic trance-inducing music with visual stimulations. Typical is the combination of music with light effect systems in concerts and in discos.” Source: <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trance?oldid=144523215> of July 30th, 2015. A Christian context, <http://guardinghisflock.com/2012/09/06/getting-high-on-god/>.

59 See article above by M. Pierre Benoît.

#### Part 4. Digression: The International House of Prayer Kansas City as an End Time Movement

60 There are several written variations used here of “Millennium”, and Pre or Postmillennialism.

61 For a general overview see Richard Bauckham, *Millennium, New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Sinclair B. Ferguson and D. F. Wright (ed), Downers Grove (Illinois), Inter-Varsity Press, 1988, p.428-430.

62 See Irenäus of Lyons, *Adversus Haereses V* [Against Heresies V] <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0103.htm>; Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, Vol II, Einsiedeln, 1969, English edition: T & T Clark Ltd., Edinburgh EH2 21Q, 1984, p.92-93; Medard Kehl, *Eschatologie*, [Eschatology], Würzburg, 1986, p.176-182.

63 See footnote 62. A free translation: “Nothing must be seen as allegory, everything is true and secure”, p.92; See also Kehl, p.181cf.

64 Through the authority of the “Edict of Milan” by the Roman emperor, Constantine in 313AD, the bloody persecution of Christians ended in the Roman Empire. In 380AD, Christianity became the religion of the State.

65 Kehl, *ibid.* p.183-185.

66 DH is an abbreviation for Heinrich Denzinger and Peter Hünermann, *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, (San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 2012), 43rd ed. Its first edition compiled by Denzinger (Dz) appeared in 1854. The numbering system was changed by Adolf Schönmetzer in 1963 (DS), but both systems are included in this bilingual Latin-English edition. It is a collection of all binding doctrinal decisions of the Roman Catholic Church.

67 See the document of the International Theological Commission from 1990, *Some Current Questions in Eschatology*. [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti\\_documents/rc\\_cti\\_1990\\_problemi-attuali-escatologia\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_1990_problemi-attuali-escatologia_en.html).

68 On the complex history of millennialism and its manifestations from the Reformation until now, see Richard Bauckham, In German, *Chiliasmus IV, in Theologische Realenzyklopädie* [Chiliasm IV, in Theological Encyclopedia (TRE)], Vol. 7, DeGruyter, Berlin 1976- 2004, 36 Vols., p.737-745.

69 See Bauckham, *ibid.*, p.741-742 (see footnote 68).

70 See Bauckham, *ibid.*, p.742-743.

71 In 1773 the Society of Jesus was suspended by the Pope, therefore Lacunza is called a former Jesuit. Despite an ecclesiastical ban on his book, it became widespread. See the reliable article in wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manuel\\_Lacunza](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manuel_Lacunza).

72 Some instructive further reading can be found in Christoph Raedel, *Faszination des Endes. Theologie und Fiktion* [Fascination of the Theology of End-Times and Fiction], in the ‘Left-Behind’-book series, EZW-Texte 212/2010.

73 See Christoph Raedel, *ibid.*, p.20.

74 See for information <http://www.dts.edu/about/doctrinalstatement/>.

75 See Raedel, *ibid.*, p.6-18. More information about the Left-Behind-theme and the issue treated in this booklet, See Carl E. Olson, *Will Catholics be 'Left Behind'? A Catholic Critique of the Rapture and Today's Prophecy Preachers*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 2003, (also available for Kindle); likewise David B. Currie, *Rapture: The End-Times Error That Leaves the Bible Behind*, Manchester, New Hampshire, 2003. See also Ralph del Colle, *Talking with Evangelicals: A Guide for Catholics*, New York/ Mahwah, NJ 2012, p.72 -73, where he talks on the typical end time scenario in many evangelical circles (rapture of the church etc., omitting the millennium), stating: "Needless to say, Catholics take a quite different approach and even Evangelicals differ among themselves.", *ibid.* p.73.

76 See <http://drandrewjackson.com/files/forerunner.pdf>, Forerunner Eschatology.

77 On the history of IHOPKC and their "prophetic" basis. See <http://mikebickle.org/resources/series/38>. The texts there are from 2009 to 2013.

78 <http://www.mikebickle.org.edgesuite.net/MikeBickleVOD/2014/S03HistoricPremillennialismandtheVictoriousChurch.KD.pdf>

79 See *Ibid.*, p.1.

80 See *Ibid.*, p.6.

81 See also the handout: [http://www.mikebickle.org.edgesuite.net/MikeBickleVOD/2014/20140214\\_The\\_Varying\\_Importance\\_of\\_End\\_Time\\_Beliefs\\_BOR02.pdf](http://www.mikebickle.org.edgesuite.net/MikeBickleVOD/2014/20140214_The_Varying_Importance_of_End_Time_Beliefs_BOR02.pdf), (2014). And an extensive portrayal in the Study Notes: [http://www.mikebickle.org.edgesuite.net/MikeBickleVOD/2014/20140214\\_The\\_Varying\\_Importance\\_of\\_End\\_time\\_Beliefs\\_BOR02\\_study\\_notes.pdf](http://www.mikebickle.org.edgesuite.net/MikeBickleVOD/2014/20140214_The_Varying_Importance_of_End_time_Beliefs_BOR02_study_notes.pdf), (2014). Mike Bickle indicates that the text is supplemented from time to time, that is the reason why we list the years here.

82 [http://www.mikebickle.org.edgesuite.net/MikeBickleVOD/2008/100\\_Most\\_Frequently\\_Asked\\_Questions\\_about\\_the\\_End\\_Times.pdf](http://www.mikebickle.org.edgesuite.net/MikeBickleVOD/2008/100_Most_Frequently_Asked_Questions_about_the_End_Times.pdf) (2008); see also the Statement of Faith of IHOPKC with special information on the "Victorious Church" in "Last things". <http://www.ihopkc.org/about/statement-of-faith/> (2015) and the detailed response on criticism and misunderstandings in "Affirmations and Denials" <http://www.ihopkc.org/about/affirmations-and-denials/>, (2015).

83 See Norbert Baumert, *Endzeitfieber? Heutige Prophetien und biblische Texte im ökumenischen Dialog*, [End-Time Fever? Today's Prophets and Biblical texts in Ecumenical Dialogue], CE-Praxishilfen 3, Münsterschwarzach 1997, p.159f; Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, Cambridge University Press 1993, p.106ff, also [http://le-protestant.ru/wp-content/files/R\\_Bauckham\\_-\\_The\\_Theology\\_of\\_the\\_Book\\_of\\_Revelation\\_2003.pdf](http://le-protestant.ru/wp-content/files/R_Bauckham_-_The_Theology_of_the_Book_of_Revelation_2003.pdf).9. Johannes Hartl supports the option not to exclude a literal understanding in his teaching series "Omega" on eschatology, Omega 3, see also next paragraph.

84 Baumert, *ibid.*, p.154.

85 Bauckham, *ibid.*, p.20.

86 We chose on purpose two Bible scholars from "Historical churches" who are not under the suspicion to interpret the Bible "rationally."

87 Baumert, *ibid.*, p.159.

88 Bauckham *ibid.*, p.108.

89 On the various approaches of interpretation, see Johannes Hartl, Omega, Script 1.

90 Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology, An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, Inter-Varsity Press and Zondervan Publishing House, (1995).

91 Grudem, *ibid.*, p.1252.

92 Roland Hardmeier, *Zukunft. Hoffnung. Bibel. Endzeitmodelle im biblischen Vergleich* [Future, Hope, Bible, End-time models in Biblical Comparisons], Betanien-Verlag, edition 4, 2010, esp. p.13-50 and p.439-502.

93 Hardmeier *ibid.*, p.501f.

94 See Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Das Buch des Lammes. Zur Offenbarung des Johannes*, [The Book of the Lamb. On the Apocalypse of St. John], Freiburg i.Br.2010, p.117, no English translation available.

95 Grudem, *ibid.*, p.1233.

96 Kehl.*ibid.*, p.181f, here p.82.

97 Kehl, Chiliasmus III in LThK, Bd.2, p.1048.

98 Bauckham, *ibid.*, the encyclopedia article quoted in 68 is on p.743; Baumert, *ibid.*, p.168-170.

99 Johannes Hartl, Omega, Script 3.

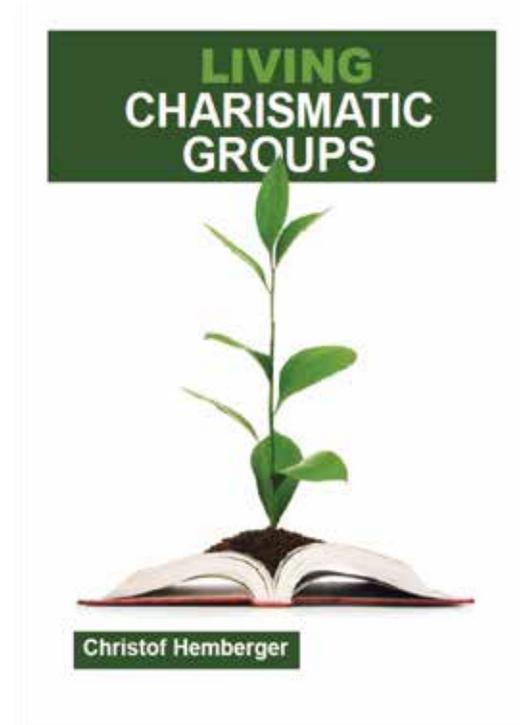
100 The position of the Roman Catholic Church: *Notes on the correct way to present the Jews and Judaism in preaching and catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church*, Vatican Commission of the Holy See for Religious Relations with the Jews in the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/chrstuni/relations-jews-docs/rc\\_pc\\_chrstuni\\_doc\\_19820306\\_jews-judaism\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/relations-jews-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19820306_jews-judaism_en.html). The talk of Heinrich Mussinghoff, Bishop of Aachen, January 12th, 2012, provides a good overview; it was given on a day of study with the theme "The State of Israel and the Roman Catholic Church". [http://www.dbk.de/fileadmin/redaktion/diverse\\_downloads/presse/2012-007a-Vortrag-Mussinghoff-Studentagung-Israel.pdf](http://www.dbk.de/fileadmin/redaktion/diverse_downloads/presse/2012-007a-Vortrag-Mussinghoff-Studentagung-Israel.pdf). The Roman Catholic Church is deeply committed to the right of existence and the security of Israel. It also favors a just two-state solution. It is in favor of free access to the Holy Places in Jerusalem and of the protection of Christian minorities in the Middle East. The Church respects the bonds of Judaism to the land of Israel, deeply rooted in biblical

tradition. It does, however, expressly not accept any of the different Jewish interpretations as they are also advocated by some evangelical, Pentecostal and charismatic communities.

101 See also the self-presentation that names end time dynamics as a framework while having other objectives: <http://www.ihopkc.org/about/> (2015).

102 St. Augustine, City of God, Book XXII, chapter 30, see [www.newadvent.org/fathers/120122.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120122.htm).

103 In general see the Catholic Catechism for Adults published by the German Conference of Bishops, chapter V, "The Life in the World to Come" esp. 3 and 4", The New Heaven and the New Earth. See also CCC, Art. 7, "From thence will he come again to judge the living and the dead, CCC, §668 to § 682 and Art. 12, "I believe in life everlasting" CCC, §1020 to §1060).



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Houses of prayer with constant prayer, is a demanding program. Following Luke 14:28-30: You have to sit down and take account. Are there sufficient resources for the project? That means: Is there sufficient spiritual experience and expertise, enough “manpower?” The Spirit of God always gives in abundance, no question, but: Can we accomplish it and how?

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