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Pontiff Encourages Charismatic Renewal

Members Gather in Rimini for Annual Meeting

VATICAN CITY, MAY 4, 2008 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Benedict XVI is encouraging and praising the work of the Charismatic Renewal in its commitment to promote communion.

The Pope affirmed this in a letter sent through his secretary of state, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, to the members of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (Rinnovamento nello Spirito). The movement members are gathered near Rimini, Italy, for their 31st meeting. The annual celebration began Thursday and is focusing on the theme "Regenerated by the Word of God" (1 Peter 1:23).

More than 20,000 people are participating in the meeting. In Italy alone, the Charismatic Renewal has more than 200,000 members, among 1,900 groups and communities.

The papal letter stated that "His Holiness praises and encourages the commitment with which the Charismatic Renewal makes its own and carries forward the effort to promote communion and collaboration among the diverse realities that the same Spirit has brought about in the Church."

The letter emphasized that the Holy Father "always follows the journey of the ecclesial movements with special pastoral solicitude" and that he exhorts the members of the Charismatic Renewal always to "unite with prayer their effective attention to the world's needs and the good of men."

Leaven

In another message, Cardinal Stanislaw Rylko, president of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, hoped that "the themes of the meeting and the days that you will spend together will be a leaven for your renewed presence in families, society and human history."

The president of the Italian bishops' conference, Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco, and the conference secretary, Monsignor Giuseppe Bertori, also sent a letter in which they recall the "horizon of joyous hope" in which the Charismatic Renewal's "precious work of evangelization" moves.

The national president of the Charismatic Renewal in Italy, Salvatore Martinez, told the *Avvenire* newspaper that the prophetic word that will inspire the meeting at Rimini "is St. Paul's confession of praise -- St. Paul, a man surrendered to Christ, reborn in him, who lived a new life to make the beauty and the power of the name of Christ known."

The national meeting, Martinez said, will in fact focus on the binomial "word-life" as a "meaningful answer to the great Christian challenge of every century: breaking down the division between faith and life, between that which we say we believe and that which we let the world 'see' and 'feel' of Christ."

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"Word and life reciprocally answer, condition and complete each other," he said. "Without the word, life is emptied out; without a life -- ours -- in which the Word can take flesh, Jesus remains a mere history lesson or a hero to be commemorated."

On Thursday, Cardinal Angelo Scola, patriarch of Venice, presiding at the Eucharist, invited those present to be "witnesses of the power and the regenerative force that the Spirit of the risen Jesus never fails to make present in history."

Friday included "lectio divina" about the mercy of God, led by Archbishop Bruno Forte of Chieti-Vasto.

On Friday afternoon there was a commemoration of the 10th anniversary of Pope John Paul II's 1998 meeting with the ecclesial movements and communities.

In this context, talks were given by representatives of the Community of Sant'Egidio, the Focolare Movement, and Communion and Liberation on the theme "The Church Counts on Each One of You."

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