

Exciting Days

As I was sitting in O'Hara Airport in Chicago, early January 1972, waiting for the departure of the flight back to Ireland, I felt drawn to speak to a nun who was sitting in front of me. She was reading a book and being reluctant to speak directly to her, (it was not my habit to speak to nuns) I got up and walked to a telephone booth in order to have a glance and see what she was reading. She was reading "The Cross and the Switch-Blade" by David Wilkerson That put me at ease as I knew the book to be on the power of the Holy Spirit working to transform many people's lives and bring them into God's blessing. The Lord had organized that the nun had been given the book that morning and also the address of a Roman Catholic prayer group in Dublin.

Two weeks after arriving home, I was impressed in my spirit to find this group. Even though the address I had been given was an incorrect one. I was encouraged by the Holy Spirit to persevere and so I found the house where the prayer meetings were held¹. For me, what happened the next night at the prayer meeting was as dramatic as Peter's experience with Cornelius. (Acts 10)

Prejudice could so easily have held me: some thirteen years earlier, a sister of mine had married a Roman Catholic. At that time in Ireland she was faced with choice of either committing to bring up her children as Catholics or having a marriage the Catholic Church did not consider valid. She got married in Switzerland. She then considered becoming a Roman Catholic as well, so I read some Protestant books on Roman Catholicism and discovered many reasons for disagreeing with this religion. While we as a family believed in freedom to change ones religious affiliation, accepting my sister's decision to actually "change hers, was another thing and, while we sought to maintain a loving relationship, there was, never-the-less, a division.

¹ [the house on Pembroke Road ,spelt Kanebrooke on the note](#)

At that prayer meeting in the home of Delma Sheridan, I found for the first time that instead of differences and prejudices mounting up in my heart, there was a clear realization that both Delma and I had been blessed by God's Spirit and that in Christ our Lord we were 'one'. Indeed, this meeting with Delma and others was a practical demonstration of a theory I had held for some time that a Roman Catholic 'could' be a Christian. Now I knew by the witness of my spirit with their spirits that in Jesus Christ there are Roman Catholics who are Christians. (This does not mean that I believe all Roman Catholics are Christians any more than I believe all Quakers are Christians. I do not.)

Two weeks later at the beginning of February, 1972, having temporarily forgot about the prayer meeting, I said I would show a film for some other group. When I remembered about that prayer meeting, I was disappointed that I had committed myself to film showing, so I prayed about it and felt peace. The film did not arrive so I got to the prayer meeting after all. There I met Mike Frawley, Mike was one of a group of twelve students who had come together early in 1972 to seek God for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Mike invited me to the Friday night meeting held in the Rosary Convent, Leeson Street. Nineteen people attended this meeting. The original group of twelve Catholics had prayed for a priest to join them. That night, which I think was their third meeting, they got their priest, Fr. Pat Doran, and myself, a Quaker! We praised God together, shared Scripture readings and personal experiences and ended up by laying hands on some people and praying for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. It was a tremendous time of joy.

From the meeting in Leeson Street, I was invited to the Tuesday night meeting at Kimmage Manor which was just beginning. It was at Kimmage that I was first asked to pray for a priest. I had no idea how one was supposed to pray for a priest! I prayed in tongues and in the Name of Jesus and the priest said later that he guessed the Lord did understand what was prayed because from that night on, things began to happen in his life. One night soon after, this priest was singing in faith beside an ex-prisoner. The song "Tell prisoners that

they are prisoners no more, tell blind people that they can see² " I don't know what happened to the ex-prisoner, but the priest found when he awoke the next morning he no longer needed his strong glasses. Praise God!

The meetings were very informal with most of us sitting on the floor. The joy of the Lord was greater than the discomfort of the positions! Another evening someone asked for

² From song that was sung frequently at meetings at that time "Go, Tell Everyone" Words by Alan Dale Music Hubert Richard

*^AHe sent me to give the ^{E7}News to the poor,
tell ^Aprisoners that they are ^{E7}prisoners no more,
tell ^Ablind people that they can ^Dsee,
and ^{B7}set the downtrodden ^Efree,
and ^A go, tell ^D everyone
the ^{E7}news that the Kingdom of ^AGod has come,
and go, tell ^D everyone
the ^{E7}news that God's kingdom has ^Acome. ^{E7 A}*

^{Am} God's spirit is in my heart.
He has ^{Dm} called me and set me ^{Am} apart.
^E This is what I have to ^{Am} do,
What ^{Em} I ^{Am} have ^{E7} to ^A do.

Just as the Father sent me,
so I'm sending you out to be
my witnesses throughout the world,
the whole of the world.

Don't carry a load in your pack,
you don't need two shirts on your back,
A workman can earn his own keep,
Can earn his own keep.

Don't worry what you have to say,
don't worry because on that day
God's spirit will speak in your heart,
will speak in your heart.

prayer and I felt strongly that I should ask them to acknowledge that Jesus is Lord. Even though they had done it often in song and creed, it took quite a while before they could confess personally that "Jesus is Lord." It was the Lordship of Jesus and the fullness of the Holy Spirit that united us above the dividing walls of our traditions³.

I began talking to the Lord. "What do You want me to do?" (I already had meetings Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Saturday; all of which I enjoyed attending). "I should be looking after my father and I feel You want me to attend these meetings." (my mother had gone to be with the Lord about one-and-a-half years earlier.) The next weekend my seventy-five-year-old father surprised me when he told me he was planning to get married again! I thought he had only been giving driving lessons! So I was free to go to the meetings. Praise to the Lord whose ways are wonderful and greater than the plans we make for ourselves. This turn of events made it possible for Marj and I to set up an independent home together when she came to Ireland later in the year for which we were thankful.

During one all-night meeting, I was made aware of the prejudices and bitterness that I had in my heart towards my sister's husband. The Lord gave me the grace to go to him and tell him that I loved him. This was a real healing for me. .

My sister Faith, who had joined the Roman Catholic church also became involved in the Charismatic meetings, The first she attended was mass on St Patrick's day 1972 and it was wonderful to have a new sister in the Lord and family fellowship restored, 36 years later she wrote to me

³ Thinking of this time nearly 44 years later, I feel that what was happening was that as people saw that the Holy Spirit was what made the difference in the early Church and desired to experience the Holy Spirit, they found themselves drawn closed to Jesus and to others from different backgrounds. As we came closer to Jesus we came closer to each other.

This wee letter has been on my heart to write to you, as the 16th/17th march approaches, Charles, I want to say how thankful I am to you, that you invited me to the Meeting at Kimmage Manor on the eve of St Patrick's Day. - as you know it was the start of my walk & search for Jesus, - & not many months later, I invited Jesus into my life, I knew I needed forgiveness & I

couldn't make it without Him. & that was 36 years ago, & I was 36! a big 'thank you' brother Charles, that you cared for your sister, who was quite a little rebel at the time!!

My love thoughts and prayers are with you as you soon will be 65, I do trust, dear brother, you will have a great year ahead, with the Lord, your guide & director.

Love

Faith xxx

The power of the Lord continued to be manifested in the days ahead and one evening while worshipping the Lord in a fellowship gathering at the home of Seymour Rice, a word of

knowledge⁴ was given out that someone needed their stomach prayed for. I had been experiencing pain from a stomach ulcer for nearly five years⁵, so I acknowledged my need of prayer and was prayed for I received the gift of faith to believe the Lord wanted to heal me. I had to stand in that faith for a couple of weeks claiming the victory in the Name of Jesus and then the pain left. I have not been troubled with it since except one day I did feel the pain coming back while I was eating a mince pie. I simply ate another pie and claimed the healing in the Name of Jesus. Praise the Lord that settled it -no pain. It is interesting to consider the story of Job here for a moment; how the Lord restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends. How often is it; that we are healed not when we pray for healing for ourselves, but when we seek first the kingdom of God and pray for others.

⁴ I Corinthisians 12:

⁵ In 1967 I was privileged to visit a Quaker Family in Beirut Lebanon, Our families have been friends since grandparents met in 1920. The son Nadim who was studying to be a Doctor drove me and 3 Palestinian friends of his overland across the Lebanon Mountains through Damascus Syria (on the way out of Damascus and nearly arrived in an area where a Syrian plane was shot down by the Israeli aircraft that day) across Jordan over the Allenby bridge near Jericho to Jerusalem on the Friday, including a visit to Bethlehem Church of the Nativity and the Shepard's cave. On the Saturday we visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Temple Mount, outside the Dome on the Rock, the garden tomb, and the Garden of Gethsemane, where I felt war clouds hanging over Jerusalem We also went to the upstairs in the old YMCA in Jerusalem from where we could look over the then dividing wall of Jerusalem, One of the Palestinians who was with us said, over there is where I grew up,(it was just 19 years since many fled their homes in 1948) over there is where I grew up, where the toys I played with as a child are, where my family had orange orchard, and you, you in the west will not let me go there. And Nadim added "There is no truth or Justice, there is only power". We then had a swim in the Dead Sea before going at 100 miles per hour across the desert in the Nadim's fathers big Buick to Aquaba on the Red sea where we stayed the night. So I got a quick dip in the red sea before we again sped across the desert to where we could hire horses to bring us through the narrow gorge to be suddenly faced with the magnificent temples of Petra, and large rooms carved out of solid and rock, The city of Petra uninhabited as was prophesied for Mount Seir Exekial 35: 3,7,9. Then back to Beirut, on the way those I was travelling with wanted me to declare as mine a 200 pack of Syrian cigarettes to save Lebanese Tax on them, I told a lie and said they were, then I felt that I ought to smoke one, to deal with the lie, then I realized I could so easily get hooked on them so through the second half out of the car window, in the Bacar valley. I was at a spiritual low at the time. About 6 weeks later there was the June war of 1967 and Nadim when to Jordan to treat people suffering from Nepal Burns from what had been dropped on them, and he nearly suffered a nervous breakdown from doing this.....and I got a stomach ulcer from the worry that I could have so easily been in Jerusalem when it happened. So the unforgettable trip, which is sadly unrepeatable, because of the conflicts that have happened since, festering since 1948, still fuelled by unresolved refugees since that time.

While I had had the stomach trouble and pain for a number of years and believed God **could** heal and even prayed for healing yet nothing happened until I sought first to do God's will.

In March 1972, I had the privilege of taking Mike Frawley and two visiting Americans, Fr. Phil Kelly and Rev. Joe Petrie to Cork where we had a meeting in the home of Pauline Jones then stayed in a Dominican Retreat House. (A new experience again for me.)

On St. Patrick's day while sitting in the prayer meeting at Kimmage Manor, I was impressed to leave the meeting and go and call Chris Rowe to the meeting, Chris left his wall-papering job (I don't think it ever got finished) and came to the meeting. The Lord blessed them and both Chris and Lillian became a tremendous help to many in the prayer meetings and in the core group too.

Fr. Phil Kelly and I drove up to the North of Ireland for Easter stopping off in Dundalk for a 'washing of feet service'. No accommodation opening up there, we found ourselves crossing the border into Northern Ireland around midnight. In the hilly country between Newry and Armagh we were stopped by armed men with blackened faces; a patrol of the local security forces, and they ordered us to get out of the car and open the bonnet and the boot. I said a quiet prayer; "Lord, you know about Phil Kelly's clerical garb in his case..." This was significant considering the fact that a prisoner disguised in clerical garb had recently escaped from prison. "Please watch over us", I prayed. I had just opened my own case in the boot when someone shouted out; "Lamb from Dublin, he's o.k." The search ended immediately and we were ushered on our way. Praise God.

At Benburb Priory Fr. Phil and I met Frank Forte from Belfast; the first Catholic in Ireland, as far as we knew, to receive the gift of tongues in this current out-pouring of the Spirit. We had a good time of fellowship with him Angela McAnespie and some others.

Even in the new and wonderful experiences, not everything proves easy for us and we find we must receive God's wisdom and grace to go through the valleys so that we can reach the mountain-top on the other side, I soon found myself in need of this grace for while

during Phil Kelly's visit we had an all-night prayer meeting at Kimmage Manor, followed by Mass. At this Mass some lay-people encouraged me to partake of the elements. Indeed I felt inclined to do so, but something in my spirit said, "no" "There are spies.in the camp." It was just as well I did not, as it turned out afterwards for some people were unhappy with the freedom of the Spirit. In contrast however, the Friday before Pentecost, it was arranged that the prayer meeting would be followed by Mass which in turn would be followed by a time of prayer for the country. This was held in the hall at the back of the Rosary Convent, Leeson Street. There were a number of non-Roman Catholics present and during the Mass, the priest felt it necessary to announce that non-Roman Catholics were not allowed to partake. I was "cut-up" inside so I asked the Lord for a reading and was given Romans 14 v17. "For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit". Without this Scripture, I would have walked out of the meeting. Well, another unusual experience came my way. I was called 'father' one evening by a young Monk and was so taken aback that I said nothing. The title of respect went briefly to my head and I was surprised that I even liked it because I thought I was so convinced that the use of titles and the receiving of them was wrong. (Matt. 23v1-12 & James 2v1-9) I had to humble myself and confess my sin at a prayer meeting not long afterwards. God, I believe, is looking for people who will humble themselves and become fools for Christ's sake that the wise may be confounded through us.

"These things have I (Jesus) spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace." (John 16v33) In August I felt that I should re-visit Belfast. As I thought about going, fear filled my heart, but the Lord opened the way for me to have fellowship with a man of faith; a priest. As we prayed, the Lord lifted the fear so I was able to go in peace and visit Belfast once again.

In September, 1972 after many letters, a few tapes and telephone calls, I was in Ohio, U.S.A. again. One Sunday afternoon Marj and I taking each other's hands, stood up, faced those assembled and in the white clap-board Quaker Meeting House surrounded by the

beauty of maple trees, declared separately to each other the following: "I take thee, Marjorie Ann Hall (Charles Benjamin Lamb) to be my wife (husband) promising with Divine Assistance to be unto you a loving and faithful husband (wife) until death do us part." We were very pleased to have with us among others, Fr. Phil Kelly who had travelled 800 miles from Boston, Massachusetts to be with us. We sat him up at the front of the Quaker meeting. He shared very acceptably with many others during the meeting for worship. You would not have known he was not a good Quaker! Afterwards, about 90 people signed our wedding certificate and all present were invited to Marj's home for a simple reception of fruit cake and punch (a non-alcoholic fruit drink). Thankfully it was a dry day for no provision had been made in case of rain, as there was not room in the house. Very soon another challenge came my way. While Marj and I were on our honeymoon, Marj felt she wanted to be baptised in water. We had both been baptised in the Holy Spirit, which is the one essential baptism, but neither of us had been baptised with water as this practice is not a part of our Quaker tradition. I had come to see that while water baptism is not essential for salvation, that I should be baptised in order to follow Christ's example. (Matt. 3v15) I also saw that if I was to be baptised, I would have to offer to resign as a Quaker and so to die to my pride in Quakerism. We were baptized together in the Flat Rock river in Indiana, September, 1972. For me, the meaning of this experience is that Jesus is the only one that matters and that if we are not willing for Him to be Lord of all our lives, we will get 'stuck' in our spiritual experience. Incidentally, my resignation was not accepted and we still attend the Quaker meetings. In fact, I was a Quaker Elder when this was written and subsequently was for many more years until 2018.