

# *New Creation Community*

*...Therefore if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation. The old has passed away and the new has come. 2 Cor 5:17....*

**A Diocesan Recognized Private Association of the Christian Faithful of Pontifical Right**



## **Dear Fellow Faithful!**

In October 2010 I attended a series of meetings co-sponsored by the Pontifical Council for the Laity and the Catholic Fraternity of Charismatic Covenant Communities and Fellowships (CFCCCCF) held in Assisi, Italy. Cardinal Rylko, the president of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, shared that the Holy Father had recently returned from a trip and made the comment that “the church is filled with baptized pagans”. The translator was not fast enough to keep up with the Cardinals comments so I did not catch where the Holy Father had traveled, but the Cardinal proceeded to encourage everyone present to further our efforts to renew the Church and make it into the Body of Christ, that it is called to proclaim.

Similarly, the PEW study released in September 2010 described the Catholic Church’s percent of membership in the United States compared to other Christian traditions as “staying even”, about 21%, but that is only due to the increased number of Hispanic Catholics participating in our parishes across the United States. The trend, they said, over recent decades shows that non-Hispanic Catholics who leave the church are joining evangelical/charismatic churches (non-denominations) or secularism – not participating in any organized religion.

Since the early 1980’s as I have worked in various grass roots ecumenical arenas I have been approached by countless “ex-Catholics” who shared their “born again” experience with me. They share how after some time they “realized” that they had to leave the Church to find the “truth”. This mentality has always upset me, but it made me realize an area in our life as Catholics in the USA that we are lacking. I became convinced of our need to develop an effective mentoring program to help Catholics, who experience a “conversion”, grow deeper in their relationship with Jesus and His Church building on the experience they have been given by the Holy Spirit and on the Truth that is Jesus manifest in His Church. Pope John Paul II talks about this in *Christifidelis Laici* (34) and Pope Benedict XVI talked about it on March 14, 2010 and again on September 8, 2010 during his general audiences.

In 2007, Dr. Donna Pacheco and I started a Spiritual Direction Academy operating out of New Creation Renewal Center in Chesapeake. Following the exhortation of St. Alphonsus Liguori, who stated that any mature Catholic can be used by the Holy Spirit as a Spiritual Director, we developed a two year program helping Catholics become more mature in their faith. We do not propose that our trained directors “have arrived” to full maturity. We do certify that they have been trained well and have been given the tools to continue the process to full maturity and to help others follow the process as well. If you think about our parishes in the Diocese of Richmond, we have about 65,000 Catholics being served by less than 300 priests and deacons. This means that if every adult Catholic sought out spiritual direction for one hour a month, every priest and deacon would spend 55 hours a week to fulfill the need since each one would have to minister to over 216 people each. This is unrealistic! Yet, every Catholic should be in spiritual direction to help them grow in their faith to full maturity.

In July 2010, I presented our program to Bishop DiLorenzo who in turn asked me to present the program to Emily Philipi, the Director of Christian Formation for the Diocese. In a meeting in November 2010, Emily and Msgr. Muench, the Judicial Vicar and the Vicar for the Eastern Vicariate gave Dr. Pacheco and me the “green light” to proceed with the program, offering the pastors and deacons in the diocese a tool to help them in their ministries. Our goal is to eventually have an average of 20 trained spiritual

**1600 Elbow Road, Chesapeake, Virginia 23320**

**Office 757 361-5991 Center 757 479-1863 Deacon Wentworth 757 287-9881 [www.newcreation.cc](http://www.newcreation.cc)**

directors in each parish: 10 men and 10 women working with the parish's ministry of adult formation in their ongoing efforts to bring about a fully mature adult Catholic presence in our parishes. Bishop DiLorenzo's only concern is to insure that the pastors remain the ultimate supervisors of the directors. We agree. Pastors are God's established authority in a parish and are *Persona Christi* for all of us.

We hope that you will consider serving your fellow parishioners in this ministry. I want to assure you personally, that, as with all of the ministries I supervise, "we will teach what the Church teaches; believe what the Church believes; and help anyone live their life in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit." The Truth, that is Christ, revealed to and taught by the Church, is enough for anyone to fill their lives to overflowing resulting in a truly happy life that draws people into the Church.

Finally, I ask for your help to identify men and women in your parish who you would consider a good candidate to help mentor others to maturity in the faith. The main personal character we are looking for is that they have a balanced view of the faith. If you would mention this program to your mature Christian friends and ask them to contact us you could help fulfill this growing need for adequate spiritual direction in our parishes.

May Jesus, who is the full revelation of God, be the source and inspiration for your life.

Your brother in Christ;



**Rev. Mr. Darrell G. Wentworth**  
Moderator/Spiritual Director

**Cc: Bishop DiLorenzo**  
**Donna Pacheco, Dmin**  
**Msgr. Raymond Barton**  
**Msgr. Frances Muench**