



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF RALEIGH

CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

THE FLAME

April 2023 issue



Miracles In Our Midst! Recent Healing Testimonies from Prayer Meetings and Healing Services 2023:

Dear Friends,

We have been experiencing miracles in our midst! The Holy Spirit has been flowing at a swift rate recently. Our Prayer Meetings and Healing Services have been on fire. God never disappoints.

It is with great joy that I have the honor of posting these various physical/inner healing testimonies. The following are only some of the testimonies from February and March of 2023. We don't have enough room in our article for all of them. Please visit our website here to read all testimonies in their entirety: <https://ccsraleigh.weebly.com/testimonies.html> We also have a new Testimony in The Flame called Praise the Lord! Stay tuned for more miracles!

Laura Bardascino: I wanted to send in a testimony. Back in October I was walking my dog, he pulled hard on the leash, and my right pinky finger got twisted up in the leash. I was in terrible pain for several months with limited range of movement, stiffness, and soreness.

I went to the healing service at St. Michael's this past February to see what it was about. To be honest, I was lukewarm as I listened to the testimonies. When it came time to get prayed over, I was not in a place of 100% belief, so I did seek a healing and ended up leaving early. Sadly, I was not able to witness the young boy's club foot healing but heard about it in the prayer meeting. Truly remarkable!

At my second Charismatic prayer meeting in February, Maria Muratore prophesied regarding someone having finger issues, swelling and stiffness. I did not speak up. Someone else did, so I figured it wasn't referring to me. Then again, at the next meeting, you again prophesied about a finger issue, again someone else responded, and I figured it wasn't about me. At a Magnificat event the following week, I was prayed with by the prayer team to seek healing prayer for my finger. I shared with Maria Muratore and Mary Trombetta (the prayer team) about the messages shared from the Holy Spirit regarding someone with finger issues. This time I believed it. This time I was relieved and healed.

In March 2023, at our Charismatic prayer meeting at St. Andrew's, Apex, Maria had prophesied about someone needing

inner healing from trauma. I had just offered two novenas to Our Lady, Undoer of Knots, to release work trauma resulting from bullying and targeting in three consecutive jobs in Boston. During healings that were going on in the room that evening, I asked the Holy Spirit to heal me from my trauma and relieve me from flashbacks that were impacting my current work life. In that moment, I felt the trauma lift off of me. As a result of that inner healing, the Lord has shone a light onto a deep sense of fear that has plagued me since childhood. This realization has allowed the Holy Spirit to deepen my trust and reliance, "For God gave us a spirit not of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control" (2 Timothy 1:7).

Thank you for this ministry of healing. With everything going on in the Church and the world today, this is the time for a new Pentecost as we are each called to evangelize and proclaim that Jesus came to call all sinners to repentance, not the righteous (Luke 5:32).

Shelley Wadsworth: *Dear Maria and prayer team, I attended your Jesus Is Lord prayer meeting at St. Andrew's, Apex on March 16, 2023. I would like to share my healing experience from that night. I had previously injured my right ankle/foot, about a month before the prayer meeting. After being prayed over I felt the pain go away, this relief happened right away. I shared this with the team at the time.*

The next morning, I had a previously scheduled Doctors appointment for this foot pain. At that appointment the Doctor declared " you are all healed up!" Now over 2 weeks later the pain has NOT returned.

Praise God!!! Thank you for the healing prayer and love I received. May God's blessings be with you.

Edward (Eddie) DiVito: *Early on at our Jesus is Lord prayer meeting at St. Andrew's, Apex, our leader, Maria Muratore, had a word of knowledge about someone in attendance having an issue with their scalp. Unbeknownst to Maria, I had a cyst removed from my scalp a few days before that meeting. I felt that this word was for me personally, and I requested prayer for healing. I was prayed over at that meeting by a prayer team specifically to heal and reduce pain for an itchy and painful scalp. By the end of the meeting, I noticed that the itch and pain in my scalp had totally disappeared. I was amazed and believe I was healed by God. The itching and scalp pain that I had been experiencing for the past 4.5 days (prior to the meeting) had totally disappeared.*

Wandering Sheep

Part 2

In last month's issue of The Flame, I shared the Parable of the Lost Sheep, focusing on why real sheep wander away from their flock and how it is symbolic about some reasons why we may stray from the Lord. The first two reasons are fear and curiosity. This second part of the focus will be dedicated to exploring the other two reasons sheep wander and how this relates to our own spiritual journey.

Sometimes sheep wander away is because they go looking for food. Savvyfarmlife.com says, "While sheep may stray to satisfy their curiosity, they may also stray simply because they encounter some particular tasty weeds or grass. Sheep spend most of their day with their noses to the ground, **happily eating the day away**. While they are usually aware of their surroundings and their proximity to their flock and home, they may also become distracted in their search for food and mistakenly wander off." To put it another way, they think the grass is greener on the other side even though they have abundant grass in their own pasture. So they look for more food and tastier food. Wow. Let's just pause for a minute and think about how much of our world is into food. There are whole channels on cable devoted to food like "Food Network." There are "Foodies" and billions of dollars spent every year to advertise food and places where you can eat. I don't know about you but I could also spend my day "happily eating the day away." Although God wants us to enjoy good things including good food, it can easily become an idol for us. The sin of gluttony is prevalent in our modern world and the proof is in our waistlines. We can wander away from the things of God, the service of God, the meditating on God, and the purpose of God because we are consumed by the things we consume. Our health is effected and we are physically and spiritually sluggish, tired, and out of shape to accomplish the Will of God for our life. "How ample a little for a well-disciplined man! He does not breathe heavily upon his bed. Healthy sleep depends on moderate eating; he rises early and fees fit. The distress of sleeplessness and of nausea and colic are with the glutton...In all your work be industrious and no sickness will overtake you." (Sirach 19-20; 22) I remember someone who I was very close to saying to me, "I eat because it's the only thing I have left to enjoy anymore." How sad when scripture tells us to "delight yourself also in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart." (Psalm 37:4) and "Health and soundness are better than all gold, and a robust body than countless riches. There is no wealth better than health of body, and there is no gladness above joy of heart." (Sirach 15-16)

The Holy Spirit also began to show me how much time many of us spend preparing to go out to eat. We search for a restaurant with good online reviews and may even go to their website to preview their menu offerings and pricing before calling ahead to make reservations. We anticipate going and our mouths and our appetites get excited about it as we are on the way there. The sad part about all of this is that many of us don't prepare with that kind of fervor for our Sacred Feast: the Eucharist. The Lord's Supper is the Meal that brings us the Bread of Life, Jesus Himself. Our hunger for food outshines our hunger for Him and so we wander from Him in that way as well.

The Church calls us to fast during Lent. In times past, every Friday was a fast day and a day of abstinence. Fasting is a way to mortify the bodily appetites and we become attuned to the things of the Spirit. This is one way to stay attached to Jesus on the vine and to ensure we aren't led astray by our fleshly desires. Fasting and prayer go hand in hand so doing both will be the most effective as well as spending time drawing near to the Lord in Adoration.

The last and final way sheep wander is that they just go with the flow and follow other sheep. "Sheep are followers-and as discussed earlier, this is a positive trait for the and is their greatest defense against predators. **There are usually leaders within each flock, and these are the ones that the rest will follow without question. Unfortunately, for the followers, leaders sometimes get distracted too, and may wander or become spooked and run in the opposite direction of home.**" (savvyfarmlife.com) The leaders are the ones who lead the sheep astray and are distracted themselves. Its like we say, "The blind leading the blind." They themselves are distracted, lead others away and *some of them then become the distraction itself*. Needless to say, for Catholics, the largest "wandering off" we have ever had was during the Reformation led by Martin Luther. I am not at all speaking against our faithful Protestant brothers and sisters here; I am making a point. The largest division that has happened in the history of Christianity was the Reformation and there was a lot of fallout on both sides and it started with one sheep leaving.

In our world today, I have observed people becoming distracted from their walk with Jesus and the true purpose of their lives by following after others: even to the point of obsession. I have to say I saw more "Christians" behaving and speaking more like the devil because their "leader" became their idol. There have been "cults of personality" and divisions even within the Church because people felt they had to take a side.

Wandering Sheep Cont'd

This happened even in the times of our Lord. “For it has been reported to me by Chloe’s people that there is quarrelling among you, my brethren. What I mean is that each one of you says, “I belong to Paul, or “I belong to Apollos” or “I belong to Cephas,” or “I belong to Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? Now, in our times, St. Paul could say, “I belong to the Latin Mass” or “I belong to the traditional Mass” or “I belong to Pope John Paul II” or “I belong to the Charismatic Renewal” or “I belong to this parish or prayer group”. People wander off after others **instead of keeping their focus on Jesus.**

People will also wander off and follow certain prophetic voices. Right now, there tends to be an obsession with end times prophecy, so-called New Movements of the Holy Spirit such as the NAR (New Apostolic Reformation), different denominations that offer a more attractive but false gospel, divisive political parties and ideologies. We are warned of this in the New Testament. *“But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their licentiousness, and because of them the way of truth will be reviled.”* (2 Peter 2:1-2) What is the way of truth spoken of here? Who is the way, the truth, and the life? Jesus! We wander from the real Jesus. We may even be repulsed by and wander away from the truths and deposits of faith handed down to us through the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. They are not popular any more and the moral compass of the world is in a tailspin. Jesus personally handed on these truths through the scriptures and Apostolic Tradition. St. Peter says, “For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.” (2 Peter 1:17) and “And we have the prophetic word made more sure. You will do well to pay attention to this as a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your heart. First of all, you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but specifically “prophecy of scripture” not the gift of prophecy. St. Paul says to “not despise prophecy” which refers to the gift of prophecy, a gift of the Holy Spirit. That being said, there are “cherry picker” Prophets who are loners

and have their own take on scriptural prophecy. Friends, the Catholic Church has been in business 2000 years with the greatest thinkers, saints, and theologians the world has to offer. We have a rich history of taking the meat and throwing away the bones. We should be wary of prophetic voices that disagree with the Church has said regarding certain prophecies and interpretation of scripture. That is the whole reason for the Magisterium. “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths.” (2 Timothy 4:3) All you have to do is turn on your TV or your computer to see and listen to such a plethora of what I will refer to as “fake Christian news.” False prophets, false interpretation of scripture, and even fake evangelists. The prosperity gospel and the “name it, claim it” gospel are the two most popular because they tickle our ears. Who doesn’t like a feel-good message with rainbows and butterflies? Who doesn’t like to hear a gifted politician saying everything we want to hear just to get our vote? Who wouldn’t love to hear a gospel that is all about God’s love but not the need for repentance? We all want a microwave miracle and a drive-thru breakthrough so we follow after leaders who offer us the message. I wish it was easier. I wish I didn’t have to suffer or go through trials and tribulations. I wish I could know everything in advance before it happens. **If I had all that then where would FAITH be and who would my faith be in?** This is why we wander sometimes...because its easier to follow others than to follow Jesus on the narrow path.

I hope and pray that during this time of Lent and our wanderings that you will seek out Jesus to bring you back into the flock if you have strayed a little or a lot. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and insight into any of the ways which you may have strayed in your spiritual journey with the Lord. Jesus is always on the lookout for us and he travels through hills and valleys to retrieve us. He is faithful and our Good Shepherd who always go after the one even if we are all in this together. Take comfort **that we are all just a bunch of wandering sheep.**

Upcoming Events

April 28th-29th, 2023

Ignited by Truth 20th Anniversary Conference

Friday Night Praise and Worship Event/Saturday Conference

For more info please go to: <https://dioceseofraleigh.org/event/ignited-truth-catholic-conference-0>

May 6th, 2023

Saturday May 6, 2023 9:30AM at St Andrew in Apex, Event to honor our Blessed Mother. We will have mass, followed by a procession around the courtyard with the Blessed Mother, and ending with the rosary.

***Contact leader Delia Smith for more details deliasmith720@gmail.com**

May 20th, 2023

Life In the Spirit Seminar at Our Lady of Lourdes

Fallon Center, Raleigh: 9:00am-4:00pm

Lunch will be provided! Donations accepted!

To register contact the Parish Office 919-861-4600 by **May 10**

***For additional info, contact Ann Franzel 919-790-0023, ron_annz@yahoo.com**

August 5th, 2023

Save the Date! Living in the Power of The Holy Spirit Workshop

St. Mary Magdalene Church, Apex NC ,

August 18th, 2023

Save the Date! Healing Service

St. Michael the Archangel Church, Cary NC

September 30th, 2023

Save the Date! 2023 Annual Catholic Charismatic Conference

Catch the Fire! Guest Speaker Deacon Larry Oney with Hope and Purpose Ministries

St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church

October 21st, 2023

Save the Date! Diocese of Raleigh Centennial Eucharistic Congress