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WHY DO PEOPLE JOIN US?

- An experience of God
- I want to give my life to God
- I want to help people
- I want to be a part of this religious group that I admire
- ...
- Where does charism fit in?

2

WHY THEIR

FOUNDATION

3

WHY DID EUGENE FOUND THE OBLATES?

- HELP THE POOR?
- PHILANTHROPIST?
- NEED FOR PRIESTS?
- NEED FOR MISSIONARIES?
- REBUILD POST-REVOLUTION CHURCH ?
- FOREIGN MISSIONS?
- HAD A BIG HEART?

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WHY DID EUGENE FOUND THE OBLATES?

BECAUSE HE WAS GIVEN A CHARISM

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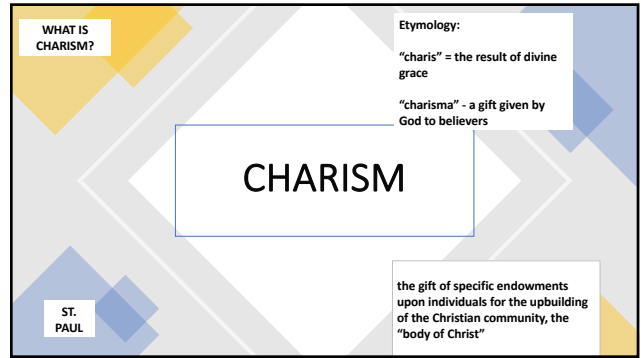
CHARISM

CHARISM

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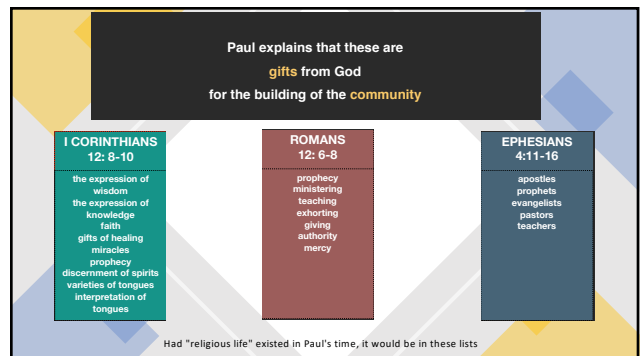
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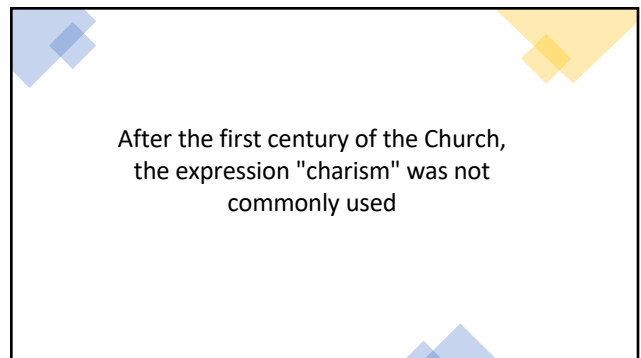
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1943 encyclical of Pius XII, "Mystici Corporis"

constitutive elements of the Church, which had never been absent. not referring to extraordinary charisms, but to those given for any service in the Church

Karl Rahner

more attention had to be paid to charisms and to the creativity of the Holy Spirit

Tromp (co-author of "Mystici Corporis")
"Dictionnaire de spiritualité"

referred not only to extraordinary and special gifts of God, but the particular graces given to Christians in their states of life: the charism of the medical doctor etc.

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LUMEN GENTIUM 12:

It is not only through the sacraments and the ministries of the Church that the Holy Spirit sanctifies and leads the people of God and enriches it with virtues,

but, "allotting his gifts to everyone according as He wills, (1 Cor. 12, 11) He distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank.

By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks and offices which contribute toward the renewal and building up of the Church...

These charisms, whether they be the more outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation for they are perfectly suited to and useful for the needs of the Church.



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CHARISMS EXIST FOR THE CHURCH

- Benedict
- Augustine, Basil...
- Francis and Clare
- Dominic
- Francis de Sales and Ignatius
- Post-French Revolution
- Missionary groups
- Evangelical movements

THE HISTORY OF RELIGIOUS LIFE IS INTIMATELY LINKED WITH MOMENTS OF CRISIS IN THE CHURCH

15

"THE STATE OF PERFECTION TO BE ACQUIRED"



One became a religious and vowed the evangelical counsels in order "to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect."

16

LUMEN GENTIUM
(Dogmatic Constitution on the Church)

CHURCH AS MYSTERY
(previously stress on hierarchic and juridical)

PEOPLE OF GOD — charisms

HIERARCHY

UNIVERSAL CALL TO HOLINESS

RELIGIOUS LIFE

17

LUMEN GENTIUM
(Dogmatic Constitution on the Church)

LG 43

From the point of view of the divine and hierarchical structure of the Church, the religious state of life is not an intermediate state between the clerical and lay states.

But, rather, the faithful of Christ are called by God from both these states of life so that they might enjoy this particular gift in the life of the Church and thus each in one's own way, may be of some advantage to the salvific mission of the Church

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PERFECTAE CARITATIS

(Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life)

Again, this does not mention the word, “charism” but uses the same vocabulary that describes charism:

- The evangelical counsels are a divine gift
- The Founders brought religious together under the impulse of the Holy Spirit
- The Spirit moves people to respond by giving them a vocation
- Religious life is a gift of God to the Church

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EVANGELICA TESTIFICATIO

(Apostolic Exhortation of his holiness Paul VI on the renewal of the religious life according to the teaching of the Second Vatican Council 1971)

This is the first Church document to speak **explicitly** of Religious Life as a charism:

“In reality, the charism of the religious life, far from being an impulse born of flesh and blood or one derived from a mentality which conforms itself to the modern world, is the fruit of the Holy Spirit, who is always at work within the Church. (ET 11)

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MUTUAE RELATIONES

Directives for the mutual relations between Bishops and Religious in the Church

The very charism of the Founders appears as an “experience of the Spirit,” transmitted to their disciples to be lived, safeguarded, deepened and constantly developed by them, in harmony with the Body of Christ continually in the process of growth.

“It is for this reason that the distinctive character of various religious institutes is preserved and fostered by the Church”.

This distinctive character also involves a particular style of sanctification and of apostolate, which creates its particular tradition, with the result that one can readily perceive its objective elements.
(MR 11)

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MUTUAE RELATIONES

Directives for the mutual relations between Bishops and Religious in the Church

In this hour of cultural evolution and ecclesial renewal, therefore, it is necessary to preserve the identity of each institute so securely, that the danger of an ill-defined situation be avoided, lest religious, failing to give due consideration to the particular mode of action proper to their character, become part of the life of the Church in a vague and ambiguous way
(MR 11)

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VITA CONSECRATA

Post-synodal apostolic exhortation of the Holy Father John Paul II to the bishops and clergy, religious orders and congregations, societies of apostolic life, secular institutes and all the faithful on the consecrated life and its mission in the church and in the world (1996)

47.

Consecrated persons are called to be a leaven of communion at the service of the mission of the universal Church by the very fact that the manifold charisms of their respective Institutes are granted by the Holy Spirit for the good of the entire Mystical Body, whose upbuilding they must serve (cf. 1 Cor 12:4-11).

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EMBRACING THE FUTURE WITH HOPE

GRATEFULLY REMEMBERING THE PAST

WAKE UP THE WORLD!
— 2015 Year of Consecrated Life —

The adaptation and renewal of the religious life includes both the constant return to the sources of all Christian life and to the original spirit of the institutes and their adaptation to the changed conditions of our time.

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A "charismatic" Order (or Congregation) is, by definition, the bearer and the one responsible for a gift that the Spirit of God makes to His people. To understand this is essential.

This gift is not made primarily for the benefit of those who enter such an Order. Exactly as the charism of Dominic and that of Francis are not for the benefit of Dominic and Francis.

The Dominican "charism" is a "gift of the Church" that we receive to be made responsible for, so that it bears fruit for the benefit of the People of God.

We receive it in a poor way, not as owners but as servants. An awful responsibility! It is not simply a question of sanctifying oneself in and through the "charism" of the Order. It is above all (and this is what sanctifies) to ensure its functioning in the Church.

J. Tillard

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A FOUNDER:
A PERSON WHO HAS RECEIVED A PARTICULAR GIFT FROM GOD

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WHAT IS A "FOUNDER"

Dictionary:
someone who takes the initiative to create or organize a group or activity that will continue after her/his death

Church:
a person who brings together a group of disciples who live according to a particular Gospel light, with some form of commitment, of spirituality, of community and of mission.

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VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF "FOUNDERS"

Communities that have a single founder: a person with a Gospel inspiration, who begins to live this. Others are attracted and join the person and the lifestyle and consecrate themselves.

Those who have belonged to a religious congregation and discerned that God was calling them to leave it in order to found another group. Mother Teresa of Calcutta is a modern example

People who found a religious community, but without becoming members of it. A bishop or diocesan priest

Persons who found a number of religious communities – who then share a common origin

In the 20th century we see the founders of many of the ecclesial movements fitting into this category

Communities who have multiple founders

"Maternal" and "paternal" figures who did not found the community themselves but who were recognized as the founding figure by them

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"After the Lord gave me some brothers, no one showed me what I had to do, but the Most High Himself revealed to me that I should live according to the pattern of the Holy Gospel."
 Testament of St Francis



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"In the life of every Christian, after baptism there is also a more existential Galilee: the experience of a personal encounter with Jesus Christ who called me to follow him and to share in his mission. In this sense, returning to Galilee means treasuring in my heart the living memory of that call, when Jesus passed my way, gazed at me with mercy and asked me to follow him. It means reviving the memory of that moment when his eyes met mine, the moment when he made me realize that he loved me."

The charism of founders can be described as a living Gospel memory



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A FOUNDER	A PERSON WHO HAS RECEIVED A GIFT OF GOD
AN EXPERIENCE OF GOD	THROUGH A SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE
EVANGELICAL	THROUGH ONE GOSPEL FOCUS THAT INCARNATES A SPECIFIC ASPECT OF THE GOSPEL
INCARNATED	LIVED BY THE FOUNDING FIGURE IN EVERYDAY LIFE
TRANSMITTED TO OTHERS	TO FOUND A COMMUNITY THAT RESPONDS TO THE NEEDS OF THE CHURCH IN A SPECIFIC WAY
THE NEEDS OF THE CHURCH	IN RESPONSE TO A TIME OF CRISIS OR DIFFICULTY FOR THE CHURCH
BEARING FRUIT	THROUGH A GROUP WHICH INCARNATES THE CHARISM, ITS MISSION AND SPIRITUALITY

THE CHARISM OF A FOUNDER

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"that moment when his eyes met mine"

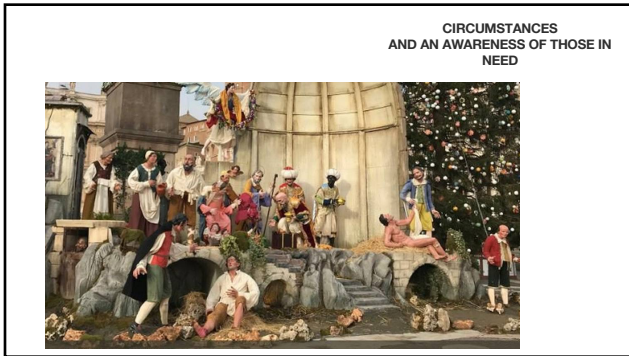


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A LIVING GOSPEL MEMORY RESPONDING TO A SPECIFIC NEED



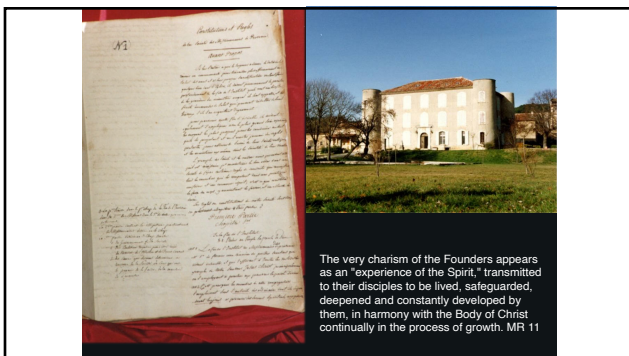
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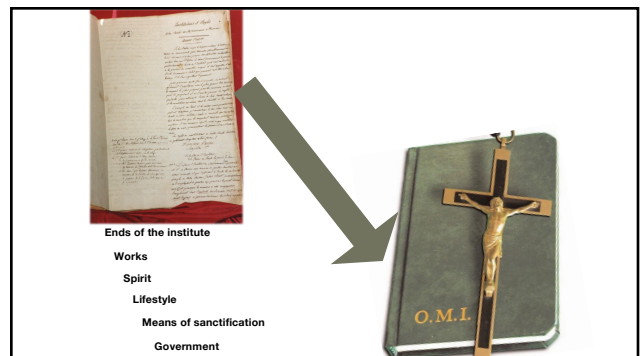
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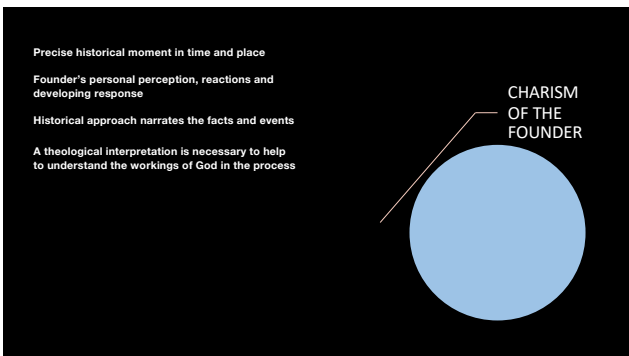
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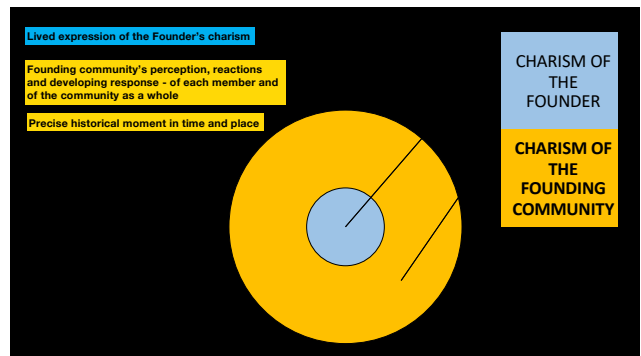
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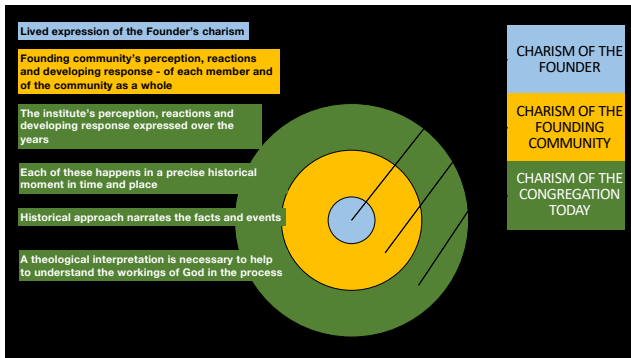
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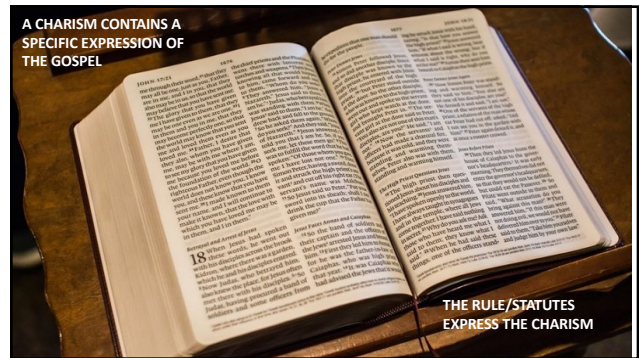
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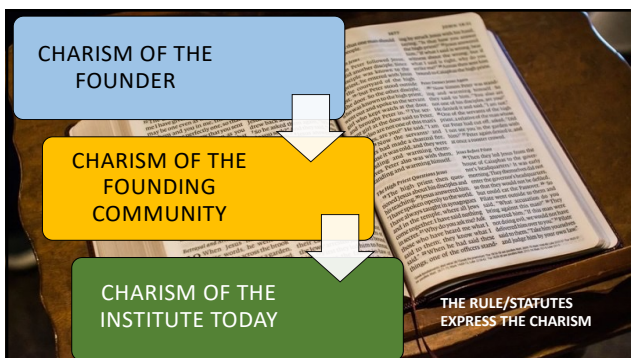
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MR 11

- an "experience of the Spirit,"
- transmitted to their disciples
- to be lived, safeguarded, deepened and constantly developed by them,
- in harmony with the Body of Christ continually in the process of growth.
- This distinctive character also involves a particular style of sanctification
- and of apostolate,
- which creates its particular tradition, with the result that one can readily perceive its objective elements.

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Charisms of Consecrated Life: Gifts of the Spirit for the Common Good

A three-part certificate series primarily intended for members of institutes of consecrated life and for the associates who participate in the charism and mission of an institute, for members of the ecclesial movements, and for others who participate in groups and fraternities which have sprung from a charism.

The series consists of a weekly module to explore each module's historical context, and how the people inspired by a charism of the Holy Spirit, which is now expressed in a Rule of Life.

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

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KUSENBERGER CHAIR OF OBLATE STUDIES

Founders, Charisms, and their Expression in Constitutions and Rules

This is a 12-week asynchronous online course being offered weekly between January 24 and April 25.

My aim is to help students to understand their charism, founding figure and Rule of Life in a deeper way and to assist them to become familiar with their source material.

For further details see:

<https://sites.google.com/site/oblatestudies/course-catalog/charisms-founders-and-their-expression-in-constitutions-and-rules>

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