

Sisters and Brothers,

Neil and Cathy Coward, Mike and Sue Wagner, Alex Maese, Laurie and I had the privilege of representing our Community at the North American Network (NAN) conference on Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> through Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was hosted by Alleluia, our sister community in Augusta Georgia.



NAN, as a reminder, is an abbreviation for the North American Network of Charismatic Covenant Communities.

This organization was formed three years ago after the Holy Father created CHARIS (Catholic Charismatic Renewal International) as an international non-member service organization to support the worldwide Catholic Charismatic Renewal. NAN enables Covenant Communities in North America to support one another as we did within the Catholic Fraternity before CHARIS. More details regarding NAN including access to [newsletters](#), can be found at our NAN website: <https://www.nanccc.org/>.

This year's conference theme was **Living an Abundant Life in an Apostolic Age**. This theme built on the conference last year that addressed the message from the book: [From Christendom to Apostolic Mission: Pastoral Strategies for an Apostolic Age](#). This year we wanted to provide wisdom for thriving, not just living, in an Apostolic Age. Our priority in discerning topics and speakers was to help leaders of Covenant Communities expand leadership and to prepare a new generation for thriving in this Apostolic Age that we find ourselves in.

Throughout this letter you can click on the italic titles of talks to listen to the talk or go to the events page of the NAN website to see the conference agenda with links to the talks here: <https://www.nanccc.org/2023conference>

Karol Sobczyk from Poland opened the conference Thursday evening with ten practical inspirations regarding [Living an Abundant Life in an Apostolic Age](#).

Friday topics focused on leadership topics and started with Gordy DeMarais, representing the Sword of the Spirit Community, leveraging his experience leading the young adult outreach [SPO](#), sharing his wisdom on [Identifying and Forming New Leaders](#). Mark Wilby from Alleluia was next on the topic of [Empowering Leaders](#).

After lunch we were treated to a wonderful talk on [Receptive Ecumenism](#) by Bishop Peter Smith. Bishop Smith provided significant insight into growing in ecumenical communion with practical examples of how we can be open to Christian Unity through our respect for one another and valuing the gifts of others.

Peter Poppleton, who serves as the Moderator of NAN, was the next speaker who shared about [Collaborating with Others](#). He stressed how important it is for leaders to admit that we do not have all the answers and to seek wisdom and help from other leaders and networks of communities.

Covering the next topic, [Discipleship & Personal Holiness](#), was Joe Loizzo from the Community of God's Love in Steubenville who reminded us that we cannot give away something (holiness) that we do not have ourselves, and that it is easy to be a disciple when things are going well. What separates leaders is how we handle times that are not going well...that there is no glory without the cross.

Jonathan and Sharon Cospers brought Friday to a close with a testimony on [Living Our Covenant Charism Abundantly](#).

The theme Saturday was Preparing a New Generation for this Apostolic Age. Our first speaker was Johannes Fichtenbauer, who is the leader of the European Network of Communities (ENC) who shared tremendous wisdom on [Passing the Baton](#). I highly recommend everyone in leadership watch this video. Tod Densmore then shared on [Balancing Family Life, Community & Outreach](#) before Laurie and I shared on [Thriving Parents in an Apostolic Age](#). In addition to all these talks there were other sessions and excellent testimonies that are available to review.

I promise you will be blessed if you take the time to prayerfully listen to the videos allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to you. Consider discussing these topics in your small groups and bringing ideas of how you can respond to a coordinator or to me.

I would like to end this article by thanking Tom Fedor for all his help editing the videos and posting all this material to the NAN and CCGD websites. Thank you, Tom!!

God Bless,

David