

Mother of God Community  
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting  
MOGC Membership  
June 7, 2009  
Hall Miller

I want to speak tonight about a mystery. It is as mysterious as any of God's mysteries:

***God chooses a people to be His own and calls men and women into particular grace.***

I am speaking tonight about the Mother of God Community. We are one of thousands of works of grace in our Church, in this day. We are not unique in being better than others. We are unique in being;

- this particular people
- in this time
- in this place
- with particular grace and charism

I am addressing this issue tonight because next Sunday night the Mother of God Community (MOGC) will participate in something precious to us that we want to explain ahead of time to you, our friends, attending our prayer meeting. Next Sunday night, June 14<sup>th</sup>, members of the Community will renew our covenant with God and with each other. We will also invite any who want to affiliate themselves with us to sign an affiliate agreement. Many of you who attend our prayer meeting but may not have related to us in other ways might not really know who we are, how long we have been around and ... so I want to help explain ...

MOGC is a work of grace to which I have been blessed to have been called to for much of my life. 40 years ago my father died and my mother, looking for a lifeline in God and in His Church became involved in the early days of MOGC. MOGC prayer meetings began in 1968 when founding members received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit (def) and started to gather weekly to praise God together for this incredible grace. In 1971 people formally formed a covenant community (define). In the late 1970's people began to relocate to Gaithersburg/ MV to be closer to each other. In 1996 we were reorganized and recognized by the Archbishop of Washington as a "Lay association of the Faithful." There are thousands of covenant communities in the Church. They are all over the world.

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- MOGC- we are a particular people
- Origins in 1968, out of the worldwide charismatic outpouring and the covenant community movement in the Church.
- 80+ covenant members
- Fr. Francis Martin is a member and is our Spiritual advisor.
- We are under the authority of the Archbishop of Washington.
- 6 members are elected to lead the Community. Called the community council.
- 1 of those council members is the community coordinator. I am serving a 4 year term as coordinator now.
- All entities within the Church can be defined or expressed through their charism. I'll read to you how we see and express this charism in some of our foundational documents.
- Read from the prologue to our statutes

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**What is a Covenant Community? Why covenant community?**

- We are different from other movements, apostolates in the church in that we are covenanted to one another. This covenant distinguishes us.
- We renew this covenant annually
- Our covenant is a promise made to each other and to God. You may have heard it said that a marriage is a triangle between 2 people and God. Our covenant is a triangle between each other and God.
- Covenant history OT?
- Read from Covenant (including obligations)
- There will be 80+ people who will sign this covenant for 2009-2010. We are committed to each other and to God to live in accord with one another and with the charism of MOG community.

We recognize that God's call to covenant is not for everyone. It is a unique way of life. Though there are 1000's of Covenant Communities around the world they are still a very small number in the Church. Some people are called to this way of life but many are not. Our covenant very much defines who we are and God's call for this body. But God's grace is bigger. Many people, including you who participate in our Sunday night prayer meeting as well as other ministries, participate in this grace with us but may not be called to covenant. We invite you to consider becoming affiliate members of our community.

- Affiliation is expressed in our statutes as follows: (read)
- Read from affiliation ceremony

We want to extend an open invitation to all of you to consider becoming affiliate members of MOGC next Sunday night. It is simply a reflection that;

- God has touched your life through the grace of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- The grace that you experience here is an important way that God continues this work in your life.

There are no particular commitments but to seek to live for God and grow in His grace. Each year we will invite you to renew this affiliation. Some will renew annually. Some will move on as God calls them. Some will draw closer and enter formation and discern covenant membership. An affiliate member of MOGC is free to follow the Lord wherever He leads them. Anyone who is interested in finding out more or in signing next week please:

- Pickup a copy of affiliate handout
- Come speak to me after the Prayer Meeting
- Contact Mary Sykes in MOGC office