

Andrzej Siemieniowski / Mirosław Kiwka

Christian Charismatic Movements

Threat or Promise?

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Eastern and Central European Voices

Studies in Theology and Religion

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Volume 1

Andrzej Siemieniewski / Mirosław Kiwka

Christian Charismatic Movements

Threat or Promise?

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht

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Documents of the Church

- CCC *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, https://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/ccc_toc.htm [accessed: 24.11.2020]
- GS Vatican Council II, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et spes*, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html [accessed: 24.11.2020]
- LG Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium*, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html [accessed: 24.11.2020]

Other

- AD *Aparecida Documents*, V General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean. Concluding document: *We are disciples and missionaries of Jesus Christ so that our nations may have life in him*, <https://www.celam.org/aparecida/Ingles.pdf> [accessed: 07.11.2020]
- DN John of the Cross, *Dark Night*, transl. E. Allison Peers, <http://www.carmelitemonks.org/Vocation/DarkNight-StJohnoftheCross.pdf> [accessed: 03.11.2020]
- Ex Gertrude of Helfta, *The Exercises*, London, 1863
- IC Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*, transl. Benedictines of Stanbrook, London 1921, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/teresa/castle2.pdf> [accessed: 04.11.2020]
- ICCRS International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services
- IDPCM *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. S.M. Burgess, E.M. van der Maas, Grand Rapids (MI) 2002
- L Teresa of Avila, *Letters*, <https://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/teresa/letters/letters.html> [accessed: 24.11.2020]
- LF John of the Cross, *The Living Flame of Love*, [in:] John of the Cross, *Complete Works*, transl. D. Lewis, London 1864, p. 217–306, <https://archive.org/stream/complete-worksofs02johnuoft#page/216/mode/2up> [accessed: 24.11.2020]
- LST Teresa of Avila, *The Life of Saint Teresa of Jesus*, transl. D. Lewis, London–New York 1904, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/teresa/life.pdf> [accessed: 05.11.2020]
- MC John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, transl. D. Lewis, London 1922, <https://archive.org/details/ascentofmountcar00johnuoft/page/348> [accessed: 03.11.2020]

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- PG *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. J.P. Migne, <http://patristica.net/graeca/> [accessed: 31.05.2021]
- PL *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J.P. Migne, <http://patristica.net/latina/> [accessed: 31.05.2021]
- RC *Rituel cathare* (Sources Chrétiennes 236), ed. C. Thoussellier, Paris 1977
- SC John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle between the Soul and Christ*, [in:] John of the Cross, *Complete Works*, transl. D. Lewis, London, 1864, p. 1–216, <https://archive.org/stream/completeworksofs02johnuoft#page/n19/mode/2up> [accessed: 24.11.2020]
- STCSR *The Shakers: Two Centuries of Spiritual Reflection*, ed. R.E. Whitson, New York–Ramsey–Toronto 1983
- STh Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, <https://isidore.co/aquinas/summa/index.html> [accessed: 06.11.2020]
- WAB Web Address in the Bibliography
- WP Teresa of Avila, *The Way of Perfection*, transl. E.A. Peers, [n.p.] 1964, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/teresa/way.pdf> [accessed: 05.11.2020]

Foreword

for “Eastern and Central European Voices” Series

The western and the eastern cultural parts of the Old Continent are like two lungs with which Europe has been breathing for centuries. The continent is the venue for different Christian denominations and non-Christian religions, which despite tensions and conflicts has been conducive to the construction of one European home. The uniting tendencies spark the exchange of ideas and research findings from different linguistic areas. Christian theological thought, which has been and continues to be the foundation of European civilisation and heritage is an integral part of the process.

Theological and religious studies in Eastern and Central Europe have of late been flourishing. Numerous departments of theology produce valuable scholarly monographs and papers which, due to the language barrier, remain mostly unknown elsewhere in the world. This is the reason why we have undertaken to disseminate the theological thought originating in this part of the continent in congress languages, especially in English. We have been prompted to do so especially because there has been no publishing initiative familiarising the global readership with the scholarly theological output of Eastern and Central Europe. As a result, we have launched a new publishing series entitled “Eastern and Central European Voices [ECEV]: Studies in Theology and Religion” – in collaboration with Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlage, a reputable publishing house – which will include monographs, postconference publications, anthologies along with outstanding dissertations and postdoctoral qualifications.

As the first volume of the new series we present the work of Andrzej Siemieniewski and Mirosław Kiwka devoted to Christian Charismatic Movements.

Editors-in-Chief

Rajmund Pietkiewicz
Krzysztof Pilarczyk

Introduction

Each of the Evangelists records one fundamental demand made by the spiritual elites. A sign was expected as validation of the Teacher of Nazareth. Jesus always responded to that expectation with an invitation to look closely at current events from the perspective of faith. It is in this context that the evangelical imperative of discerning “the signs of the times” (Matt 16:3) or the recognition of God’s “time of visitation” (Luke 19:44) comes into play.

Awareness of this obligation has survived in the Church to this day. Nowadays it is expressed, among other things, in the famous formulation of *The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World “Gaudium et spes”* (GS). In this document, drawn up by Vatican Council II, the ecclesial community feels obliged to “[scrutinize] the signs of the times and [interpret] them in the light of the Gospel” (GS 4) “to carry forward the work of Christ under the lead of the befriending Spirit” (GS 3).

The theology of the signs of the times is today not only an important tool for the Church’s pastoral activity and social teaching, but also one of the fundamental theological categories that allow the Church to open herself up to the modern world and engage in a dialogue. The documents of the Second Vatican Council use the term “signs of the times” interchangeably with the term “signs of God’s presence and purpose” (GS 11). Thus the signs of the times were assigned to the order of salvation and treated as signs of hope. Therefore, St John Paul II emphasized their supernatural dimension, noting that they are “significant clues to the presence and action of God’s Spirit in history”.¹

The signs of the times are

special events in the history of humanity, in social life or even in the lives of individuals. They are closely connected with God’s salvific initiative for man, which develops over time, and with the Holy Spirit’s agency in human history, so that they allow us to identify what God expects of us at a given time under certain circumstances.²

The signs of the times understood in this way point to the callings and promptings of the Holy Spirit. They are neither a direct revelation nor a clear word of God;

1 John Paul II, *General Audience*, 23.07.1998 [WAB]. In order to simplify the footnotes in this publication, texts available on the Internet will be marked with the abbreviation [WAB] and their full web address will be provided in the Bibliography at the end of the book.

2 J. Majka, *Metodologia nauk teologicznych [Methodology of Theology]*, Wrocław 1981, p. 242.

they usually remain hidden and difficult to recognize among a multitude of other facts and events. They indicate, however, the direction to be taken in order for the development of the world to be in harmony with God's plan, and to become the soil on which the Gospel will sprout abundantly.³

One contemporary phenomenon that seems to be fully compliant with the signs of the times is Christian charismatic movements, which for many people can be identified with what the Holy Spirit says to the Church today. It is an undeniable fact that they are developing in a very dynamic way. Despite their humble and inconspicuous beginnings, charismatic communities today have millions of members in all countries of the world. They take various organizational forms. For a large number of Christians, such communities are an evangelical response of faith to their specific existential problems. They offer a modern way of practicing Christianity, born of one simple desire: *Come, Holy Spirit! "Iuvenescit Ecclesia"*, the document of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, expresses it as follows:

The character of "movement" distinguishes them in the ecclesial landscape in as much as they are powerfully dynamic realities. They are capable of provoking a particular attraction to the Gospel and offering a proposal of the Christian life which, basically global in outlook, touches every aspect of human existence. [...] [The movements] propose renewed forms of following Christ in which the *communio cum Deo* and the *communio fidelium* are deepened. Thus, the attractiveness of the encounter with the Lord Jesus and the beauty of Christian existence lived in its integrity is brought to new social contexts. A particular form of mission and witness is also expressed in such an entity, encouraging the growth of both a lively awareness of the individual's Christian vocation as well as stable paths of Christian formation and ways of evangelical perfection.⁴

From the sociological point of view, contemporary charismatic movements are an ever-increasing wave of spiritual enthusiasm that absorbs multitudes of new converts. Are these movements completely new and unprecedented in the history of the Church? The scale of this phenomenon is certainly without precedent. Are they an absolute novelty? This study aims, among other things, at answering the question of whether contemporary charismatic movements are a novelty or a continuation of the Spirit's action in the Church. The answer to this question requires delving into the sources of faith and the life of the Church, that is, mainly the New

3 Cf. S. Moysa, *Rozeznawanie znaków czasu w Duchu Świętym* [Discernment of the signs of the times in the Holy Spirit], [in:] *Napełnieni Duchem Świętym* [Filled with the Holy Spirit], ed. A. Jankowski, Poznań 1982, p. 134–135.

4 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Letter *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* to the Bishops of the Catholic Church Regarding the Relationship Between Hierarchical and Charismatic Gifts in the Life and the Mission of the Church, 2 [WAB].

Testament. A separate issue generated by the dynamic development of charismatic communities is a certain tension in understanding the nature and functioning of the Church, a tension that rises in an ecclesial community in which office and charism are juxtaposed, where the charismatic structure is perceived as being in conflict with the hierarchical structure. We make an attempt to discuss this extremely important issue, looking for New Testament testimonies that describe how these two dimensions developed and intertwined.

Two phenomena deserve special attention in the spirituality of charismatic movements: baptism in the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues. These, too, will be addressed here and will involve a profound analysis of the relevant biblical texts and terminological clarifications, as well as the presentation and interpretation of many testimonies from the history of Christianity. We hope that our reflections will provide the appropriate material for a correct understanding and accurate assessment of the tensions involved in the co-existence of the charismatic and hierarchical aspects of the Church.

A separate issue is the problem of so-called “pentecostalization”, understood as a global process of creating new pentecostal-style communities and transforming many other Christian churches and religious associations according to a more pentecostal model.⁵ Undoubtedly, pentecostalization is a sign of the times, having a complex and specific nature, and warranting a closer look into its dynamics and the spiritual challenge faced by the Catholic Church today.

We hope that this study, despite its limitations, will be a valuable contribution to the discussion of the shape of modern Christianity and a useful tool for discerning both the signs of the times and where the Holy Spirit is leading the Church in our day.

5 See A. Kobyliński, *Etyczne aspekty współczesnej pentekostalizacji chrześcijaństwa* [*Ethical aspects of the contemporary Pentecostalization of Christianity*], “*Studia Philosophiae Christianae*” 50 (2014) 3, p. 93–130.

1. The awakening of the biblical Church

1.1 The New Testament Church: a biblical model

1.1.1 Institutions or the Spirit?

“May our Church be as it was in the first centuries! May it resemble the times of the first disciples of the Lord Jesus!” This was the cry uttered by every Christian generation whenever weakness of faith was laid bare, and the cry expressed a craving to return to the Church as described on the pages of the New Testament; to restore a form of community and the ecclesiastical ministries that resulted in the blessings described in the Acts of the Apostles.

Some sought in the Bible all that could confirm the authority of the hierarchy flowing from Christ. They pointed out a straight line from Jesus, through the office of the twelve Apostles with the primacy of Peter, to the shepherds established by the apostolic ministry, to the current pope, bishops and priests. This was the customary view expounded by traditional Catholic theology and apologetics.

Others took notice of all those elements that seemed to be at variance with the hierarchical scheme. In the Bible, they argued, the ministries of prophets or evangelists were not formalized. To these readers, Scripture emphasized charisms (healings, prophecies, speaking in tongues) rather than holding different kinds of office. Over time, this vision has come to dominate modern Neo-Protestant, especially Pentecostal, exegesis.

These two approaches were sometimes juxtaposed as contradictory and irreconcilable. However, in the New Testament we find them both. Both approaches have also been present throughout the Church's twenty-century-long history.

The Apostle Paul, nearing the end of his ministry, wrote a letter to the community in Ephesus in which he articulated the truth about the Church: “[you] are members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets” (Eph 2:19–20). These words highlight hierarchy: the apostolic foundation of the community of Jesus's disciples. Emphasis is also put on the charismatic aspect: prophets are mentioned alongside the Apostles as those who co-create the foundations of the Church. The two elements work together harmoniously because they are both God's gift to the Church. The contemporary Christian tends to perceive a tension here: the Apostles formed a strictly defined and compact group, which could only be joined through formal appointment (see the choice of Matthias, Acts 1:21–26). Meanwhile, the gift of prophecy is associated with the phrase: “The wind [*pneuma*] blows where it wills” (John 3:8). Can the two be reconciled?

In the Gospel we read, “You are the light of the world” (Matt 5:14). Jesus’s words are addressed both to the original apostolic community and to all successive generations of Christians.

Consider a certain similarity in the history of physics. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Albert Einstein argued that light has a dual, wave-particle nature. What does that mean? On the one hand, light behaves like a stream of particles rushing through space; on the other, it also behaves like a wave. There is no need to apply the either-or approach: either particles or waves. The supporters of both solutions were right because light has a dual, particle-wave nature. Einstein’s insight was a decisive breakthrough in science.

The same is true of the Church of God. Some hold that the Church has a visible structure made up of dioceses, parishes, monasteries, and schools. These constituent elements of the Church are said to be real building-blocks or hard, tangible “particles”, as in our analogy of the nature of light. The new ecclesial movements with their respective communities that have occurred in the recent history of the Church are thus marginalized as hobbies for enthusiasts.¹

For others, the Church is all about constant movements and changes. All that matters is the breath of the Spirit in the human heart, and the successive waves of renewal and enthusiasm. What about permanent institutions and age-old structures? They are viewed as a burden or an obstacle that leads to ossification and formalism, since as some assert, “the office is empty of the Spirit!”

Yet the Church is made up of both elements. She has structures and institutions; she also has movements and waves of renewal. Her nature is similar to light and it can be said figuratively that the Church also has a dual, wave-particle structure. Jesus’s words, “You are the light of the world” are the guidelines for the Church community. On the one hand, there is a place for the effective and fruitful operation of stable structures and traditional institutions, but on the other there is also scope for ever-new waves of movements inspired by the Holy Spirit.²

1 In his talk *Church Movements and their Place in Theology* given at the World Congress of Ecclesial Movements in Rome in 1998, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger recalled some of these communities with personal expressions of gratitude: the Neocatecumenal Way, Comunione e Librazione, Focolari. Talking about these “new outpourings of the Spirit”, he pointed out that they are new, but in another sense, not new at all, because in the whole history of the Church there were analogous phenomena accepted by the shepherds of the Church as the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the people of God. See Benedict XVI, *New Outpourings of the Spirit*, [n.p.], Ignatius Press, 2007.

2 See J. Ratzinger, *Ruchy Kościelne i ich miejsce w teologii* [*Church Movements and Their Place in Theology*], a conference held on 27 May 1998 at the meeting of Ecclesial Movements in Rome, before the 2000 Jubilee, “Post Scriptum” 6 (1998), p. 8–34. Original text: Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Intervento in apertura del Convegno mondiale: I Movimenti ecclesiali, speranza per la Chiesa e per gli uomini*, 27 maggio 1998 [WAB].

Does this amount to some “modern” ideas that threaten the traditional order of things? Not really. Here’s an example. In fourth-century Palestine, the Roman Church, well organized into dioceses, bordered on the territory of Arab nomads. They were ruled by the militant Queen Mavia, who rejected evangelical overtures and, by the way, ravaged the Roman state to the boundaries of Egypt.³ She finally agreed to admit missionaries into her territory on the condition that a monk named Moses be chosen as their bishop. Neither he nor his successors were allowed to have a see in a particular city, but they were to be called “bishops of tents”;⁴ i.e. live like nomadic shepherds. In this way, the traditional Roman ministry assigned to particular territories with their dioceses, parishes and local administration was supplemented by pastoral care for a nomadic people in constant motion. To continue our analogy with light, the local, particle-like structure was complemented by a dynamic “wave” innovation.

Another example will be much more elaborated, and will heavily draw on the Bible, especially the Acts of the Apostles. We will consider how the Scripture presents the Church of Jesus Christ and by the same token ensures her sustainability through permanent institutions and a concurrent dynamic growth through charismatic ministries.

1.1.2 Biblical lists of ecclesial ministries

A good place to start is with the Acts of the Apostles, the Church’s first self-portrait. As the title indicates, it mainly recounts the dynamic history of the original community of disciples. As the Book of Acts unfolds, it reveals the status of its particular members.

In the beginning, when we read “disciples” it only seems to refer to the chosen Apostles (the Twelve or the Eleven). But after a few verses, we discover that the group of “disciples” is made up of the Apostles and also some other members of the Church:

They went to the upper room where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, together with some women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers (Acts 1:13–14).

³ Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical history*, VI, 38 [WAB].

⁴ M.R.A. Henrion, *Vescovi dei Campi o delle Tende. Storia universale della Chiesa dalla predicazione degli apostoli fino al pontificato di Gregorio 16.*, I, 9, 373, Napoli 1842, p. 358 [WAB]. See also A. Berault-Bercastel, G. Antonelli, *Storia del cristianesimo*, Venezia 1828, vol. 3, p. 117.

This list of Church members not only includes more than the Eleven, but also has an internal structure: the Apostles are listed by name, separately from the other followers of Jesus. The Church appears here as a hierarchical community, and the source of this hierarchy is the will of Jesus Himself: the Apostles are those “whom he had chosen” (Acts 1:2).

A few years later (probably about 33 AD) we still see the same basic structure: the Church comprises both the Apostles and disciples, and the Apostles clearly have the authority to discern the ecclesial path and to direct the community in the light of the Word of God: “The Twelve called together the community of the disciples and said, ‘It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to serve at table’” (Acts 6:2). As time goes by, the category of the Apostles becomes broader, and after several years (circa 49 AD) those in charge of the Church are distinguished as “the apostles and the presbyters” (Acts 15:4). That comes later, though. Initially, the only pastors mentioned in Acts are the Apostles.

From the very beginning of Acts, we also find an indication that there are ministries of a different order from those exercised by the Apostles. Let us consider one more time the list of people praying at the Cenacle: “They went to the upper room [...] All these devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, together with some women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers” (Acts 1:13–14).

Mary is the only person whose name is listed along with the Apostles. The reason behind her elevation is also given. Hers is not a hierarchical position, but a special vocation and an extraordinary gift from God: “Mother of Jesus”. Already the first chapter of the Acts sends an important signal: relationships among members of the Church are richer than the distinction between the disciples and the hierarchical pastoral group, i.e. Apostles. There are gifts and charisms of a completely different kind and order, but of course integrated into the community: after all, everyone prays in the Cenacle “with one accord” (Acts 1:14).

Further careful reading of Acts will lead us to an important discovery. The extension of the Church structure to include a charismatic place for “Mary, the mother of Jesus” is not the only enrichment of the Church. Mary showed the way for the emergence of new ministries in the Church based on charisms.

In Jerusalem, for example, there were disciples who ministered as prophets. We read about this already in the description of the evangelization in Antioch (about 43 AD, Acts 11:27), and then in the report on the “Jerusalem Council” that took place in 49. To resolve the problem of the admission of non-Jews to the Church, “the apostles and presbyters, in agreement with the whole church, decided to choose representatives and to send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. The ones chosen were Judas, who was called Barsabbas, and Silas, leaders among the brothers”. The choice of Barnabas and Paul seems obvious. But why Judas and Silas? In what sense were they leaders among the brothers? A few lines later we learn that Judas and Silas were “prophets” (Acts 15:22–32). There is no reference to any formal

appointment as was the case with Apostle Matthias (Acts 1) or deacons (Acts 6). And yet they were in the community and had important roles in it, most probably charismatic.

For now, we will defer consideration of what it might have meant to be an ecclesiastical prophet in the apostolic period.

We will start with verses concerning the apostolic and prophetic foundations of the life of the Church in St Paul's letter to the Ephesians. The passage speaks of the Church's dual nature (her "wave-particle" nature, as it were):

You are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone. Through him the whole structure is held together and grows into a temple sacred in the Lord (Eph 2:19–21).

Christians receive a thrilling vision here: their community is founded on the cornerstone of Jesus Christ, for "no one can lay a foundation other than the one that is there, namely, Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 3:11). The Church grows further on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets and is built – as a spiritual temple – by all the believers and baptized: "[The mystery of Christ] was not made known to human beings in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body" (Eph 3:4–6).

What is this all about? The Good News was intended as a gift not only for the Jews, but also for the members of other nations called here "Gentiles". Spreading the Gospel among non-Jews is a radical and ground-breaking step in the evangelization undertaken by the nascent Church. St Peter was the first to experience it. It is in this sense that this mystery was revealed to the Apostles. And then St Paul, in a truly prophetic way, explained the meaning of this revolutionary change, especially in the Letter to the Romans. Thus, over the years, the mystery that "that the Gentiles are coheirs", was "revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit". So beginning with the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we can see that the whole Church followed this pastoral path. The details of this journey were not revealed in any obvious way directly by Jesus. Rather, they were unveiled in the successive stages of prayer, proclamation of the Word of God, and building up the Church – both through the hierarchical ministry of the Apostles and the charismatic ministry of the prophets: "[Christ] gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Eph 4:11–12).

Here in turn we learn about yet another aspect of this "wave-particle" nature of the Church. The path of evangelization among other nations, discerned by

the Apostles and prophets, brought about the emergence of new communities of disciples. These communities needed shepherds (Acts 14:23) and teachers (Acts 13:1). The local churches created in this way did not exist for themselves. One of the aims of their creation was to help new Christians mature in faith. And the proof and sign of a mature community was its ability to send evangelists on a mission (Acts 13:2).

Even in the text of the Book of Revelation, which was written decades later, the community of the Church appears to have had a dual apostolic and prophetic ministry: “Rejoice over her, heaven, you holy ones, apostles, and prophets, for God has judged your case” (Rev 18:20). Saints, or holy ones, in the language of the New Testament are simply Christians. And the Christian community of disciples is ministered to by those who continue the mission of the Twelve chosen by Jesus (Apostles) and other harbingers of God’s mysteries who were filled with the Spirit (prophets).⁵

In the three verses cited from the Letter to the Ephesians, we have so far highlighted only the first general observation: apart from the Apostles, there are also other ministries and charismatic gifts in the Church that are essential or even indispensable for the achievement of the community’s goals. Let us consider the following: the New Testament details different ministries existing alongside the office of the Apostles. A brief description of them is found in the First Letter to the Corinthians and the Letter to the Ephesians.

Some people God has designated in the church to be, first, apostles [ἀποστόλους]; second, prophets [προφήτας]; third, teachers [διδασκάλους]; then, mighty deeds [δυνάμεις]; then, gifts of healing, assistance, administration, and varieties of tongues [γένη γλωσσῶν] (1 Cor 12:28).

The arrangement of the text should help us notice that the list opens with “apostles and prophets” to be followed by “teachers” and those who exercise charismatic gifts. What is important here is that the ministries are clearly prioritized. This was definitely the author’s intention, since the ministries are assigned the ordering words “first”, “second”, and “third”. In the Greek original it is clear: πρῶτον, δεύτερον, τρίτον. The list ends with the categories of healing, assistance, administration and speaking in varieties of tongues.

The Church’s biblical self-portrait is also visible in another passage from the Letter to the Ephesians:

5 See G. Gromacki, *The Foundational Gifts of Apostle and Prophet in Ephesians*, “The Journal of Ministry and Theology” 17 (2013) 2, p. 10 [WAB].

He gave some as apostles [ἀποστόλους], others as prophets [προφήτας], others as evangelists [εὐαγγελιστάς], others as pastors and teachers [ποιμένες καὶ διδασκάλους] to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (Eph 4:11–12).

This list is intriguing. Among Apostles, prophets and teachers we also find evangelists and shepherds who were not mentioned in the passage from 1 Corinthians. It is worth dwelling on this passage from Ephesians because it is sometimes used as a guideline for organizing new movements and charismatic communities. Therefore, it is of particular importance in a broader perspective for such movements in the contemporary Church. It is time for a closer look at this very interesting passage.⁶

1.1.3 Fivefold ministry in Ephesians 4:11–12

The working thesis advanced here is that Ephesians 4:11–12 is not only a blueprint to be implemented in the future, it also accurately describes the experience of the community at Ephesus. The order in which the Church's ministries are mentioned here may reflect the actual sequence of the manifestations of the Church's mystery to the people of Ephesus. That alone is a good reason to ponder this text.

Indeed, the Scriptures give us many accounts of how, after their conversion to Christianity, the Ephesians first came to understand the word "apostle" through their encounter with St Paul; the term "evangelist" from the meeting with Apollos; and "teacher" in the persons of Aquila and Priscilla (as well as Paul). Finally, through their own ecclesial daily life they grew familiar with the terms "shepherd" and "prophet".

The Bible should show which experience of the Ephesians the Apostle Paul could have been referring to, when he mentions these five ministries: "[Christ] gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers". These five dimensions of ministry were first fulfilled in Jesus Himself.⁷ If the Risen Christ then gives these ministries to others, it is so they can continue His own mission. Scripture shows how, in His own Person, Christ first realized these gifts to the Church:

Apostle: "Holy brothers, sharing in a heavenly calling, reflect on Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession" (Heb 3:1).

6 Ibid., p. 26. See also S. Page, *The Assumptions behind Spiritual Gifts Inventories*, "Διδασκαλία" 22 (2011) 2, p. 46–48.

7 Cf. N. Ormerod, *On the Divine Institution of the Three-fold Ministry*, "Ecclesiology" 4 (2007) 1, p. 38–51.