

Title: The Legacy of the Charismatic Renewal in the Church of Ireland.

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Abstract:

I was drawn to the subject of this thesis on account of my own personal experience and involvement in charismatic renewal throughout my youth and early adulthood. My experience illustrated to me that the charismatic movement was capable of overcoming denominational prejudices that were especially prevalent in that period of Irish political history.

This research dissertation examines charismatic renewal within the context of the Church of Ireland and analyses and identifies its impact and on-going legacy today. It draws on various theological and biblical sources relevant to the theme. As there is limited published material in relation to the subject, it also relies heavily on the qualitative ethnographic research conducted. This was by way of a comprehensive questionnaire given to numerous individuals who had a significant role in the renewal. The results yielded by this fieldwork were analysed, compared and contrasted in light of both scripture and theology.

It progresses from the movements historical and theological origins, to the late 20th century situation in Ireland. A study of Cecil Kerr's ministry in the Christian Renewal Centre highlights that place's impact both on the Church and on the precarious political landscape. Pertinent theological themes are also examined. These concern the disparate views on the meaning of baptism in the Spirit, the significance of spiritual gifts and the continuing role of the Spirit in relation to the church. In conclusion the importance of team ministry is raised. In the author's view this is a vital resource that will allow a dynamic resurgence of the Spirit within mainstream Church of Ireland ministry.