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Peter Hocken: His Life and Work

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Abstract

This article discusses the life and work of the Roman Catholic Charismatic Peter Hocken. It shows how, over many publications and in a series of writings directed both to Catholics and to the wider Christian world, he has constructed a theological understanding of the outpouring of the Spirit in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The purpose of the Spirit in denominational and nondenominational streams turns on the key role of Messianic Jews and is essentially eschatological and ecumenical as it prepares for the return of Christ. The article also includes a list of Hocken's publications on Pentecostalism, charismatic renewal, and Israel.

Keywords

Peter Hocken – Messianic Judaism – eschatology – purposes of spiritual outpouring

Introduction

I sat in an airport lounge waiting for a flight and in walked Gary McGee. We were on our way to our respective homes after the SPS conference in 2008 and began a conversation that I wish could have been prolonged. It was a shock to learn of Gary's death in December of that year. In August 2011 we learned that Bill Menzies, one of the founders of SPS, had died. These two events signalled that the first generation of pentecostal scholars was passing. Moreover, in 2010 I had attended a memorial service in London for Michael Harper, who had been an influential figure on the charismatic scene for more than thirty years. At that service I met with Peter Hocken and we talked for a while of our memories of Michael, and we may have touched upon the Donald Gee Centre, of which the three of us were trustees. Drawing upon the instincts of an historian I

decided to write an article about Peter. His own journey, because he is a Roman Catholic priest, is unusual and his scholarly activities, because he has published in *Pneuma* and been past president of SPS, are widely known. It seemed to me that at some point in the future as the twenty-first century unfolds, scholars will look back and want to know about the life and work of earlier pentecostal writers, and Peter Hocken, I believe, will be among those whose literary work has enduring value.

The context of work is life. Although it has been cogently argued that the work, the literary product—the book, article, essay, review, academic paper, chapter, or obituary—stands or falls on its own without any interpretive assistance from the human being who first composed it, there has always been an alternative view. Whereas the text, it has been confidently asserted, may exist only as a constantly elusive set of words perpetually relating only to other words in a great intertextual web, it has been argued with equal force, in the opposite direction, that the text and the life each throw light on the other.¹

Regardless of these considerations, which, in the wake of Derrida, have an undoubtedly postmodern air, there is a good reason why the life of a pentecostal writer might be of especial interest to other Pentecostals and Charismatics. This is that Pentecostals and Charismatics will believe, by virtue of what makes them Pentecostals and Charismatics, in the power and reality of spiritual experiences. They will understand a certain template, a certain normative spiritual journey, that leads from darkness to light, from being outside the flow of the Spirit to being within that flow and encountering its life-changing benefits. Over the years they will have heard hundreds of testimonies and, in their congregational attendance, pondered the many lives displayed before their eyes in repeated readings from the Bible. Thus the writings of a pentecostal and charismatic scholar are connected with his or her pilgrimage. In what follows, Peter moves from a position outside Christianity to one that is within Christianity, and eventually within Catholicism and to a call to the priesthood and Spirit baptism. Those things he writes at different points in his life reflect different stages of his journey.

This article is intended to provide an overview of the life and work of Peter Hocken. It is not a critique of his work or an account of his inner spiritual journey but aims to bring his writings into association with his life. So, for example, it is relevant that he grew up experiencing various types of Protestantism, trained as a Roman Catholic priest in England, has a good working knowledge

¹ See, for instance, discussion in Valentine Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 102–105.

of at least two European languages in addition to English, is somewhat introverted, studied for a doctorate under Walter Hollenweger, was part of a charismatic Catholic community in the United States, saw the charismatic movement on both sides of the Atlantic, and became acquainted with a wide range of pentecostal and charismatic scholars through his membership of SPS. Such a background, with its mixture of theology and history, enabled Hocken to give meaning to the internationally scattered people and events that comprised the early stages of the charismatic movement and its Roman Catholic expression. In what follows, representative writings are considered in three categories: historical, theological, and specifically Roman Catholic. The text is intended to show how he faces toward the pentecostal and charismatic movements from a Roman Catholic position and understands the Spirit's outpouring on Protestantism from this vantage point while, at the same time, he faces toward his own Roman Catholic Church from a pentecostal and charismatic position. His eventual synthesis offers an interpretation of the work of the Spirit across these broad divisions of the worldwide church, and the meaning he assigns to the twentieth-century outpouring is drawn from biblical and historical reflection as well as his own life experience.

In the text that follows, I refer to representative writings drawn from each of the three main categories mentioned above but, in each case, I have checked back with Peter Hocken to ensure that my interpretation of his writings is recognized by him as authentic.² It is also perhaps worth noting that there are times when the text below refers to "Hocken" as a scholar and author and to "Peter" as a priest and a man. It is not always possible to maintain this distinction rigidly but that is the rationale behind these two appellations.

The methodology of writing was as follows.³ I originally approached Peter by email in October 2011 and, after correspondence, carried out a first interview by Skype for about an hour later that year. After the interview I sent him a transcript that he checked and corrected. Further interviews followed early in 2012. I then began to write an account of his life and sent this to him in advance of a face-to-face meeting at SPS that year. He again corrected matters of detail. I rewrote while, at the same time, reading many of the key books or articles that he had recommended and sent him a further draft that, after more than one additional Skype interview, I corrected either by adjusting the sequence

² There are too many writings to allow an individual comment on each.

³ I had written an article on Donald Gee in the *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* (16, no. 1 [2007]: 133–153) and began by asking Peter if he would like me to take a similar approach, but he demurred.

of events or by showing more clearly how one event was linked with another. Where quotations are given without further reference, these are taken from the notes of my interviews.

Much of this was straightforward, but the turbulence inside the Mother of God community during 1994–1995 was a sensitive issue and, only after a number of additional questions and inferences did we reach the account given here. Following this, peer review queries on an earlier draft of this article requested even more information about what was clearly a painful episode, and so a number of extra details and perspectives have been added.⁴

A rather similar process occurred in relation to Peter's published work where my own interpretations of what he has written appeared to him to be too black-and-white, and so these were nuanced in response to his comments, clarifications, and developing thought. I have seen the entire corpus of his work against the horizon of what seems to be the final master theme of a united church—Jew and Gentile, Roman Catholic, Protestant (and Orthodox)—reconciled by the Spirit's creative impetus.

Early Life

Peter Hocken was born in 1932 in the rural county of Sussex, England. He came from an Anglican home with an evangelical Anglican grandmother who sent him Bible reading notes and other encouragements. Although his step-grandfather was relatively wealthy, his father held a modest job in a bank. He was privately educated at Brunswick Preparatory School and then won a scholarship to Tonbridge School, where the regular chapel services leaned toward Anglo-Catholicism. He also attended an organized youth group (Crusaders) with meetings run by two members of the Brethren, a low-church denomination noted for its precise exegesis of Scripture. In this way Peter became acquainted with both ends of the spectrum of English Protestantism.

When he left school he stopped going to church and would have attended university had his grandfather approved. But the old man saw university as a place for wastrels sowing their wild oats, and so Peter was guided into a post at an insurance company in London and began actuarial studies, which did not interest him at all. This was interrupted by call-up to National Service between

⁴ It is worth noting, however, that the implied threat of litigation from some previous Community members has prevented as much enquiry or discussion as academic commentators would wish.

January 1951 and December 1952. After initial training in England, he was sent to Salalah, Oman, for eleven months. There were only sixteen men at the base and two were Christians, one Roman Catholic and the other from the Plymouth Brethren. The Roman Catholic was wide-ranging in his thinking, generous with his possessions, and read many books, some of which he lent to Peter. The Plymouth Brother was narrow, moral, and showed little joy. As Peter pondered and prayed, he had a sense that he would one day become Roman Catholic himself.

On returning to the UK Peter reentered the world of insurance but, in the summer of 1953, his mother had a stroke. He told his father of his decision to convert to Catholicism in October 1953 and this decision was communicated to his mother, who died four days later; after instruction, he was received into the church in May 1954. He was active in the Catholic Evidence Guild between 1954 and early 1956, and this confirmed his calling and the unattractiveness of trying to climb the secular world's corporate ladder. During most of 1956 he was ill and off work. The following year he felt a call to the priesthood.

Having offered himself for ordination, Peter was advised to remain for a further year in his job because of a health query. He started to study for the priesthood at the seminary in Oscott, Birmingham, in September 1958. He remained there until June 1964 and continued reading widely. He appreciated and was influenced by the books of Cardinal Newman, Yves Congar (read in French), and Bernard Lonergan while enjoying the lighter fare of G.K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc. In January 1959 Pope John XXIII called a Council and the resulting Vatican II influenced the whole of Peter's preparation for priesthood. It became the "springboard" from which he jumped forward.

In the summer of 1960 Peter visited a Belgian Benedictine monastery at Chevetogne, where he met people whose broad cast of mind was indicated by their willingness to relate across theological borders to the Orthodox. The Benedictines advised him to get rid of the narrowness that characterized English Catholics, a defensive narrowness that stemmed from Protestant persecution in previous centuries. Then, after reading Hans Küng's *The Council, Reform and Reunion*, Peter's horizons broadened further and he came to appreciate the ecumenical potential of Vatican II.⁵ Indeed, a thread running through his life is "a big concern for unity."

He was ordained in 1964 and quickly became involved as a Catholic representative in ecumenical discussion. The decree on ecumenism was passed

⁵ The original UK edition, simply called *The Council and Reunion*, was published in 1960.

the same year and the Catholic bishops were asked to act on it. Having been made secretary of the Northampton Ecumenical Commission in 1967, Peter was sent to a conference at Heythrop near Oxford and found himself the youngest person present. He immediately came to know the main ecumenical representatives in England and Wales and a few front-runners in other churches, and he was soon making written contributions to *One in Christ*. Between 1972 and 1976 he was a member of the Ecumenical Commission for England and Wales.

Peter was never in charge of a parish but was an assistant priest for four years in Corby, Northants, where he was introduced to working-class Catholicism. He stopped parish work when he was invited to teach seminarians at Oscott, where he remained from 1968 until 1976 with a break in Rome between 1969 and 1971 to study for a Licentiate in Sacred Theology (STL), majoring in moral theology. His ecumenical work centered on bringing theological reflection to bear on such practical and pastoral issues as interchurch marriages.

After 1971, when Peter had been baptized in the Spirit and spoke in tongues, he was involved on three fronts: with ecumenical dialogue, in the charismatic movement, and in continuing to teach moral theology. He himself came to renewal through currents within the English Catholic charismatic movement.⁶

There was a famously lively Assemblies of God congregation in downtown Birmingham run by two women who had originally intended to offer themselves for the mission field.⁷ They worked among immigrants to Britain and had built up a large Sunday school and an attendant congregation in which dancing, singing in the Spirit, and other pentecostal phenomena were welcome.⁸ Soon after his own baptism in the Spirit in October 1971 Peter attended some of the meetings as well as a separate charismatic prayer meeting and, in this way, realized that Pentecostals and Charismatics belonged together. When Pope John Paul I died in 1978, one of the lady pastors prayed to the Lord, "You will send the Catholics a new good man." Peter could hardly have felt a warmer instance of the Spirit's breadth of concern.

Archbishop Dwyer of Birmingham asked Peter to write a report on Catholic Pentecostalism for the Theology Commission of English bishops. The report

6 Some but not all British Catholic Charismatics resisted the American influence of Ann Arbor with its Life in the Spirit seminars.

7 Miss Fisher and Miss Reeve founded Hockley Pentecostal Church.

8 In one of his most autobiographical pieces Peter reflects on how he has reevaluated Pentecostalism: see Hocken, "A Charismatic View on the Distinctiveness of Pentecostalism," in *Pentecostalism in Context: Essays in Honour of William W. Menzies*, ed. W. Ma and R.P. Menzies (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 96–106.

was published in the *Heythrop Journal* in 1974. Two years later Peter went to the States during the summer and was beginning to feel the burden of his responsibilities. Someone asked him to write down all the groups of which he was a member and all his commitments. He was heavily involved in the Diocesan Ecumenical Commission and the Joint Working Group with the British Council of Churches on moral questions as well as a Working Group on Shared Church Buildings. Once he saw the list of his commitments, he realized that he could not continue as he was. He had a vision of Christ on the cross and “the Lord showed me that the reason I was doing too much was ambition and that it was killing me.” He cancelled all his arrangements for the rest of the summer and began to discern that out of his commitments those to the charismatic movement were his own particular task, whereas the things he did in moral theology, and even in the ecumenical movement, could be done by others. There were no others who could fill the priest-theologian role. “I would be more modest, I hope. Very few Catholics were then reflecting theologically on local ecumenical issues and on charismatic renewal.” Oscott had to go. Peter explained all this to his bishop in England. He asked permission to remain in the Mother of God Community in the United States. “I was fortunate in my bishop. He was a good listener and not at all authoritarian.” Peter was given permission to spend twelve months in the United States, but this eventually stretched to twenty years!

The American Years

The Mother of God Community was a product of the Catholic charismatic renewal. A group of well-heeled Catholics began to buy homes in the Gaithersburg area of Maryland close to Washington, DC. The community began around 1968 with seventy people. By the time Peter arrived, the community had grown to 250 and later reached approximately 600. To start with, Peter found one permanent priest and a visiting priest, although at no stage in the life of the community were the priests in charge. By 1989 a school had been founded and the total complement of priests had risen to five, including Peter. Members could worship in the chapel, but they also went to their own churches on Sundays, with the result that there was collective living but individual choices were possible. There were a lot of households, and Peter headed one of these in which a number of young people lived between 1985 and 1989. The people who shared the home ate together, with a house meeting once a week and a big prayer meeting on Sunday. About 93 percent of the community members were Roman Catholic and there were lots of married couples.

The community had an unusual core of theologian-scholar members that was not paralleled in any other charismatic community, at least in the English-speaking world. They shared the conviction that it was important for the renewal to have a strong theological underpinning. There was also a sense that it was important for a renewed theology to be coming out of communities living the grace of the renewal in a way that could not happen with a university-based theology. There are antecedents for this in the Catholic tradition. It was out of this conviction that during Peter's years in the community he did not seek any academic position. Francis Martin and Tom Weinandy were teaching in various institutions while living in the community, though later Tom Weinandy moved to Oxford, where he remained until he was appointed theological adviser to the U.S. Catholic Bishops Conference.

Peter's intellectual position at that point could be summed up like this: The charismatic renewal is for the renewal of the whole church—this was a widespread belief among charismatic Catholics linked to Vatican II (which was seen as the Council of renewal);⁹ the renewal of the church requires a renewal of theology; therefore the charismatic renewal must play a key role in the renewal of theology; but baptism in the Spirit builds the community of the church, and so charismatic communities are the Spirit-given context for renewal, including renewal of theology.

Someone in the community suggested to Peter that he should embark on Ph.D. studies, and so in 1979 he enrolled at Birmingham University under the renowned Walter Hollenweger. His first idea was to study what theologians were saying about the charismatic movement. He spent 1979 to 1980 reading Donald Gelpi, Kilian McDonnell, and others, but none appeared satisfactory to him. The light dawned when he felt God saying to him, "I don't want you to study what other people think I'm doing, but what I am doing." Later he realized that "this was not just a word about my thesis but also about my whole ministry." Between 1980 and 1982 he gathered material on the pentecostal and charismatic movements in the UK, USA, Canada, and France. In the final phase, between 1982 and 1984, he limited the thesis to the UK. The dissertation was completed in 1984 and published as *Streams of Renewal* in 1986 with a revised edition in 1997.

During this time, Peter became an officer of the Society for Pentecostal Studies and its president in 1986. He regularly issued newsletters compiling records of the growing numbers of publications on world Pentecostalism and, at the

⁹ Cardinal Suenens is an example of someone who thought like this.

request of Gary McGee when Zondervan's first dictionary of pentecostal and charismatic movements was in preparation, Peter was able to use the wealth of material he had collected on the international origins of the two movements, charismatic and pentecostal, to write eighty-seven articles, including, for instance, specifically pentecostal pieces on the Berlin Declaration (which had driven German evangelicals and Pentecostals apart) and Douglas Scott. While traveling to gather more information about the ecumenical relations within the charismatic movement, he came across the Union de Prière and the writings of its founder, the Frenchman Louis Dallière. These opened up to him a vista of understanding about the Spirit's role and Israel's role in preparing the way for the second coming of the Lord.

Dallière was an influential figure for Peter. He came from a committed Reformed Church background and yet took the pentecostal-charismatic movement seriously. "They have something, we have something" was his attitude. Through Dallière's writings Peter began to see things more clearly. Dallière had traveled over from France to examine the Elim Pentecostal Church in the UK in 1932 and concluded that Pentecostalism was not "intrinsically sectarian." Although he had been baptized in the Spirit through Douglas Scott, a British missionary to France and the founder of French Assemblies of God, Dallière was always convinced that he should remain in the Reformed Church. He took a positive attitude and was always looking for "what was right" in Pentecostalism. Dying in 1976, Dallière lived long enough to see the early vibrant years of the charismatic movement.

The Mother of God Community experienced a major crisis in 1994 and 1995. In communities that are predominantly Catholic, the church requires statutes to be drawn up defining membership and other arrangements. While statutes were being produced there were complaints to Cardinal Hickey, the Archbishop of Washington. One of the cofounders of the community was Edith Difato, who combined her life of prayer with the reading of Christian classics that led her to "emphasize that inner revelation is central to baptism in the Spirit," that "community life is essential for deep appropriation of the gospel," and that "the blood of Jesus in the cleansing from all sin" helps in "putting to death every movement of the flesh within the Christian."

Once it was known that Hickey was investigating, those who had been keeping quiet about their concerns felt released. They communicated their complaints to the Cardinal. The Assessment Committee, which was made up of clergy and laity, took about eight months to investigate and the Cardinal took roughly a further eight months to go through all the material that had been collected. Peter had initially interpreted the weaknesses he saw as a form of immaturity, but, during the probing of the committee, financial and other

irregularities came to light. Hickey required the previous leaders to step down and Peter was appointed acting chaplain to the continuing community for an interim period until elections were held for the leadership team. After the elections Peter returned to the UK. He later said:

On the question of why I left Mother of God and returned to UK in 1996, the deepest reason is that I sensed that my particular calling and contribution could no longer be fully exercised in the restructured post-crisis community. I believed that the pre-reform community had various genuinely prophetic elements. I also saw that the church authorities saw these elements I believed to be prophetic as a reason for the problems. As I knew that there had been real abuses, I saw that the church authorities cannot be expected to receive prophetic elements from a tainted source—I also saw how fair Cardinal Hickey had been and how much time he had given to it. He could have shut the whole show down, but he saw the good and he did not want this lost with the garbage. I thought that it would be impossible to reactivate the prophetic elements again in that context (which was highly combustible and emotional) for at least 10 to 15 years.¹⁰

Out of this experience, however, just before the crisis broke, and out of a quite separate and growing awareness of the Spirit's stirrings among Jewish people, would come *The Glory and the Shame*, published in 1994. The book "focused on the glory, on the work of the Holy Spirit in this outpouring of divine life and power" (p. 183), but acknowledged "the moral humiliation of famed preachers" and "financial irregularities in major ministries" as well as the sad "break-up of charismatic communities" (p. 184). Hocken offered an explanation by recognizing our human weaknesses, the seductive materialism of modern western society, and the enmity of Satan (pp. 184–186). These themes of glory and failure, which later seemed prophetic, were echoed when the glories of the Catholic Church's long moral and humanitarian record were marred by the discovery after about 2002 that Catholic priests in as many as eight countries had sexually abused children, often over many years, and without any proper remedial action being taken by the hierarchy, which was at least partly aware of what had happened.

¹⁰ Email to author, February 18, 2014.

Back to Europe

Peter became chaplain to the Bishop of Northampton (1997–2001) and was given the honorific title of Monsignor in recognition of his service. At the age of seventy he relocated to Austria and now lives in Hainburg in Austria beside the Danube, where he walks daily and is active as a preacher, teacher, writer, adviser, priest, and scholar. His measured and settled understanding of the Holy Spirit in the twentieth century was probably reached by 1996. He was one of the first leaders to commit himself to the pursuit of a second Jerusalem Council (TJCI) similar in authority and scope to the first described in Acts 15. He wrote an article on TJCI for the *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* (2007), and his extensive travels are subordinate to the purposes of the as-yet-unheld Council. Nevertheless, this is not the sole focus of his ministry: with an eschatological view of the baptism in the Spirit he also works for renewal in preparation for the Second Coming of Christ.

Writings

Peter has written twelve books and five booklets as well as eighty-seven articles for the first edition of the *Dictionary of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (1988) and over one hundred for the new edition (2002). In addition to twelve contributions to books, he has edited a book and written more than 140 articles in a variety of languages. The writings may be divided into three main categories: historical analysis, theological reflections, and expositions of Roman Catholic teaching in the context of post-Vatican II renewal. The main theme, developed across each of the categories, is that the Holy Spirit has been operating in the twentieth century to bring the disparate parts of the church into relationship. From the mid-1990s Peter saw the crucial role of Jewish people, led by Messianic Judaism, in bringing this all together. The Spirit has tailored corrective instruction for each section of the church so that the errors or weaknesses of one part may learn from the strengths of other parts. And all this should be seen in the light of the eschatological momentum, in line with Paul's statements in Romans 11 about the regrafting of the branches that were once cut off, that will reintegrate Jewish believers within the whole revitalized church.

Historical Analysis

Although he had published articles previously, *Streams of Renewal* (1986) was Hocken's first academic book, and in it he set out a direction from which he never deviated. The early chapters provide detailed and still fresh vignettes of

the scattered and preparatory meetings and conferences that eventually coalesced into the charismatic movement. All the scholarship is meticulously conveyed without jargon. A distinction is made between those pioneers outside Pentecostalism “and yet not having a committed relationship to any of the historic church traditions”¹¹ and those who “were convinced that God was calling them to live out their new life in the Spirit within their own denominations.” He aims to show how the charismatic movement straddled denominational and nondenominational sectors and how, once these people were in touch with one another through conferences or reading the same magazines, they began to be influenced by an international ecumenical vision fostered by David Du Plessis and supported by the Fountain Trust.¹² In the final section Hocken reflects upon the purpose of the pentecostal and charismatic movements and sees them as sharing a common experience of the Spirit without “a common understanding of the movement and its purpose in God’s sight” because their “received theologies, especially their ecclesiologies,” remain unchallenged.¹³

The article on Cecil Polhill published in *Pneuma* in 1988 is an exemplary piece of scholarship. Choosing a man who had been overlooked in many other histories but whose contribution as an organizer and strategist was vital and whose contribution as a benefactor was properly unostentatious (he paid off the mortgage on the Azusa Street building), Hocken tracked down almost every conceivable source to reconstruct Polhill’s life as a missionary to China and then as cofounder of the early Pentecostal Missionary Union. Hocken conveys the character of Polhill as well as his spirituality and leaves us with the impression of a real human being whose self-effacing disposition concealed great generosity and uncompromising commitment to the propagation of the gospel. Later writers were to understand more fully how infant British Pentecostalism grew, despite having Anglican leaders (Polhill remained an Anglican all his life), into a denominational and eventually interdenominational force.

In *The Strategy of the Spirit* (1996) Hocken starts from further back in time so as to trace the history of streams that began to flow from the 1730s onward. His choice of the word *stream* is deliberate: the word *waves*, popularized by Peter Wagner, seems to him deficient because, while waves replace one another, streams coexist. So, he shows how the evangelical stream, with its sources in Pietism, gave rise to revivalism and important humanitarian and social justice projects. Holiness was transdenominational; it also stimulated nineteenth-

11 *Streams of Renewal*, rev. ed. (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 1997), 123.

12 *Ibid.*, 141; the Foundation Trust had been founded by Michael Harper.

13 *Ibid.*, 217.

century Protestant mission while leaving its mark on later Pentecostalism. The pentecostal movement itself gave rise to heroic missionary labours and Spirit-filled churches on five continents. The charismatic stream, while reviving mainline churches, bore fruit in multinational agencies. These streams create today's context. Given that each stream is an expression of God's will, Hocken understands that divine patience over centuries is making preparation for a fullness in the church to be realized on Christ's return.¹⁴

Writing as a Catholic about the Catholic charismatic renewal, Peter has in numerous articles and chapters told the story of its beginnings, its later organizational features, and its revivifying impetus ecumenically, evangelistically, communally, and, to some extent, liturgically. Writing for the world at large, Hocken's enormous contribution to the first international dictionary was surpassed by his contribution to the revised dictionary published in 2002. He brought up to date his lengthy entry entitled "The Charismatic Movement" by adding a section on its globalization and its turning outward to the world beyond the church.

Theological Reflections

During the 1980s Peter published four articles in *Pneuma*. In these his distinctive voice is heard. In 1981 he explored the concepts of revival and renewal, the first favored by Pentecostals and evangelicals and the second by historic confessional or liturgical churches. He argued that the concepts have been "sundered by human sin" but belong together. This illustrates his desire to offer a "both/and" position, one that is essentially irenic, rather than a confrontational "either/or" position, and it allows him to range widely across all the parts of the church in which the Holy Spirit is charismatically at work and to develop an inclusive theological method.

In 1983 he explored baptism of the Spirit and argued that "many inadequate views of the charisms stem from failing to see their relationship to Jesus." He quotes with approval from Stanley Frodsham, who said, "the baptism of the Holy Spirit brings a deeper and clearer revelation of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ," and goes on to contend that at conversion the believer is "opening the door to Jesus Christ," while at baptism in the Spirit "there is a fuller yielding to Jesus ... revealing the majesty of Jesus Christ and making evident the activity of the Holy Spirit." Taking this insight further, he argues that spiritual gifts are also all related to Christ so that, for instance, "prophecy then is not just any message from God. It is always in some way a declaration of God's purpose in his Son";

¹⁴ *The Strategy of the Spirit?* (Guildford, UK: Eagle Publishers, 1996), 260.

healing enables people to be what God intended them to be; tongues enable Christians to make “a quantum leap beyond the stammering limping character of ordinary human language” into the praise of supernatural worship.

In 1985 Peter argued that we should see baptism in the Spirit “as a Trinitarian event” and that we should correlate its meaning and purpose with the meaning and purpose of “God’s entire salvific plan.” Taking meaning and purpose separately he argued that the meaning “is the total immersion of the believer by the agency of the Spirit into the being and mystery of Christ to the glory of the Father,” while its purpose “is the power to function as a Christian” toward God and other people “in love, service, ministry and evangelism.”

In 1989 Peter focused on the relationship between the physical and spiritual and showed that whereas Catholics tended to recognize that outward ritual acts were expected to achieve an inward spiritual result, the direction was reversed among Pentecostals: an inward spiritual change is witnessed by an outward act. He maintained that contemporary Catholics’ attitudes should be corrected by their historic theology of signs and that both Pentecostals and Charismatics could learn from this theology. Dialogue would be mutually enriching.

The Glory and the Shame (1994), as has been said, examines the successes and failures of the charismatic movement. Hocken begins by examining the surprises in the Acts of the Apostles that led to changes in church history for Jews and Gentiles and he argues that there are similarities between the first century and the present time. There are dissimilarities because the original outpouring occurred on a united church whereas today’s church is disunited. He affirms that “the pentecostal and charismatic movements represent a mighty initiative of the Lord.”¹⁵ So, rather than seeing the pentecostal and charismatic movements as purveyors of spiritual experience or sociologically successful adaptations to today’s culture—even if they are this—he understands the primary and directive power for the movements to come from heaven.

This work of the Spirit is complex, because “the unity of the church as the body of Christ depends upon the interaction of the immediate and the mediated, the Spirit and the body. Without the Spirit poured out from heaven, the church is no more than a religious institution and heritage. Without embodiment in historical forms and instruments, there could be spiritual dynamics but no body of Christ.”¹⁶ In saying this he implicitly criticizes both Roman Catholicism for its institutional stasis and nondenominational Charismatics for their

¹⁵ *The Glory and the Shame* (Guildford, UK: Eagle Publishers, 1994), 51.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 51.

failure to recognize the body of Christ on earth. And for anyone to see the church as it truly is in its current condition is all too parallel with the “great prophets of the Old Testament who both saw the devastation of Jerusalem and proclaimed her future restoration,”¹⁷ because the church is indeed like a ruined city. “Catholics are led to repent from neglect of God’s Word in the past, in theology and in devotions; and for exercises of spiritual authority in ways alien to the spirit of Jesus.”¹⁸ These are strong words from the Catholic priest, and brave ones too. Equally, “Protestants may be led to repent for their suspicion of authority, and neglect of the body of Christ, and a suspicion of all outward forms.”¹⁹

It is here that the pivotal role of Israel in helping to bring the churches together and serving as a focus for unity is elaborated. “Romans 11 also hints that the reintegration of Israel may be important for the reunion of separated Gentile Christians,”²⁰ and the reintegration will be on the basis of the work of the Holy Spirit “in each grouping and tradition, which means respecting its original character in its positive witness.”²¹ This is an enormous challenge because it demands the integration of separate entities: “revivals, principles and organic substance.” What the history of the ecumenical movement suggests is that “any kind of ecclesiastical democracy that treats all the divided churches as equal partners is doomed to frustration.”²² This leads Peter finally to speak of the shame of the church as a result of the failures of the charismatic movement and the shortcomings of western Protestantism caught up in the toils of materialism. The Catholic Church does not escape his censure: the renewal of the church can be damaged by a fascination with spiritual revelations especially when these are combined with older forms of Marian piety.²³

In a chapter in a later book (1997) Peter recounts his expanding relationship with Pentecostals. At first he was “much more impressed by Pentecostal practice than by Pentecostal theory”²⁴ and came himself to be classified as neo-pentecostal because of his support since the late 1970s for a two-stage understanding of conversion-regeneration, although this support was “always more

17 Ibid., 127.

18 Ibid., 130.

19 Ibid., 130.

20 Ibid., 139.

21 Ibid., 159.

22 Ibid., 159.

23 Ibid., 189.

24 “A Charismatic View on the Distinctiveness of Pentecostalism,” 19.

pastoral than theological.”²⁵ So, in some respects, he sees Pentecostalism simply as an intensification of evangelicalism but, in other respects, it is a change of “the relationship between God, Jesus, the Word, the Spirit, the church and the Christian” that transforms it into something that “no longer falls simply under the generic evangelical heading.”²⁶ This leads him to rethink evangelical history, which may now be cast as a “divine struggle” for Pentecost to break out, and the charismatic renewal then represents “another God-given opportunity to escape from ideological boxes.”²⁷ So while the church needs the richness of the Holy Spirit’s work in our day, Hocken believes that Pentecostals cannot produce this theology on their own; the resources and wisdom of all the major Christian traditions are required for such a theology to be written.

But why should we believe that the twentieth-century pentecostal and charismatic movements are different in crucial respects from previous movements in history? Peter locates this difference in their distinctive contribution to the Holy Spirit’s preparation for the coming of the Lord. The factor that contributed most to this conviction is the awareness that this is the first movement in history to have an impact on *both* the evangelical Protestant *and* the Catholic worlds. So this conviction of a particular distinctiveness is closely related to Peter’s commitment to Christian unity.

Two articles in pentecostal journals looked at the concepts of revival and of renewal, seeing them as different but complementary. These articles are “The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement as Revival and Renewal,” *Pneuma* (Spring 1981): 31–47, and “Revival and Renewal,” *JEPTA* (1998): 49–63. Historically, revival has been linked to an emphasis on discontinuity and renewal to an emphasis on continuity (although the term *renewal* only came into common Catholic terminology with Vatican II, the idea long precedes it).²⁸ The bringing together of revival and renewal requires a higher synthesis in which both discontinuity (divine in-breaking and new creation) and continuity (God’s fidelity in ongoing covenant with church as historic reality) are brought together.

While revival reawakens the eschatological hope, this does not by itself indicate historical progress; it may just mean reawakening in the same way as previous revivals reawakened hope in their day. But the renewal element involves a restoration of elements long neglected or forgotten. In the pentecostal/charismatic movements, Hocken sees the elements particularly being restored to be

25 Ibid., 102.

26 Ibid., 103.

27 Ibid., 105.

28 See Matthew 19:28 or Titus 3:5.

the charisms or charismata that are divinely given for the upbuilding of the body. In the Catholic renewal, the charisms are being restored to the historic body of the church. This is new.²⁹

It was in between the *Pneuma* and the *JEPTA* articles that Peter came to an understanding of the role of Israel and the Jewish people. This discovery was linked to his encounter with the Messianic Jews and his learning of the charismatic component in their emergence.³⁰ But here we have another clear sign that the pentecostal/charismatic movements represent something more than the recurrence of evangelical revival. Indeed and significantly, the official *Catechism of the Catholic Church* recognizes that the Second Coming of the Lord will be delayed until the entrance of all Israel (see para. 674).

So, theological ideas from one side of the spectrum can illuminate the other side: Peter believes that the radical pentecostal concept of the Latter Rain can be received in a modified form into nothing less than the Catholic understanding of the history of the church. This modified version of history would recognize significant spiritual stirrings between the fourth (or second) and the sixteenth (or twentieth) centuries, but it would see the unity of the church as central in a way that Pentecostals have not done. Consequently, Peter believes that the entire pentecostal/charismatic phenomenon calls us to transcend our narrow readings of church history, both the pentecostal (dismissive) and the Catholic (triumphalist) readings, and to reinterpret the past two thousand years. What we should have is a new approach that combines both readings.

29 A more conventional reading of the Catholic charismatic movement that sees it as leading to institutional renewal is given by William K. Kay, with Kees Slijkerman, Raymond Pfister, and Cornelis van der Laan, "Pentecostal Theology and Catholic Europe," in William K. Kay and A.E. Dyer, eds., *European Pentecostalism* (Leiden: Brill, 2011). Institutional renewal leaves all the structures where they were but simply adds fresh enthusiasm to church life.

30 Peter explained in an email (February 19, 2014): "My understanding for Israel came first through my contact from Jan 1989 with the Union de Prière and the teaching of their founder, Louis Dallièrè; see "The Prophetic Contribution of Pastor Louis Dallièrè," in *The Spirit and Spirituality* (ed. W. Ma and R.P. Menzies), 2004, pp. 271–297; out of this and other input I wrote *The Glory and the Shame* (1994) with some refs to Messianic Jews, whom I had never met at that time (!), and a chapter on "The Pivotal Role of Israel" (pp. 133–139). It was because of *The Glory and the Shame* that I met Messianic Jews (first Daniel Juster—13th February 1995) and within a year was asked to join the committee of Toward Jerusalem Council II."

Roman Catholic Teaching

The early *You He Made Alive* (1974) is all about prayer and provides a biblically based set of chapters on different kinds of prayer, including prayer that is contemplative, in faith, responding to Scripture, and within community. *Blazing The Trail* (2001) explains how the Spirit makes the church more evangelistic, eucharistic, ecumenical, and eschatological. We see Hocken writing as a Catholic for Catholics, familiarly quoting papal encyclicals or decrees, and drawing upon the Dominican theologian Yves Congar and, among others, on the achievements of the remarkable Polish priest Franciszek Blachnicki.³¹ In this book Hocken shows how the Spirit brings the church to a new humility, penitence, and openness; further, he highlights the witness of Hebrew Catholics and Messianic Jews who are part of the big picture of the church's restoration. Indeed, "Israel holds the key to Christian unity."³² In *The Banquet of Life* (2004) Peter speaks as a moral theologian, quoting from encyclicals to observe that "[f]or centuries, in her moral teaching the Catholic Church had emphasised natural law, that is the moral order inscribed in creation, that reflects the mind and purpose of the Creator. In the teaching of Vatican II, there was a shift from truth expressed in nature to truth embodied in the human person."³³ He also offers this caution: "When we emphasise the uniqueness of each person, but forget the human need to live in society, we produce an irresponsible individualism that is incapable of generating a common vision. When we emphasise human need for society, but overlook the unique dignity of each human being, then we produce totalitarian societies that trample on the rights and dignity of individuals in the name of social progress."³⁴ This individuality is best expressed by interdependence, which harks back to Peter's vision of a renewed church comprised of interdependent parts and traditions that make a new whole. He maintains this vision even in respect of the nondenominational new churches that repudiate all the apparatus of denominations and their hallowed customs. "I believe," he writes elsewhere, "that the Roman Catholic Church has constant need of the Protestant protest: though I also believe that protests need the framework they are protesting against."³⁵

31 *Blazing the Trail: Where is the Holy Spirit Leading the Church?* (Stoke-on-Trent, UK: Alive Publishing, 2001), 30.

32 *The Glory and the Shame*, 151.

33 *The Banquet of Life* (Stoke-on-Trent, UK: Alive Publishing, 2004), 7.

34 *Ibid.*, 23.

35 *All in One Place*, Papers from the Brighton Conference of July 1991, ed. Peter Hocken and Harold Hunter (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press), 230.

Conclusion

A survey of Hocken's thought over more than thirty years makes clear that he has created a coherent and coordinated theological synthesis. Bringing Catholic theology to bear on the pentecostal and charismatic movements, he then takes theology from these movements back to Catholicism. He creates a dialectic based upon an assumption that the Holy Spirit is at work and historically has been at work across great swathes of the church. The pentecostal and charismatic movements, particularly the latter, stand out because of an extensive appeal that transcends ecclesiastical boundaries. All this is seen in the light of a biblical grasp of history that is being divinely moved to a pre-ordained conclusion. The charismatic movement is important, but so is the ecumenical movement, and they are in fact related in the divine plan just as evangelicals and Catholics, though they may appear to be opposed, are related.

Peter's understanding of baptism in the Spirit is uniquely his own, although there are others, such as Frank Macchia, whose views are consonant with his.³⁶ He understands the baptism to be an eschatological outpouring because all the biblical loci that mention baptism in the Spirit have an eschatological dimension; thus the baptism belongs to the preparation for the coming kingdom. It is an outpouring that should draw us to look forward; the desire to look backward toward Christian initiation is unhelpful. The point of the bestowal of the gift of the Spirit is to prepare the church in all its multiple forms for a great coming together that will climax at the return of Jesus. And so, also, the Roman Catholic position, which is concerned to connect Spirit baptism with the grace given at the sacrament of child baptism, is something of a distraction. Indeed, when Catholics look back to the sacramental acts or, even, to ask such completely hypothetical questions as "Was Francis of Assisi baptized in the Spirit?" Peter believes that they are missing the point. The Spirit of God is poured out in our day for the great ecumenical purposes of God. Whatever outpouring occurred in the time of St. Francis had a different profile from the movement of the Spirit in our own times; today the baptism of the Spirit is prophetic of a future deluge of the Spirit, but it makes little sense to apply the same terminology to earlier prophetic movements whose purpose was essentially different.

Classical Pentecostals could learn from Hocken's perspective. Their concern to characterize the baptism as "power for service" is important and ensures

³⁶ Frank Macchia is a previous editor of *Pneuma* as well as the author of many books and articles.

that the reception of the Spirit is seen as having a practical function in the Christian's life rather than being primarily a healing or emotional experience (although it is this). The eschatological dimension implies that the gaze of the church is fixed upon the great panorama of the future as it rushes toward us.

The theology that Hocken has constructed is profoundly trinitarian. One of the functions of the Holy Spirit is to convict of sin and, as he does this, the Spirit will reveal to various streams and traditions where they fall short and how they must repent and reform themselves. It is possible, Hocken argues, to see the institutional expression of the church as part of the ministry of the Son, since it is through the institutional church that the mediated presence of God may be known. The unmediated presence of God, through the ministry of the Spirit, may be felt within the institutional setting or outside this in the nondenominational groupings.³⁷ Those who see the unmediated presence of God as paramount need to understand the physical and ritual aspects of worship as well as the role of institutional structures in carrying forward divine purpose.

Many of the changes that God desires to bring about to the disparate components of the church can (only?) be effected by the overt incorporation of Messianic Jews within the body of Christ. For, as Hocken says in *The Challenges of the Pentecostal, Charismatic and Messianic Jewish Movements* (2009), "Messianic Jews can powerfully help this confession/ reconciliation [between Catholics and Protestants] ... before the Jews all Gentile Christians are in a similar situation. We all find ourselves at the bar of history with sins to confess. This new situation makes it easier to leave the traditional forms of self-justification."³⁸

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³⁷ *The Glory and the Shame*, 60.

³⁸ *The Challenges of the Pentecostal, Charismatic and Messianic Jewish Movements* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2009), 111.

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