Dear Faithful Friends,

When I sign letters thanking you for your donations that make the mission of Renewal Ministries possible, I feel a deep gratitude for the faithfulness of so many who have been believing in us, praying for us and supporting us for so many years. Some of you began supporting us way back in 1980 when we first began, and still are!!! As we approach the Christmas season, with deep gratitude for the Gift of Jesus, which makes eternal life possible for all of us who remain faithful to him to the end, we also join our gratitude to God, for you. Some of us meet from time to time as different members of the Renewal Ministries team travel about, and some of us may not meet, God willing, until heaven. Then there will be plenty of time to rejoice together at all that the Lord has done through our relationships with one another. Rather than reviewing the entire past year and giving a preview of what’s coming in 2012—I will do that in our January issue—this month we are devoting most of our space to a more comprehensive report of one of our missions this past year to Tanzania. Our Renewal Ministries teams have journeyed to Tanzania eleven times since 2001 and have carried out missions in 11 of Tanzania’s 27 dioceses. This past year we faced one of our most difficult challenges because of the particular circumstances, yet saw the Lord do truly marvelous things, whose “ripple effect” only God knows, but perhaps he will let us see, during our heavenly reunion! In this newsletter we also feature the personal faith journey of Renewal Ministries’ country coordinator Tom Edwards and his wife Pam, who have faithfully served the Lord for years. Throughout the year we will also include the testimonies of our other country coordinators so you can get to know the men and women who have courageously responded to the Lord’s call to “make disciples of all nations.”

May the Lord bless you with deeper insight into his personal love for you and personal commitment to you this coming Christmas season.

Thank you for your friendship, your prayer and your gifts that help so many people all over the world.

Your brother in Christ,

Ralph Martin

Ralph Martin
Mission to Tanzania

The spectacular Peres Mountains formed the backdrop for the first ever rallies in the diocese of Same. The events were viewed by the bishop as a pivotal moment in the life of this diocese.

In our recent mission focused on ministry in the most Northern regions of Tanzania, targeting the dioceses of Same (pronounce Sa-may) and Moshi, on the slopes of beautiful Mt. Kilimanjaro. We were blessed with a strong and talented team: Fr. Earl Muller from Detroit Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Sr. Rita D’Souza and Sr. Kateri Cahill from the Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in Prayer Town, TX, John Mathe from Interlachen, FL, Jean Marie Thompson from Riverside, CA, Miriam Wright from Burlington, Ontario, Katherine Butcher of Brampton, Ontario, and Jim Doran of Oakville, Ontario. Joining forces with us were our faithful Tanzanian brothers and sisters from Dar es Salaam: Estalatus Mtema (National Director for the Charismatic Renewal), Louis Bulemela (Secretary for the National Charismatic Renewal), Roman Lyimo (Director of Agape Community), Hermina Wilke (incoming Secretary/Treasurer for the National Charismatic Renewal), and Celina Columbani (lay Catholic evangelist). George Ndegwa also traveled from Nairobi to join us for a few days. With this capable team we were well set for our planned FIRE rallies, retreats for priests and religious sisters, pro-life workshops, and healing and deliverance workshops.

The majority of our time was dedicated to the Diocese of Same. The entire region of Same is populated by about 550,000 people, 12% of whom are Catholic. There are 35 diocesan priests serving approximately 70 parishes and many outstations. Our efforts to work in this diocese have been blocked for the past several years. Previous leadership, which eventually was removed by the Vatican, had opened the diocese to occult practices as well as financial mismanagement. This situation provided for a good deal of consternation to the new bishop, Bishop Rogatus Kimayo, C.S.Sp. who quickly moved to invite our team to his diocese. Prior to our arrival a number of priests of the diocese signed a letter to the bishop stating that they did not want us. The parish council president at the Cathedral gave a speech denouncing our work as evil. However Bishop Kimayo announced that he had already invited us and thus we were coming. All of this set the stage for our arrival. Fortunately many people were interceding for us and the Holy Spirit was ready to do a work. The Renewal leaders in Dar es Salaam had sent several strong lay people to Same a few days in advance to begin laying a foundation for our ministry. Upon our arrival a platform had been set up for the outdoor rallies.

Our team traveled ten hours by bus on our first full day to reach a town in Same. Lodging was sparse, however the Elephant Hotel outside of town provided quite adequate lodging and food for our team who filled most of the hotel for the next ten days. The geography of the region is very beautiful and a band of monkeys and a herd of banded mongoose that constantly swarmed the property kept our team fascinated, especially when the monkeys attended our early morning Mass on the patio. There are very few resources in this area which is populated by the Pare, Chagga and Maasai...
tribes amongst a few others in the mountains. Raising cattle and some subsistence farming keep the people going although water is at a premium and many walk for miles to obtain a bucketful.

The bishop came to listen to the preaching on our first day of ministry and was pleased at what he heard and he expressed his relief that people were coming to the rally. On Sunday, three of our team members accompanied Fr. Everest, the Vicar General to minister in an outstation in the Maasai village of Marwa. He is only able to make this trip once a month due to a lack of petrol for his vehicle.

Sisters’ Retreats
Twentythree religious sisters, representing five different Congregations from the Same Diocese, attended a special four-day Life in the Spirit Seminar at Good Shepherd Cathedral. Considering that the New Pentecost had been resisted on every front by priests, sisters and laity, this event was nothing short of a miracle! The sisters had many questions, experiences, fears and anxieties about the Charismatic Renewal that were cleared up and clarified for them as we presented a history of the Renewal and prepared them to receive the fullness of this grace. They testified that the gift of the Spirit came to them in a tangible way as wind, water, fire, a gentle touch and healing. At the close of the Seminar, Sister Agatha spoke on behalf of all the sisters, summarizing the powerful work of the Holy Spirit in their lives in the four short days.

“When we came here we had many things we were not aware of and you helped us by teaching us and showing us the way of the Holy Spirit. You have prayed for us and it is my hope and joy that the fire which you have kindled in us, given by the Spirit through you, will keep burning with the help of others. We shall be able to help others to salvation especially the people who are entrusted to our care as Jesus has no other hands but ours, no other eyes but ours and no other mouth but ours. We cannot do this without the Holy Spirit helping us.”

Approximately seventy sisters attended a retreat at Christ the King Cathedral in the diocese of Moshi for three mornings. Sister Cordula, a local Franciscan sister, assisted us in preparing the sisters for this mighty work of the Spirit. We gave teachings on their identity as religious women, obstacles to receiving the fullness of God’s grace, the importance of forgiveness, deliverance and renunciation of witchcraft practices, and the gifts of the Spirit. On the final day Tom Edwards came to help pray with the sisters for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The outpouring of the Spirit was manifested in a powerful way through tears, laughter, joy and freedom in the Spirit. It was a moment of great grace to see God’s faithfulness to these women. One sister commented on behalf of all the sisters: “Before we were living the Religious life, but now we’ve tasted the Living God! We are in awe!”

A few team members travelled into the bush country to the Maasai village of Marwa with Fr. Everest for a Sunday morning mass. The parishioners were so gracious and appreciative of our visit.

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Priests’ Retreat

The priests’ retreat this year was very much a team effort. We were coming into a very difficult situation. Bishop Rogatus Kimayo was very much hoping that an introduction of the charismatic renewal to the diocese could start a more general renewal and begin the process of healing amongst the priests. The priests’ retreat was well attended by thirty of the thirty-five priests of the diocese, who were there primarily because of the urging of the bishop. The overall structure of the retreat followed the general outline of a Life in the Spirit Seminar with modifications appropriate for priests. I provided some of the framework talks and also special presentations on Ignatius’ Discernment of Spirits, forgiveness, the baptism in the Spirit, magisterial documents, and deliverance. Personal testimony was provided by Jim Doran and Roman Lyimo. Fr. Rogassian Msafiri spoke on the Lordship of Christ and fielded many of the questions about the local Tanzanian situation. Tom Edwards spoke on the gifts of the Spirit and the National Charismatic coordinator, Estelatus Mtema provided further exhortation. In the end we did not have time to pray with them individually for the baptism in the Spirit but we prayed together extensively for the outpouring of the Spirit. Some of the comments we received from the priests were very encouraging; what they encountered in the retreat was not what they expected and a number of them were clearly touched. The bishop, who attended, was quite pleased.

Pro-Life Workshops

Tanzania’s love of children and family is under a vicious attack due to the presence of Planned Parenthood in Africa and money pouring in from “civilized” countries for population control. By the mercy of God, we were invited to give Pro-Life workshops, and thanks to the Interlachen Knights of Columbus Council 8917, we were able to purchase life-size fetal models ranging from seven weeks to eight months. These models were invaluable in touching the hearts of everyone who saw them. As we went through the stages of development beginning with conception, the heart beating at eighteen days, taste buds forming at eight weeks, etc., you could visually see the reality that “this is a baby” taking hold of their hearts. Our Lord powerfully yet gently erased all doubts and lies from their minds.

After a Pro-Life workshop at the sisters’ retreat in Same, the sisters shared their concern that young people were not being taught on life issues and were having abortions. That afternoon an invitation came to go to a secondary school. As we went through the unborn stages with 400 young women, we also explained to them how abortions were performed at the various ages. They told us that this was something that they would never forget and they wanted all of their friends to know these truths. Using Scripture, the Catechism, the Gospel of Life and Theology of the Body teachings, we were able to share with our Tanzanian brothers and sisters the beauty of the male and female reproductive systems, the realities of abortions, artificial birth control, and the physical

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By Fr. Earl Muller

“As we went through the stages of development beginning with conception...you could visually see the reality that ‘this is a baby’ taking hold of their hearts.”

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Fr. Earl Muller presents a Life in the Spirit Seminar to 30 priests from the diocese of Same.
and spiritual gifts of Natural Family Planning. These workshops were attended by both men and women who were hungry for these teachings; they had many questions and took pages of notes. At the end of our workshops, people in both dioceses shared that many of them were on birth control and some were having abortions because they had been told these were good things. They were so grateful to hear the truth. An older man in Same told us he worked in the hospital and was pushing people to be sterilized but now he was going to stop. He and many others now want to teach Natural Family Planning to their community. The Lord is stirring up His Spirit in Tanzania and gracing them with a new passion for the protection of the unborn and the sacrament of marriage. Please pray for these men and women as they begin the battle for life in their country.

Healing & Deliverance Workshops

In the same diocese we witnessed a powerful outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The morning workshops focused on healing and deliverance and living in freedom through the power of the Holy Spirit. Initially about forty people attended, but the group doubled as the week progressed. We began the workshop by teaching the principles of deliverance and freedom in Christ using the Unbound model of prayer. The group listened attentively to the teachings and participated wholeheartedly during the prayer ministry times. They were so hungry for the truth and the hope of sharing more fully in the victory of the Cross! Although many already attend Mass regularly, tribal traditions such as ancestor worship and witchdoctor rituals for healing and fertility continue to be practiced by Catholics. Ignorance of the truth, fear, and spiritual bondage hold many people back from living fully as beloved sons and daughters of God. During the workshop and afternoon rallies, lives were changed as the Holy Spirit touched hearts and minds with truth, hope and love.

We also conducted a Life in the Spirit Seminar and the whole group received the Baptism in the Spirit. One of the beautiful manifestations of the Spirit was that many received the gift of joy and laughter, and tears of joy streamed down their beautiful faces. One woman’s story stands out. As the daughter of a witchdoctor she had grown up believing that the rituals were normal and healthy. Not surprisingly, there was significant darkness in her life which manifested itself in daily torments, especially at night. Yet in the midst of it all, the Lord had been calling her and drawing her to himself. Early in the week, she experienced some freedom during the ministry time and it gave her hope and the courage to continue coming. As she received the truth and responded in prayer, she blossomed like a rose in springtime. She said this was the first time she

As the daughter of a witchdoctor she had grown up believing that the rituals were normal and healthy. Not surprisingly, there was significant darkness in her life which manifested itself in daily torments, especially at night. Yet in the midst of it all, the Lord had been calling her and drawing her to himself.
In the diocese of Moshi an estimated 10,000–15,000 were present for three afternoon rallies on the grounds of Christ the King Cathedral in the shadow of beautiful Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Reflections by Team Members

“It was wonderful to see the Lord working in Tanzania. I was very impressed by the team that ventured with us to Tanzania and by the Tanzanians that joined the team and the work that they are doing to promote Catholic evangelization in their country. Witnessing the joyful release of the Holy Spirit in some of the people attending the rallies was fantastic. It makes me better realize the size and impact of the Church worldwide. (Jim Doran)

“This was my first mission. I was constantly in awe of my team members’ forbearance, faithfulness and fervor to spread the word of God. While meeting the bishop of the Diocese of Same, I understood that God was answering his prayers to come and claim his people from the practices of witchcraft and a failure to live the Christian life. In the Unbound workshop, I witnessed large numbers repent, forgive and receive the Father’s blessing. During a Life in the Spirit Seminar, hearts were changed and there was an outpouring of the spiritual gifts. The Holy Spirit was also active in the simultaneous Pro-Life workshops and the retreats for Sisters and Priests. To see 10,000 people attending a rally in the diocese of Moshi was an amazing experience as everyone danced and worshipped God. The workshops here were large and God moved among his people with his transforming grace with joyful results. I went to bless but I have been abundantly blessed by this call to mission. Thank you to Renewal Ministries for the work they are doing in building the church in Tanzania. It is wonderful to know that the Catholic Church has a strong presence in this area of the world.” (Kathy Butcher) +

Rallies

Afternoon rallies were held daily in each diocese. Several hundred attended the rallies each day in the small town of Same, held on the Cathedral property against the backdrop of the spectacular Peres Mountains. These first-time events in Same were viewed by the bishop as a pivotal moment in the life of this diocese. In Moshi an estimated 10,000–15,000 were present for the rallies on the grounds of Christ the King Cathedral in the shadow of beautiful Mt. Kilimanjaro. +

Water Ministries

This year was my ninth mission to Tanzania and it was a very exciting and fruitful experience for me. I was elated to see the progress made by our African brothers and sisters since my first visit in 2003. The Charismatic Renewal Center at Emmaus Center in Dar-Es-Salaam which was nothing but an open field, has developed into a complex with a concrete and tiled floor that includes a stage that is used daily for workshops. Rallies averaging 500 people are held every weekend. This year a week-long conference was held here that was attended by over 400 youth from the area. They have constructed a two-story concrete building to house the local and national Charismatic offices. I was personally greeted by numerous individuals who expressed their gratitude to the Renewal Ministries team that visits annually and told that our presence here has been an inspiration and a tremendous blessing to them.

Water Ministries, Inc. is in the process of partnering with the Agape Centre, a local organization with ties to the Catholic Church in the diocese of Dar Es-Salaam. We are making plans to train and equip a drilling crew so that a safe and dependable source of water can be constructed at some of the many schools and churches that do not currently have access to clean water. +
It was early in 1974 when “the thought” seemed to take root. I dismissed it as fantasy. Me, a preacher of the Word of God? I’m a layman, married with a young family. It had taken several years to gain a bit of security and benefits in my management position with the company. Besides, I was not even a good conversationalist, let alone a teacher. I was an introvert, and one-on-one conversation was a challenge for me. And yet, “the thought” persisted, accompanied by a deep desire. I knew that the Word of God had changed my life, and I wanted to share that truth with others.

In time my wife and I discussed the idea, and strangely enough Pam’s reaction was, “Yes, this could be from God.” Over a period of three months it seemed that the Holy Spirit continued to confirm this word in various ways. In the midst of this struggle, it occurred to me that if ever I was going to be able to teach the Word, it would require something beyond me. I began to pray and fast and ask the Lord to grant me a gift of preaching.

A few days later Pam and I were invited to a little Christian concert presented by a new group of young people. As they closed the concert, they invited all present to remain there in silence. I sensed the Holy Spirit overshadowing me once again. From within I heard the words, “Tom, you have it!” At that moment I knew that God had given me the gift of teaching. I knew that I couldn’t do it yet, but if I would be faithful to study and then to exercise the gift, God would cause it to grow and would use it for his glory. There was no doubt in my mind about that.

In the early summer it came to light that my company would be leaving the Jacksonville, Florida market. I would be transferred, and life could go on as usual. But I knew in my heart that this was decision time. Was God saying, “Tom, leave all that seems to give you and your family financial security”?

That day I had a random encounter that confirmed God’s call to me. Leaving work, I steered my car down the spiraling ramp of the multilevel downtown parking garage. As I stopped before the ticket taker’s booth, he looked me in the eye and for no apparent reason asked, “Are you a preacher?” The words rattled me; I knew God was speaking! The next day I gave my company notice. I had heard “the call,” and life would never be the same.

This step of faith soon evolved into an international mobile outreach of lay Catholic evangelization with an emphasis on the preaching and teaching of the Holy Scriptures in a practical, applicable way. In the course of thirty seven years, the Lord has given me opportunities to minister at conferences, retreats, and parish missions throughout the United States, Belize, England, Wales, Canada, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Kazakhstan, Jamaica, Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa. My wife Pam and I currently live in St. Augustine, Florida. We have two adult children and eight grand children.
Please Pray…

+ for the continued work of evangelization and renewal in Tanzania and throughout Africa. May God’s truth dispel the darkness and bring greater freedom and conversion.

+ that God will protect, equip, and strengthen all those who are working tirelessly and sacrificially to bring the Gospel to others.

+ for the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members, especially as they face the challenges of illness and economic uncertainty.

+ Thank you for your continued support through prayer as we labor together for the Gospel and the renewal of the Church.

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Renewal Ministries is a Catholic ministry committed to renewal and evangelization in the Church. It seeks to proclaim Jesus Christ through its TV and radio outreaches, as well as through books, tapes, conferences, retreats and other international evangelistic events.

Editor
Debra Herbeck

Design
Anne Martin

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Blessed John Paul II

The Word who found a dwelling in Mary’s womb comes to knock on the heart of every person with singular intensity this Christmas.

December 2011

*Toronto, ONT
Catholic Renewal Ministries’ Board Meeting
December 4–5
Ralph Martin, Peter Herbeck, Sr. Ann Shields, Gary Seromik

January 2012

Young Adult Mission to Mexico City
January 2–8
Jim Murphy, Debbie Herbeck and Team
Contact Kathleen Kittle at 734-662-1730 ext 132 or kckittle@renewalministries.net

*Ann Arbor, MI, Pastoral Leadership Forum
January 9–12
Ralph Martin

*Salina, Kansas, Clergy Formation Days
January 17–20
Ralph Martin

*Events not open to the public

Baltimore, MD
National FOCUS Leaders’ Conference
January 21
Peter Herbeck
Contact Christine Westerlin at: cwesterlin@focusonline.org or

February 2012

*Birmingham, AL, Crossing the Goal Taping
February 12–15
Peter Herbeck

Mesa, AZ, St. Timothy’s Parish Renewal
February 17–18
Ralph Martin
Contact number: 480-775-5200

Detroit, MI, Sacred Heart Major Seminary, St. Paul Fellowship
Friday, February 24
Ralph Martin
Contact: Peter Williamson at 734-434-2781 or williamson.peter@shms.edu

Cromwell, CT, St. John’s Parish Mission
Monday, February 27–Tuesday, February 28
Ralph Martin
Contact number: 860-635-5590

www.renewalministries.net
P.O. Box 1426 Ann Arbor, MI 48106 phone 734-662-1730 In Canada P.O. Box 400 Station U Toronto, ON M8Z 5Y8 phone 416-251-4255