Dear Partners in the Mission,

Wonderful opportunities keep opening for Renewal Ministries to bring the message that we have been entrusted with to increasingly wider circles in the Church. As I write this I just got back from New Mexico where I gave two talks to the Diocesan Directors of Deacon Formation. About 200 deacons and priests along with some of the deacons’ wives gathered in Albuquerque under the auspices of the National Association of Deaconate Directors for their annual conference. Before I left I was able to ask Deacon Dan Foley, the Chairman of our Board in the US, and Deacon Steven Thomashefski, our Country Coordinator for Hungary and Romania for their advice about what deacons most need to hear. The talks were well received; I spoke of the New Evangelization emphasizing themes that I put in writing in our new booklet, *The New Evangelization: Why Bother?* and themes concerning holiness from my book *The Fulfillment of All Desire.*

The weekend before I was invited to give a few talks to the annual conference of the Institute for Religious Life held at Mundelein, the Chicago Archdiocese seminary, which gathers many of the new orders in the Church of nuns and priests – and some old orders as well – that emphasize their loyalty to the Church. Again, it went well. I know some of you follow our calendar each month in this newsletter and pray for the various outreaches. Thank you! Your prayers are being answered.

Since my last update on our activities in Renewal Ministries, I’ve also had the chance to give talks at two men’s conferences – one in the Diocese of Brownsville, Texas and another in Baltimore, MD; I spoke at parish missions in Ft. Worth, TX, Linthicum, MD, Jackson, MI, and Lansing, MI. I gave in-service workshops for Church workers in the Diocese of Camden, NJ and Ennis, TX, and spoke at a Eucharistic Congress in the Diocese of St. Augustine, FL. A real highlight was giving three talks to the seminarians and faculty at the seminary for the Archdiocese of New Orleans, as well as speaking at several Legatus chapters. Sr. Ann and Peter have been similarly blessed with opportunities to preach the gospel and “equip the saints for the work of ministry” (Eph. 4:12).

Everywhere I go people tell me how much the work of Renewal Ministries is impacting their lives – whether it be through the TV or radio programs, the booklets or books, CD and DVD albums, encountering our preaching and teaching at events like just mentioned above, or any variety

“Your teaching on personal prayer helped to establish a discipline that has been an essential element in my walk with the Lord.”

Ralph gave two general session talks on holiness and evangelization to 200 Diocesan Directors of Deacon Formation and their wives in Albuquerque, NM.

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of other ways as well. Some have been faithful supporters of Renewal Ministries for many years and when I am in various cities it is a privilege to meet them, sometimes for the very first time. I am genuinely moved and deeply grateful for the long-term generosity and faithfulness of so many of you!

As you can see from the comments below, your support continues to bear fruit!

“Your letters are like taking a bath. I feel cleansed by the Holy Spirit.” (Puerto Rico)

“At the Lift Jesus Higher Rally this year we were strengthened in our faith and sent out to share and evangelize in our parishes and wherever we may be. Thank you!” (Canada)

“I have listened to your program with Fr. Ricardo three times. It is fabulous. I am passing on these truths to others. Thank you for being a light in a dark world.” (California)

“Thank you for reminding us. I can increase my pledge and am happy to do so!” (Michigan)

(Thanks to all those who responded to our March notice. A number of you increased your pledges, some were able to catch up, and some were able to give a “one time” extra gift. We are back on track and as of now we don’t need to cancel any of the scheduled missions.)

“I am listening to your CD album on Catherine of Siena as I drive to work. I am going through it for the second time. I want to listen to some of the others but I am happily stuck on Catherine! Years ago at one of the Notre Dame conferences I heard you present a two part workshop on Union with God in Prayer. There were 5,000 people who attended that year. Your teaching on personal

Dear Partners in the Mission,

Ralph gave a general session talk and a workshop to participants at the Institute for Religious Life annual conference at the Archdiocese of Chicago’s seminary in Mundelein, IL. This conference draws men and women from many different religious orders who wish to remain faithful to the teaching of the Church.

Several hundred diocesan and parish leaders from the Diocese of Camden, NJ heard Ralph give three talks on evangelization, holiness and the new Pentecost at a Diocesan study day.

Ralph was asked to give three talks to the seminarians and faculty at Notre Dame Seminary in the Archdiocese of New Orleans.
prayer helped to establish a discipline that has been an essential element in my walk with the Lord. Here we are all these years later and you continue to help me grow in my walk with the Lord. Thank you!” (Maryland)

“I was listening to EWTN’s Bookmark last night and I couldn’t believe what I was hearing about your new book Will Many be Saved? What you explained is exactly what I need to share with my relatives. I am so concerned for them and their salvation. We’re going to get your book – as many copies as we can get our hands on and share it with others.” (Florida)

“I thank the Lord daily for your ministry.” (Pennsylvania)

“My favorite programs are when Peter and Ralph start really going at it talking about what’s revealed to us in Scripture!” (Windsor, Canada)

“I appreciate seeing you on EWTN. My husband and I remember you from the FIRE team. He went to be with the Lord and I am managing very well, knowing he is where he wanted so much to be. I will pray for you.” (New Zealand)

“The Lord had brought me to himself after years of wandering but I was getting discouraged at what I was hearing in my local parish. I was at a breaking point. Then, one night, while visiting my mom’s house I couldn’t sleep and picked out a book from her bookshelf. It was A Crisis of Truth by Ralph Martin. I found myself saying “YES” out loud every few paragraphs. Ralph was identifying the very same untruths I was hearing at my parish, false teachings actually. I read the book cover to cover in one sitting. I asked myself: Who is this guy? I then proceeded to read everything I could find by Ralph and found Renewal Ministries and started watching The Choices We Face and watched every archived episode. My prayers were answered. This was the beginning of an outpouring of the Lord’s grace.” (Canada)

“I’m a prisoner but have come to the Lord and want to help others do so as well. I’m leading a group of 10-15 men and I need to give them some booklets that can help them grow in their faith. Can you help us? We can’t receive these directly but our chaplain has agreed to receive them for us and pass them on.” (We sent some! Michigan)

“I’m a Baptist but love watching you on EWTN. Keep up the good work for the Kingdom of God. You and our ministry remain in my prayers.” (Anonymous email)

“We listen to Sr. Ann every single night and she is such a blessing to us.” (New York)

“I listen to Sr. Ann EVERY DAY! She is AMAZING! She explains things better than anyone! Thank you!” (Florida)

I have a pile of literally hundreds of these messages, but you get the idea! Thank you for making all of this – and much more possible.

Your brother in Christ,

Ralph Martin

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@DebbieHerbeck
@id916
Learning from Pope Francis

I CAN ONLY SPEAK from externals; I have not met Pope Francis but several characteristics stand out in the very few months since his election. I want to share them with you because I think God speaks to each of us through some of the “surprising choices” of the Holy Spirit—if we have ears to hear and eyes to see!

The first reflection was precipitated by his choice of name. It signaled a regard for personal simplicity and humility; a desire to bring God’s peace to a war torn and chaotic world. The choice of Francis indicated a man who was patterning his life and service on the saint whose love for God was all consuming! It reminded me of St. Francis’ call from God to “Rebuild my Church!” in the 13th century. After the chaos of the sex abuse crisis in the 21st century, we continue to need great leadership so that the foundation can be secured again in Christ. St. Francis embodied a love for the Lord and for God’s people. Through simplicity he led many back to wholehearted dedication to Christ.

Compassion marks the first few months of the Pope’s pontificate. He seems focused on the poor, the disabled, the weak. Even in a crowd of hundreds of thousands he sees them and moves toward them quickly, regardless of his planned event or scheduled destination. He brings to the poor the assurance that they are not forgotten. In fact, they seem to be the first that Pope Francis tries to engage.

Even his choice of residence, the simplicity of his clothing, and his daily decisions to do things for himself, say much about his priorities—about the concrete simplicity of daily living which should challenge all of us.

Regarding the concerns about the present Curia, which have certainly filled our newspapers, Pope Francis has already begun to move—not with noise, but quietly, beginning the needed changes with the formation of the committee. By the time this newsletter is in your hands, much more about the Pope’s actions and intentions will probably be evident. But these observations about his life can help us contemplate some important questions about our own lives, if we are to be part of the solution, and part of Christ’s flock under the shepherding care of Pope Francis.

1. Do I regard myself as steward and not owner of all the earthly things I “possess”? They may have involved hard work on my part, nevertheless they remain gifts from God to be used for His honor and contribute to goodness of life for all those my life touches.

2. Am I aware of the poor and needy around me—not just at holiday times—but day in and day out especially from those who serve me—grocery store, gas station, dry cleaner, pharmacy,
We need to put Him in the center of our lives more and more, in our thoughts and words and actions. He will do the rest if we cooperate.

restaurant. Do I look at the people who serve me? Am I courteous, kind, and interested in them—where appropriate? Do I regard another’s dignity whether I am serving or being served? We can all serve others—the parish bazaar, the food kitchen, prolife activities—but do we bring Christ? Do we give of ourselves in such a way that Christ can be seen and known and loved through us? It seems to me that this is what Pope Francis is trying to model for us.

3. Am I a true disciple of Christ in my thoughts, words, and actions? Am I hypocritical; do I live a double life—one person in the streets or the workplace, another at home? I am not saying we have to be perfect—we cannot make ourselves perfect. But I am saying that we need to think of others before ourselves. Sister Ruth Burrows in her book The Essence of Prayer tells us that there is in us a sly, unrecognized cunning—that is, a pride which always thinks of self first, takes care of self before anyone else. She says this is the biggest enemy to growing in genuine faith in God. We need to put Him in the center of our lives more and more, in our thoughts and words and actions. He will do the rest if we cooperate.

4. Finally, do I strive to be a genuine instrument of peace in all the situations I daily find myself? Peace is based on knowing the presence of God; it is based on prayer that I might be God’s instrument in every difficult situation I need to participate. It means I give others, even those with whom I strongly disagree, the respect they deserve (even as I disagree with their ideas or proposals).

It’s really not complicated; it’s just very difficult. But if we ask God for the grace daily, even hourly, He will transform us—yes transform us. When we put Him first in our thoughts, relationships, and plans, we will not only grow in faith but we will be an instrument of peace, able to bring the truth, with a genuine heartfelt love, that sets people free.

I have known many very good Popes in my lifetime. Each was given to us for a particular time; from Pius XII to John XXIII to Paul VI, to Blessed John Paul, to Benedict XVI, who while an outstanding teacher, taught us perhaps his greatest lesson, by acknowledging his inability because of age to shepherd the Church in these perilous times. That kind of humility should speak to us and give us the wisdom we need in our lives to make the right decisions for the good of others—small or great.

These are my reflections; I would like to hear what you think and how some of Pope Francis’ priorities are affecting you. There are many lessons to ponder. This quote reflects the disposition the Lord is calling us to have:

“I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do. What I can do, I should do. And what I should do, by the grace of God, I will do.” (Edward Everett Hale)

Let us not miss the grace being given us individually and collectively. St. Francis of Assisi, pray for us!

Please Pray…

for our missions this summer to Zambia, Latvia, Papua New Guinea, Tanzania, and Ghana.

for the continued work of Renewal Ministries throughout the U.S. and Canada as we preach the Gospel and equip others for ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit.

for the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members, especially as they face the challenges of illness and economic uncertainty.
Youth from the Souled Out group in Canada had an amazing week of ministering to the Haitians. They joined in the evening parish missions with testimonies, prayer ministry, skits, and lots of dancing and worshipping!

THIS TRIP was probably our most effective mission to Haiti. It seemed the perfect balance of proclamation and demonstration. We were doubly blessed by the youth team from Canada, led by Dominic Inneo, a Canadian board member for Renewal Ministries. They were extremely well prepared and showed an unusual boldness and ability to “mix and mingle” with our Haitian family. Their music, personal testimonies, and drama touched the people and presented the Gospel in a way that transcended language.

Our day-time activities included visits to the schools sponsored by Haiti Missions, Inc., the food and financial distribution to around 160 families at Numero Deux plus others at two additional distribution sites, and all our nightly outreaches to various Catholic churches. Fr. Jomanas, who is a lawyer and teaches at the Seminary, also arranged for a visit to the local prison to distribute food and present the Gospel.

We preached the basic Gospel message at night at four different parishes, and invited the Lord to come and heal. Nancy taught on the blocks to receiving freedom in Christ and led the people in prayers of forgiveness and renunciation. The Lord worked in mighty ways each night! The first night, I asked the Canadian youth to move through the crowd and pray for the people. It was a totally new experience for them, but to their credit they jumped right in and the Lord honored their prayers and the faith of the people! Like the Apostles they returned rejoicing that the Holy Spirit had worked powerfully in the Name of Jesus!

After that first night the team was eager to pray for the people. You could see their faith in Christ and confidence in their call growing daily. Each night we had a time of testimony from the team members as to their experiences of the day and they all talked about how much more they received than they gave.

From Natalie Zima - God uses each and every one of us in very special ways. I am a senior member of my youth group Souled Out. Initially, I felt peace about going, but then I started worrying where I would get the money. After praying a lot, the Lord told me that it was my time to go and that I should not worry about it. So I put my trust in the Lord and said yes to going to Haiti and He provided more than enough money. He provided us with around $25,000 through my team’s fundraising and personal donations. Our God is a God of more than enough.

In Haiti, Jesus was present everywhere we went, especially in the eyes of the Haitian people. I went to Haiti hoping that I could give Haiti all that I had to offer. It would seem as though Haiti has nothing to give us. It turns out that Haiti gave me things that are much more valuable than money.
They gave their love to me and showed me that the Lord’s love reigns in every country, despite its conditions. Even though we could not understand the languages we were speaking to each other, we could understand each other through our faith. As I was sitting in a service with a Haitian baby on my lap and surrounded by Haitian children, I realized that these were my brothers and sisters. I promised myself at that moment that I would love them as I would my own brother and sister back home.

I don’t think I will ever forget a long conversation I had with one of the friends I made in Haiti. I told him that I believe Jesus surrounds us and that He is in everything good, and he agreed with me. We made a friendship bonded by our love for Jesus. I saw Jesus in every child that we fed at every school and orphanage. I saw Jesus in the kind eyes of the prisoners at the prison we brought supplies and food to. I saw Jesus in the priests who delivered the Lord’s message so well and who truly touched my heart. I saw Jesus in the faith-driven work and loving hearts of my team. This trip has helped me grow stronger in my faith. Here in Canada, we are rich in money, but our faith is starving. God has opened my heart to see that faith is so much more valuable than money.

From Sara Pellegrino - I have been blessed and privileged and there have never been any big struggles for my family. For as long as I can remember, I’ve always wanted to step outside of my comfortable life and do something big to help others. As I began to meet many of the local children, I realized that though they may not have every necessity in life, they have such a joy for the life they do live. They had a love for each other and for Jesus that was so visible. God’s presence was physical which brought an enormous amount of security to everyone serving there.

This trip has changed my life. My faith, trust and awe of God has been taken to a much deeper level. I see how God provides. Nothing He does is small. I appreciate what I have in my own life. I know now more than ever that God does not forget about us. We are not invisible to Him. He adores us and places us exactly where He needs us to be. I used to feel guilty for living in Canada and having everything I need all in one place. Now, I realize that God put me here for a reason. I have the resources to go out and help the helpless.

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On the Road

“The gate of Heaven is very low; only the humble can enter it.”

–St. Elizabeth Seton

June 2013
Plymouth, MI, Corpus Christi Conference, Our Lady of Good Counsel
Saturday, June 1
Ralph Martin, Sr. Ann Shields
Contact: www.olgcparish.net or mnagel@bcbsm.com or 586-219-7223

Mission to Zambia
June 2-12
Lloyd & Nancy Greenhaw and Team
Contact: Kathleen at 734-662-1730 ext 132 or kkittle@renewalministries.net

*Oklahoma City, OK, Clergy Study Days
June 3-6
Ralph Martin

Steubenville, OH, Catholic Charismatic Conference
June 7-8
Ralph Martin
Contact: www.franciscan.edu or 1-800-437-8368

Phoenix, AZ, Life Teen Training Convention
Monday, June 10
Ralph Martin
Contact: cturner@lifeteen.com

Mission to Papua New Guinea
June 23-July 8
Lloyd & Nancy Greenhaw and Team
Contact: Kathleen at 734-662-1730 ext 132 or kkittle@renewalministries.net

Steubenville, OH, Priests, Deacons, Seminarians Conference
June 17-21
Ralph Martin
Contact: www.franciscan.edu or 1-800-437-8368

Mission to Latvia
June 19-30
Don & Pat Turbitt and Team
Contact: Kathleen at 734-662-1730 ext 132 or kkittle@renewalministries.net

Ann Arbor, MI, i.d.916 Summer Fun Event
Wednesday, June 26
RSVP at facebook.com/id916 or intentionaldisciples916@gmail.com or dherbs24@gmail.com

North Palm Beach, FL, School of Catholic Bible Study
June 27-30
Debbie Herbeck, Laurie Manhardt, Bishop Jan Liesen
Contact: Laurie at 772-321-4034 or CatholicBibleStd@aol.com

Lake Orion, MI, Discipleship Event
June 29
Peter Herbeck
Contact: Steve Mitchell at 248-789-5764

July 2013
Mission to Tanzania
July 3-20
Tom Edwards and Team
Contact: Kathleen at 734-662-1730 ext 132 or kkittle@renewalministries.net

Plymouth, MI, Disciples in the Marketplace
Saturday, July 13
Peter & Debbie Herbeck and Team
Contact or register at: www.RenewalMinistries.net or IntentionalDisciples916@gmail.com

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*Events not open to the public