Dear Fellow Witnesses!

Yes, we are witnesses. Witnesses to the lordship of Jesus! Witnesses to His love and His awesome sacrifice, continually made present in the Eucharist!

I’m writing this while I’m in Argentina, although by the time you get this, I’ll be in Africa doing the same thing—a national retreat for priests. I thought you might find it interesting to learn more about these trips.

Argentina is a long way away from Michigan. First, I flew from Detroit to Atlanta; then from Atlanta to Buenos Aires; then from Buenos Aires to Cordoba, the second largest city in Argentina; and then I took a sixty-mile drive to the retreat house through mountain roads. In total, the trip took about twenty-four hours, with all the waiting for connections, etc. Of course, it was nothing like Country Coordinators Lloyd and Nancy Greenhaw’s harrowing pick-up truck rides through muddy paths in the jungles!

Over eighty priests and deacons gathered from all over the country—and it’s a big country! Four deacons drove from the southern part of the country in a truck, taking turns driving for twenty hours. As always, I learned a lot about the country and the Church in Argentina while I was there—nine days in all (I spoke at a general conference after the priests’ retreat concluded). I ended up giving fourteen talks. There was supposed to be another speaker, but two weeks before the events started, they decided to cancel the other speaker, as they wanted to hear from me the whole time! This required more last-minute talk planning than usual.

The priests and deacons were a wonderful group. The group consisted of a wide range of ages, religious order and diocesan, some involved in the Charismatic Renewal and some not, but everyone seemed to sing and raise their hands in prayer almost from the start. The music ministry was very impressive, with two priests and a married lay person, whose wife and young baby attended the retreat as well. The baby was one of the most well-behaved I have seen, especially with so many days with such loud music and long talks! With many of the fast-paced songs, the lyrics were accompanied by elaborate hand motions that everyone seemed to know. Even with more than fifty different praise songs sung during the course of the retreat, everyone seemed to know all of the songs—with no song books and no projected lyrics. Pretty amazing!

And yet Argentina is suffering both as a country and as a Church. The inflation rate is about twenty percent this year, down from thirty percent last year, and many people are severely stressed financially. Also, the Church is experiencing the same kind of decline that we see in many traditionally Catholic countries. Many Catholics have left the Church for evangelical and Pentecostal churches, and many have simply stopped coming to church at all. The priests I spoke to estimated that perhaps only ten percent of the Catholics in Argentina attend church at all, and the percentage of even nominal Catholics in the country has declined from...
Continued from page 1

... newly ordained priests are now sometimes made a pastor on ordination day.

The priest who interpreted for my talks—we stood next to each other and he quickly put into Spanish each phrase or short sentence that I spoke—worked very hard! It sounds a bit cumbersome, but it actually can move along quickly and effectively, as the speaker and interpreter get used to each other. Since I’ve done this for so many years in so many different languages, I do know how to choose words that are easier to translate and stay away from idioms particular to North America. I spoke on the topics I most wanted to speak on—evangelization and the truth of the Gospel, the real meaning of mercy, the reality of heaven and hell, holiness, prayer, dealing with temptation and sin, etc. For the last talk, I decided to share about the message of Fatima and the witness of the three children. I think Mary and the three children helped me a lot, since it seemed to very deeply touch the priests and deacons, and many were wiping away tears. The priest interpreting for me had to stop for a while, as he also was deeply moved and fighting tears. Of course, I was too. The sacrifice and fervor of these three children continue to inspire me and many others. After the talk, one of the priests suggested we say a decade of the rosary right then and there, and we did.

During the course of the retreat, we prayed for healing and for baptism in the Spirit or its renewal, and the priests very movingly began to pray for one another with beautiful brotherly affection.

At the end of the retreat, several priests and deacons asked to share the graces they received.

One shared that he was in a crisis with his priesthood when he came, and the Lord delivered him from it and confirmed him in his priesthood.

A deacon shared how he had regular stomach pain and couldn’t eat many things without exacerbating it, particularly raw vegetables. After being prayed with, he felt he was healed; he ate raw vegetables that evening without a problem. He had been to many clinics to try to find an answer, and he found it on the retreat, directly from Jesus.

Another priest shared how at a relatively young age, he had developed severe arthritis and had to give up sports and other activities. He was continually seeking to be healed, but wasn’t. On the retreat, he shared how the Lord showed him that if he was healed, he would be a “lost priest” and that the suffering of the arthritis was an opportunity to respond to the message of Fatima and unite his suffering to the suffering of Jesus for the salvation of souls and reparation for sin. He was full of joy!

Another priest shared how he had always had trouble praying the rosary, but when we said the decade of the rosary after the talk on Fatima, he felt a flood of grace come into his soul, and he instantly developed a desire to say the rosary going forward.

Another priest shared how he had been a priest for ten years, but no one had ever told him he was called to be a saint or even that he could be one. He also said that he never knew that prayer could be more than just asking for things needed in his ministry. He was overjoyed to discover the possibility of greater intimacy with Jesus! He also said the Holy Spirit deeply touched his soul when he heard about how the three children at Fatima responded to the requests of Mary, and he knew he was being invited to do the same. He said he wasn’t “converted” yet, but he was deeply touched and on the way.

Also, after the big conference that followed the priests’ retreat, the priest who had led the priests’ retreat got up and said something quite remarkable:

“I want to repent on behalf of the priests that we have not prayed enough or focused enough on our mission of salvation. Please forgive us.”
I am very grateful for the opportunity to help strengthen these men who have made such great sacrifices for us, the people of God, giving up wife and children to be able to help us on the path to heaven. We need to pray for our priests; they bear heavy burdens and are under continual attack from the enemy.

Thank you for all that you do for the conversion of sinners and reparation for sin!

In Jesus,

Ralph Martin

P.S.

I also want to share that we are now offering two powerful resources on Fatima. The first, Fatima: A Message for Us Now, is an interview I did with Peter Herbeck on the remarkable message and meaning of Fatima, which contains some insights that are unique to this CD. We recently also began offering A World in Danger: Fatima’s Urgent Message, in both CD and DVD formats. This is a talk I shared in Toronto at the Lift Jesus Higher Rally. It is quite different in style from my interview with Peter. It is a fervent call to do all we can for the salvation of souls—something within the reach of us all—in response to Mary’s remarkable insights into the great realities of our salvation.

I am sure the meaning and message of Fatima will touch many people’s hearts—as it did the priests in Argentina. Listen to or watch for yourself, and ask the Lord who you can share these resources with! As Jack Lynch, our TV producer, said when he heard my Toronto talk: “This may be the best single presentation on the timeliness and importance of the Fatima apparitions. It is clear, cogent, impactful, alarming, sobering, and moving. Share it freely!”

The following prophecy, given by Fr. Michael Scanlan, was shared in a New Covenant magazine article by Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan in May of 1980. Its words continue to ring true today. One member of our staff responded to the prophecy with these words: “This is very sobering. It is amazing how easily we get mired in the weeds and forget or fail to see where the real battle is or who the real enemy is.” As the original New Covenant article stated, “It demands serious attention, prayerful reflection, and true repentance. It is a word that should touch and change each of our lives.”

But more to the issue, there will be purification and persecution among my people. You will have to stand for what you believe. You will have to choose between the world and me. You will have to choose what word you will follow and whom you will respect.

And in that choice, what has not been accomplished by the time of blessing and gifts will be accomplished. What has not been accomplished in the baptism and the flooding of gifts of my Spirit will be accomplished in a baptism of fire. The fire will move among you and it will burn out what is chaff. The fire will move among you individually, corporately, in groups, and around the world.

I will not tolerate the situation that is going on. I will not tolerate the mixture and the adulterous treating of gifts and graces and blessings with infidelity, sin, and prostitution. My time is now among you.

What you need to do is to come before Me in total submission to My Word, in total submission to My plan, in the total submission in this new hour. What you need to do is to drop the things that are your own, those things of the past. What you need to do is to see yourselves and those whom you have responsibility for in light of this hour of judgment and purification. You need to see them in that way and do for them what will best help them to stand strong and be among My faithful servants.

For there will be casualties. It will not be easy, but it is necessary. It is necessary that My people be, in fact, My people; that My Church be, in fact, My Church; and that My Spirit, in fact, bring forth the purity of life, the purity and fidelity to the Gospel.
I once read a meditation that said, “Everything about life has been carefully attended to so you could fulfill your destiny, and God is always with you to help you. None of us is just a random occurrence. We have not been left here to evolve alone. Every one of our lives fits into a master plan, something we can learn about and embrace as we spend time in prayer and Scripture. Parts of this plan are common to all of us. For example, we know that God wants us to be holy and full of love and praise for Him (Eph 14:16). But each of us is designed to fulfill these callings in our own unique way.”

(The Word Among Us, Advent 2004)

The Lord is with us from birth to death, and this includes our senior years.

Our years after age seventy are frequently referred to as “The Golden Years.” Yet the ills of aging often don’t appear golden. Can they be? Yes! They are golden for those who have given their lives to Jesus. Regardless of our income, we are rich in the things of God and His Church! These years are a part of God’s will and plan. “Here we have no lasting city, but we are looking for the city that is to come” (Heb 13:14). We are in the final years of our pilgrimage to that city of eternal bliss, of total union with the Trinity.

These years afford us our last opportunity to be purified and ready to see God. Suffering is not good in itself, but God brings good out of it. Our aging, sufferings, and death can become what Fr. Gabriel of St. Magdalene, OCD, terms a “mystical purgatory,” through which we expiate our sins, intercede for others, and at the same time grow in our love for God.

It is humbling to not be able to walk without assistance, but out of love for God, I can accept this suffering as expiation for my sins of pride. When it takes longer to dress myself because of arthritis in my hands, or I need to wait for someone to pick me up, because I can no longer drive, I can say, “Jesus, I’ll be patient in this difficulty. I want to lovingly accept this purification of my sins of impatience.”

Sometimes, we may need to give up very spiritual things, like driving or walking to Mass every day, or our activity in our local church. There are so many things we can’t do any more, and it seems like such a loss. As we suffer these voids in our life, we can trust that God is using them to open up in us a greater capacity to receive His love and to love Him in return. Jesus took upon Himself the full weight of human suffering, so to transform it into a means of salvation and endless happiness in that blessed place where there will be no more pain. In anticipation of that blessedness, Jesus brings a deep and real joy to all suffering and tribulations.

These years also afford us opportunities to suffer in a paschal manner. When Sr. Lucia of Fatima was dying, Pope John Paul II sent her a letter that reminded her to accept her final suffering and death as “paschal suffering.” Suffering in a paschal way means uniting our sufferings with Jesus’ in His bitter passion and death—and in the victory of His resurrection. As we let the thread of His resurrection permeate our sufferings, we can experience the triumph, joy, and peace of Jesus’ resurrection, trusting that we will have an eternity of total union with the Blessed Trinity.
Shortly after writing to Sr. Lucia, John Paul II entered into his own final weeks of suffering and personally witnessed to what paschal suffering means. At the end of his life, and during the many struggles that preceded it, he lived the words of St. Paul:

*We have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.* (2 Cor 4:7-11)

Pope John Paul II made his sufferings an altar on which he offered himself to God.

Knowing that my senior years are an important part of my sanctification—that I can still work for the Kingdom—has helped me very much. I need to set aside time for prayer and Scripture reading every day. Days become busy, even in retirement, and time for prayer can be crowded out. When I am faithful to prayer, God continually draws me more into loving Him and letting Him love me.

**Prayer allows what I endure to be redemptive.** My sufferings can have eternal value for me, for the Church, and for the world. I am partnering with Jesus in His redemptive work for the Church—establishing His Kingdom here on earth!

I recently read a meditation on Luke 5:11:

> We may not see 3,000 people come to Christ in one day.  
> Still, Jesus did call us the light of the world.  
> Let’s not hide that light under a basket!  
> Our words and actions do matter.  
> We really bring Christ with us into every situation we enter.  
> Our prayers of intercession really can transform others’ circumstances and change their hearts.  
> We really can “catch people” for God’s kingdom!

*(The Word Among Us, September 2005)*

Jesus gave us the great commandment to love Him with all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind (Mt 22:38). He added, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” As we age, we may no longer get out to actively serve, but we can love all we relate to. We can exude the love of Jesus, because we have made our afflictions an altar on which we offer ourselves to God, and Jesus is on that altar with us. St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta encouraged people to give Jesus to others by example—by being in love with Jesus, radiating His holiness, and spreading His fragrance of love everywhere.

Although I may not be able to be physically active, I am still a child of the Church through baptism, and I share in its rich life. I can do this in many ways: meditating on daily Mass readings; expressing my deep desire to receive Jesus spiritually, when I can’t receive Him in Holy Communion; and reciting the Communion prayers and the prayers after Communion to help enkindle my desire to receive Him.

I also remain interested in what is going on in the universal Church and my parish: Someone brings me the weekly bulletin, so I can pray for parish activities. I make financial contributions. And someone from the parish brings me Holy Communion.

**Our senior years can be as golden as we make them.** Thank You, Jesus, for the abundance of grace that You give as we draw near the end of our journey. You designed these years so they can give us the inner strength and understanding that our earthly losses require. You give us unlimited trust as we suffer voids and detachments. What seems like diminishment serves to enlarge us, to give us more wisdom. Help me believe You are hollowing out in my soul greater capacities to receive You. Help me look at each trial as a proof of Your love and desire to unite me more to Yourself. Fill the voids with Your love.

---

**Leave a Legacy of Faith**

Did you know it is very easy to remember Renewal Ministries—and thereby continue supporting Catholic evangelization and renewal—in your will?

› **Use this formula if you live in the United States:**
I give and bequeath to Renewal Ministries Inc., 230 Collingwood, Suite 250, Ann Arbor, MI 48103, Tax ID 38-2385975, the sum of $__________ (or % of residual estate) for its general uses and purposes.

› **Use this formula if you live in Canada:**
I give and bequeath to Catholic Renewal Ministries Inc., 331 Evans Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M8Z 1K2, Registration No. 12374-0243-RR0001, the sum of $__________ (or % of residual estate) for its general uses and purposes.

**QUESTIONS?**
Please call Gary Seromik in our office, at 734-662-1730, ext. 121.
Spreading the GOSPEL in Mexico

by Heather Schultz, Renewal Ministries' Editor

Tim Green, who has served in Mexico regularly since he first traveled there in 2013 with his daughter’s FGR class, described his time there as “an incredible blessing.” Tim served in Mexico a second time in 2015, when his second daughter went with FGR. After that, Country Coordinator Butch Murphy asked Tim if he would consider serving more frequently, since he added so much to the team. Tim has traveled to Mexico City with Renewal Ministries six times since then.

Tim’s unique upbringing makes him particularly well suited to serving in Mexico City. He spent twelve years of his childhood there, and another year in Venezuela, while his father worked as a journalist, and then a bureau chief, for the Associated Press. In fact, Tim even speaks Spanish with a Mexico City accent. Among other things, this enables him to translate homilies; serve as a translator in the medical tent; and pray with people for healing, for freedom from oppression, and that they will experience God’s love.

Regarding his service with the young people from FGR and i.d.9:16, Tim said, “It’s a real pleasure to watch the kids encounter the Lord’s love in a deeper way, through mission activity and our prayer times together. Mother Teresa said you will encounter Christ in the poor, and that is so true. If I’m attentive to the Lord in ministry, I really encounter Him there.”

Extended family: That is how Renewal Ministries’ country coordinators and frequent mission team members describe the people they have come to know—and love—in the dumps of Mexico City. Renewal Ministries’ mission work there occurs more frequently than it does in any other specific place. Country Coordinator Butch Murphy travels there at least four times each year along with a medical team—another unique aspect of our service in Mexico.

Renewal Ministries’ annual mission trips to Mexico take place in January with i.d.9:16 young adults; in April with seniors from Father Gabriel Richard High School (FGR) in Ann Arbor, Michigan; and in July and either October or November with other groups or individuals who want to serve there. Some years, our country coordinators also make additional trips to Mexico with groups that do all of their own fundraising.
Tim described two times in which he very much encountered the Lord through the poor in Mexico:

- Once, while at a home for elderly men, he was ministering to a man who couldn’t use his arms and couldn’t speak. “I was giving him a banana, and he sort of smelled, and I don’t like being around people like that on a natural, human level,” said Tim. “Suddenly he cried, ‘Agua! Agua!’ (Water! Water!) He was thirsty—and it was like I heard the Lord say, ‘I thirst!’ from the cross.”

- Another time, Tim was putting shoes on an elderly woman who couldn’t reach her feet. He gave her a kiss on the cheek, which is a sign of great respect. In doing so, he realized she smelled very badly—and the Lord said to him, “That’s Me you just smelled.”

Tim explained, “I have a fairly small heart with not a lot of generosity and love—and the Lord keeps expanding it every time we go down there, which is very, very good.”

The Mexicans who live in the dump “have an incredible generosity of spirit,” said Tim. He explained that the mission team often will give people two sandwiches, because “they will find someone and give one away. If you give them one sandwich, they will give half of it away.”

“Every group we take is amazed by the total giving the Mexicans have for each other,” he added. “They try to look out for those in need who don’t have enough. For instance, there is a man who is ninety-two with deteriorated eyesight. He is treated with respect and dignity. He is taken through the food line, and people make sure he has what he needs.”

They extend that generosity and love to the young people who attend missions. “Our kids (the FGR students, all of whom have taken at least three years of Spanish) stumble through their conversations, and the residents smile and nod and talk back,” said Tim. “They share the love they have for each other.”

He added:

“The work Butch and Debbie Herbeck do—the love they show the people—is what carries the day. It’s delightful to watch. You go there and you experience the love of your extended family and that love gets shared with our kids (who go on the missions).”

While members of Renewal Ministries’ mission teams benefit from serving in Mexico, the residents in the dump also appreciate the presence, service, and love of the people on mission. For instance, “they are incredibly grateful for our priests bringing the sacraments for them,” said Tim. “I don’t think that happens very often—that a priest is there who they can talk to and who can bless them. They are so grateful.”

Another way the residents have shown gratitude for their “extended family” is that they recently put a lot of effort into updating the medical tent area, giving it two wooden walls, a tin roof, and a cement floor. As one member of the i.d.9:16 medical mission team, Hallie Raney, said, “The leader of the community told us that the people wanted to build a beautiful place for us to come to in order to demonstrate their gratitude and love.”

There are limits to what can be done in the medical tent, but the team is able to “clean wounds and give medicines to people who need them on a regular basis for diabetes, etc. In some cases, we are their sole source for that medicine,” said Tim. People also can be treated for things they typically encounter, like getting jabbed in the hand or foot by a needle while going through the dump, foot problems, or parasites. Tim added, “The doctors serve selflessly in the tent. It gets hot, but they serve for hours on end.”

Tim himself was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor eighteen years ago. He has done radiation twice, and after exhausting all other options, recently underwent chemotherapy. He said “it is by God’s grace” that he is able to continue serving in Mexico. Even his brother, an atheist and a doctor, admits it is a “miracle” that Tim has still been well enough to go.

“I thought my first trip might be my last,” Tim explained. “Every time I go, I wonder if it will be my last trip. It helps me to live for the moment and to be more present to the people I am there with.”

“This mission is so transformational,” he concluded. “It impacts the people who go on it so deeply. It’s worth anyone considering going on it. If they want to encounter the Lord and His people, it definitely happens on this trip.”

---

Please Pray…

- For those who are facing concerns related to aging—either their own, or that of someone they love—that the Lord will grant them peace, wisdom, and confidence in His unfailing love.

- For the Lord’s Church to hear His voice and listen to the call to repent, draw near His heart, and bring His light to the world.

- For the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members, especially as they face the challenges of illness and economic uncertainty.
On the Road

July 2018 ENGAGEMENTS

Uganda
National Priests’ Retreat*
June 30-July 6
Ralph Martin

Lourdes, France
Community of the Beatitudes’ Conference*
July 12-13
Dr. Mary Healy

Lincoln, NE
Revive Young Adult Conference
July 13-14
Pete Burak
Details: https://lincolndiocese.regfox.com/revivelnk

Paris, France
Anuncio Conference*
July 14-15
Dr. Mary Healy

Steubenville, OH
John Bosco Conference
July 16-19
Sr. Ann Shields, SGL

Notre Dame du Laus, France
Fraternité Pentecôte Conference*
July 19-20
Dr. Mary Healy

Albuquerque, NM
Catholic Charismatic Conference
July 27-29
Peter Herbeck
Details: https://abqccc.org/

Dombes, France
Chemin Neuf Community Conference*
July 29-30
Dr. Mary Healy

* Not open to the public. For a complete listing, visit: RenewalMinistries.net/Events

“Sometimes we make terrible choices that lead to mental, emotional, and even physical suffering, but God can discipline us through them and bring great good, eternal good—if we admit our mistakes and sins and repent. Nothing is lost eternally if we come to God in contrition and choose to follow Him.”

Sr. Ann Shields, SGL

MISSIONS

Uganda
June 29-July 13
Lloyd & Nancy Greenhaw

Gambia
July 2-29
Emmanuel Tamakloe

Tanzania
July 4-18
Tom Edwards

Hungary
July 16-21
Deacon Zoli Kunszabo

Vietnam
July 16-30
Deacon Chau Doan

Latvia
July 18-23
Don Turbitt

Mexico
July 18-24
Butch Murphy

Cameroon
July 22-29
Peter Newburn

Guinea-Bissau
July 30-August 4
Emmanuel Tamakloe

For more information about missions, contact Kathleen at 734-662-1730 ext. 132 or kkittle@renewalministries.net

Sometimes we make terrible choices that lead to mental, emotional, and even physical suffering, but God can discipline us through them and bring great good, eternal good—if we admit our mistakes and sins and repent. Nothing is lost eternally if we come to God in contrition and choose to follow Him.”

Sr. Ann Shields, SGL

RENEWAL MINISTRIES

In the United States
Episcopal Advisor
Archbishop Robert J. Carlson, St. Louis, MO
Chairman of the Board
Deacon Dan Foley
President
Ralph Martin

In Canada
Episcopal Advisor
Cardinal Thomas Collins, Toronto, ON
Chairman of the Board
Monsignor Gregory Smith, Vancouver, BC

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, conferences, retreats, and other international evangelistic events.

CONNECT WITH US…

Visit our website—www.renewalministries.net for programs, blog, contact info, resources, & more!

Download the i.d.9:16 mobile App for easy access to all of the above Renewal Ministries’ content and so much more!

Editor
Heather Schultz
Design
Emily Bachelor
© 2018 by Renewal Ministries