Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It’s amazing how many of us associated with Renewal Ministries have been asked to serve in Brazil over the last year or so! In the February 2018 newsletter, Peter wrote about his trip there (to read his account, visit www.RenewalMinistries.net/newsletter). Also, our dear friend Patti Mansfield has been going to Brazil for many years and just recently was there for a priests’ retreat. Mary Healy recently was there for a retreat, and I was recently there too!

I would like to tell you about what's happening in Brazil. There are four national Catholic television networks in Brazil, and I spent most of my time there at one of the networks. Fr. Edward Dougherty (“Fr. Eduardo”—pictured at left), the one who invited me to Brazil, wanted to continue to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and the amazing impact it is having there, so he had me appear on a number of his TV programs. In one half-hour interview, he shared the story of his encounter with me many years ago, when another man and I prayed with him in Michigan for baptism in the Holy Spirit.

I also was on a national program that evening, and then he has an all-day program on Sunday, during which I gave three forty-five-minute talks. Fr. Eduardo also arranged for a day in which key leaders from across the country came together and dialogued with me about issues of concern. It was a very worthwhile visit! On another day, we traveled to a nearby diocese that has prayer groups in every single city. The 600 leaders of these prayer groups and little communities came together, and I gave three talks to them. I was very impressed, because so many of them were in their twenties and thirties.

continued on page 2

While in Brazil, Ralph gave three talks to leaders of prayer groups and communities.
The question I always have had is: With so many good things happening in the Catholic Church in Brazil, why do they keep asking people from Renewal Ministries to come and help them? They gave me this three-part answer:

1. They get big crowds, but people are living off a past experience that they want to recreate. They believe Renewal Ministries can help, because we understand the call to holiness and how to make progress in the journey. That is why they are having my book on holiness—The Fulfillment of All Desire—translated, and it should be available in the next few months.

2. We have preserved a fervent zeal for God for many years. For many people, their zeal is flagging, and they think we can help them persevere for the long haul.

3. There’s a certain polarization going on in the Church in Brazil right now. There’s been a resurgence of liberation theology and a reaction to that by a more traditionalist Catholicism that’s actually closed to renewal. They think that Renewal Ministries has a balanced approach to the real vision of Vatican II and Pope John Paul II.

Shortly after returning from Brazil, it was time to leave again—this time for Uganda, a country in east Africa with a population of about 40 million people. It was also time for malaria pills and mosquito netting over our beds. My left hand was still out of commission, so it was somewhat difficult to travel, but things worked out.

While I was in Brazil, my wife, Anne, and I celebrated our fiftieth wedding anniversary over the phone. The good news is that the weekend after I got back, everyone was able to get together and celebrate it in person. I am so grateful for the gift of such a wonderful woman as a wife, six children, their spouses, and seventeen grandchildren.

I returned from Brazil tired, happy, thanking God for all He is doing there, and humbled by the thought that we could make a contribution to what is already such an amazing work of God.

evangelization has been very successful, but the depth of formation has not kept pace with it. The Emmaus Community has remained so faithful all of these years, and it has been a real source of renewal for the Ugandan Church, by conducting countless Life in the Spirit Seminars, including ones for hundreds of priests and seminarians; conducting countless conferences and rallies; and even helping organize the retreat I spoke at.

I was in Uganda for the fifth International Priests’ Retreat, which had 350 priests and bishops in attendance. I was accompanied by Country Coordinators Lloyd and Nancy Greenhaw and Board Member Deacon Larry Oney.

One very moving experience for me was having a man travel five hours from a distant city to come and see me, just in case that was the last time I would be in Uganda. He had visited me in Ann Arbor way back in 1987, and that itself was an original and remarkable meeting. He’d come to the United States for three months for media training with a Charismatic community in Texas. He wanted to see me, because I was the editor of New Covenant Magazine, which he greatly appreciated and even translated into his local language and spread widely throughout Uganda.
One day, he knocked on my door. He had gotten a ride into Ann Arbor and had asked somebody where I lived. That person just happened to know my address!

While speaking to the priests in Uganda, I knew I had to address the question of chastity, which is a very delicate thing to do. I was telling my wife that I needed to do this, and she reminded me that the famous Ugandan Martyrs died for chastity rather than give into their king’s sexual advances. The Ugandan Martyrs are greatly honored and celebrated, but not everybody seems to fully understand why they died and how we should honor them, not just with our ceremonies, but with the chastity of our own lives.

The last talk I gave before I left for the airport was about Our Lady of Fatima and the inspiring response of the three children to her message. It seemed to bring the whole retreat together: repentance, conversion, holiness, prayer, and fasting. One professor of theology at the university told me he had heard the story of Fatima his whole life, but it had never entered his heart until that day. There were many tears amongst the priests.

During the priests’ retreat and throughout the whole week I was in Uganda, people kept telling me how grateful they are for the support of Renewal Ministries. And then, two days after I returned home, it was time to welcome fifty priests from all over the world to a five-week summer session at the seminary where I teach. I had the honor of teaching thirty of them. It sure has been a busy time! A special feature of it is that it all happened while I could not use one of my hands. One thing about being sick or injured is that it brings out a compassion for others who are also sick or injured, many much more so than ourselves. You never wish to have that type of a cross, but God knows how to bring good out of it by increasing our compassion for others.

As my time in Uganda ended, Renewal Ministries had Tom Edwards and a team leaving for Tanzania and Emmanuel Tamakloe beginning a mission in Gambia—and so it goes on and on, year after year, thanks to the mighty grace of God and your love and support.

Your grateful brother in Christ,

Ralph

P.S. My faithful friend and a pioneer in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Fr. Tom Forrest, passed away on July 16, 2018, only two days before his ninety-first birthday.

I worked with Fr. Tom during my time in Belgium, when he succeeded me as the director of the International Office for Catholic Charismatic Renewal. He even baptized one of my children while we were there and gave First Communion to another child!

Fr. Tom was a great evangelist throughout the world and will be dearly missed.

Eternal rest grant to him, O Lord; and let light perpetual shine upon him. May his soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Ralph spoke to 350 priests in Uganda at the International Priests’ Retreat.

Ralph taught thirty priests during a summer session at Sacred Heart Major Seminary.

Ralph spoke to 350 priests in Uganda at the International Priests’ Retreat.
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I’m writing to share with you a few thoughts as a follow-up to Ralph Martin’s excellent and courageous letter *Dear Troubled Catholics*, regarding the current crisis in the Church.

Ralph wrote that this current crisis, precipitated by the revelation of Cardinal McCarrick’s moral failures and the failure of leadership in the Church to prevent his rise to prominence, could be a “tipping point” for the Church. He sees in it a possibility for genuine repentance and change for the Church.

I perceive in this crisis—both here in the United States and around the world—an opportunity, given us by our Lord. I believe we are experiencing the discipline of the Lord; it is a severe mercy, a judgment upon the Church that is meant to lead to deep, thorough repentance, healing, and reformation. It’s an opportunity that demands a response from all of us, beginning with the leadership of the Church. If we cooperate with Jesus, with obedient and repentant hearts and total honesty and transparency in the fear of the Lord, Jesus will lead us out of this terrible crisis. If we fail to respond to this time of purification, I believe the Church in America will be severely weakened, the decline we’re witnessing in the Church will escalate, and the flock will scatter.

While on mission in Uganda in 2016, the Lord spoke to me about what we are now living through. Our team from Renewal Ministries was leading a week-long retreat for about 350 priests and bishops from five east-African countries. One morning during daily Mass, right after Communion, I sensed the Lord telling me to get out my journal and to write down the following:

“*The days ahead will be marked by growing chaos and confusion. I am coming to purify my Church. I am about to bring down the idols that hold my people in bondage; I will expose the hypocrisy of the mighty and the strong, both in the Church and in the world.*”

Watching the mighty fall in the past few years—Harvey Weinstein, Bill Cosby, Bill O’Reilly, Matt Lauer, Al Franken, and now Cardinal McCarrick and other cardinals and bishops—has been sobering. These revelations are meant to lead all of us to repentance and to instill in us a healthy fear of the Lord. The Captain of the Armies of Heaven, Jesus, the Lord, is purifying His Church and exposing the emptiness and hypocrisy of the world. Scripture tells us that the Lord disciplines those whom He loves.

It’s important for us to understand Jesus’ intent. He doesn’t come to humiliate or destroy; He comes to save. St. Peter tells us that judgment begins with the house of God. Jesus is purifying His Church for the sake of the salvation of the world. The Church is the hope of the world, the sacrament of salvation, the light of the world. When the Church is trapped in sin, her light goes dim and her salt goes flat.

Today, the Church is infected with deep strongholds of sin that are crippling her life and witness. In the period leading up to the Dallas Charter in 2002, Jesus began to expose the horrific corruption of homosexual sins of pedophilia and ephebophilia (sexual attraction to pubescent boys) among the clergy, and the cover up by some of the hierarchy of these crimes. Eighty-one percent of the victims were adolescent males.

Steps were taken at the time to respond to the crisis with the Dallas Charter and the “zero tolerance” policy instituted throughout the Church in the United States. The Charter was a start, but lacked complete honesty and transparency. The efforts by the bishops left the dishonest impression that the primary problem the Church was facing in this crisis was pedophilia and not ephebophilia. This allowed them to deflect attention from the fact that active homosexuality among the clergy was the primary source of the problem.
What’s clear from the revelations about Archbishop McCarrick is that the repentance in 2002 did not go deep enough. There was a cover up, a strategic decision to hide the bigger problem of active homosexuality among the clergy, including some of the hierarchy.

What we are seeing is the means to which Jesus will go to purify His Church. The wound of sin in this area is deeper than most of our brothers in the hierarchy are willing to acknowledge or to confront. But the Lord will not relent.

In the letter to the Church in Ephesus in the Book of Revelation, Jesus tells the leaders of the Church the following: “I have this against you, that you abandoned the love you had at first. Remember then from what you have fallen, repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent” (Rv 2:4-5).

Jesus warned the leaders of the Church, even though they had done many things right, that they had lost their first love. He then gave them a three-step process to make things right:

1. REMEMBER
2. REPENT
3. ACT

They were to remember the place from which they had fallen, to repent, and then to do the works they had done at first. In this crisis, this is a good guide for all of us, especially our leaders.

Jesus is calling our leaders to remember the purity and holiness to which they have been called, and to make a thorough examination of their lives before Him. They must then act decisively, with zeal and determination, to bring to light all that is hidden in darkness. They must remember that this severe mercy is an act of love that calls for total obedience to the Lord, knowing, “those whom I love I reprove and chasten; so be zealous and repent” (Rv 3:19).

Just as in Ephesus, so it will be with the Church in America, if we don’t respond wholeheartedly, with complete honesty. If the Church refuses to expose the truth, and in the fear of the Lord to cooperate with Him in this hour of purification, He will “come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.”

That is what I believe is at stake at this time for the Church in America. To “remove your lampstand” means, in the words of Victorinus of Petovium, to “disperse the congregation.” The Church in many parts of the United States is already in decline. If we as a Church do not cooperate fully with the Lord at this time of visitation, the decline will escalate dramatically.

If we as a Church do not cooperate fully with the Lord at this time of visitation, the decline will escalate dramatically.

Cooperation means that policies, good public relations, the advice of lawyers, and the like are not enough. Just looking to the future is not enough. Positive platitudes are not enough. What is needed is action to root out systemic habit patterns of sin, to expose strongholds of sin to the full light of day.

This kind of stronghold of sin will not go away. It will keep producing like a deadly virus in the body or like a festering wound that has only been tended to on the surface. The infection will keep spreading. To date, the words of Jeremiah are a fitting description of the response of the bishops to this serious problem: “They have treated the wound of my people carelessly” (Jer 6:14).

The bishops can no longer continue to treat this wound carelessly; it has to be cut out, to the root. That means having to confront the fear that holds them back. To address this problem head on and to take appropriate action will likely cause serious disruption in the Church for a time, and serious pushback from forces in and outside the Church. There is no easy way forward; it will require great courage.

There is a way out of this: follow Jesus, obey Him. He will give all of us what we need. It’s time to awaken the graces of our Confirmation, fortitude that is “prepared to suffer injury and, if need be, death for the truth and for the realization of justice.” And a healthy fear of the Lord to overcome the fear of men that so often leads to inaction and weak, foolish responses in the face of serious sin. “The man who fears the Lord will not be fainthearted” (Sir 34:14).

We have nothing to fear if we put all our hope in Him. It’s not our job to secure all the potential consequences that may transpire from a radical response to Jesus at this time. Our job is to obey and to entrust everything to His mercy and love, and to the protection and intercession of Our Lady.

Jesus said, “I am the light of the world, he who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life” (Jn 8:12). Even in the greatest darkness, we can walk in the Light.

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Bishop Edward Rice shared Ralph’s letter on his diocese’s website. He wrote, “I, along with all those who love the Church, am dismayed, disgusted, and numbed when I think of those who have been harmed by his behavior. While I would rather not address the situation publicly, to not address it is to stick my head in the sand. The following article . . . expresses my feelings and perhaps your feelings, too.”

We heard from someone in Boston whose parish priest said during his homily, “I’m going to do something I’ve never done before and probably will never do again. I’m going to read a column from another writer for the homily.” Then, the priest proceeded to read Ralph’s letter Dear Troubled Catholics. The priest concluded his homily with, “I have nothing else to say today.”

Patti Mansfield wrote, “Yesterday I said to myself, ‘Ralph is going to write something!’ and (my husband, Al, and I) rejoiced as we read it together. We could have spoken each sentence as it was written, so completely are we in agreement. We will do all we can to send it out. Al wants it read by every Catholic in the world. Thank you for being faithful to your prophetic call. Jesus sees in you the friendship, loyalty, and fidelity He told us He’s longing for.”

We’ve also heard from so many others:

“Dear Troubled Catholics

Dear Ralph,

I would like to begin by saying that I agree with you completely in your words. The Church has experienced many dark days in the past, but this time feels different. This is not just about the actions of one individual; it is about a system that has failed. I applaud your courage in speaking truth to power.

The battle against Evil has arrived upon our shores. It has infiltrated our homeland. Pray, fast, support our good priests, and speak out against this evil where you see it.

Thank you for this call to arms. We should not falter from engaging in this spiritual battle. Though our dwindling army may be weary and disheartened, we will meet the Enemy and be victorious, for Christ has won this battle already.”

“Thank you for this post. I will write my bishop and ask him to let his seminarians know that he will protect them when they go to seminary. That they will have his cell phone, and that if there is a scintilla of inappropriate behavior, he will investigate and remove them if necessary. That he will also put the seminary on notice that there will be publicity if they don’t get their institution cleaned up. I think we have a bishop that will do this. If the bishop will not, make sure the families of seminarians make noise.”

“Thank you for this letter on this extremely painful situation. As you have mentioned, here in Scotland we too have been touched by this scandal and it has severely undermined the authority of the Church and its credibility, particularly in a small country like Scotland. Continuing to pray, ‘Lord, have mercy on us.’”

As of press time, Ralph Martin continues to receive feedback from his letter Dear Troubled Catholics (found in the September 2018 newsletter, at www.RenewalMinistries.net/newsletter) as well as requests for radio and newspaper interviews on the topic. We want to share the following responses with you, because we believe they indicate both the extent of people’s outrage, and also encouragement that, in fact, “nothing is hid that shall not be made manifest, nor anything secret that shall not be known and come to light” (Lk 8:17). These responses give us hope that (as one supporter noted), “Jesus’ kindness toward us will astound us, if we remain calm through this crisis and give His warmth and Light to others in the coming days of darkness. Remember, although He is repulsed at their behaviors, if they would repent, He is waiting for them to return. As He said to St. Faustina, ‘the greater the sinner . . . the more he has recourse to my mercy.’”
“A priest friend who is an expert on the Middle Ages said the Dark Ages were not as dark as the period of the Twentieth Century up to the present time. . . . Sometimes, the Lord allows us to walk in the dark so we will search for the Light. . . . The gates of hell shall never prevail against the Church. Only the Lord can give us the hope we need. Healing is available through the mercy and compassion of the Lord. We will see the Resurrected Christ rise up out of all this rot and filth in the Church and in the world and proclaim victory over sin and evil, once again. Praise God!”

“If true leaders in our Church do not speak boldly and courageously, the rot will continue to deepen and grow unabated. This was brave and needed.”

“It came to me that all this must be revealed now, at this hour and at this time, because in one more generation, this news would not even be remarked on. Our public schools are actively teaching that gender is fluid, homosexuality is to be embraced, that this behavior is part of our freedoms. I am deeply saddened—humiliated even—by the scarring of our Church. But I think of the eleven who did not stop proclaiming Jesus because one of them had betrayed Him. Their own community had been scandalized, which must have added greatly to their sorrow, but Jesus told them ‘go’ and they went.”

“Good men and women . . . bishops, priests, seminarians, and lay men and women, (have been) all but frozen by the might of Satan working through all parts of the Church. Thank God that He (God) is still in charge and Christ continues to lead us to victory. As the official exorcist for my diocese, I sometimes feel overwhelmed by the evil at work around us, and the lack of belief in any permanent evil or personified evil that is really so obvious to those who use eyes of faith. The victory is Christ’s, but we must be serious in continuing the mopping up operation which is our duty as His followers. Dirty work, but bearable if we work as one and continually draw power from the gifts of the body and blood of Christ.

TO HIM BE THE GLORY.”

“(I had prayed) that the Holy Spirit would reveal all of the wolves in sheep’s clothing. (Then), I read about Cardinal McCarrick, and of course was heartbroken and angry, but yet thankful that God was cleaning house. And I also realized that I was somewhat responsible, because I did not pray enough for the Church and her shepherds who are on the front lines of the war. It is easier to criticize than it is to pray. But we must not only pray for the conversion of the priests who have gone awry, and the healing of their victims, but also for courage for bishops and priests who know what is going on, and are afraid to say or do anything about it. And of course, we must pray for the Catholics who are tempted to leave the Church, that they will instead turn to the Lord personally and allow Him to strengthen their faith in the midst of this crisis. I believe that in this way God can use us to be part of the solution instead of part of the problem.”

“(This) sentence sums up just about every homily I’ve heard in years, ‘it was unclear what the priest was actually saying.’ With so much immorality in our culture and so much love of money and the things of the flesh, you would think it would be fairly easy for priests to say something *clearly* about these things in order to help us sort through and avoid the troubles and sinful situations we face daily in our culture. But no, the great percentage of the time, we leave Mass, and Mr. Martin’s observation is all we are left with concerning the words of our pastors . . . ‘it was unclear what the priest was actually saying.’ If we don’t hear the truth in our parishes, or from our bishops, then where in world are we to find it?! I am so sick of leaving Mass every Sunday with that vague idea about being good and doing good and following Jesus and wondering why the heck the priest doesn’t talk about any of these things that are so dangerous for us and so predominately a part of our everyday world. And it seems like they are afraid to.”

“Thank you for the thoughtful email. It highlights the fact that it has never been more important for the laity to get involved, as the Church transforms into a “smaller and more purified Church.”

“I am not leaving the Church —where else can I go? But I will be praying, fasting, and trying to console the Heart of Jesus in the midst of this mess. . . . Thank you for speaking the truth in clarity and love. It has been a great help to many.”

“History has shown that, when the Church becomes less worldly, her missionary witness shines more brightly. Once liberated from material and political burdens and privileges, the Church can reach out more effectively and in a truly Christian way to the whole world, she can be truly open to the world. She can live more freely her vocation to the ministry of divine worship and service of neighbor.”

“It is not a question here of finding a new strategy to re-launch the Church. Rather, it is a question of setting aside mere strategy and seeking total transparency, not bracketing or ignoring anything from the truth of our present situation, but living the faith fully here and now in the utterly sober light of day, appropriating it completely, and stripping away from it anything that only seems to belong to faith, but in truth is mere convention or habit.”

Pope Benedict XVI
On the Road

October 2018 ENGAGEMENTS

St. Louis, MO
Peter Richard Kenrick Lecture
Oct. 4
Dr. Mary Healy
Details: kenrick.edu

Ann Arbor, MI
i.d.9:16 Disciples’ Night
Oct. 4
Speaker Kris Frank
Contact: Katelyn@id916.com

Baltimore, MD
Women’s Conference
Oct. 6
Ralph Martin
Contact: Marylandcatholicwoman@gmail.com

Alpharetta, Georgia
Legatus Meeting*
Oct. 9
Ralph Martin

Kansas City, KS
Legatus Meeting*
Oct. 10
Peter Herbeck

Grand Rapids, MI
Legatus Meeting*
Oct. 11
Dr. Mary Healy

Ann Arbor, MI
Renewal Ministries’ Board of Directors Meeting*
Oct. 14-15
Ralph Martin; Peter Herbeck; & Sr. Ann Shields, SGL

Vilnius, Lithuania
National Priests’ Retreat*
Oct. 16-19
Ralph Martin

Ann Arbor, MI
Legatus Meeting*
Oct. 17
Peter Herbeck

Calgary, Alberta
CCR Conference
Oct. 19-20
Dr. Mary Healy
Details: cccrs.com/conferences/

Klaipeda, Lithuania
Renewal Conference
Oct. 20-21
Ralph Martin

Cary, NC
CCR Conference
Oct. 20
Peter Herbeck
Details: www.stmichaelcary.org/

Bloomfield, CT
Courage Conference
Oct. 22-24
Dr. Mary Healy
Details: truthandlove.com/conferences/

Ann Arbor, MI
Heart to Heart Apostolate Talk
Oct. 25
Ralph Martin
Details: www.hearttoheartcwa.com

Please Pray...

❖ That the Lord will show us how He wants us to pray, so that we may bear more fruit for His kingdom.
❖ For the health of all expectant mothers and their unborn children.
❖ For the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members, especially as they face the challenges of illness and economic uncertainty.

St. Lucia
October 7-14
John Kazanjian

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

Doylestown, PA
WINE National Women’s Conference
Oct. 27
Dr. Mary Healy
Details: www.wineconference.org/

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

R E N E W A L  M I N I S T R I E S

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

Please visit www.renewalministries.net for programs, blog, contact info, resources, & more!

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