Dear Fellow Disciples,

Greetings—especially you Southerners who are blessed with warm weather!

Last month I gave a general overview of everything we have been doing over the past year and asked for your continued support during these tough times so we can continue helping people all over the world. I’m happy to report that “so far so good”; the Lord is providing what we need, thanks to His mercy and your generosity, and we have not had to cut anything yet. As a prudent step we did prepare for the downturn by eliminating some paid TV airtime in some smaller cities, since we have been so blessed by currently having two programs regularly running on EWTN—The Choices We Face, and Peter’s significant participation in Crossing the Goal.

And this month there is still another opportunity. EWTN commissioned a film crew to do a half hour “profile in faith” on my journey in following the Lord which they will run as a “special” on Thursday, February 5 at 6:30 pm Eastern Time. The interviewer got me to share at a depth of personal detail that I had never done before and is including photos of my Irish relatives, etc. Those who have seen it say it has great potential to draw people towards Christ, as I was drawn. Thanks be to God! This will serve as an “introduction” to the 13 week series on The Fulfillment of All Desire, which I taped almost a year ago down in Alabama and is now edited and ready for launching. It will run for 13 weeks beginning Monday, March 2 at 5:00 am EST and Thursday, March 5 at 10:30 pm EST. I felt inspired doing this series and I’m looking forward to seeing how it helps people on their faith journeys.

Outside this Issue
Don’t Miss the Annual Lift Jesus Higher Rally! Page 3
In Him It Is Always Yes! Page 4
A Sneak Preview of The Choices We Face 2009 Page 6

Fr. Timothy Gallagher will appear on two shows of The Choices We Face in March 2009 in which he offers viewers practical wisdom for using the Ignatian method of prayer and discernment.
Dear Fellow Disciples,

In this issue you’ll see an article about The Choices We Face for 2009, previewing some of the great guests that will be on the program this year. The Choices We Face will launch on EWTN in the regular time slot beginning Tuesday, March 3 at 6:00 pm EST and Friday, March 6 at 6:30 am EST. Program times for other networks and stations can be found on our website at www.renewalministries.net and you can also view the show any time by accessing our website.

Even though the Lord is opening many doors for us to proclaim His goodness and truth, where “it’s at” is the help we are able to bring ordinary folks who are living in an increasingly difficult environment. These letters were sent to Peter about the impact of both his radio program Fire on the Earth and his new television show Crossing the Goal.

“I have become an avid listener of Fire on the Earth the past few months via podcast. I just wanted to write to tell you how much I appreciate your program. I am working in a parish as a youth minister. Your program feeds me personally and inspires me to grow in my faith, but it also gives me fresh perspectives to bring to the youth of my parish. Normally I listen to your program on my drive to work. This gets me having Christ-centered thoughts at the start of my day. But I find that these thoughts remain with me and I ponder them even for days to come. I am continually sharing these insights with friends and other youth ministers, almost ad nauseam. So I can say with confidence that for me you are achieving your goal for the program, the promotion of Catholic mission and evangelization, and I wish to encourage you in this work!”

“My son is a freshman and he came home last Friday after his first semester. A short time ago, I discovered Crossing the Goal and was attracted to this program hoping my husband would find it meaningful as well. I set up a series recording of it. Last Sunday, I was in the kitchen doing some holiday baking and heard Peter’s voice, knowing that my son found the recorded program thinking it was sports related. He watched the entire show! He even asked questions later about it. Crossing the Goal is a ministry in my opinion as it positively influences us toward Jesus. My husband and I are so grateful for our Catholic faith and the richness it offers. We pray daily for our children and ask God to draw them in to His heart. Thank you for your work.”

Without your faithful support in prayer and giving this wouldn’t be happening. Thank you.

Your brother in Christ,

Ralph Martin

‘So I can say with confidence that for me you are achieving your goal for the program, the promotion of Catholic mission and evangelization, and I wish to encourage you in this work!’

Watch for Two New Programs on EWTN in 2009!

- Profile in Faith a special program documenting Ralph Martin’s own faith journey can be seen on Thursday, February 5 at 6:30 PM EST.

- The Fulfillment of All Desire a thirteen week series based on Ralph Martin’s bestselling book premieres Monday, March 2 at 5:00 AM and Thursday, March 5 at 10:30 PM EST.
Please Pray...

+ that the new season of *The Choices We Face* will help many come to know the saving love of Jesus Christ.

+ for all those who are battling fear and despair due to illness, unemployment, and family difficulties. May the Lord draw them to Himself and help them to know His peace, comfort, and hope.

+ for wisdom and courage for the leaders of the Church as they face challenging social, political, and moral issues.

+ for the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members.

*Thank you for your continued support through prayer as we labor together for the Gospel and the renewal of the Church.*
In Him It Is Always Yes!

During this Lenten season, I think it would be helpful to ponder this particular passage from the Gospel of Matthew 21:28–32:

“A man had two sons and he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ And he answered, ‘I will not’; but after, he repented and went. And he went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father? They said, ‘The first.’ Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the harlots believed him; and even when you saw it, you did not afterward repent and believe him.’”

There are several passages in Jesus’ own life that are very important as we look at our call as Christians to do the will of the Father.

“My food is to do the will of Him who sent me.” (John 4:34)

“I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me; but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know I love the Father.” (John 14:30)

Saint Paul, in speaking of Jesus’ love for the Father and his desire to do the Father’s will, wrote this to the Corinthians: “Do I make my plans like a worldly man ready to say Yes and No at once? As surely as God is faithful, our word to you has not been Yes and No. For the Son of God whom we preached to you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not Yes and No. In Him it is always Yes. For all the promises of God find their Yes in Him.” (2 Cor. 1:17–20)

To do God’s will and not our own is a challenge. So often, we seek to justify and excuse ourselves so that we don’t have to be stretched, challenged, or inconvenienced. How many times have we been inspired to give more of ourselves for the kingdom, and made resolutions to do so, but after the first fervor wore thin, we slacked off doing what we had promised? I do not condemn you. God does not condemn you, but the realization of the number of times each of us has said yes but lived out a no to God’s call should sober each of us and cause us to reflect.

Take a moment now and think of just one area where you initially said yes but did not follow through. Don’t make excuses, just acknowledge it and then ask for grace to say yes, no matter how many weeks or months or years have intervened. God’s grace is always present. It does not work within the confines of time—but rather in the intentions and the motives of hearts. When you say to the Lord, “I want to say yes to your will today, no matter how many times I have said no in the past. Show me, Lord, how to do it under these present circumstances,” you will be amazed at how God will bless you!

Every time I speak of this passage in the Scripture I am reminded of a young man I taught many years ago. He was a very poor student, barely able to read or write; at almost 16 years of age, he had endured much humiliation through his grade school years. As an angry, humiliated “child” in a man’s body, he simply endured sitting in a freshman English class longing for the birthday that would release him from the classroom. No matter how I tried, his response to me was a loud no—he couldn’t learn; he didn’t want to learn. NO!! One day he made his no abundantly clear as I walked up and down the aisle correcting papers they had written. The room surprisingly was quiet until I came to this young man’s desk. I will never forget the look on his face as I leaned over his paper. He was fearful, defeated and angry. He pulled out a switchblade knife, snapped it open and laid it on his paper. The guys in the room went into an uproar. In that noise which covered my voice I leaned down and said quietly, “I will never embarrass you publicly.” Loudly I said, “I always wanted to learn how to use one of these things. Teach me!”

He was shocked into silence for a moment and then explained how to handle such a knife. Later, he came to me, “Why didn’t you kick me out?” The only answer I
could give was that I loved him and cared about what happened to him. I expected mockery in response and instead he was silent. From that day on, he was in my classroom before and after school with a new attitude of “teach me, show me, explain to me,” and with much help, he legitimately graduated from high school four years later. He thought he couldn’t do anything worthwhile and so he said no to it all until someone genuinely showed care and patience and mercy (all gifts from God, by the way). This young man represents many of us!

The other problem we face is saying yes too quickly before counting the cost—soberly reflecting on what the yes will involve, and asking for the grace to be unselfish. We jump in without thinking and then when the work becomes too hard, takes longer, or we face opposition, we slack off and turn away. God never asks anything from us for which He does not supply the grace. We simply need to believe that we are loved and that with His help we can serve Him well.

I would like to recommend that when God asks something of us that we reflect on how the task or call or ministry can bring us into intimacy with Jesus and with the Father. When I love someone, I simply want to be with them, doing what they are doing or helping in some way to make their burdens lighter. God longs to have us walk in closer fellowship with Him. He wants to share the desires of His heart with us. When we say yes to what He asks of us we put ourselves in the place to share in deeper friendship with Him. This is the blessing of being a disciple.

During this Lenten season take time to tell God, “Lord, I know I have failed you in the past. I know I have said no to too many things. I know too that sometimes I have said yes to you, to your desires for me and then forgotten, or given up, or only done the minimal. Please forgive me, Lord. Help me today to hear your voice; give me grace to say a generous yes to your inspiration. Help me to be a more faithful disciple.”

You can find more of Sr. Ann’s reflections on the Scriptures in her latest book Deeper Conversion: Extraordinary Grace for Ordinary Times. To purchase this book, use the enclosed order form or go to www.renewalministries.net and click on Book Store.
John Kazanjian: *No Ordinary Businessman*
John Kazanjian talks about how he is answering God’s call as a husband, father of five girls, business owner, and lay evangelist in Turkey.

Dr. Robert Horton: *First Things First*
A university professor shares the moving story of his conversion and God’s healing power in his life following a personal tragedy.

Bert Ghezzi: *The Heart of a Saint*
Well known author Bert Ghezzi discusses his book *The Heart of a Saint* and how the lives of the saints can help us grow in holiness and draw us closer to God.

Gerry Faust: *Training for True Happiness*
The former Notre Dame coach talks about how his Catholic faith has sustained and strengthened him throughout his life.

Debbie Herbeck: *Who Do You Say That I Am?* and *My Journey Home*
In these two shows, Debbie Herbeck shares the inspiring account of her faith journey—from her Jewish upbringing, to her deeply personal encounter with the Messiah, and her entry into the Catholic Church.

Patti Mansfield: *Reflections on Mary*
In this show Patti teaches about four gestures of Mary and how they express her nature as our heavenly Mother, model, and advocate.

Fr. Denis Heames: *From Hollywood to Heaven*
Searching for truth amidst the Hollywood lifestyle, Fr. Denis encountered the Lord and his eventual call to the priesthood.

Curtis Martin: *Vision for Life*
President of Fellowship of Catholic University Students and co-host of *Crossing the Goal*, a new television show for men, Curtis discusses how FOCUS helps college students to live faith-filled, empowered Catholic lives.

Fr. Bill Spencer: *In God’s Time*
Recently ordained at 75, Fr. Bill recounts the story of God’s call on his life and the message that we are never “too old” to serve the Lord.
Join Ralph Martin and Peter Herbeck for our 25th Year!

Dr. Janet Smith: *The Right to Privacy*
Dr. Smith discusses her new book, *The Right to Privacy* and how this privacy mentality has fueled immorality and the culture of death in modern society.

Fr. Frank Pavone: *Who Will Roll Away the Stone?*
In a stirring video clip from *The Lift Jesus Higher Rally*, pro-life activist Fr. Pavone proclaims a triumphant Easter message of hope, and issues a call to stand for life in the power of the Resurrection.

Jonathan Morris: *A Priest for Our Times*
In this fascinating interview with Fr. Jonathan Morris, the young priest talks about his call to the priesthood, his role as news commentator for Fox News television, and his new book, *The Promise: God’s Purpose and Plan for When Life Hurts*.

Fr. John Riccardo: *Living in Great Hope and Joy*
Although we live in a post-Christian era, Fr. John Riccardo helps us understand how we can live faithfully as Christ’s disciples, filled with Christian hope and joy.

*Prayer*
In this second show, Fr. John Riccardo teaches about how prayer can help us develop a lively and intimate friendship with God.

Dr. Roger and Lorrie Anderberg: *Love is Stronger than Death*
The Anderbergs share about the sudden and tragic of death their youngest son in 2004 and how the Lord brought their family through difficult times, and increased their love and hope for Heaven.

To view these and other inspiring shows of *The Choices We Face 2009*, tune into EWTN beginning March 3

Tuesdays at 6:00 pm & Fridays at 6:30 am EST.

To see broadcast days and times on other stations in the U.S., Canada, and EWTN International go to

[www.renewalministries.net](http://www.renewalministries.net)
and click on TV/Radio and then TV Schedule.

*The Choices We Face* can also be viewed online any time at

[www.renewalministries.net](http://www.renewalministries.net)
On the Road

“ A man can bear all things provided he possesses Christ Jesus dwelling within him as his friend and affectionate guide.”

St. Teresa of Avila

February 2009

Orange Park, FL, St. Augustine Diocese Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference

February 6–8

Peter and Debra Herbeck
Contact Mike or Linda Cavallo at: 904-683-7517

Detroit, MI, St. Paul’s Fellowship Sacred Heart Seminary

February 6

Sr. Ann Shields
Contact Peter Williamson at: pwilliamson@bibletheology.com

Lake Ridge, VA

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church

February 7

Ralph Martin
Contact Tuckie Staab at: 703-494-4630 or staab22@hotmail.com

Garden, MI

Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference

February 13–15

Sr. Ann Shields
Contact John Hogan at: 906-283-3212

Newark, NJ, University Students Retreat

February 20–21

Ralph Martin
Contact: tlawmaster@gmail.com

Manchester, New Hampshire Evangelization Conference

February 27–28

Peter Herbeck
Contact Christopher Paul at cripaul@comcast.net

March 2009

Dearborn Heights, MI

St. Linus Parish Mission

March 1–5

Ralph Martin, Peter Herbeck, Sr. Ann Shields
Contact number: 313-274-4500

Ypsilanti, MI

Transfiguration Parish Lenten Mission

March 6

Sr. Ann Shields, SGL
Contact number: 734-482-6240

Bronx, NY, Divine Mercy Conference

March 7

Ralph Martin
Contact number: 413-298-3691 or www.marian.org

Ypsilanti, MI

Transfiguration Parish Lenten Mission

March 20

Debbie Herbeck
Contact number: 734-482-6240

Colorado Springs, CO, Men’s Conference

March 21

Peter Herbeck
Contact Rich Cleveland at: 719-337-3837

Omaha, NE

Institute for Priestly Formation Meeting

March 23

Ralph Martin

Birmingham, AL, Crossing the Goal Taping

March 23–27

Peter Herbeck

Renewal Ministries

Chairman of the Board
Bishop Sam Jacobs, Houma-Thibodaux, LA

President
Ralph Martin

In Canada

Episcopal Advisors
Archbishop Thomas Collins, Toronto
Bishop M. Pears Lacey, Ret. Auxiliary, Toronto

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

© 2009 by Renewal Ministries

www.renewalministries.net