Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord!

A letter from Ralph Martin

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! He is pouring out His Holy Spirit! The feast of Pentecost is on May 23 this year. It is intended not just to be the occasion when we remember something that happened 2,000 years ago, but an opportunity to renew the gift of the Spirit that we have received. We can do this by thanking the Lord for giving us His Spirit and asking by His grace to become more attentive, more docile to His Spirit at work in us. A lot of wonderful materials are available to help us do so. This month in the enclosed Reply Card we’ve gathered together some of the best books, CDs and DVDs on the work of the Holy Spirit for your consideration.

Renewal Ministries is now almost 30 years old and I still am amazed to see how much the Lord is doing as together we all work for His Kingdom, and how faithful His provision is, through you.

Our new website continues to provide many people an opportunity to listen to our radio programs or to view our TV programs who aren’t able to so in other ways. I still can’t get over the fact that people from more than 80 countries each month visit our website! (www.renewalministries.net)

And I still am amazed at and grateful for all the letters and emails we get from people testifying to the blessing that the many outreaches of Renewal Ministries have been to them.

“Thank you so much for the Fire on the Earth programs this week and for having the current day’s broadcast on-line already. It was powerful and Peter’s message lifted me out of a spirit of fear when he shared 1Peter 5: 6–10.”

“Peter’s and Sr. Ann’s daily programs are broadcast here in Salt Lake City, Utah and they have become my daily inspiration. As I drive to work each morning they help me to get my mind clear on what’s important and how I can live as a Christian throughout the day. I’m not a Catholic, I’m a Latter Day Saint, but I really appreciate how you help me.”

“Listening to your program has helped me to see that the devil was leading me into self-condemnation. God is giving me freedom through your program and I will pass it on to my children.”

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord!

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“I am a nun in Nebraska. Your newsletters Really Rock! They get to the heart, touch where God is present, and bring us closer to the purpose for which we were created. Our local convent has decided to read The Fulfillment of All Desire together.”

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“Your newsletters are so inspiring. I am a retired sister and I know that I am not alone since I have the Treasure, God, within me. I will continue giving $5 each month as long as I am physically able.”

“I am stationed at the largest US Air Force base in the United Kingdom, where troops are deployed to the troubled areas of the world. Can we have as many copies of the booklet Is There Any Hope for Me? Our men and women would really benefit from them. Your program today on EWTN was great.” (Through your generosity we were able to send 100 copies to this base.)

“I am a nun in Nebraska. Your newsletters Really Rock! They get to the heart, touch where God is present, and bring us closer to the purpose for which we were created. Our local convent has decided to read The Fulfillment of All Desire together.”

“Your country coordinator will probably not tell you this. Recently he was in this distant country and it was subzero weather the whole time and the temperature inside was not so different than the outside. He was in intense back pain almost the whole time but managed to conduct all the sessions, all day long with tremendous outpouring of graces on many. I think this was pretty heroic and just wanted you to know of what stuff your leaders are made.”

We are deeply grateful for the heroic service of all our country coordinators, and for your support that makes all our work possible.

Let’s continue to pray: Come Holy Spirit! We need the new Pentecost to unfold in ever greater ways!

Your brother in Christ,

Ralph Martin

Join Us for the 2010 Annual Renewal Ministries Gathering

“Put on the Armor of God”

Friday, May 14th–Sunday, May 16th New Location!
Eagle Crest Marriott Hotel
(www.eaglecrestresort.com)
In Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti just minutes from Detroit Metro Airport

Guest Speaker: Fr. Francis Martin is a priest of the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., who holds a Doctorate in Sacred Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, and is Professor of New Testament at the Dominican House of Studies.

Special Guests: Fr. Michal Zamkovsky and Bohus Zivcak from Slovakia will share the amazing testimony of the River of Life Community and their work of evangelization.

For more information or to register contact Jessica Sherwood at: 734-662-1730 x32 or jsherwood@renewalministries.net or go to www.renewalministries.net
Mission to Transylvania

By Deacon Zoltán Kunszabó

It was a great honor to receive an invitation from Fr. Bőjte Csaba, a Franciscan priest in Transylvania to help him with an event for youth. He has founded 60 orphanages around Transylvania with 1000 children and he also has a ministry for another 2000 children in day care centers helping them in their studies and also feeding them.

His plan for this event was to gather the 14–18 years olds at his main house in the city of Déva to give them a special program according to their interests and problems. He also marked this event as a retreat for the leaders of the houses. The theme of the weekend was “The Joy of the Lord, Not the Joy of the World.” This was the first event like this for the teenagers and the teachers together and we looked forward to taking part in it.

We began with a Mass; Laci led the music ministry and I served as a deacon. Fr. Csaba preached on the importance of having the courage to fight for our dreams. He shared a lot of true stories—70% of his children attend the university while 70% of the children from the governmental orphanages go to prison.

After Mass Laci and I led a time of Eucharistic Adoration. The packed church was filled with genuine joy and the older teenagers were very attentive as we worshiped together. I read them the story of Bartimeus from the Gospel of Mark, and invited them closer to the Lord with the divine words: “Don’t be afraid! He calls you! Come closer!” I called everybody forward around the altar in a tight circle and I lifted up you! Come closer!”

Almost everybody came forward to do this, and we prayed the prayer of dedication together. It was a strong moment of the Spirit.

After this we continued with Holy Mass, and Fr. Róbert preached on a life seriously surrendered to Christ. After Mass we prayed over the people who asked us and after one hour we had to finish because of the long way to Déva. It was past midnight when we arrived back at Fr. Csaba’s place.

On Sunday we began with a festive Mass and then the teens spread out for small group time. After lunch there were testimonies by the adult leaders of the orphanages on how their faith had motivated them to serve the children. Fr. Csaba also asked Laci and me to speak about our conversions and ministry. After supper we had an evening of worship and this large group of teenagers were really open to the Holy Spirit!

We started our last morning of the retreat with Holy Mass and Fr. Csaba’s closing words to the children. It was really hard to say goodbye to all those nice, clear and kind young faces. Fr. Csaba invited us back for his summer camp and other events. There is no doubt, we will come back to be a part of this really blessed work here!

Our connection with Fr. Csaba and his work was very valuable. We feel the Lord gave us the opportunity to bring all the benefits of a Spirit-filled, Word-centered spirituality of the new evangelization into a more traditional and more hidden, but very authentic Catholic life. The heroes of charity should find the springs of power touched by the living Word of God and the proclaimers of the Word should find the ways to live out its fullness in the works of charity!
The Lordship of Jesus

The time between the celebrations of Easter and Pentecost is my favorite liturgical time of the year. It is one long celebration of the victory of Jesus over the powers of sin and death. From his resurrection to his ascension into glory to the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost, we witness, by faith, the dawning of the new creation and the inauguration of the final stage of human history.

We celebrate the Resurrection, Ascension and Pentecost as distinct events in salvation history, but in reality they are three events tied together into one movement, one saving action by Jesus. Jesus’ incarnation, death and resurrection were all directed to the Father’s plan to enthrone Jesus as Lord and Messiah. St. Peter interprets the meaning of the disciples’ experience on Pentecost this way:

“This Jesus God raised up, and of this we are all witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you see and hear...Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

The central fact St. Peter is led to communicate under the power of the Holy Spirit is not only that Jesus rose from the dead, but that God has exalted him to his right hand, and has made him both Lord and Christ.

What does it mean that Jesus is Lord? It means that “all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to” him (Matt 28:18), that he is “the first and the last, and the living one,” who died and is “alive for evermore,” the one who now holds “the keys of Death and Hades” (Rev 1:17–18).

It means that Jesus is the “first-born from the dead” (Col 1:18), the first of an entire race of people destined to receive the “free gift of God” which is “eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 6:23). Jesus literally has become a “life-giving spirit” (1 Cor 15:45), which means that he is the one, the only one, who has the power to make life beyond death possible. In him “death was swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor 15:54). In his own body he exalted human flesh to eternal glory, to an indestructible existence no longer subject to the powers of sin and death. The human race has a future only because Jesus has the power to grant anyone who will follow him a share in his indestructible life. In him each one of us can literally “become partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4).

The apostles understood exactly what they had been given in Jesus:

“And this is our testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who has not the Son of God has not life” (1 Jn 5:11).

“For in him the whole fullness of the deity dwells bodily, and you have come to the fullness of life in him who is the head of all rule and authority” (Col. 2:9).

This is unmatched, unrivaled power and authority.

Dominion Belongs to the Lord!

The reality of Jesus’ Lordship, his rule and authority, was a central affirmation and a deeply felt experience of the early Church. Their constant cry was, “Jesus Christ is Lord!” They lived with an acute awareness of Jesus’ majesty and power.

Pentecost was a revelation of Jesus’ Lordship. The signs and wonders, the tongues of fire, the “sober intoxication of the Spirit,” the miracle of tongues, the bold preaching of the apostles, were all signs pointing to Jesus’ enthronement in heaven as King and Lord of all.

It’s important that we pay attention to the signs. The central message of Pentecost, what all the signs point to, is that Jesus, the King, has fulfilled his promise to establish the Kingdom of God on earth, to make access to the Father possible. St. Peter made it clear that it was Jesus who “has poured out this which you see and hear” (Acts 2:33). It is the Spirit, God’s very own life, that was poured out. It’s the King, Jesus, who makes access to the Father’s kingdom possible through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This is the fulfillment of Jesus’ entire mission, the realization of his central proclamation: “The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the Gospel” (Mk 1:15).
St. Peter preached the very same message on Pentecost:

“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him...save yourselves from this crooked generation’” (Acts 2:38–40).

The good news is that there is a way out of this “crooked generation.” We can “flee the wrath to come!” (Lk 3:17) God has, in the words of St. Paul, “delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption and the forgiveness of our sins” (Col 1:13–14).

To “receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” is to be transferred to the “kingdom of his beloved Son.” To be in the kingdom of the beloved Son is to live under the Lordship of Jesus. The Spirit makes it possible for us to live under the Lordship of Jesus by putting us directly in touch with him. This is St. Paul’s point when he says, “No one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 12:3). The Holy Spirit enables me to say with confidence, “Jesus is my Lord!”

When thinking about the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives, especially in the context of Pentecost, it is easy to focus our attention on the gifts the Spirit bestows upon us for ministry. We have to remember that the Spirit’s first priority is to bring our lives under the authority of Jesus. The first gift we are given is freedom to live a new way of life: “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom” (2 Cor 3:17).

**The Love of Christ**

Jesus intends that new life in us to flow from a new heart, one touched by God’s own love: “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us” (Rom 5:5). That love radically reorients our lives toward God; it gives us a hunger to want to please the Lord and to bring our lives under his Lordship.

“For the love of Christ controls us, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised” (2 Cor 5:14–15).

I pray that in this season of Pentecost the fire of the Holy Spirit will be at work in each of us to help us live more fully under the Lordship of Jesus and to know more deeply God’s great love, poured out for us.
Discover the Exciting Things on our NEW Renewal Ministries Website!

I just listened to your welcome message on your beautiful new web site. It looks good and I'm excited to be able to watch episodes of your show at home. Hope it goes well and that more people hear and respond to the message of freedom, hope and love that Jesus offers with open arms and compassion because of your good work.

Weekly Videos featuring inspiring messages, testimonies and life in the mission field

Easy Navigation

Online Bookstore

The Choices We Face TV programs with Ralph Martin and Peter Herbeck

Food for the Journey radio programs with Sr. Ann Shields, S.G.L.

Fire on the Earth radio programs with Peter Herbeck

Find out all there is to know about our MISSIONS and how YOU can get involved

Keep tabs on all things Renewal Ministries with our Event Calendar

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And MORE!

Please Pray...

+ for a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church that leads to deeper conversion, holiness, and a fresh proclamation of the Gospel.

+ for all those who are laboring heroically for the Gospel. May the Lord give them courage, strength and hope as they serve the Kingdom of God.

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

Thank you for your continued support through prayer as we labor together for the Gospel and the renewal of the Church.
Not in the Family Picture

Eric from Minnesota

I considered myself a Christian most of my life. I knew about God and the gift of his Son for our salvation. I was active in the church and tried to live a “good” life. I had even experienced a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. But I never really had understood the role of the Holy Spirit in my life. As a result I slowly drifted away from that personal relationship.

I worked hard to maintain control of my life, but the harder I worked, the bigger mess my life became. My business was failing, debts were soaring, my marriage was struggling, my wife and I had a miscarriage, and my best friend committed suicide.

As these difficulties occurred, I simply worked even harder. Soon I was working three jobs, sixty to seventy hours per week. Before long I was spending all my waking time worrying about where I was going to earn my next dollar. This stress led to frequent anxiety attacks and waking at night in a sweat.

On the rare occasion when I wasn’t working, my son would ask, “Why is Daddy coming with us?” One day, looking at the photos, I realized I was not in any of our family pictures. I was always at work. I also realized that my son was growing up, and I didn’t really know who he was.

When I saw how the chaos of my life was affecting my family, I swallowed my pride and began praying regularly to God to have mercy on my wife and son and bring peace to their lives. I didn’t pray for my own peace, because I felt I deserved the misery I was experiencing.

Over the next year and a half God began answering my prayers. I found myself working one job and spending more time with my family. Despite working less, God created amazing circumstances that greatly reduced our debt, we moved into a nicer home, and we were blessed with our second son. I opened my heart a crack, and God showed me how much he cared for and loved me.

I finally understood the role of the Holy Spirit as a guiding power source in my life. No longer did I have to rely on head knowledge of God and his teaching in a trudge through life. I could now rely on God’s eternal guiding Spirit to be with me at all times and to bless me with many gifts to accomplish his special purpose in my life.

God has answered my prayers by bringing peace into my heart. He continues to soften my heart and teach me how to surrender control of every aspect of my life to him. I now experience the overwhelming joy and peace that I previously thought were impossible. I’m finally living the Spirit-filled life God intended for me.

This and other inspiring testimonies about the action of the Holy Spirit can be found in When the Spirit Speaks, Touched by God’s Word by Peter and Debra Herbeck.
On the Road

May 2010

Jacksonville, FL
Crossing the Goal Conference
Saturday, May 1
Peter Herbeck
Contact: dave@crossingthegoal.com
or www.crossingthegoal.com

Albany, New York, Diocesan Day of Renewal
Saturday, May 1
Sr. Ann Shields
Contact Dcn Jerry and Marie Gregaitis at 518-542-4497

Orchard Lake, Michigan
Our Lady of Refuge Parish Talk
Wednesday, May 5, 7:30–8:30 pm
Ralph Martin
Contact number: 248-682-0920

Orchard Lake, Michigan
Our Lady of Refuge Parish Talk
Wednesday, May 12, 7:30–8:30 pm
Ralph Martin
Contact number: 248-682-0920

Ypsilanti, Michigan
Renewal Ministries Annual Gathering
Friday, May 14–Sunday, May 16
Contact Jessica at 734-662-1730 x32
or jsherwood@renewalministries.net

Fowler, Michigan
Most Holy Trinity Parish Encounter Series
Tuesday, May 18
Sr. Ann Shields
Contact Fr. Dennis Howard at 989-593-2162

Ottawa, Canada
“New Evangelization in Canada”
Tuesday, May 18–Thursday, May 20
Ralph Martin and Peter Herbeck

Green Bay, Wisconsin
Diocesan Pentecost Celebration
Saturday, May 22
Ralph Martin
Contact: www.estovir.com

Mission to Serbia
May 29–May 30
Deacon Zoltán Kunszabó and Team
Contact Jessica at 734-662-1730 x32
or jsherwood@renewalministries.net

June 2010

Mission to Croatia
June 7–12
Deacon Zoltán Kunszabó and Team
Contact Jessica at 734-662-1730 x32
or jsherwood@renewalministries.net

Steubenville, Ohio, Franciscan University of
Steubenville Charismatic Conference
June 11–13
Ralph Martin, Sr. Ann Shields, S.G.L.
Contact number: 800-437-8368
or www.franciscanconferences.com

Steubenville, Ohio, Franciscan University of
Steubenville Religious Sisters
June 15–17
St. Ann Shields, S.G.L.
Contact number: 800-437-8368
or www.franciscanconferences.com

Mission to Lithuania
June 17–21
Dr. Peter Williamson and Team
Contact Jessica at 734-662-1730 x32
or jsherwood@renewalministries.net

“Open yourselves with docility to the gifts of the Holy Spirit! Receive with gratitude and obedience the charisms that the Spirit does not cease to offer!”

Pope John Paul II

For this reason, I also say to you:

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   Design
Debra Herbeck  Anne Martin

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