Dear Friends,

Even though many of us have never met personally I feel that I can call you “friends” because you’ve said “yes” to the work we’re doing in one way or another. Besides our common bond as fellow members of the Body of Christ, we have the additional bonds of our involvement in Renewal Ministries. Some of you have contacted us in response to one of the television or radio programs; some of you have asked to be included among those who get this monthly newsletter because you heard us speak at a conference or a parish mission or some other event. Some of you have been with us since we began in 1980 or 1981. Others have been with us for twenty or ten or five years or less. Whenever I sign a thank you letter for someone who has been with us for years I feel a real wave of gratitude and a spontaneous prayer for you goes up—of gratitude for your faithful support and in blessing for you and your family. For some of you this is your very first newsletter. Whatever the case may be, we appreciate very much that you’ve joined with us in some way to help further the great work of renewal and evangelization in which Renewal Ministries has the privilege of participating. Your support continues to make a concrete difference in people’s lives all over the world.

“As a Protestant, it is through this show and Renewal Ministries that I have the strength to carry on. Because of your show, I have come to a closer walk with the Lord and the Holy Spirit.’”

At our recent Renewal Ministries Gathering we had the honor of hearing Bohus Zivcak and Fr. Michael Zamkovsky share their amazing stories of serving the Lord together during Communist times in Slovakia. On Saturday evening they led us in a powerful and anointed time of worship together.
Dear Friends,

“Your comments on the clergy sex abuse crisis in the June newsletter were right on the mark. Very strong and timely. I hope many people read them. Thank you for all you have done to speak clearly about God’s truth. Keep on!”

the strength to carry on. Because of your show, I have come to a closer walk with the Lord and the Holy Spirit. My prayers and support are with you. I pray that someday I will be able to see you in person.”

“The website looks REALLY SHARP!!! I love the colors and it is really ‘easy on the eyes’. There is just the right amount of links and info on the homepage. I love the new, short weekly video from one of you that is posted each week.”

“When you spoke to the Archdiocesan employees I bet many experienced a ‘new Pentecost’ while you were speaking.”

“Your talks in Green Bay, WI last week were wonderfully inspirational. Many participants experienced conversions and I heard one person say that the talks miraculously saved her marriage. Praise God!”

“Thank you for helping us here in China. The people here whom you are training are already doing important work. “

“Your visit here was exceptional. Your message was welcome and received. Thank you for your steady service all these years.”

“Your comments on the clergy sex abuse crisis in the June newsletter were right on the mark. Very strong and timely. I hope many people read them. Thank you for all you have done to speak clearly about God’s truth. Keep on!”

(The June newsletter is available on-line at our website. Just go to www.renewalministries.net and click on “Newsletter” on the home page.)

“I’m profiting immensely from The Fulfillment of All Desire and am now recommending it to everyone I can think of. I go straight from reading to prayers of thanks and praise to God for His loving wisdom that you share in this book. Thanks for being obedient and writing it!”

“I was trapped in serious sin for many years. I’ve had a massive conversion ever since we got EWTN and have been watching The Choices We Face and Crossing the Goal every week. I love your new website and look and listen to everything on it!”

“I have ordered Ralph’s talk Why Everyone Needs to be Baptized in the Spirit literally by the boxful and have distributed it widely. The experiential knowledge of God’s love and mercy through being baptized in the Holy Spirit is truly a watershed discovery for many and never fails to change lives and empower. I’ve also ordered Peter Herbeck’s book When the Spirit Comes in Power by the boxful and continue to distribute it as prompted.”

“We’ve recently completed another of our annual “Gatherings” here in the Ann Arbor area. About 200 of our friends—that’s some of you—attended from both the US and Canada. Many said it was the “best ever”. Fr. Francis Martin, the noted biblical scholar, was with us, as were Bohus Zivcak and Fr. Michael Zampovsky from Slovakia. They told their amazing stories of how the Lord brought them together when Fr. Michael couldn’t reveal that he was a priest because of the Communist government and how now they are working together for the Kingdom not only in Slovakia but in Kazakhstan and other countries as well. Bohus is now a Country Coordinator for Renewal Ministries.

Next year’s Gathering is scheduled for May 13–15, 2011 and all of you are invited! More info to come as we get closer to the date.

Your friend in Christ,

Ralph Martin

Fr. Francis Martin, the noted biblical scholar, gave teachings throughout the weekend on our theme, “Put on the Armor of God.”
Severe Mercy

Over the past few months a number of you have taken the time to express gratitude to Ralph for his insightful reflections in the June newsletter on the new wave of priest pedophilia and sexual misconduct cases that are currently rocking the Church in Europe. As of this writing, the sad, shameful story of infidelity, malefiaence, hypocrisy and cover-up won’t go away. The revelations just keep coming.

Why is this happening, especially throughout the “Year of the Priest”? Can the hand of the Lord be discerned in this whole sordid mess? I think it can. In fact, I think the Lord is near at hand, and it’s important for each one of us to see, hear and take to heart the message the Lord is giving to the whole Church, and, I believe, to the world.

Since 2002, when the crisis in the United States broke, I’ve believe the Lord has shown me a number of things that have helped me respond personally to the crisis. I’d like to share them with you in the hope that you might be encouraged through these trying times for the Church.

A Missed Opportunity

As the celebration of the Jubilee Year 2000 approached, Pope John Paul II made the “examination of conscience” and the “purification of memory” an important part of his pastoral plan for the whole Church. The call to repentance had a prophetic quality to it which resonated in the hearts of many people who I spoke to at the time, but unfortunately, like many prophetic exhortations from the Holy Father, it seemed to elicit only a limited response. I remember having a conversation with Sr. Ann Shields at that time in which she expressed deep concern that the leadership of the Church didn’t seem to be leading with the depth of “courage and humility” that the Holy Father’s call warranted. She even wrote passionate pleas to a number of bishops asking for a more honest, thorough, and heartfelt public repentance. She feared the lack of clear leadership would trickle down to the pews, resulting in a limited response from the Church as a whole.

At the time, I felt we were witnessing a missed opportunity, a failure to welcome the mercy and grace being offered by the Lord for a true purification of the Body of Christ. The Holy Father made it clear in this “purification of memory” we were receiving a “summons to conversion”:

“First of all, the sign of the purification of memory; this calls everyone to make an act of courage and humility in recognizing the wrongs done by those who have borne or bear the name of Christian...By its nature, the Holy Year is a time when we are called to conversion. This is the first word of the preaching of Jesus, which significantly enough is linked with readiness to believe: “Repent and believe the Good News.” (Mk 1:15) The imperative put by Christ flows from realization of the fact that “the time is fulfilled.” (Mk 1:15) The fulfillment of God’s time becomes a summons to conversion, which is in the first place an effect of grace. It is the Spirit who impels each of us to “return into ourselves” and to see the need to go back to the Father’s house. (cf. Lk 15:17–20) Examination of conscience is therefore one of the most decisive moments of life. It places each individual before the truth of his own life. Thus he discovers the distance which separates his deeds from the ideal which he had set himself...Yet we too, sons and daughters of the Church, have sinned and have hindered the Bride of Christ from shining forth in all her beauty. Our meager faith has meant that many have lapsed into apathy and been driven away from a true encounter with Christ.” (Incarnationis Mysterium, no. 11)

“As the Successor of Peter, I ask that in this year of mercy the Church, strong in the holiness which she receives from her Lord, should kneel before God and implore forgiveness for the past and present sins of her sons and daughters. All have sinned and none can claim righteousness before God. (cf. 1 Kgs 8:46) Let it be said once more without fear: “We have sinned” (Jer 3:25), but let us keep alive the certainty that “where sin increased, grace abounded even more.” (Rom 5:20) (Ibid)

Think what might have happened if each one of us had responded wholeheartedly to that prophetic call. Imagine if our bishops would have led the way, bending their knees, publicly acknowledging the sins that many knew were lurking just below the surface of our comfortable self-righteousness. Instead of hearing the continued on pg 4
word of the Lord in fear and trembling, taking action, having the courage and zeal to take the initiative to cleanse our own house, to come into the light, our leaders tried to “manage” our sin problem.

Looking back, we were facing a “decisive moment of life,” one that may have saved us from a great deal of misery and shame. The Holy Father made it clear we were entering a time of fulfillment, a season pregnant with grace, a time of mercy for the whole Church, if only we would have the courage to respond with honesty and humility.

Renewal of Missionary Commitment

The Holy Father tied the call to repentance directly to mission. The sin of the Church “hindered the Bride of Christ from shining forth in all her beauty,” it “impeded the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of many people,” and it drove people away from Jesus.

Heartfelt repentance was to lead to holiness, to purification, to surrender to the power of the Holy Spirit, which alone makes the Church beautiful, joyful and attractive to those who do not know Jesus. The Holy Father’s vision was set on preparing the Church to take up her mission with renewed vigor at the dawn of the new millennium.

“The coming of the Third Millennium prompts the Christian community to lift its eyes of faith to embrace new horizons in proclaiming the Kingdom of God. It is imperative therefore at this special time to return more faithfully than ever to the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, which shed new light upon the missionary task of the Church in view of the demands of evangelization today.” (Incarnationis Mysterium, no. 2)

The recent popes had made it clear that the Catholic Church “exists in order to evangelize,” (Evangelii Nuntiandi, no. 14) and therefore “For each believer, as for the entire Church, the missionary task must remain foremost” (Redemptoris Missio, no. 86) in the hearts of everyone. Our sin, compromise, worldliness and hypocrisy dulled that missionary commitment. Sin produced indifference to the Church’s fundamental reason for being. Many—far too many—of the baptized, both laity and clergy alike, manifested very little genuine “zeal for souls.”

The Holy Father’s passionate plea for deep repentance was motivated, in part, by the heart of Jesus, “to seek and save the lost.” (Luke 19:10) Even now as I reread the Holy Father’s words, I sense the urgency in my own heart and the Holy Spirit crying out in me: “No more hindering the beauty of the Bride of Christ! No more standing in the way of the Spirit! No more presumption, indifference and lethargy in the face of the enormous missionary demands of our time! It’s time to wake up, to get serious about our duty to respond to the Holy Father’s call for a new evangelization, and to cooperate with this call to serious repentance.”

The Jubilee was an opportunity for each person to come to terms with the condition of their own life in light of their missionary identity. It was an opportunity to come face to face with Jesus’ passion and fire for souls. It was a time of mercy and grace meant to produce real change. For those who had the courage and humility to respond wholeheartedly to the Spirit’s call that change happened. For those who missed that “time of the Lord’s visitation” something more was needed.

Something More: Severe Mercy

I believe the Lord is permitting the sins of the Church to be revealed in our time because he is deadly serious about the battle for souls. He wants a purified Bride: repentant, holy, zealous, attentive, joyful, a radiant Bride who is passionate to fulfill her missionary purpose. That
I believe that anyone who persists in taking this discipline ‘lightly’ is in danger of being cut off, pruned from the vine. Now is the time to cooperate with the Lord, to take action in your own life, to completely come into the light, to allow nothing to remain hidden that you know the Lord wants revealed.

Cooperating With Jesus

The Letter to the Hebrews gives us important wisdom on how to welcome and cooperate with the “discipline of the Lord”:

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor lose courage when you are punished by him. For the Lord disciplines him whom he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives...for the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” (Hebrews 12:5–6, 11)

There are lessons here for us that we should take to heart during this period of discipline:

1. Remember that you are a son or daughter of God. The very reason we are receiving this discipline first is because we are children of God. We are not “illegitimate children, but sons.” This severe mercy is coming from the heart of a loving Father. He has our best interest in mind.

2. It is very important that we not take this discipline “lightly.” I am afraid that is exactly what happened in the Church’s response to the urgent cry of Pope John Paul II leading up to the Jubilee Year. It is a very bad idea to ignore what the Lord is doing. He will not permit indifference, presumption, arrogance, worldliness, and pride to stand in the way of His purpose for the Church in this hour. I believe that anyone who persists in taking this discipline “lightly” is in danger of being cut off, pruned from the vine. Now is the time to cooperate with the Lord, to take action in your own life, to completely come into the light, to allow nothing to remain hidden that you know the Lord wants revealed.

3. Take courage, do not be afraid. The crisis we’re facing seems overwhelming at times, like it will never end. It is fear producing, it shakes our faith, it can easily lead to discouragement. Now is the time to trust the Lord. Confess His Lordship over your life and the life of the entire Church. All is in His hands. He has already overcome all that we fear.

4. Keep your eye on what the Lord is seeking to produce in you: “the peaceful fruit of righteousness.” He wants to heal our souls, to make us holy, so we can hear His word and respond to it in our lives. He is disciplining us because He wants to make us saints. Saints are little Christs, and it is the light of Christ that the profane world needs to see. His plan is to reveal that light through us; our part is simply to say yes to Jesus’ work in us, again, again and again.

Judgment Upon the World

Finally, I believe the judgment that has begun in the “household of God” will eventually come upon the world: “and if it begins with us, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?” (1 Peter 4:17) God loves the world so much; He will not let it remain in its sin.
Mission to Serbia
By Deacon Zoltán Kunszabó

One of the best results of the previous mission year is the fundamental openness of parishes towards mission activities. We have received a lot of invitations from the pastors of the Nagybecskerek Diocese to visit their parishes and communicate a new breath of the living and joyful Spirit of God. We had the opportunity to serve at the parish of Törökkanizsa, where the Roman Catholic community (mostly Hungarians) live as a minority among the Serbian Orthodox majority. Pastor József Bogdán, the well known priest-poet explained to us before the event that there was no possibility for a large visible mission in the small city because of the religious and ethnic tensions. So we planned a mission program in the church building in the framework of a Sunday morning Mass.

We arrived in Serbia in the afternoon and our first stop and accommodation for the night was the parish of Csóka, where Pastor József Mellár, the dean of the diocese very kindly hosted us. We left early the next morning to reach Törökkanizsa and were joined by Attila Bánhidi, one of the founder-members of the New Jerusalem Community in Budapest, Hungary and László Csiszá and his wife and helper Erika. There was also a group of the local charismatic leaders from the close cities who came to our assistance. The Holy Mass started at 9:00 am with a packed church of 300 people. It was the first Mass with guitars and lay testimony in the history of this local church!

During the Holy Mass Laci Csiszér served with worship music in his very touching way and Attila gave his testimony; it is a great story about a young man without any religious background who the Lord Jesus revealed Himself to step by step and grabbed his heart. I served as a deacon, read the Gospel of the Transfiguration and gave a mission speach. After Mass we sang more and offered the opportunity for people to dedicate their lives to Jesus in a deeper way and to come forward for prayer. We also called the sick for healing prayer. We prayed for more than an hour in three groups in the ice-cold church; there is no money in Serbia for the luxury of heating. The hunger for the Lord’s healing and tender love was incredible. It was really touching to hear the stories of these simple, poor and wounded people from a country of continuing wars the last two decades. They have no help in life—especially not from the institutions of the society. It was great to see them drinking the waters of eternal life with tears in their eyes—in a community where prayer ministry was unknown until this day. It showed that this kind of service can be really natural in groups of believers because it responds to their real spiritual needs.

Afterwards, we were invited to lunch by Pastor József Bogdán. The warm chicken soup was like medicine after the cold church. Our ongoing mission in Serbia is to communicate love and encouragement to the parish priests fighting alone with the difficult spiritual and practical circumstances. We have a great hope that, as Fr. Bogdán said, some of the young people who came to see us for the service will join the community of the Church. Let’s pray for God’s new plants in Törökkaniza, Serbia!
Mission to Ireland
By Don Turbitt

Our objective on this mission was to preach the Gospel and bring healing to a broken people and Church in Ireland. We certainly didn’t bring healing to a large part of the church but we spoke to several hundred and gave them hope. The Catholic Church in Ireland seems to be at its lowest point and I see this as an opportunity to bring about the changes that have been needed for years. It hasn’t happened yet, but my prayer is that the Church here will turn to renewal in the Holy Spirit for help and teaching. There were eight members on the team with Pat and I, five were repeat missionaries and three new to Ireland.

Our first weekend conference was a Life in the Spirit Seminar and fifty attended—half of them were already baptized in the Holy Spirit and we had the opportunity to pray with everyone. During the week we drove to Dublin to the Avila prayer group. I spoke about the difficult times in Ireland and in the world, pointing out the opportunity this gives to God’s people. Mike Butler gave his personal witness of the death of their child and how God brought good from darkness. There were 300 plus in attendance and we prayed over just about everyone.

The following weekend we returned to Northern Ireland for a weekend conference. I spoke on Friday and Sunday and Pat took the entire day and night on Saturday to speak on healing of memories, as requested. As it turned out the weekend theme was “revival” and many of the fifty attendees felt the Spirit of revival at the conference.

Testimonies from the conferences:

Twenty-eight years ago John Joe Pearson experienced a tire exploding in his face. The accident left him almost totally deaf in both ears. Even with two hearing aids he could not understand what people were saying. He only heard noise when people spoke. Colleen Breslin, a team member from Canada, prayed with him with no apparent results. That night in bed he thought he heard the noise of cars going by the hotel. The next morning he went outside without any hearing aids and he heard birds chirping for the first time in 28 years. That happened at the first weekend conference. The next weekend he shared that he was now able to totally hear and because of that he also received a job after being out of work for several years.

Kevin Bradley, a man in his mid-twenties, told of taking a fall twelve years earlier. He had fallen some 25 feet and hit his head on concrete and was in a coma for two weeks. When he came for prayer to Cathryn Torgerson on the first weekend conference, he had poor posture, one of his eyes was partially closed, and she couldn’t understand him very well. He rested in the Spirit and seemed changed when he got up. She told him to expect to experience joy like he never had before. A few days later, he came to the hotel and his posture was fine, his eye was fine, and she could understand him better. He said the pain was gone and he had been experiencing the joy that God told him he would.

An accident 28 years ago left John Joe Pearson almost totally deaf in both ears. After receiving prayer at the conference he completely regained his hearing and as a result he also received a job after being out of work for several years.

“...he was now able to totally hear and because of that he also received a job after being out of work for several years.”
On the Road

“We become what we love and who we love shapes what we become.
If we love things, we become a thing.
If we love nothing, we become nothing.
Imitation is not a literal mimicking of Christ, rather it means becoming the image of the beloved, an image disclosed through transformation.”

St. Clare of Assisi

August 2010
Mission to Ghana
July 28–August 9
Brent Heiser and Team
Contact Jessica at 734-662-1730 x32
or jsherwood@renewalministries.net

Little Rock, AK
Charismatic Conference
July 30–August 1
St. Ann Shields, SGL
Contact: ark.cc.org

Mission to Siberia
August 4–23
Don & Pat Turbitt and Team
Contact Jessica at 734-662-1730 x32
or jsherwood@renewalministries.net

Mission to Kenya
August 11–27
Peter Thompson and Team
Contact Jessica at 734-662-1730 x32
or jsherwood@renewalministries.net

Livonia, MI
St. Michael the Archangel Parish Staff Retreat
August 17
Ralph Martin

September 2010
Mission to Latvia and Ukraine
September 1–20
Don & Pat Turbitt and Team
Contact Jessica at 734-662-1730 ext 32
or jsherwood@renewalministries.net

Ann Arbor, MI
Taping for The Choices We Face
September 7–10, 13–17
Ralph Martin & Peter Herbeck

Nashville, TN, Evangelization and Catechesis Conference
September 18
Ralph Martin
Contact number: 615-297-7545 ext. 425

Ann Arbor, MI
Country Coordinator Meetings
September 23–25

Birmingham, AL, Crossing the Goal Taping
September 27–October 1
Peter Herbeck

Please Pray…

+ as we prepare for the upcoming taping of The Choices We Face in September. May all the shows continue to inspire, equip, and strengthen our viewers.
+ for the upcoming mission trips to Kenya, Siberia, Latvia, and Ukraine.
+ for the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members, especially as they face the challenges of illness and economic uncertainty.

Thank you for your continued support through prayer as we labor together for the Gospel and the renewal of the Church.

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. Pearse Lacey, Ret. Auxiliary, Toronto

Chairman of the Board
Msgr. Gregory Smith

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

© 2010 by Renewal Ministries

www.renewalministries.net