Dear Partners in the Gospel,

A letter from Ralph Martin

Last month I wrote that Anne and I were preparing to leave for Italy to finish up a doctorate in theology at the “Angelicum,” the Dominican Pontifical University in Rome. When you get this we’ll actually be there but due to the advance lead time needed to publish the newsletter I’m writing this while still in the U.S.

Getting ready to go was something of an adventure. Since we’ll be there for more than 90 days (we return June 16th) we had to apply for a visa from the Italian Consulate in Detroit. It took me weeks to get all the paperwork in order and even then I wasn’t sure I had it all right. We had to have notarized statements concerning the validity of our driver’s licenses, our marriage license, our health insurance, and a notarized statement that we would report to the Italian police no later than 8 days after our arrival for our “welcome interview.” For those of you who haven’t had to go through something like this a “notarized” statement is one that has been witnessed to by a properly authorized person licensed to do such things. We also needed a letter from the University in Rome, a letter from the seminary in Detroit which promised to pay the University in Rome, proof of round-trip airline tickets, proof from our bank that we were customers in good standing, not to mention the four page application, and proof that we had a place to stay in Rome. And duplicate copies of everything. When we arrived at the Consulate there were several signs in big letters that said “IF YOU DON’T HAVE EXACTLY THE RIGHT PAPERWORK YOU WILL HAVE TO RETURN AT ANOTHER TIME.” As the Consulate official
continued on pg 2

“I would appreciate your prayers that I’m able to write a good dissertation that helps the Church and gives glory to God, and also be open to whatever ‘divine encounters’ the Lord may have prepared during our time there.”

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The knowledgeable, dedicated (and fun) crew at Russell Video in Ann Arbor, Michigan helped us produce another outstanding year of shows for The Choices We Face. (Seated from l to r): Dan Russell, Scott Hyde; (Standing from l to r): Mike Pinsoneault, Tom Mansell, Jason Whittaker, Cory Russell, Peter Herbeck and TCWF Producer, Christina Thomashesfki
Dear Partners in the Gospel,

was going through our paperwork she decided it wasn’t in the right order and we would have to return, but after I drew her attention to a few items she decided to let us apply without having to come back. I definitely experienced this as our guardian angels helping us.

While I’m in Rome I’ll have to concentrate on my main purpose in being there, but I promise to send back photos and some news from time to time. In the meantime, Peter Herbeck and Sr. Ann Shields will be holding down the fort. I would appreciate your prayers that I’m able to write a good dissertation that helps the Church and gives glory to God, and also be open to whatever “divine encounters” the Lord may have prepared during our time there.

I’ve actually written a short article that deals with some of the themes of the dissertation that we’ll be featuring in the newsletter over the next several months. This will give you some idea of what I’m working on and its relevance to the work of renewal and evangelization.

In the meantime though, I want to thank you for your generous end of the year giving which once again enabled us to meet our budget and avoid any cutbacks in the multiple missions that continue to unfold through Renewal Ministries.

In this issue you’ll see the fruit of one of these missions as we provide a preview of the upcoming new season of The Choices We Face. And just by “chance” I am scheduled to meet tomorrow morning with Marshall Levijoki, the media expert, who walked into my office almost 30 years ago and asked me to consider launching a weekly television program. And here we are in the 28th year of our weekly programs! Marshall has continued to serve the Lord through media over the years and currently is involved in a website that provides video enactments of the Bible (www.toseejesus.com).

I appreciate Marshall’s perseverance, and I appreciate yours.

“The one who perseveres to the end will be saved.”

Your brother in Christ,

Ralph Martin

“In this issue you’ll see the fruit of one of these missions as we provide a preview of the upcoming new season of The Choices We Face.”

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Save the Date!  The 19th Annual Lift Jesus Higher Rally

**When?**
Saturday, April 9th, 2011
9:00 AM–6 PM

**Where?**
Metro Toronto Convention Center
North Building  255 Front Street West

**Speakers & Special Guests**
- Sr. Ann Shields, SGL
- Deacon Alex Jones
- Peter Herbeck
- Fr. Scott McCaig
- Archbishop T. Collins

**What’s Happening?**
- Inspiring Talks, Uplifting Music
- Eucharistic Healing Procession
- Divine Mercy Celebration
- Mass with Archbishop Collins
- Simultaneous dynamic youth rally

**Tickets—Information—Cost**
Adult Rally $18 — Youth Rally $9
416.251.4255 or pdkromer@rogers.com
or 905.270.2510
Catholic Renewal Ministries, P.O. Box 45018, 5845 Yonge St., Toronto, Ontario  M2M 3V0
www.lift-jesus-higher-rally.org
The Message is LOVE

Recently I was asked to speak at our parish prayer meeting—a Friday evening in December. A week prior to the meeting, the Lord had spoken a number of times through the prophetic word that He loved us—repeatedly telling us that He loved us. Before I spoke, the leader of the prayer meeting reflected on those words from the previous week.

When I stood up to speak, I suddenly remembered (an inspiration, I think) that my very first prayer meeting had occurred on a Friday night in December exactly forty years previously. As I noted that, it also struck me that the Lord had spoken of His love for us at my first prayer meeting. I remembered how often, how consistently, and in how many contexts the Lord has told us how dearly He loves us and wants us to be confident in that love; that He will forgive any sin we bring to Him in true repentance, that He will never desert us, that His mercy endures forever.

My momentary reflections on God’s love caused me to ask myself—and those present—do we really believe? Have we staked our lives on the truth that God does truly have a personal love for each of us, that trusting in that love we can rejoice in the good things of this life, and be confident of His forgiveness when we sin? Do we really believe that we are His beloved children who have been given His Holy Spirit as the first pledge of our inheritance, that the Son is our personal Savior, not only to save us eternally but also to shepherd us daily through the heights and the valleys of this life, even through the dark valley of the shadow of death until that day of eternity when all mourning and sorrow will flee? Do we believe that our heavenly Father will greet and embrace each one of us and draw us into union with Himself—the Source of All Love? This is what I was created for! Do I believe it?

That night as I spoke at that prayer meeting, each of us present took some time in silence to honestly face ourselves and ask if we did believe and to ask for greater faith to take these truths to heart and to literally build our lives—our goals, plans, relationships, and daily living on the Truth which is ultimately a person—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By His great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and to an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, through now for a little while you may have to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold which though perishable is tested by fire, may redound to praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Without having seen Him, you love Him; though you do not now see Him you believe in Him and rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy. As the outcome of your faith you obtain the salvation of your souls.” (1Peter 1:3–9)
Mission to Slovakia and the Czech Republic

Our mission to Slovakia and the Czech Republic included seven team members from the U.S. and Canada and we were joined by other key people from Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Our team was diverse and included several with strong teaching skills, thus multiple venues were planned and at times the team split in half in order to reach a maximum number of people. We began in the city of Presov, presenting a weekend retreat for the Maranatha Community held at the new Pope John Paul II Evangelization Center. Most of our team gave a talk or testimony and offered prayer ministry, and the retreat was greatly blessed and appreciated by many. On Sunday afternoon, our team split and John Kazanjian and I traveled to the capital city of Bratislava while Mary Shaw facilitated an outreach with the rest of the team to Northern Slovakia and the towns of Tristan and Orava.

Bratislava City Mission
A massive evangelization effort had been planned for the capital city of Bratislava. In the first week, 70 Catholic missionaries from around Slovakia engaged in outreaches to all the schools, from first grade to university students. The blitz included various kinds of street ministry and nightly concerts in the main plaza of the city center. The second week consisted of simultaneous parish missions throughout the city. We were involved in the ministry to elementary and high school students (including both public and Catholic schools) for several hours each day and conducted ministry to students of a large Catholic university on Monday evening. These venues went quite well and we were able to present the gospel to an estimated 2000 students during our time there.

Bohus Zivcak, country coordinator for Renewal Ministries from Slovakia, served as one of the chief organizers of the Bratislava mission along with Redemptorist priests Fr. Michael Zamkovsky and Fr. Rasto. Bohus brought some known performers in for the nightly concerts.

Orava & Tristan, Slovakia
Mary Shaw details the three days of ministry in the northern town of Orava as follows:

“We stayed with Fr. Bruno Kozuch at the youth retreat center. Since our last visit a year ago, the community living there has grown from about seven to twelve and most are in need of support for problems with addictions. Father invited us to present evenings of renewal in his two parishes. We traveled to the nearby town of Tristan where we ministered in 2009. The church was filled for evening Mass, concelebrated with Fr. Graham Keep who also gave the homily. After Mass, I presented a talk on forgiveness and healing followed by a testimony. Our team stationed themselves around the sanctuary and for more than two hours people came forward for prayer. Compared to a year ago, more people came for prayer and they appeared much more open to the Holy Spirit. Many were moved to tears as the Lord touched them. We held a similar program the following night in another parish, and again people responded openly and deeply to prayer.

Much of the two full days in Orava were spent in schools. We ministered to children from grade to high schools, both Catholic and public. We shared testimonies, answered questions, and presented the basic Gospel message. Fr. Graham Keep served as a powerful witness to the working of the Lord as he shared his call to the priesthood. His unique sense of humor with a message brought many laughs and received undivided attention from the students everywhere we went. The team was also invited to speak to a group of social work students and we were able to share how a relationship with the Lord and knowing His healing power and love compliments the work of health care professionals.

Ruzomberok, Slovakia
This was the third year that our Renewal Ministries team conducted events at Ruzomberok Catholic University. A small band of graduate students forms the leadership of a community which has been engaged in a very active ministry to students over the last eight years. This includes a large weekly praise and teaching meeting in the campus church and an intense three year discipleship program. A regular Wednesday night open meeting is attended by many adults from the surrounding area. On Friday night we participated in one of their outreaches to a Franciscan parish in the ancient town of Levoca. We also presented workshops for their leaders and small group animators.

Brumov-Bynica, Czech Republic
In 2007, Renewal Ministries conducted a mission for the parish in this small town in the Moravian district and the surrounding villages shortly after Fr. Karol Matlock had assumed his duties there, and he expressed a deep desire to bring spiritual renewal to his parish. Upon our arrival this year it became apparent that Fr. Karol’s desire for renewal is coming to fruition. Saturday night marked the first evening of our
five day parish mission. We began with the monthly Praise Night, an event that is now springing up in a number of parishes in the Czech Republic. This session involved many teenage and young adult musicians but was attended by entire families with younger children, as well as a number of elderly from the town and beyond. Fr. Karol is a skilled acoustical guitarist and he was fully involved, along with visual aids, flag ministry, and free flowing contemporary worship songs, all combined to bring the candle lit church into a symphony of prayer and worship. The three hour service seemed but a moment as people of every age and walk of life entered into worship.

The next morning our team spoke at five Sunday Masses, encouraging people to attend the afternoon programs in the villages of Neda-sov and Brumov, followed by five nights of talks and prayer ministry. On Monday and Tuesday mornings we had the opportunity to present programs to every student in the Brumov public school. Many of the students also attended the parish mission. Each night the church was full and really packed on Tuesday for the Mass with healing prayers for families.

Outreach to Ostrava, Czech Republic
Fr. Graham shares the following from his experience in Ostrava: We were invited by Fr. Bogdan Stepian to conduct a two day parish mission in the midst of a city which is largely atheistic, economically poor, and highly populated with Gypsies. The parish mission began with Mass in the main church followed by a gathering in the chapel of the rectory. There were approximately 30 parishioners who attended the first evening. The session included testimonies by our team on the ordinary missionary call of a lay witness, followed by a talk on John Paul II’s call for the New Evangelization. The next night over 50 people attended the Mass, a witness talk, and a teaching on baptism of the Holy Spirit. Participants were then invited to receive prayer from team members and everyone asked to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. Many who were prayed with experienced a new ardor of the Holy Spirit. A gentle, but powerful outpouring of the Holy Spirit was experienced by all. This parish is poor and could not afford this kind of outreach without the generous support of Renewal Ministries and its donors.

Ministry in Brno, Czech Republic
On one of our previous journeys to the Czech Republic our team members prayed with a lady named Dana who is an English teacher in the Catholic high school in Brno, noted for its academic achievement. Dana extended an invitation to visit her school and speak to her English classes. The students welcomed us by sharing some of their amazing musical talent and they were very responsive to our ministry.

In conclusion, our ministry remains highly valued in both Slovakia and the Czech Republic and many opportunities remain. Both the clergy and laity are highly receptive and welcoming and the thirst for sound teaching continues.

We began with the monthly Praise Night, an event that is now springing up in a number of parishes in the Czech Republic. This session involved many teenage and young adult musicians but was attended by entire families with younger children, as well as a number of elderly from the town and beyond.

Please Pray...

+ for Ralph and Anne as they spend the next four months in Rome. May the Lord help Ralph complete a dissertation that is useful for the Church and the work of evangelization and renewal.
+ that this new season of The Choices We Face will help many people encounter Jesus in a deeper way and serve Him with renewed zeal.
+ 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.
Nicky Nolfi: Full Conversion Ministries

In this show Nicky speaks candidly about his strict upbringing in the Nazarene church, his rebellious youth years, his return to the Lord and conversion to Catholicism. He also shares about Full Conversion Ministries, founded by him and his brother to help bring people to the fullness of Jesus Christ in the Catholic Church.

Sunil & Sindhu Nadarajan: Jesus Youth USA

Sunil & Sindhu Nadarajan share their journey from Hinduism to Catholicism and their current work with Jesus Youth USA.

Jim Minnick: Balancing Faith, Family and Business

A business and family man, Jim shares how faith has brought him through challenges and how he has tried to balance a successful career with a life in Christ.

Rachel Thelen: Catholic Urban Project

Rachel is the Director of Catholic Urban Project, a city summer service program for Catholic young adults. In this show she recounts her own experiences growing up in a Catholic family and her current work in helping young people to share the love of Christ and serve the poor.

Sr. Maria Silva: A Bronx Bride of Christ

Sr. Maria Silva, a member of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist describes her journey to becoming a nun and her recent appearance on the Oprah show.

Fr. James Mallon: Courage for Discipleship

Fr. James is the pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Canadian Martyrs Parish in the Archdiocese of Halifax and a member of the Renewal Ministries’ Canadian Board of Directors. In this show he shares about discipleship and an exciting new DVD project entitled, “Dogmatic Theology” a relevant and humorous series which explores themes central to our Christian faith.

Bohumir Zivcak, Ph.D.: Catholicism in a World of Communism

Born and raised in Communist Slovakia, Bohumir recounts his moving experience of encountering the Lord as a teen, secretly practicing his faith, the fall of Communism, and God’s call to spread the Gospel.

Deacon Larry Oney: Amazing Grace

Deacon Larry Oney from the diocese of New Orleans shares his experience of growing up as a black man in Louisiana and the grace he received to overcome racism.

Jennifer Fulwiler: Conversion of an Atheist

In this show, Jennifer Fulwiler, author of the popular Catholic blog Conversion Diary, talks about growing up as an atheist and how her worldview began to crumble, revealing the truth of God’s love and presence in the Catholic Church.
Archbishop Zbignevs Stankevics: Saying “Yes” to the Lord

This show highlights the spiritual journey of the recently appointed Archbishop of Riga, Latvia and long-time friend of Renewal Ministries.

Dr. William Mitchell: Healed by the Holy Spirit

Dr. William Mitchell describes his own dramatic conversion experience, the healing power of the Holy Spirit and how God has led him into a ministry of evangelization.

Tom Naemi: Mission of a Former Mobster

In this gripping show, Tom shares about a life filled with revenge and hatred that led to fifteen years in prison and how the Lord met him there and set his heart on fire for the Gospel.

Mark Neugebauer: Jesus Is Messiah

A Jewish believer, Marks shares his compelling story of coming to know the Messiah and being led to the fullness of faith in the Catholic Church.

Ed Conlin: The Soul of Detroit

A licensed substance abuse counselor and chaplain, Ed shares about the ministry of working with the impoverished at St. Aloysius’ in the inner city of Detroit, Michigan.

Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC: Consoling the Heart of Jesus

Recently ordained, Fr. Michael shares about his call to the priesthood and his book entitled, Consoling the Heart of Jesus, a Do-It-Yourself Retreat Inspired by the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Other inspiring guests include:

Fr. John Riccardo, Patti Mansfield, Mary Healy, Mike Timmis, Dan Spencer, Kelly Pease Lombardi and more great shows with Ralph and Peter.

To view these inspiring shows of The Choices We Face 2011, tune into EWTN beginning March 1, 2011 on:

- 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 and click on TV Shows then TV Schedule.

The Choices We Face can also be viewed online any time at www.renewalministries.net.
On the Road

“As our body cannot live without nourishment, so our soul cannot spiritually be kept alive without prayer.”

St. Augustine

February 2011

*England
Consultation on the Work of the Holy Spirit
February 1–2
Ralph Martin

Brighton, MI, St. Patrick’s Women’s Walk
Wednesday, February 9
Debbie Herbeck
Contact: Julie.Kemp@fisglobal.com

Garden City, MI, Upper Peninsula Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference
February 11–13
Peter Herbeck
Contact John Hogan at 906-450-5215

Naples, FL, Faith and Ale Men’s Group
Wednesday, February 16
Peter Herbeck
Contact: www.faithandale.com

Tampa, FL
Crossing the Goal Catholic Men’s Conference
Saturday, February 19
Peter Herbeck
Contact: www.crossingthegoal.com

Birmingham, AL, Crossing the Goal Taping
February 21–25
Peter Herbeck

*Troy, Michigan
Legatus of Northeast Michigan
Tuesday, February 22
Debbie Herbeck
Contact: dnelegatus@gmail.com

Menlo Park, CA, Women’s Retreat
February 25–27
Sr. Ann Shields, SGL
Contact Mariella Hermosillo at: mariellabsn@yahoo.com

March 2011

Howell, NJ
St. Veronica Parish Marriage Retreat
March 4–5
Peter & Debbie Herbeck
Contact Larry Pighini at: 732-477-1303 or pghlp@comcast.net

Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey, Catholic Men’s Conference
Saturday, March 5
Peter Herbeck
Contact number: 973-497-4545 or CatholicMen@rcan.org

Long Island, NY
St. Philip and James Office of Evangelization
Tuesday, March 7
Peter Herbeck

Grand Blanc, MI, Parish Mission
Monday, March 14—Wednesday, March 16
Peter Herbeck, Dcn Steve Thomashefski, Paco Gavrilides

*Rome, Italy, Theological Consultation on Baptism in the Holy Spirit
March 17–20
Ralph Martin

*Rome, Italy, North American College, New Pentecost Seminar
March 18–20
Ralph Martin

Saginaw, MI Diocesan Event:
“Everyday Evangelization”
March 18–19
Peter Herbeck
Contact Connie Kaczynski at: 989-797-6607 or ckaczynski@dioceseofsaginaw.org

* Not a Public Event