

A letter ▶
from *Ralph Martin*

RALPH & RALPH
One of the leaders of the renewal in Vasai, after having read some of Ralph's books, felt inspired to name his son Ralph!



Proclaiming Jesus through Catholic Renewal and Evangelization

April 2017

Dear Friends,

Let me begin by expressing my tremendous gratitude for your prayers and support that made possible our mission to India this January. The Lord was clearly at work, and I believe much fruit will come from our combined efforts.

The welcome we received by all four bishops and their main collaborators couldn't have been warmer. I also want to say a special thanks to Romeo Fernando, who interpreted for us in Vasai and helped us in Pune.

Our time in Vasai was very blessed. We stayed with Archbishop Machado (pictured at right), who said he has been reading my books since he was a seminarian. This gave us the opportunity to share many meals and get an in-depth "seminar" on the Indian Church and the pervasive Hindu culture.



Archbishop Machado told us an amazing statistic—



While the Indian population of more than one billion people is less than three-percent Catholic, Catholics carry out forty percent of the country's education, healthcare, and social services, and are highly respected.

However, the growth of a more fundamentalist Hindu Nationalism is putting heavy pressure on their ability to continue providing these services and this witness. While open evangelization is not possible in many parts of India, the witness of these institutions and person-to-person faith sharing is indeed powerful.

On our first day, we dove in with two talks to an open evangelization meeting oriented to "Sunday Catholics," but which Hindus and others periodically attend. I gave two talks, and Deacon Dan Foley, the chairman of Renewal Ministries' American Board, gave a talk as well. The next day, we conducted a day-long conference for members of the Community of the Good Shepherd, which organized all the events of our stay.

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We then did a day-long conference for prayer group leaders in the diocese. Over 500 attended, and I gave three talks there as well. Deacon Dan often offered commentary after my talks. The next day, I gave three talks to the priests of the diocese. In the evening, we all spoke at a meeting with about fifty young people.

The day after that, we met with the nuns of the diocese, and again I gave three talks. In the evening, I gave two talks at an event in a huge outdoor field, where about 5,000 people had gathered, very much surprising the archbishop!

We then were blessed to travel to the “tribal area,” where the diocese has about sixteen mission stations, at which they do excellent work in providing education, healthcare, and social work services, all while quietly evangelizing. *They are currently preparing 165 people for baptism this coming Easter! Praise God!*



Ralph and Anne praying with one of the nuns in Vasai.

When we arrived, we were greeted by hundreds of school children in uniforms who were throwing flower petals and singing for us with music provided by their native instruments. This was a very moving experience for all of us, and tears came to our eyes. I gave three talks to about fifty of the priests and nuns who work there.



On our way to the airport in Mumbai the next day, we stopped to see Fr. Fio Macarenhas, who was the third chairman of the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Council and who now runs a Catholic Bible school in Mumbai. Then, we visited a shrine at the top of a steep hill, where a miraculous statue of Mary was recovered by fishermen centuries ago.

On the way up the hill, a man on a motorcycle called out my name. Twenty years ago, the last time I visited India, he took me to the conference center on his motorcycle. He had hoped to make it to Vasai to hear me again, but couldn't, and then the Lord brought him across my path as I walked up the hill! How utterly amazing! He invited me to hop on his motorcycle once again and gave me a ride up and down the hill a few times. Talk about finding needles in the haystack, or the Lord numbering the hairs on our head!

Our next stop was Trivandrum, in the far south of India, which is the “heartland” of the Catholic Church in India. Christians make up about twenty percent of the population of Kerala and run many highly regarded schools, hospitals, and universities. There is a different atmosphere here and many open signs of Catholic presence and faith.



About 5,000 people gathered in a field in Vasai to hear Ralph speak!



Fr. Matthew George picked us up at the airport; he was one of the first graduates from the STL program at Sacred Heart Major Seminary. Fr. Chas Canoy, a graduate of Sacred Heart Major Seminary's STL program and a pastor of a parish in Jackson, Michigan, also arrived to help us with the upcoming week-long retreat for priests in Pune.

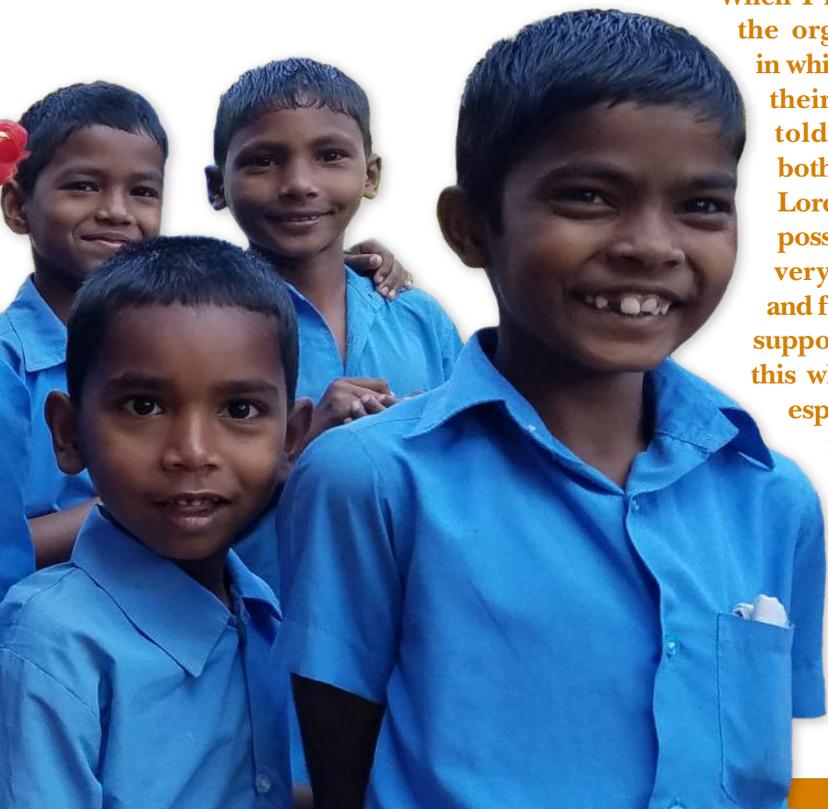
We stayed with Cardinal Cleemis, the president of the Indian Bishops Conference, who had scheduled an annual theological colloquium during the time I was in India, so that I could present a paper at it. Almost all of the nearly one hundred seminarians in his diocese, and some of India's leading theologians, were there. I discussed whether it is still important to evangelize, given

the fact that it is sometimes possible to be saved without hearing the Gospel. You know my answer:

ABSOLUTELY! People's salvations are at stake!

After two nights in Trivandrum, we boarded a train for Kochi (Cochin). It soon became apparent that I was having some stomach issues. However, upon our arrival, I was told that 500 priests, nuns, and lay leaders were waiting, and they asked if I could come immediately to the auditorium. I begged for a few minutes to go to my room and "freshen up." I wasn't sure I could continue, and I asked Fr. Chas and Deacon Dan if they could be ready to do the first talk.

When I mentioned this to the organizers, the way in which they expressed their disappointment told me I had to do both talks, trusting the Lord that it would be possible. It was. I am very grateful to God and for your prayers for supporting me through this whole mission, but especially for getting me through that particular day.



Archbishop Korilloos, the archbishop of Tiruvalla, hosted the gathering. I gave two talks, one on evangelization and one on the new Pentecost. Later that afternoon, we met with about forty key lay leaders, who told us amazing stories of how they are evangelizing. **One couple told us how they lead 250 laypeople who work as full-time missionaries throughout India. If they are short on funds, they fast for three days, and the Lord provides!**

The leader of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Kerala told us they have **3,000 prayer groups!** He travels as an evangelist all over the world. Another woman told us of her ministry to professionals in the work force. Someone else told us of their amazing ministry to children; they have trained over 300 counselor/evangelists that work in camps for children in India and other countries. Someone else told of their successful efforts to translate the Bible into sixteen Indian languages that had never had the Scripture before. We were all "blown away" by the zeal, courage, and dedication of these brothers and sisters.

That same night, I was unexpectedly invited to address all thirteen Latin Rite bishops, who were meeting on a topic related to marriage and family life. Bishop Sebastian, who was a priest at the wedding of my niece, had asked if he could invite me. God gave me amazing strength that day that began with wondering if I could go on or not!

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➡ Pictured from left to right: Fr. Matthew George, Ralph Martin, Cardinal Basелиos Cleemis Thottunkal, and Fr. Chas Canoy in Pune, India. Fr. Matthew and Fr. Chas are both Sacred Heart Major Seminary STL graduates.

On Mission in India continued...

Our host at the pastoral center in Ernakulum (the “new city” area of Cochin) was Fr. Varghese Vallikatt, another graduate of our STL program at the seminary and now the deputy director of the Kerala Bishops’ Conference—he serves as the primary executive for coordinating the work of all three rites in Kerala, he himself a Syro-Malankara, as well as for the Syro-Malabar, and Latin Rite bishops.

We then travelled to Pune for our last events. John and Michelle Kazanjian joined our team at this point—a great blessing! They taught the priests how basic Gospel truths—like

- ➡ *repentance*
- ➡ *forgiveness*
- ➡ *and renunciation of the devil*

—can be applied in practical ways in order to bring freedom in areas of people’s lives that are afflicted or in bondage. This is known as the Unbound method. We formed teams to pray for priests individually, and many experienced wonderful freedom and deliverance. Deacon Dan and Fr. Chas preached at all of the daily Masses, and our team worked beautifully together. I helped as a prayer warrior for a number of these sessions; one night the demand from priests led me to do my first “solo” prayer session, and it went well.

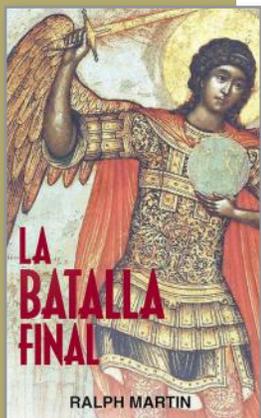


Renewal Ministries' team for the mission to India included Ralph & Anne Martin, Deacon Dan & Dolly Foley, Fr. Chas Canoy, Erin Campbell, and Michelle & John Kazanjian.

The Final Confrontation
now available
in **Spanish!**

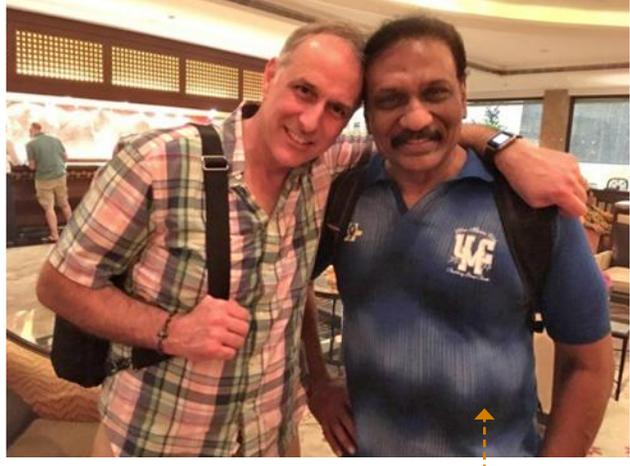


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Please Pray...

- ✚ That we all would have missionary hearts, ready to serve and proclaim the Good News of the Lord wherever He calls us, be it our home, our place of work, or more distant lands.
- ✚ That we may find time, during these last days of Lent and in the rejoicing of Easter, to rest in the Lord, to trust in His love of us, and to say with full confidence: “Jesus, I trust in You!”
- ✚ For the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members, especially as they face the challenges of illness and economic uncertainty.



Leave a Legacy of Faith

Romeo Fernando spent most of the week with us in Pune and was a big help to the priests, many of whom asked him to return to teach them how to lead Life in the Spirit Seminars and help their people experience greater life in the Spirit. Since our return, we already received an email from the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Service Team in Pune, saying, "We have received many requests now to put on the Life in the Spirit Seminars in parishes here, thanks to your team!"

We spent our last weekend giving eight talks to a general conference of mostly Charismatic Renewal Catholics.

I have been invited to return to India to do a retreat for all fifty-one bishops of Kerala and then all the priests and nuns. We all feel doors have opened in India that we should continue to walk through, for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Thank you so much for your prayers, financial support, and other sacrifices that allow this and all other missions to take place.

Your brother in Jesus, our Lord,

Ralph Martin

Ralph

We are extremely grateful for the generosity of so many people who strive to be the Lord's light in this world, and recognize Renewal Ministries' instrumental role in keeping the flame of faith burning through our efforts to:

- Share the Word of God Across the World
- Offer formation for Priests, Deacons, Religious Sisters, and Laity
- Evangelize and Educate through TV and Radio Programs
- Provide Young Adult Outreach
- Be a Light in the Darkness

For the same reasons you support Renewal Ministries now, would you consider remembering us in your will?

Making a bequest to Renewal Ministries is simple...

Use this formula if you live in the United States:

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QUESTIONS?

Call Gary Seromik at 734-662-1730, ext. 121. Gary is the administrator for Renewal Ministries and will be happy to answer any of your questions.

**IT'S NOT TOO LATE! Join us for the annual
Renewal Ministries Gathering**

The
**LIGHT SHINES
IN THE DARKNESS**

APRIL 7-9

Ypsilanti, Michigan

Contact Kathleen Kittle at kkittle@renewalministries.net.