# **H RENEWAL** M I N I S T R I E S

Proclaiming Jesus through Catholic Renewal and Evangelization

May 2018



A letter > from Ralph Martin



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### Dear Companions on the Journey!

We had a very long winter here in Michigan—not as blasted by "nor'easters" as New England and some other states were—but day after day, for weeks on end, we had below freezing temperatures and almost continual light snow. Spring has come as a welcome relief, although it took weeks longer for the below-normal temperatures to moderate. Yet through it all, how amazing that we have an earth able to support life and a planet so very beautiful in its varied climate zones and terrains. And how amazing that God created the universe to give Him glory and delight us! And how much better it will be when the curse of sin, which has even affected the creation, is finally lifted at the Second Coming of Jesus and the resurrection of the dead!

I continue to be deeply struck by the Fatima messages from the angel of Portugal and Mary, Queen of Heaven. I continue to speak at local Catholic schools and value these opportunities greatly. My favorite speaking engagement recently was for a small first-grade class at the local Catholic school that three of my grandchildren attend.

I had already spoken to the third through eight graders at this school, but my youngest grandchild at the school, a first grader, was very disappointed that his class wasn't invited. (The whole student body, from kindergarten to eighth grade, have attended at other schools. It was children as young as this that the angel visited— Jacinta, Francisco, and Lucia were six, eight, and nine when the angel first began to prepare them for Mary's visits.) I ran into the first grade teacher at a fundraising event for the school and asked if I could visit the class and tell them about the events and message of Fatima. She gladly agreed. At that same fundraising auction, Huron Valley Catholic School honored our own Debbie Herbeck with the St. John Bosco Award for her long-time work with young people. Congratulations, Debbie!

I arrived in the classroom, and the children all gathered around me on a big rug and listened very attentively, answered well the questions I asked, and asked good questions of their own. Yes, as Jesus said, "Let the children come to me" (Mk 10:14). Then, just this morning, I dropped off those three grandkids at school, and I stayed to pray in the school chapel. I was pleasantly surprised as class after class came in for a period of Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. Yes, let the children come to Jesus! And to anyone who has contact with children: Don't underestimate the impact you can have by sharing with them Jesus and the whole heavenly court! continued on page 2



• Ralph speaking to students about Fatima. Check out page three for some of their responses to the message



Celeste Martin on mission in Papua New Guinea last fall, before leaving to teach in Vietnam.

### © noteworthy MISSION NEWS

Several months ago, Country Coordinator Don Turbitt reported that Celeste Martin, who frequently serves on Renewal Ministries' mission trips, had accepted a volunteer position to teach English to seminarians in Vietnam. We are happy to report that her work has been going well!

### She recently wrote,

"You are right, the Vietnamese are very welcoming and loving people. This is like having ten sons (the priests) and one-hundred grandsons! Actually, I am sponsoring 'a few' for next year, and when I return, I hope to be able to continue for the following year. During the Christmas holiday, I met two of our deacons who are studying at St. John's in Boston, Tung and Son. They will be coming back here in March for ordination-very, very exciting! My first lesson from Vietnam is that there is hope for the Church!"

### A NEW OPPORTUNITY...

Celeste plans to teach in Vietnam for a second year. Fortunately, there also is a second position available in Vietnam for someone to teach English in the Hue Diocese. There is no pay, but there is free room and board and, according to Don, "lots of grace and love." You do not have to be an English teacher. For more information, please contact Don at 401-568-7601.

#### Continued from page 1

That very afternoon, I gave the same presentation to doctors of theology at the seminary where I teach, as part of a Lenten faculty colloquy, and they responded with equal attentiveness. I don't know if that's the first time the same presentation was given to doctors of theology and first graders, but I thought that was pretty neat!

Jesus rejoiced that what was hidden from the "wise and understanding" was being revealed to the merest of children (Mt 11:25, Lk 10:21). A lesson for us all, but a lesson that even doctors of theology can learn!

Another wonderful event that occurred since we've last communicated is our annual Lift Jesus Higher Rally in Toronto. How inspiring once again! This was our twenty-sixth annual rally, and 4,500 adults and young people attended. It is always very beautiful to see how multi-ethnic the church in Toronto is, with people of every race and language there united in their love for Jesus. Quite a few people were there for the first time and had a good chance to hear the Gospel.

And something happened at the rally that has never happened before! The day before the rally, a couple from Canada called me on my cell phone and told me that God had blessed their business and inspired them to match every donation given at the rally—so they did! Therefore, the \$68,318.55 given at the rally to support the work of Renewal Ministries was doubled to \$136,637.10! The Lord is giving us strong encouragement to continue the mission, firing on all cylinders! The day before the rally, Bishop Scott McCaig arrived in Toronto after more than thirty hours of travel, returning from our latest mission in Ethiopia, which we will report on in next months' newsletter.

The talks were outstanding, and we will tell you more about how to order them when they are available for distribution. Patti Mansfield was with us and gave an absolutely delightful and inspiring account of that famous "Duquesne Weekend," where the power of Pentecost broke through to a group of students that then impacted the whole world.

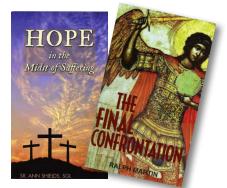
Until next month,

Your companion on the journey,

Rolph Martin

**Ralph Martin** 

**P.S.** While in Ireland recently, I discovered that our booklets *The Final Confrontation* and *Hope in the Midst of Suffering* had been published by an Irish publishing company. Word is spreading!





This picture shows just a sampling of the 4500 adults and youth who attended the twenty-sixth annual Lift Jesus Higher Rally in Toronto. It is inspiring to see how beautifully diverse the Church is in Toronto!

### FATIMA IMPACTS JODAY'S YOUTH

Below are some comments Ralph has received from students following his talks on Fatima at area Catholic grade schools.

• Thank you for your very inspiring talk! I loved it when you talked to us about the Scripture verse, "Unless you become like a child, you won't enter the kingdom of God." It made me immediately want to offer my sacrifices to God. Later, all the boys didn't have a drink until after basketball practice.

• Thank you for coming to our school and giving that speech. Most of us were inspired to make sacrifices. It inspired me to make a sacrifice and sleep without a pillow. We are all happy that you came.

• Your talk inspired me to do many sacrifices like the Fatima children did. ... When my brother was being annoying, I let it go, and when I wanted candy and my mom said no, instead of eating one, I did not eat one. Also, when everyone got a cone from outside and I did not, I offered it as a sacrifice.

• Your talk inspired me to sacrifice some of my lunch. That was the best talk I've ever heard. Thank you so much.

• Ever since I heard your talk, I'm starting to think of every sacrifice as a blessing.

Someone offered me candy, and even though I wanted to eat it, I didn't take it. I'm making more sacrifices because St. Francisco did and I want to be like him. He is now my favorite saint.

O (It) struck me when you said that Our Lady looked at Francisco with compassion and sadness and said he might have suffering. That made me realize that everyone, not just myself, has suffering in their lives and that we need to offer up our sufferings to God and pray for others to be healed. Thank you for helping me realize this.  ✓ I WILL RESPOND TO MARY'S MESSAGE
TO THE THREE CHILDREN
BY ALWAYS TRYING TO MAKE A SACRIFICE EVERY DAY.
LIKE THE THREE CHILDREN WHO ALWAYS TOLD THE TRUTH,
I WILL TOO. I WOULD LIKE TO GET TO HEAVEN. <sup>↑</sup>

• I was struck by your love of the three children and now I feel inspired to pray to them more often.

• Your speech . . . inspired me to make right choices, pray, and talk to God more. When temptation comes upon my mind, I think of the three children of Fatima.

• Your speech about the Fatima children helped me realize what I could do to get closer to Jesus and get more people through Purgatory with prayers.

• Your talk . . . has led me to have a close relationship with Mary and to try and offer sacrifices for the souls in Purgatory every day.

• You said, "Unless you become like a child, you can't enter the kingdom of heaven." This quote inspired me, because it showed me that... God has a special love and plan for me.

I will strive to be more like the children of Fatima and put all of my faith and trust in God.

I've been practicing sacrifices like not complaining when a game was unfair! • This reminded me that it's the little sacrifices that count and it reminded me of how much sin can hurt you in trying to get to heaven. The description of hell is probably the part that struck me most. . . . It encouraged me to pray the rosary and offer up little things for the conversion of souls.

• You really helped me to see God through Mary in a way I have never experienced.

• One way I will respond to Mary's message is to pray more. I will also do penance for my sins . . . by doing random acts of kindness. Praying can also be a form of penance.

I hope one day you can come back and give us another talk for the WHOLE DAY!

• I realized that I should pray for others more and pray for special graces to become a saint. I was also struck by the sacrifices the children made. I can't believe that they did those things. It makes me want to do more sacrifices for the world.

• Your talk gave me a whole new insight on what really happened to those three children. It made me realize, even though I am young, I can start making sacrifices now.

○ I think it is very important that Mary is asking us to pray for all that is going on right now and wars. We need to trust in God. Also, we need to be more like the three children and listen to God to pray and make sacrifices for sinners. That vision should tell us that hell is bad and you don't want to be there. I think we should all pray at least part of a rosary, just like Mary said.



This article originally appeared in Sr. Emmanuel Maillard's November 2017 monthly report from Medjugorje. You can sign up to receive these e-newsletters at https://sremmanuel.org.

### Thieves in our midst!

Every day, new means of communication are made available and placed on the market for us to buy. They are touted everywhere: television, radio, mobile phones, Twitter, Internet, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, etc. **If these "modes" are supposed to help us communicate, then why have fellowship and relationships between people deteriorated? Why are families increasingly torn apart?** Who are these thieves who come to subtly steal away our time of listening to one another, to participate in the joy of fellowship and unity of hearts?

### A trap for our relationships with others

Families should be "a place of understanding and kindness," according to one of our Blessed Mother's recent messages in Medjugorje. But through television and all of these different devices, too many families have allowed thieves to sneak into their midst. Thieves who steal their time, family conversations, and time that otherwise would have been spent paying attention to one another.

Of course, these technologies are not all bad! They are often very useful and the only means of communication between households that are miles apart.

However, our frantic, systematic, and indiscriminate use of them has turned these technologies into real domestic tyrants that <u>control us</u>.

These new forms of communication steal our ability to have a deep inner life and to listen to God and to our neighbor. They steal our ability to adore the Living God, which makes the grandeur of man. They suspend us in a state of distressing superficiality that we are getting used to, and it is a disaster. It is almost like a drug addiction. When we worship God, we become what we truly are in the eyes of the Creator, while these impostors deprive us little by little of our beautiful identity. Many families are suffering from a critical lack of communion. Where love is not expressed, every person tries to survive his imprisonment by seeking compensation through all-out communication. Oh, if only we knew how much God wants to talk to us! After all, His first commandment begins with "Shema Israel," "Listen Israel!"

### A pitfall in our relationship with God

The Lord said to St. Faustina:

### "In a chatty soul, I find no rest. The incessant turmoil exhausts me, and in this tumult, the soul cannot hear my voice."

God indeed speaks to every soul, but only a small number of them hear the murmur of His voice. Today, many people are afraid of silence—afraid of having to face themselves. Noise enables us to forget our inner emptiness by pretending to fill it. What an illusion! Poor heart, it cannot find true joy! Poor heart that does not know that only God can fill it, and which forgets its capacity to be filled!

### How can we keep a pure heart?

When we are criticized or hear unkind words, they hit us like a wave hits the shore. It can hit a rock and bounce back with even greater violence: This is what happens when we respond, justify ourselves, or further spread these words around. But the wave can also run aground on the sand, lose its strength, and end up disappearing: This is what happens when we meet criticism, slander, and hatred with silence, as Jesus did during His Passion. Thus, violence runs aground in our silence and simply disappears.

"Never enter into a (combative) discussion," shared the Mother of God in one of her messages at Medjugorje! For instance, if someone curses God in your presence, pretend not to hear it. Do not respond, do not argue back. But in your heart, bless the Lord with all your heart, say as many praises as you can. Your blessing will cancel out the effect of the blasphemy, and God will be glorified.

### Three filters

The philosopher Socrates gave us some very good advice. When we hear something bad being said, and we want to repeat it to others, let's first put it to the test of the "three filters":

### 1 Is it absolutely true?

Is it a good thing to say?

### 3 Is it useful to say it?

### If it is neither true, nor good, nor useful . . . let's forget it!

Let us take the Mother of God as our example. She was silent as she carried Baby Jesus in the quiet of her heart. She did not cry out from the rooftops, "Guess what! I have the best news ever for you!"

### St. Faustina: "Silence is a sword in spiritual struggle."

St. Faustina made the above statement in *Diary: Divine Mercy in My Soul*. She continued,

"A talkative soul will never attain sanctity. The sword of silence will cut off everything that would like to cling to the soul. We are sensitive to words, and quickly want to answer back, without having any regard as to whether it is God's will that we should speak."

"A silent soul is strong. If it perseveres in silence, no adversities will harm it. The silent soul is capable of attaining the closest union with God. It lives almost always under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In a silent soul, God works without hindrance." (477)

"The Holy Spirit does not speak to the dissipated and talkative soul, but speaks by silent inspiration to the soul that knows how to keep silent. If silence were strictly observed, there would be no murmurs, no bitterness, no slander and gossip. Love of neighbor would not be tarnished. In a word, many flaws would cease to exist. A mouth that keeps silent is pure gold and is a testament to inner holiness." (145)

### Elsewhere, Jesus also said to her:

"Try to live in silent reflection in order to hear my voice, which is a murmur; only souls remaining in silent recollection can hear it" (1779).

### SOCIAL MEDIA REFLECTIONS

from the Renewal Ministries' Staff

Renewal Ministries has formed a team to regularly discuss social media practices. Social media has proven to be a wonderful and powerful tool in engaging a wide array of people in the New Evangelization, in sharing resources for drawing people closer to the Lord, and even in developing a sense of community and support. On the other hand, social media also presents many potential dangers, as noted in Sr. Emmanuel Maillard's article to the left.

In engaging in social media, Christians must ask, "How can we be in the world, but not of it?" The majority of people in our culture utilize social media. How do we reach them and love them, while also encouraging moderation in social media use for ourselves and others?

We recently compiled suggestions for moderating social media usage:

- Designate specific times of the day for going online (i.e., don't get on social media first thing in the morning or last thing at night).
- » Download a phone usage tracker.
- » Find an accountability partner.
- » Make time for prayer before accessing social media for the day.
- » Fast from social media one day a week.
- » Don't get on the phone while waiting in line or just to pass time.
- » Consider the ratio of social media versus prayer time in one's life.
- » Try once a day to just "sit and be."

We challenged our team to try some of these suggestions and report on their experiences. One team member used Apple's Moment app and said she "recognized how much time I actually spend on my phone. I could be on that screen three hours a day?! It's an eye-opener."

Another used the Android Quality Time app and agreed: "I was surprised at how often I opened my phone—eighty to one-hundred times a day!"

Colleagues urged caution in interpreting data, since phones are used for so many purposes beyond social media—like reading and talking with family—but also noted that "the amount of usage doesn't make it wrong. It's good to know how long you are looking at a screen."

One colleague shared the experience of intentionally trying to not use a phone as a distraction while standing in line: "It gives you time and some space to think. It's the idea of giving yourself silence so you can hear the Lord in your life—it's a practical, helpful way of doing that."

Another agreed, and noted that all of the team's thoughts surrounding social media are intended as "principles for discernment, not as a legalistic burden. Sometimes you have to respond to emails before prayer in the morning, because that's what the schedule allows, and someone needs your response in a timely manner. Ultimately, we need to ask: Is this taking away from my prayer time? Our goal is to ensure we are paying proper attention to how social media is impacting our attentiveness to our relationships with people and the Lord."

Another colleague shared that while he finds himself tempted to pull out his phone simply for something to do, "I've been thinking a lot about 'pray constantly.' And turning to our phones really does stop us from just being with the Lord in the present moment. There's a lot to be missed there that we are not aware of."

"The Lord, Mary, and the saints heaven—wants to accompany us on this journey."



# FIRE ON THE EARTH

Toronto's annual Lift Jesus Higher Rally continues to grow! This marked the event's twenty-sixth year, and 4,500 people gathered for the adult and youth rallies to "feel filled again," as Helen Travassos, from Brampton, Ontario, explained as the reason she has attended the rally since 1998. "I go out of here filled with the Spirit and purpose."

### SPEAKERS INCLUDED:

- Ralph Martin
- Patti Mansfield
- Sr. Ann Shields, SGL

 Cardinal Thomas Collins (Mass celebrant and homilist)



### Save the Date for next year's LIH Rally SATURDAY · MARCH 2, 2019





### FATIMA: A MESSAGE FOR US NOW

**Rolph Mortin** shared Mary's message at Fatima—which has been on his heart since he visited there last year: "So many souls are going to hell because so few people are willing to pray for them. And Mary has revealed our prayers and sacrifices can make an eternal difference for the salvation of souls."

He shared how both an angel and our Blessed Mother appeared to three children. They were taught prayers, asked to pray the rosary, and asked to accept sufferings "for reparation of sins and as intercession for the conversion of sinners." The children agreed, and Mary told them, "Then you are going to have much to suffer, but the grace of God will be with you to help you bear it."

> Regarding Fatima, Ralph said "a veil has been placed over people's eyes so they can't see the truth of Jesus any more, and Mary is trying to wake us up."

Ralph explained that the children, who were shown a vision of hell, gave a wholehearted, childlike response to the Lord—and we should do the same.

He discussed how the children also offered voluntary sufferings, like giving their lunches to poor children or foregoing a favorite treat.

When Mary shared with the children that they could offer these sacrifices for the conversion of sinners, it made them understand "how much God loves us, and how meaningful it is that we can take the difficulties that come our way and they can make a difference for the conversion of sinners," Ralph noted.

"Sacrifice is a measure of love."



### AS BY A NEW PENTECOST

**Patti Mansfield** shared her testimony of receiving baptism of the Holy Spirit at the Duquense weekend that marked the beginning of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

Before the weekend, she explained, "I prayed, 'Dear Lord, bless my plans according to my timetable.' I was in role confusion."

However, she wanted to grow closer to God:

### "I realized it's not enough simply to know about God... intellectually. I was thirsty to know and experience Him."

Participants preparing for the Duquense weekend were asked to pray with expectant faith, read the first four chapters of Acts, and read *The Cross and the Switchblade*.

She explained, "As I read that book, I kept thinking . . . 'Why isn't the Holy Spirit at work in this way in my life?' I had a mustard seed of faith. I knelt on the floor and prayed, 'Lord . . . if Your Spirit can do more in my life than He's done until now, I want it!'"

During the retreat, Patti walked into the chapel and found herself "trembling before Jesus in the tabernacle." She realized, "He is holy, and I am not holy. He's going to ask me to do something. But bigger than my fear was my need to surrender unconditionally to God. That need is in every human heart. I said, 'I give my life to You, and whatever You ask of me, I accept it. If it involves suffering, I accept that too. Teach me to follow Jesus and to love as He loves."

After praying, Patti said, "I became prostrate with my shoes off. I felt like I wanted to die in that moment, as I was tasting the sweetness, the mercy, and the tenderness of God... (and) I knew that grace was for everybody."





### THE FIRE OF GOD'S LOVE: THE CALL TO TRUE REPENTANCE AND FREEDOM

**Sr. Ann Shields** spoke of the importance of humble repentance and offering forgiveness.

"God's blessed when we say, 'I did it. I'm guilty. Will you please forgive me?" she said. "(This can) change things in the heart of the Church. When we repent of our own sin, God can use us."

Sr. Ann also discussed the importance of forgiving others. "Resentment and revenge kill us and God's presence in us," she said. "Ask for strength and wisdom to forgive (others). **Pope John Paul II called the Eucharist 'radiation therapy':** Let it burn out anger, jealousy, resentment, and revenge. God's grace will touch your heart."

She noted that Jesus Himself forgave His persecutors as He was dying on the cross, by saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

She urged people to ask themselves, "Am I willing to allow the fire of the Holy Spirit to burn out what is not of God? Am I willing to choose His will over mine? If we bow down, God will raise us up: our family, our country, and the Church. It begins with the willingness to face our sin and repent."

### A CORE MANDATE

In his homily, **Cardinal Thomas Collins** spoke out strongly against the Canadian government's recent attempt to dictate the Catholic Church's "core mandate" as including the things it likes about the Church (service to the poor) and not the things it doesn't like (teachings on the sanctity of life and marriage).

#### Cardinal Collins said the faithful should examine how they are living out their true core mandate by using the acronym "BIG": Behavior, Intention, and God.

Behavior means "it's not enough to speak about faith; we need to act day by day in the integrity of our lives, recognizing that we fall, but by God's grace can become saints," he said.

Intention means that "it's not merely doing good things that matter... we do what we do for the Lord." Cardinal Collins said, "Be focused on Christ crucified, not the faith watered down to make it acceptable to a culture that knows not Christ."

Then, he said, we need to ask, "Who is (our) God?" "The majesty of God should be reflected in all we do," he said. "You do not take lightly the Lion of Judah. Our core mandate is to be servants of the Lord God."

# LIFT JESUS HIGHER YOUTH RALLY MORE THAN CONQUERORS

More than 1,200 youth gathered to hear speakers Rachel Herbeck, Adora Namigadde, Jake Belluomini, Connor Flanagan, and Bishop Scott McCaig speak on the youth rally's theme, More Than Conquerors. Chris Bray and Connor O Flanagan provided music for the event, and a team of youth and young adults performed the Everything skit and provided prayer ministry.

"The Holy Spirit was present," shared Lauren Yurko, a member of the youth rally team. "The speakers were anointed and the kids were attentive and free to authentically encounter the Lord and invite Him into their lives in a more real way. Many of them really laid down the burdens they had brought in."



# On the Road.

### May 2018 ENGAGEMENTS

Halifax, NS\* Priests' Retreat April 29-May 4 Peter Herbeck

Ann Arbor, MI i.d.9:16 Disciples' Night *May 3* Ralph Martin Contact: Katie@id916.com

Lansing, MI\* Lansing Catholic High School Gala May 7 Peter Herbeck

**Slovakia\* River of Life Community Talks** *May 10-14* Peter Herbeck

**Poland\* Retreat for Poland Foundation** *May 16-22* Peter Herbeck

**Brighton, MI Livingston Vicariate Catholic Men's Night** *May 17* Ralph Martin Details: LivingstonCatholic.com

Plantagenet, Ontario Healing and Reconciliation Conference May 18-20 Sr. Ann Shields, SGL Details: katerinativeministry.ca/upcomingevents West Vancouver, BC Christ the Redeemer Parish Mission *May 30-31* Ralph Martin Contact: 604-922-1371

\* Not open to the public. For a complete listing, visit: RenewalMinistries.net/Events

Please Pray...

- That the Holy Spirit would guide all of us who use social media, as well as parents discerning how to best guide their children's use of it. May it be a tool to bring us into community—one that does not overshadow simply being with and listening to both God and others.
- Sector Courage to respond to the call to share God's Word with others.
- For the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members, especially as they face the challenges of illness and economic uncertainty.

### MISSIONS

**Mozambique & Malawi** April 24-May 7 Lloyd and Nancy Greenhaw

Ghana May 2-6 & May 21-27 Emmanuel Tamakloe

**Serbia** *May 11-13* Deacon Zoltan Kunszabo

Haiti May 14-28 Lloyd and Nancy Greenhaw

**Slovenia** May 17-28 Don Turbitt

For more information about missions, contact Kathleen at 734-662-1730 ext. 132 or kkittle@renewalministries.net

<sup>66</sup> Mary, in addition to being our Mother, is the best teacher for achieving knowledge of the truth through contemplation. The drama of contemporary culture is the lack of interiority, the absence of contemplation. Without interiority, culture has no content. It is like a body that has not yet found its soul. **99** 



### RENEWAL MINISTRIES



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