



RENEWAL MINISTRIES

Proclaiming Jesus through Catholic Renewal and Evangelization **September 2017**



A letter ▶
from *Ralph Martin*

Dear Friends,

I just finished signing thank you letters, and I must say, I am deeply humbled and grateful for your ongoing support for the mission of Renewal Ministries. Some of you have been faithfully supporting us since 1980! And each year, the Lord has added new friends to our band of supporters. We are grateful for every one of you, whether you have just joined us this summer or have been supporting us since the beginning.

Some of our friends from the beginning, though, have been called by the Lord to the next phase of their life and mission—on the other side, passing through death to the joy and freedom of heaven. Each time we are notified that one of our supporters is now joined to the mighty intercession of Jesus for the salvation of those of us still on earth, we have a Mass said for them, in case there is some additional need for purification before they can enter into the full joy of the master and hear those amazingly wonderful words: “Well done, good and faithful servant.” Even as they have gone on, some have left us a gift in their will that enables them to continue the mission, even when treasure on earth is no longer theirs to administer! **It is extremely moving to receive word of such a bequest—a last act of love that will help us to continue to reach many.**

Last month, I shared about the great inspiration of being at the fiftieth anniversary of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) in Rome, where Pope Francis again strongly encouraged us to keep sharing the gift that God is continuing to give us in this “current of grace” that is still flowing strongly. After our time in Rome, Anne and I went on to Belgium, where we lived for four years and where two of our children were born. (We called them our little Brussels Sprouts.) We had been invited to give several talks to celebrate the Belgian celebration of the anniversary of the Renewal. We love Belgium. It is a neat and tidy little country with a noble history of faith and great missionary outflowing. Fr. Damian, who went to Hawaii to work with the lepers, is but one of the many Belgian missionaries and saints. But how far this noble country has fallen!

A great apostasy from the faith is shockingly apparent. As one priest said to us: “We have a beautiful seminary with only one problem, hardly any seminarians!” **Church attendance is shockingly low, and hardly any young people are to be found at Mass. The country itself seems to delight in being on the cutting edge of abortion, euthanasia, and the explicit rejection of their Catholic heritage.** Catholics are hardly having any children, and the flood of Moslem immigrants in some cities now comprises thirty-three percent of the population, and they are continuing to have many children. God bless the Moslems! God help the Catholics! May Our Lady of Fatima—the name of Mohammad’s beloved daughter—come to our assistance! May we pay attention to her continuing pleas to say the rosary and help her mission with our prayer and fasting!

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Ralph recently spoke in Belgium for the CCR's Golden Jubilee. The Catholic Church is facing great decline in Belgium.



Leave a Legacy of Faith

We are extremely grateful for the generosity of so many people who strive to be the Lord's light in this world and who 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:

*I give and bequeath to Renewal Ministries Inc.,
230 Collingwood, Suite 250, Ann Arbor, MI 48103,
Tax ID 38-2385975, the sum of \$ _____
for its general uses and purposes.*

Use this formula if you live in Canada:

*I give and bequeath to Catholic Renewal Ministries Inc.,
331 Evans Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M8Z 1K2,
Registration No. 12374-0243-RR0001, the sum of
\$ _____ for its general uses and purposes.*

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.

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Sadly, it seems that the Church leadership in Belgium has been intimidated by the aggressive secular culture and is almost accommodating itself to the situation, rather than challenging it with a vigorous proclamation of the Gospel. We went to the most dynamic parish in a large city where we were staying, and sure enough, it had an excellent choir that was in the center of the sanctuary, but the priest almost seemed to be a bit player in the performance. And it sure looked like a woman standing next to the priest on the altar was concelebrating. She said all the prayers with him, except for the exact words of the consecration, and she raised up the chalice as the deacon normally does at the appropriate time, etc. **When our host remarked that this probably seemed a little unusual to us, he told us it was actually authorized by the bishop as a way to prepare the remaining Mass attendees for a church without priests! Oh, this is painful.**

Lord have mercy on us. Truly.

In the meantime, we continue to preach the Gospel in season and out of season, when it's convenient and when it's not, and we appreciate your support that enables us to do so. As you get this letter, I'll just be leaving for Fatima to speak at the Portuguese celebration of the CCR anniversary and then return to two weeks of TV production, as we tape our new episodes of *The Choices We Face* for the coming year. Please read the rest of the newsletter, which contains the usual inspiring stories of our mission work and an insightful article by Sr. Ann, and take a look at the reply card for another great selection of resources for our own growth and mission.

Alleluia! Jesus is Lord! And He's coming again in glory to judge the living and the dead! May He find us busy with the Father's work—according to each of our vocations.

Sincerely yours,

Ralph

Please Pray...

- ✚ **FOR** those who mourn, that the Lord will give them comfort and strength.
- ✚ **That** the Catholic Charismatic Renewal will continue to bear fruit through the next fifty years, bringing people around the world into an ever-growing, personal relationship with Christ.
- ✚ **FOR** the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members, especially as they face the challenges of illness and economic uncertainty.



Be Still and Know That He is God

A PROPHETIC REFLECTION FROM RALPH MARTIN

Golden Jubilee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Rome 2017
(His talk followed ones by Patti Mansfield and Dave Mangan.)

Be still and know that He is God.

God is here. The God that Patti and Dave are speaking about is here, now.

He's right next to you, right in you. It doesn't matter where you are sitting. It doesn't matter whether you're thirsty. It doesn't matter whether you're hot and sweaty.

He is here.

God is here.

He wants to do in our souls, and He wants to do in our hearts, what He most loves to do.

He loves to invite us to repentance. He wants to give more of Himself to us. He is asking us to let go of things we may be holding on to that are blocking His love in our life.

We should be asking ourselves, "What should we do?" Because we're not just celebrating something from the past. We are telling the story of One who is still present.

God is here now, wanting to do what He did in the Upper Room on the Day of Pentecost and at the Ark and the Dove (the retreat house in Pennsylvania where the Catholic Charismatic Renewal began). Ask the same question they asked of Peter on the day of Pentecost:

"What shall we do?"

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus.

We know from the Acts of the Apostles, the gift of the Holy Spirit isn't just a one-time gift. When the apostles were facing persecution, they prayed for more of the Holy Spirit. We are facing difficulty and persecution all over the world. We need more of the Holy Spirit.

When Timothy got lukewarm in his ministry, Paul said, "Stir up the fire I gave you through the laying on of my hands" (2 Tm 1:6). That gift is meant to be stirred up. For some of us, maybe it's gotten lukewarm. Some of us here maybe don't even know why we're here tonight. We heard of big things happening, and we're curious.

What's happening here tonight is the action of God being made visible in this most amazing gathering of people from 127 different countries, who have sacrificed to be here as witnesses, out of love for God.

Everybody here is a witness!

Everybody here is a witness to the action of God.

In a few minutes, we're going to pray for more of the Holy Spirit. We need to prepare ourselves to do what Peter asked us to do on the day of Pentecost.

There's lots of distraction. There's lots of very wonderful excitement. There's lots of wonderful celebration.

But God is here. The God that Patti and Dave were speaking about is here. Now.

He's right next to you. He's in you. Let's ask the Holy Spirit to convict us of ways in which we can have courage to be witnesses. It's only because of the Holy Spirit that anybody can say that Jesus Christ is Lord. Every knee will bend and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

To anyone here who hasn't surrendered their life to Jesus Christ, Jesus Himself is here, and He is speaking to you. He's loving you, and He's urging you, and He's hungry for you to accept His love.

I'm going to close with something that Jesus said through the Holy Spirit to one of the first Christian communities: "I am the first and the last. I was dead, but now I'm alive. Behold, I am alive for ever and ever" (Rev 1:17-18).

Jesus is alive forever and ever! He's here tonight. He's ready to heal. He's ready to pour out the Holy Spirit. He's ready to forgive sin. He's ready to pour out His heart!

Let's open our hearts to God!

Below is a prophecy Ralph received in Rome during the time of prayer mentioned in this article.



"I feel like the Lord is letting me feel His heart for you.

I feel like the Lord is telling me,

I long for your love.

I long for your love.

There is nothing I want more.

There is nothing I desire more.

There is nothing I value more.

There is nothing I want more than your love.

I am longing for your love."



FEAST OF THE Triumph of the Holy Cross

► BY SR. ANN SHIELDS, SGL

When I was asked to write this article for our September newsletter, I was almost immediately struck by the realization that we celebrate the feast of the Triumph (or Exaltation) of the Holy Cross on Sept. 14. This feast commemorates the finding of the true Cross by St. Helena in 326.

THE HISTORY OF THE TRUE CROSS

To give you some background of this feast, St. Helena, a convert to Christianity and the mother of the Roman Emperor Constantine, went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, hoping to find the very Cross on which Jesus was hung. She succeeded; the identity of the true Cross was confirmed by a miraculous healing of a terminally ill woman.

St. Helena had a church built on the site of Jesus' crucifixion, known as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Constantine dedicated this church on Sept. 13-14 in 335. Even today, the Stations of the Cross in Jerusalem, or the Via Dolorosa, end at this very spot.

The true Cross was considered a most valuable treasure of the Church, and the feast honoring the Triumph of the Holy Cross has continually been celebrated until this day.

Church of the Holy Sepulchre
[JERUSALEM]

REFLECTIONS ON THE TRIUMPH OF THE CROSS

Why is this important? As I travel and speak in many places, I see the ravages of sin in the lives of so many, but I also see the incredible healing power of God when there is repentance. I meet many people who stumbled in the darkness, but have emerged into the light. And I find myself bowing down to the power and the triumph of the Cross.

During each Lent and Easter season, we worship Christ in a particular way as our Savior, who died for us on that Cross, that we might receive mercy and live forever with Him. But we need to more closely unite ourselves to the power of the Cross in all seasons. As the challenges of life face us—many times in major ways—I think the Cross, and the love and mercy that flow through every wound of Christ on that Cross, need to be part of our lives in a more tangible and frequent way. We need to learn how to unite our pain and suffering with the only suffering that can heal and set us free.

God allows our sin, its consequences, and the trials we bear because of the sin of others, to be united to His saving Cross for our healing and restoration. This is all a part of His great mercy.

A few years ago, I had an experience I have never forgotten. Some of you may have heard me tell this story:

I was in a local drugstore on a hot summer day and took my purchases to the counter. A lovely young woman was serving at the cash register. As she took my items, she glanced at me, and my crucifix caught her attention. Leaning across the counter, she held my crucifix in the palm of her hand.

"Who is that guy on that bar?"

she said. A bit startled, I paused, and quickly realized she was seriously asking me that question. I said,

"This is Jesus of Nazareth, who died for your sins and mine, so that we could live forever with Him."

"Oh!" She quietly reacted and then said,

"You know I think my grandfather had one of those."

She smiled at me and went on to the next customer. It was a quick exchange, but although she was clearly clueless about Jesus, she had seen a crucifix before—her grandfather's.



Since then, I have never missed a week that I don't think about her and the generation she represents. She came from a family that had some Christian background, but something either did not get passed on, or the message did not penetrate. This I do know:

I will make sure that wherever I am, I will ask God for the opportunity to speak of His love and mercy toward us, and when I cannot speak, I will pray to be a quiet sign by my kindness and mercy.

I will ask God for myself and for all of us that we remember to venerate the cross as often as we can, and that we hold it high in our conversation, our actions, and our relationships. Some say we live in a post-Christian era, and it certainly seems that we do in many ways. Let each of us be a sign of a merciful savior. The power will come from the Cross we venerate!

We need to hold up the Cross of Christ before our own eyes—daily! Then, we need to hold up the cross for others, by our thoughts, and words, and actions. We need to worship, adore, thank, and plead with Him for mercy for ourselves and for those who have strayed. We need to let the power of the Cross genuinely invade our lives and change us. A relationship with Jesus and the power of His Cross is never static!

Let us keep our eyes open to the many people in each of our lives—all people we encounter in our homes, neighborhoods, parishes, and places of work. **Every soul is mission territory!** When we sacrifice ourselves and our time to reach out to another, the life-giving power of the Cross of Jesus Christ can speak through us. Even our prayer for others—nearby or abroad—is a major service! Jesus, even while dying in unspeakable horror, was able to offer forgiveness and promise another heaven. **While we cannot promise heaven, we can do everything else—by the power of the Cross: offer forgiveness; speak a word of comfort; assure someone of our prayer; go the extra mile; and stand with someone suffering and give comfort and hope that flows from the Cross.**

May September 14 be a day on which each of us thanks Jesus for His unspeakable love, even to death. Let us pray that we may, according to His will and grace, follow in His footsteps for our loved ones and for the generations to come. Let us encounter Christ in a new or deeper way—through the power, the mercy, and the love of Jesus on the Cross!

**May the Cross of Jesus
triumph in your life
and the life of your loved ones!**

ARTWORK CREDIT: *The Triumph of Christianity Over Paganism* (1868?) by Gustave Doré

Exaltation of the Holy Cross Novena

Jesus, who because of Your burning love for us willed to be crucified and to shed Your Most Precious Blood for the redemption and salvation of our souls, look down upon us and grant the petition we ask for . . . (mention here).

We trust completely in Your mercy.

Cleanse us from sin by Your grace,

sanctify our work,

give us and all those who are dear to us our daily bread,

lighten the burden of our sufferings,

bless our families,

and grant to the nations, so sorely afflicted, Your peace, which is the only true peace, so that by obeying Your commandments we may come at last to the glory of Heaven.

AMEN.

(This prayer is from www.ewtn.com/devotionals/novena/holycross.htm.)

ENCOUNTER CHRIST *in Scripture!*



I would like to invite you to take time to prepare for the feast of the Triumph of the Cross on Sept. 14. Ask God for His mercy in your life and for the future, as you ponder the Scripture passages for that day:

NUMBERS 21:4B-9

You can see here a sign of the Cross that was to come—which would give life, heal, and restore life.

...

PSALM 78

Do not forget what God has done for us!

...

PHILIPPIANS 2:6-11

St. Paul so eloquently proclaims what God has done for us in the Cross through Jesus Christ. (Memorize this one!)

...

JOHN 3:13-17

This ties the Old and New Testament readings together. God, in Christ, showed His love for us by dying on the Cross, so that we might be redeemed from sin and death. May His Name be forever praised!



By Tom Edwards
COUNTRY COORDINATOR
for SLOVAKIA

Tom is Renewal Ministries' country coordinator for Slovakia, Czech Republic, and Tanzania. Tom began full-time ministry in 1974; it soon evolved into an international outreach of lay Catholic evangelization and mission with an emphasis on preaching and teaching Scripture. Tom lives in Florida and, with his late wife Pam, has two children, nine grandchildren, and a great-grandson.

Spreading the **GOSPEL** in Romania & Slovakia

“ REMAINING STRONG WITH LITTLE SUPPORT ”

► Oradia, Romania

Our first event in Romania was an all-day meeting at Ave Maria Radio. The forty-five participants were hungry souls with open hearts, seeking encouragement and exhortation from God's Word. The worship session was lively and Spirit-filled. Team member Marilyn Bergeron, of Cornwall, Ontario, presented a teaching session on fear versus boldness. It struck a chord, and many later testified of the need to be free of fear in the sharing and living out of their faith.

We then broke into workshop groups, with team member Jean Thompson leading a pro-life workshop, Romanian Country Coordinator and native Tibi Majoros sharing on the gift of tongues, and another local brother teaching on the gift of prophecy. Bohdan Novak, from Slovakia, shared his powerful testimony, which brought him from a life of bondage and addiction to a ministry of full-time lay Catholic evangelization and mission. I also taught on the Great Invitation.



The combination of the teachings, workshops, and a video on our Asian missions paved the way for a period of personal empowerment and healing prayer. Every participant received personal prayer by our teams. Tears flowed freely, as the Holy Spirit graced us with His powerful presence, deeply touching the hearts and minds of this people so utterly ready to yield to a touch from the Lord.

► Babes Bolyai University (UBB)

With more than 41,000 students, UBB is the largest university in the country. In a dimly lit room of an ancient building high above the city streets, a group of forty Catholic students gathered together for five hours on a Sunday afternoon.

These “kids” have been gathering weekly to worship, pray, and seek God in spite of being surrounded by a very ungodly atmosphere.

Worship was an anointed time of
“purity in the Spirit.”

These young people have a measure of maturity not found in many other parts of the world.

Marilyn observed:

“ I am always inspired by the community life we find in these countries, with people living much as the early Church. They are so committed to meeting and praying together—all ages and different walks of life—for each other and the needs of the Church. Our team offers them much needed encouragement to keep moving forward. Knowing that Renewal Ministries cares enough to send a team to their country means a great deal to them. They realize that they are not alone in their efforts. As outsiders, our perspective is different, and they listen very attentively to talks by our team members. Their leaders have identified poor knowledge of the Bible as a concern in a number of the communities. Our talks are biblically based, and I believe God uses them to underline the importance of studying the Bible. ”



Jean Thompson reflected on the impact the pro-life message had on these university students:

“ I was surprised to find out that a pro-life message was included in the workshops, along with tongues and prophesy. Tibi was obviously listening to the Holy Spirit, as the hunger for information and guidance soon became evident.

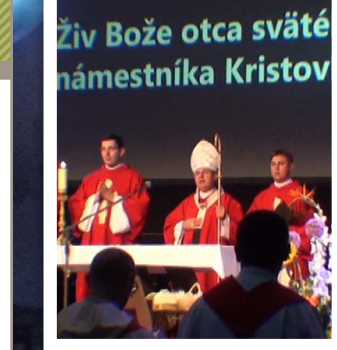
Romania has the highest abortion rate in all of Europe. There have been times when yearly abortions far outnumbered live births. The men and women who attended the workshop wanted to know how abortions are done; its spiritual, emotional, and psychological effects; what has been proven effective in other countries to stop it; what’s the law in their country; how we can help someone who’s had an abortion; and so many, many other questions. It was a joy to be with these students who are remaining strong with very little support! ”

► Odorhei

Our mission here was to share with a strong Catholic Renewal community and surrounding smaller communities. Around ninety people attended, not a few of them young adults and families. The praise ministry was strong and lively. Our team moved among the participants following a time of quiet reflection, and the Holy Spirit began to work in profound ways, as hearts were touched.

We knew the next day would entail a very early departure and a day’s drive to our destination in Slovakia. Therefore, we were grateful when a woman who had been profoundly moved by the evening’s ministry asked us to stop by her bakery early the next morning.

We accepted the offer. The bakery was filled with freshly baked bread and goodies of every kind. The woman had already prepared bags of things to go—loaves of fresh bread, assorted sweet pastries, sandwiches loaded with meat and veggies, and cups of the strongest coffee ever to touch human lips. We prayed for the lady and her staff, and off we went. We were set for the journey.



► Presov, Slovakia

About 4000 people attended the Fire Rally in Slovakia. In addition to powerful talks, the day was punctuated with vibrant music and praise, dramatic sacred dance and mime presentations, as well as times of prayer ministry, in which thousands responded. The day closed with Archbishop Bernard celebrating Holy Mass (with live telecast to all of Slovakia) and sharing a tremendous word of hope and encouragement for the ongoing work of the Renewal in the Church.

Jean Thompson reflected:

“ I was excited to hear what our good Lord has been doing since the team was last in Slovakia. As always with the Lord, I was not disappointed, but richly blessed.

Many told us how they continue to be blessed and strengthened through the teachings, testimonies, and prayer they received last year, especially in the area of forgiveness in the families. They articulated clearly what they heard and took into their hearts. One woman, whose husband was a Communist leader and who has been harshly criticized for her faith throughout the years, came running up and gave me the biggest hug. She shared that ever since she received prayer last year, Jesus was lifting lifelong burdens off her and blessing her family.

Last year, we prayed for peace and unity in the parish of her son, a Greek Catholic priest. This year, he shared the beautiful blessings our Lord was pouring out in his parish. Instead of hurt and frustration, he was brimming with joy and holy expectation. ”



Above [inset]: Archbishop Bernard at the Fire Rally, celebrating Mass for 4000 people.

Above: Tom Edwards speaks at the Fire Rally on *The Family as Living Stones*.



Renewal Ministries continues to have an impact on several Eastern European countries. Other Renewal Ministries' associates also have worked diligently and with great zeal in Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, Lithuania, and Latvia, to advance the Gospel and renew the Church. They have labored hard and well to lay a foundation upon which we are privileged to continue to build.✠

On the Road

September 2017 ENGAGEMENTS

Fatima, Portugal National Conference

Sept. 2-3
Ralph Martin
Contact: antonioapario@netcabo.pt

Greenville, SC Legatus*

Sept. 5
Dr. Mary Healy

Ann Arbor, MI i.d.9:16 Disciples' Night

Sept. 7
Contact: info@id916.com

Boston, MA Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Sept. 8-9
Peter Herbeck
Contact: Janice Filippi at 617-957-6131

Windsor, Ontario Christian Culture Series Lecture at Assumption University

Sept. 12
Dr. Mary Healy
Contact: info@assumptionu.ca

Owensboro, KY Marian Conference at Sts. Joseph and Paul Church

Sept. 15-16
Ralph Martin
Contact: lisaenglert@bellsouth.net

Wellandport, Ontario, Canada Bread of Life Day of Renewal

Sept. 16
Dr. Mary Healy
Contact: Mary Evans at
info@thebreadoflife.ca

Detroit, MI Legatus*

Sept. 19
Ralph Martin

Powell River, BC Talk at Assumption Parish

Sept. 21
Dr. Mary Healy
Contact: 604-485-5300

Detroit, MI St. Paul's Street Evangelization at Sacred Heart Major Seminary

Sept. 22
Ralph Martin
Contact: Adam4mj@gmail.com

Vancouver, BC CCR Conference

Sept. 22-23
Dr. Mary Healy
Details: vccrs.ca

Rome, Italy Consultors of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization*

Sept. 25-26
Ralph Martin

MISSIONS

Kenya

Aug. 22-Sept. 5
Peter Thompson

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

Brooklyn, MI Country Coordinator Meeting*

Sept. 27-30
Peter Herbeck, Ralph Martin, and
Sr. Ann Shields

Lima, Peru Bible Course for CCR Leaders

Sept. 29-Oct. 1
Dr. Mary Healy

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

“ A small suffering freely accepted gives meaning and value to the untold volumes of vast suffering throughout the world. Through it we help the world perform a valid penance. Nothing is so sad as seeing the whole world going through exceptional sufferings . . . blindly. ”

➔ Servant of God Madeleine Delbrel (+1964)

RENEWAL MINISTRIES

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Chairman of the Board
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President
Ralph Martin

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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, conferences, retreats, and other international evangelistic events.

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easy access to all of the above Renewal Ministries'
content and so much more!

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