



# RENEWAL MINISTRIES

## CATHOLIC RENEWAL & EVANGELIZATION

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JANUARY 2023



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## Happy New Year!

**Some of you may be wondering how I can speak of a happy new year when there is plenty to be unhappy about. And indeed, there is.**

**But as Christians, we know that Jesus has already triumphed over all evil.**

Even though things may get worse—since Scripture discusses the great apostasy and the removal of all restraint on evil (2 Thes 2:6-7) and the Catechism of the Catholic Church discusses the appearance of the anti-Christ and the final trial of the Church (675-677)—eventually all evil will be removed from the universe and those of us who by the grace of God are faithful to the end will experience the unending joy of the new heavens and the new earth and the glory of risen bodies.

“Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb” (Rv 19:9). This is proclaimed at every Mass, and our participation in the Eucharist is a foreshadowing of the eternal wedding feast that will never end. So, it begins now!

That being said, it does look like things will get worse before they get better. The darkness is growing in power and extent. The culture is now in the hands of those who

are determined to implement a “new world order,” which as Archbishop Gomez has said, has no room for Christ or the Church. Persecution has begun and will get worse.

Those of us who live in Michigan have recently experienced a shocking manifestation of this. Despite truly heroic efforts on the part of the Michigan bishops and the generous work of many priests and lay people, Proposal 3—which enshrines in the Michigan constitution the unlimited right to abortion and cancels all existing laws that had been painstakingly passed over many years to ensure parental rights—was decisively passed. Additionally, for the first time in forty years, all the levers of governmental powers in Michigan are now in the hands of those who absolutely oppose any restrictions on abortion—the Senate, House, governor’s office, and Supreme Court! It’s beginning to look a lot like California and New York.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

— A PRAYER TO —

## *Our Lady of Guadalupe*

PATRONESS OF THE AMERICAS & THE UNBORN

Virgin of Guadalupe, Patroness of unborn children, we implore your intercession for every child at risk of abortion. Help expectant parents to welcome from God the priceless gift of their child’s life . . .

Guide our public officials to defend each and every human life through just laws. Inspire us all to bring our faith into public life, to speak for those who have no voice . . .

We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ,  
who is Love and Mercy itself. Amen.

[View complete prayer: [www.usccb.org/prayers/prayer-our-lady-guadalupe](http://www.usccb.org/prayers/prayer-our-lady-guadalupe)]



PRESENTS

# EMPOWERED TO STAND

SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 2023

METRO TORONTO CONVENTION CENTRE

TORONTO, ON



Jesus: Image by Brent Borup



## SPEAKERS:

RALPH MARTIN | CHRIS STEFANICK | PETER HERBECK  
ANGÈLE REGNIER | RACHEL HERBECK

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## Announcement Regarding THE GATHERING

Renewal Ministries will not host an in-person or online Gathering in 2023. We are discerning the best way to use our resources and reach people with the increasingly urgent message of God's love! We will keep you updated about 2024. Meanwhile, please stay connected with us through our newsletter, YouTube channel, podcasts, and radio and TV programs. We are grateful for your support and strive to continue serving you and the Lord well!

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or scan the QR code to the right  
with your phone. ➔



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Dark days indeed. How many babies will now be killed? How many women will be lied to and pressured? And worse, how many people have had to deaden their consciences in order to approve such evil things?

**I haven't seen reports yet on what percentage of Catholics in Michigan voted in favor of unrestricted abortion, but the preliminary national figures as posted by the Associated Press indicate that, once again, anywhere from forty to sixty percent of Catholics in various states voted in favor of pro-abortion candidates or for the legalization of unrestricted abortion.<sup>1</sup>**

Unfortunately, decades of silence on the key truths concerning marriage, sexuality, and the life of the unborn in most pulpits have led to this humiliating outcome.

**Committing ourselves to care for pregnant women and their babies—as many are now emphasizing—is very, very, good. But isn't deep repentance led by our leaders also necessary—for their decades of silence on what it means to truly be a disciple of Christ that has led to perhaps the majority of Catholics going over to the world?**

The Eucharistic Revival now being implemented must be more than a re-emphasis of the doctrine of the Real Presence. It must include a profound call to repentance and conversion. A true revival needs a strong outpouring of the Holy Spirit that instills a deep fear of God rooted in a perception of his great holiness that leads to heart-felt repentance.



**A TRUE REVIVAL  
NEEDS A STRONG  
OUTPOURING OF  
THE HOLY SPIRIT  
THAT INSTILLS A  
DEEP FEAR OF GOD**

**May the Holy Spirit honor our feeble efforts to turn in his direction; have mercy on our weakness, infidelity, cowardice, and fear of what people will think; and send us true revival!**

Thank you for your support that enables us to—as I often write in books when I sign them—keep on! Let's all keep on, for those who persevere to the end will be saved.

*Ralph Martin*

Ralph

## Footnote

1. David Crary, Peter Smith, and Nuha Dolby, "Midterms reinforce Christian voter trends on abortion, GOP," AP, Nov. 11, 2022, <https://apnews.com/article/christian-voter-trends-2022-midterm-elections-0377eed4eed23d5356c29b10af9f6f69>.





# Live A FULL Life

BY SR. LUCIA CHRISTI, SV

*This article is abridged from id's November Disciples' Night. The original talk can be viewed here: [bit.ly/3V3rsgL](https://bit.ly/3V3rsgL).*

Jesus "came that they may have life and have it more abundantly" (Jn 10:10). He teaches us how to live life to the full:

- *Receive the gift of your life.*
- *Give yourself away.*
- *And live in gratitude.*

## RECEIVE THE GIFT OF YOUR LIFE

A young man invited St. Francis of Assisi to stay at his house and at night kept an eye cracked open to see what the saint would do. After a while, Francis knelt and prayed:

***"Who are you, God, and who am I?"***

Francis repeated this over and over. The young man was so moved by this saint's love for his Lord, he joined the friars.

Francis wasn't afraid to ask the deepest questions of his heart. Our hearts ask these questions too. Thankfully, God has revealed Himself to us. God made everything in the first five days of creation with us in mind. On day six, He made Adam and Eve and gave all of that to us as a gift so He could be in relationship with us. He is the God of the universe, but his heart longed for you.

God loves you with an infinite and personal love in a way that He doesn't love anyone else. He sees in you a unique and unrepeatable image of his Son.

## GIVE YOURSELF AWAY

Jesus commanded, "Love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 13:34). He added, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15:13). Love is choosing the good of another over my own good, and it's perfected in the cross.

God designed our hearts after his own heart; we experience our greatest freedom and joy when we give ourselves in this way. St. John Paul II said, "Man cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of self."

A woman shared with me that she came to New York City to find a fresh start, experience what she wanted in life, and do what would make her happy. Then, she found herself pregnant and abandoned. Slowly, she received the grace to let go of the dreams she had when she came to New York. She said, "I'm learning true love is sacrifice. I'm going to be making sacrifices every day for the rest of my life for this baby, and I'm going to start now."

Praise the Lord—she gets it. She was made to do something great with her love, and she found joy in doing exactly that and pouring out her love completely as a mother.

**The world thirsts for your love. Your heart reflects a piece of God's heart that others can only know through you. Ask God, "How have you made my heart to love? How do you desire that I give myself away to make your love known in the world?" Then, be not afraid. Life to the full is cruciform, but the cross always ends in the resurrection.**

**You can start right now in little ways: smile at a shy person, do dishes for your family, stay close to a friend having a hard day. Filling each moment with love allows us to live life to the full even amid suffering.**

## GRATITUDE

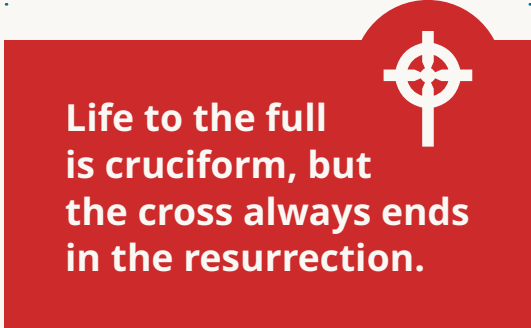
"What do you possess that you have not received?" (1 Cor 4:7) Everything is a gift from God's loving hand. When we cling to what we have as if we've earned it ourselves, grasp for more possessions, or reject God's gifts, we are unfaithful to who we are as children of God. We must remain grounded in the reality that without Him we can do nothing and that our Father knows our every need and withholds nothing from us.

Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross was a Jewish convert killed in the gas chambers. She wrote,

*"Things were in God's plan which I had not planned at all. I am coming to the living faith and conviction that—from God's point of view—there is no chance and that the whole of my life, down to every detail, has been mapped out in God's divine providence and makes complete and perfect sense in God's all-seeing eyes."*

This is faith. This is the disposition of gratitude lived in even the most difficult circumstances.

**We also can learn to see everything—even our deepest sufferings—as part of God's good plan for our lives. When we learn to see the world this way, no evil can truly harm us and no one can steal our joy.**



**Life to the full  
is cruciform, but  
the cross always ends  
in the resurrection.**



# WHAT I SAW BEYOND THE CLOUDS

BY RALPH MARTIN

*This article is condensed from Ralph's YouTube video, What I Saw Beyond the Clouds. You can view it on our YouTube channel at [YouTube.com/@renewalministries](https://www.youtube.com/@renewalministries).*

Every summer, I teach an intensive course at Sacred Heart Major Seminary. During that time, I make a forty-minute drive into Detroit every day. I teach a three-hour class in the morning and a two-hour class in the afternoon. Sometimes, my prayer time is a little shortened during those days because I leave early in the morning, so I continue my prayer time in the car. I won't turn the radio on; I'll just be with the Lord. I might pray out loud a little bit, I might rejoice a little bit, or I might just be quiet.

When I was driving one morning this past summer, I was struck by the clouds. Do you know how sometimes the cloud formations are so beautiful and spectacular, with colors, shapes, heights, depths, and lights behind them? I was thanking the Lord for the beauty of the earth and the beauty of the sky, when I recalled some of the new photos coming in from the James Webb Telescope. It's even more powerful than the Hubble Telescope, and they've released the first images that have come back from it. They are fabulous! They capture the incredible scope of the universe. We don't even know

how far it goes, and it is still going. Things are being born, things are dying, and things are collapsing. It's hard to fathom with our human minds—the measurements of energy, force, mass, speed, and light. There's a huge light show going on, a huge firework show going on! It's amazing!

**Then, I was thinking about God, who created all this and sustains it. If the measurements were just a little bit off, we wouldn't be alive here. We wouldn't have a habitat that human beings could live in. Everything's at just the right angle from the sun. Everything's spinning in just the right way. The Earth is tilted in just the right way. Everything is miraculously ordered for human life to exist.**

How could this little tiny speck in this absolutely unfathomably huge universe have the attention of God? How could little creatures on this planet have the attention of God—not only have the attention of God but be able to have anything to do with Him or be able to fathom Him? Who can fathom God? Who can fathom the one who created the universe? Who can fathom this intelligence, this power, this immensity, this might?

**Then I thought, a greater manifestation of God's power, might, and divinity is Jesus—the Word of God taking on human nature.** The Word became flesh and dwelt among us (Jn 1:14). Those who believe in Him will not perish like the passing things of this world will perish, and perhaps even like the universe itself will perish (Jn 3:16). We'll have eternal life.

This mighty God took on human nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary—a woman totally opened to God, able to receive Him, and willing to offer her humanity to God so that the Word could become flesh and dwell among us. Just fathom what it means that the Word became flesh, that we now have Jesus!

Amazingly, Jesus said,

**“If you've seen me,  
you've seen the father.”**

**(Jn 14:9)**

If you hear what I'm saying to you, you're hearing what the Father is saying to you. This mighty God, who keeps the galaxies spinning and creating and declaring his glory, is now reliably, mercifully, and miraculously speaking



to us in words we can understand that are absolutely true and absolutely vital!

We need to treasure Jesus. He's the treasure buried in the field that is worth selling everything to have (Mt 13:44). He's God speaking to us, rescuing us from the death that came into creation. He's the one who loves us and knows what it's like to be a human being. He's come to take us back to the Father's house—where there is a place for us. Jesus promised,

**"In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?"**

**(Jn 14:2)**

He said there are many places for those who want to be with Him, listen to Him, obey Him, and follow Him. He said if we will just take hold of Him and eat his body and drink his blood in the sacraments, if we would just be faithful to Him until the end, despite temptation, suffering, and pain, we will experience his glory.

One day, I was talking to a Carmelite hermitess, Mother Immaculata, in a hermitage not too far out of Steubenville, Ohio. She's a very holy woman who has written some wonderful things not widely available. One day, she said,



*"I want to show you a picture of the beatific vision. I want to show you a picture of God."*

She held up an image of Jesus as a small child, with his arms outstretched, surrounded by clouds. Jesus was at his most vulnerable in the womb of the Virgin Mary. Jesus was a little child. Jesus was a man kneeling at the feet of his creatures, cleansing them, washing them, loving them, and sacrificing for them. This mighty God begs us to be saved and to pass from mortality to immortality. This mighty God kneels at our feet and cleanses us with his Word, his Spirit, and his sacraments.

We may not know how big the universe is, or whether there is intelligent life on other planets, but we know one thing for certain: the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Now at the right hand of the Father, He's there, bodily. We know that Mary has already gone ahead of us; she's there, bodily. There's a place for us bodily human beings to be cleansed of the death that came into our souls through sin. We can experience the forgiveness of sin through the sacrifice of Jesus the Incarnation that led to the cross and to Him taking upon Himself all the ugliness, hatred, foolishness, and evil of the world. He opened a door for us to get through to get healed of it, to get cured of it, and to share with Him in the glory of his risen body. So whatever else is happening in the universe, we know what is happening now for us.

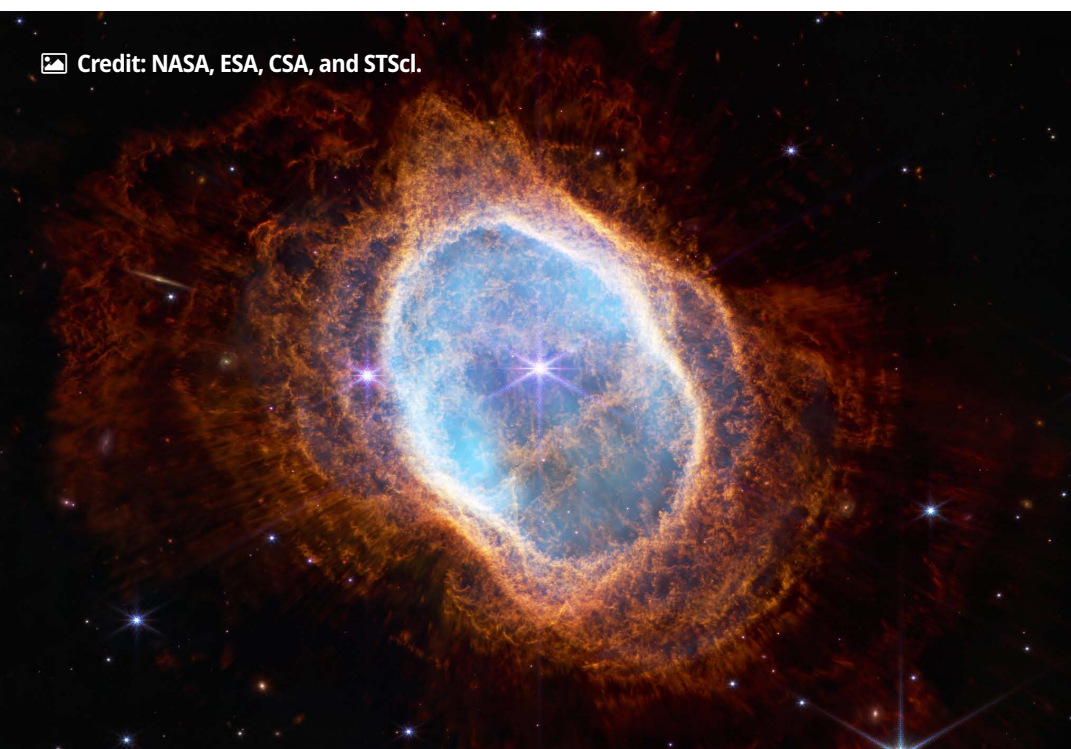
This is from Revelation Chapter 21:2-3:

**"I also saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a great voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them.'"**

That's permanent. The Incarnation is permanent, the body of Christ is permanent, and our relationship with the Lord our Redeemer is permanent, if we stay faithful to the end, if we love Him, if we aren't afraid to come to Him, if we are willing to become like little children so we can enter the kingdom of God.

So, you never know what's going to happen when you look up at the clouds. You never know what's going to happen when you're driving a car or praying. You never know what the Lord's going to show you because He's so merciful through his Holy Spirit.

 Credit: NASA, ESA, CSA, and STScI.







# SPREADING THE GOSPEL IN SLOVAKIA



**BY TOM EDWARDS**

**Country Coordinator for Slovakia**

Tom Edwards is Renewal Ministries' country coordinator for Czech Republic, Slovakia, 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 and his wife, Jean Marie, make their home in St. Augustine, Florida.

Peter Herbeck asked me to serve as Slovakia's country coordinator twenty-five years ago—only two years after Renewal Ministries' first outreach there in 1995. At that time, Slovakia was just beginning to recover from many years of oppressive Communist rule. A generation of citizens had been doomed to godless atheism by the relentless indoctrination imposed upon them from childhood onward, but by God's grace, the Catholic Church had maintained a strong remnant of faithful believers.

During those dark years, bright lights were shining below the surface. For example, Sr. Helena Torkosova, a young religious sister working as a kindergarten teacher, and Fr. Michael Zamkovsky, a young priest who secretly maintained his ministry while working in a factory, were inspired by the Holy Spirit to begin a small home prayer meeting. Courageously, they took groups of young people on clandestine retreats in the forest. They dared to pray prophetic things like:

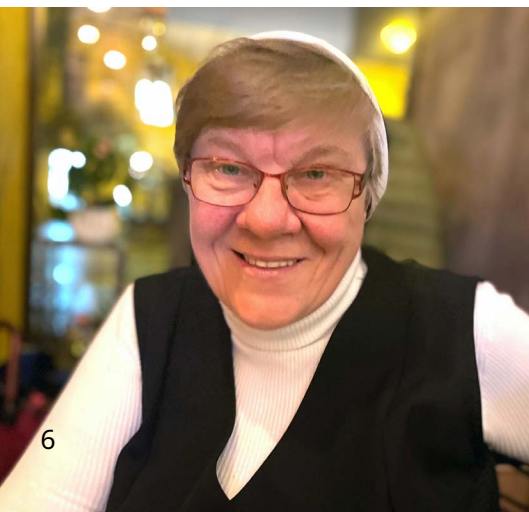
*"Lord, let us someday fill up that new Communist-built sports arena in Presov with Christians who will worship Jesus and burn with a fiery zeal for the things of God."*

Eventually, their work was discovered, and repercussions followed. Undaunted, they never lost their charismatic

fervor. Their selfless sacrifice and prophetic prayer were fulfilled in that first Fire Rally.

God has continued to use these same servants throughout the years and into the present. Almost every clergyman or layman in Slovakia or the surrounding countries has tremendous respect for them and the things that continue to unfold in the Church because of their service. It has been my humbling experience to continue to return to Slovakia with talented teams over the past twenty-five years, sometimes as many as three times per year. We have witnessed a fire of the Holy Spirit leap from city to city, town to town, village to village as each year we push to pioneer new avenues of outreach. No parish or group is too small for us to respond to. Vibrant communities continue to be birthed, all of which are firmly grounded in parish and diocesan life.

The Maranatha Community in Presov has grown from a handful of young people to over six hundred, with families and 250 children at the core. Effective evangelization programs are offered continuously, including Alpha for high school students, young adults, couples, and more. Hundreds of people are coming into the faith. Sr. Helena spearheaded the construction of the beautiful John Paul II Center, which



serves as an arm of a nearby parish and for many other purposes as well. Dozens of people who live in the flats surrounding the facility attend weekday Mass at 6:30 a.m. Hundreds attend the weekend Masses.

The community, having outgrown the facility, just finished building the Maranatha Arena. Last year, we presented the Fire Rally virtually from the unfinished building. This year, the full-fledged conference center was the site of our in-person Fire Rally, which also was live streamed throughout the country.

### FIRE “OHEN” RALLY

The 2022 Fire Rally was a two-day weekend event. I was asked to share four messages: *Fascination with Jesus*, *More Holy Spirit in Our Lives*, *God’s Unrelenting Love*, and *Faith and Surrender*. Two of our team members shared testimonies. Each day also featured the Gospel presented in drama and mime. The very talented Maranatha musicians led dynamic worship sessions. Other testimonies by Slovak clergy and lay people conveyed a powerful witness of the work that the Holy Spirit is doing in the lives of people. Flag ministry and dance, which incorporated people of all ages, promoted worship and gave glory to God. We celebrated Holy Mass each day. A mother and daughter from Ivory Coast also shared a moving story of deliverance and God’s miraculous work in their harrowing escape from the ravages of war.

### ON THE MOVE

On this mission, we maintained an aggressive schedule that kept us on the move day and night for two weeks. We presented pro-life teachings in several elementary and high schools. We also reached out to those who have not experienced our presentations. Our itinerary covered over 3500 kilometers and included Catholic and Greek Catholic parishes in the towns, villages, and cities of Slovakia. In most places, we were able to pray with dozens or hundreds of participants who were thirsting for a touch from God.

### ORLOV

We were warmly welcomed in the village of Orlov by the Greek Catholic priest Fr. Jan, his wife Jana, and some of their eight children. Our arrival allowed for the area’s first-ever evening of renewal. The parish sits near the Ukraine border, and life is somewhat difficult there. Nevertheless, the church was filled to capacity. We also were invited to share the pro-life message in the nearby government school. The crowded classroom included Ukrainian refugees just learning the Slovak language.

### TIBAVA

Fr. Rudolph stepped out in faith to invite our team to share the first evening of renewal in the little village of Tibava. The church dates to 1300 AD. He was concerned about whether the villagers would attend and be open to our team members praying for them individually. Once again, we found the people open and eager as they responded to the message, “*Who do you say that I am?*” Tears flowed like a river as they poured out their prayers and opened their hearts to the Spirit.

### KOSICE

Kosice is the second largest city in Slovakia. Its modern church was just opened after ten years of construction and an intense effort by its pastor. The church is surrounded by old Commu-

nist-built flats where thousands make their homes. I was led to share a particularly hard-hitting message, *Rooted in Christ*, which emphasized the dangers of modern-day popular culture. The response was overwhelmingly positive. Afterward, many young people encircled our team asking questions and sharing revelations and understanding that they have been gaining in their own prayer meetings.

### TVORDSIN AND ORAVA

We shared the pro-life message with several assemblies of students at a large Catholic high school. The pastor also arranged for both an evening and a morning of renewal with extended times for personal prayer. The beautiful church, which dates to 1770, was filled with several hundred people for both sessions. At the conclusion of the morning talk, people lined up for hours to receive personal prayer.

Team member Leila Benoit wrote,

“The Holy Spirit is moving in Slovakia! Many of the areas in which we traveled are already on fire for the Lord, but the Spirit continues to move there in a powerful way! What was particularly amazing to witness was the heart of the people in some of the smaller villages. For many of them, it was their first experience of a sovereign move of the Holy Spirit, and their hunger for more was truly moving. We witnessed so many hearts being healed as they were set on fire for more of the Lord!”

Our team shared a pro-life message in both a Catholic school and a large government-run school in Poprad.





# EVENTS JANUARY 2023

For a complete listing of events, visit [RenewalMinistries.net/Events](https://RenewalMinistries.net/Events).

## St. Louis, MO Seek Conference

January 2-6

Dr. Mary Healy and Pete Burak & the id Team

Details: [seek.focus.org](https://seek.focus.org)

## Napa, CA St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology Conference for Priests\*

January 3-6

Ralph Martin

## Virtual Event Catalyst Growth Conference\*

January 4

Pete Burak

## Boston, MA St. John XXIII Seminary Day of Recollection\*

January 8

Dr. Mary Healy

## Rome & Assisi, Italy Pilgrimage\*

January 15-27

Lavinia Spirito

## Ann Arbor, MI Christ the King Women's Retreat

January 20-21

Debbie Herbeck

Details: [ctkcc.net/2023womensretreat](https://ctkcc.net/2023womensretreat)

## Clearwater, Florida Spiritual Masters of the Church Course\*

January 23-27

Ralph Martin

## Ft. Lauderdale, FL Alpha Conference

January 26-27

Dr. Mary Healy

Details: [alphausa.org/the-alpha-conference](https://alphausa.org/the-alpha-conference)

\* Not open to the public.

## MISSIONS



### Mexico City, Mexico Young Adult Mission\*

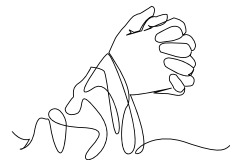
January 2-8

Jim Murphy & Team

### Mexico City, Mexico University of St. Thomas Mission\*

January 9-16

Jim Murphy & Team



## PLEASE PRAY

► That women facing difficult pregnancies may find the support and love needed to help them choose life for their unborn children.

► That Catholics will awaken to a full understanding of Christ's presence in the Eucharist and a heartfelt desire to allow Him to be lord over all of their lives.

► For the prayer intentions of all our supporters, their family members, and their parish families, especially as they face the challenges of illness and economic uncertainty.



*This is a serious warning cry:  
Surrender without reservation to the Lord who has called us.  
This is required of us so that the face of the earth may be renewed.*

//St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross



Renewal Ministries is a Catholic ministry committed to renewal and evangelization in the Church. It seeks to proclaim Jesus Christ through its TV, radio, and social media outreaches, as well as through books, conferences, retreats, and other international evangelistic events.

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