



A LETTER ▶ FROM RALPH MARTIN

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If we wish to serve God and love our neighbor well, we must manifest our joy in the service we render to Him and them. Let us open wide our hearts. It is joy which invites us. Press forward and fear nothing.

//Katharine Drexel

Faithful Friends,

It might be a little corny, but you really are the “wind beneath our wings” as we travel to the four corners of the world by mission, multiple medias, and local and regional evangelization! We are borne up by your love, prayers, and financial giving—and have been for more than forty years! Your “yes” to the invitation to join us in our mission has had—and continues to have—powerful effects.

Lately, I've been very struck by the mysterious power of our “yeses.” When we think of the power of our yes, we first think of the power of Mary's yes. Her fiat to God's invitation changed the course of world history, allowed the Savior to come, and impacted everyone who ever has or will live. The Holy Spirit invites us to believe, repent, and be baptized—and, like Mary, all who say yes to this invitation become sons and daughters of God, as well as heirs of eternal life and happiness!

I also have been thinking that we often don't realize the significance of saying yes to an invitation. Sometimes we don't even realize the invitation is from God. We usually have no idea of what will unfold because of our yes—and, unfortunately, what will not unfold when we refuse to say yes.

I think of how, in *Fatima in Lucia's Own Words*, Lucia writes that she, Jacinta, and Francisco had no idea of what they were saying yes to when Mary invited them to give their lives completely to the Lord.

“Are you willing to offer yourselves to God and bear all the sufferings he wills to send you, as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and of supplication for the conversion of sinners?”

As Lucia writes, they enthusiastically responded: “Yes, we are willing!”

Later, she explains that they had no idea what their yes would mean and could hardly imagine all that would follow.

I'm so grateful they said yes.

Closer to home, I recently had a chance to reflect on the significance of our apparently lowly yeses. I can see in my own life that saying yes at various times to the Lord, agreeing to follow Him, leaving graduate school, etc., has unfolded in ways I could never have imagined and thankfully helped many other people.

Just a couple months ago, my wife Anne and I were able to gather all our six children and nineteen grandchildren in one place, and I marveled at what Anne's yes to me allowed to unfold. I was working in campus ministry at the Catholic student center at Michigan State University and at the national office of the Cursillo Movement. I was wrestling with vocational discernment. Should I remain single? Should I get married? It was agonizing at times. I had developed a friendship with Anne and indeed the thought of marriage to her had more than crossed my mind.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

The Fatima children:
St. Jacinta, Lucia, and St. Francisco



PRESENTS EMPOWERED TO STAND

SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 2023 METRO TORONTO CONVENTION CENTRE TORONTO, ON



Jesus Image by Brent Borup



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Then she went to France to work as a nanny for the summer before her senior year at MSU. As soon as she left, I knew I wanted to marry her. Since this happened during the days of expensive international calls and no cell phones, and since I did not even know how to reach her except through a post office address, I proposed in a letter. Thankfully, she received it! And, thankfully, she wrote back and said YES!

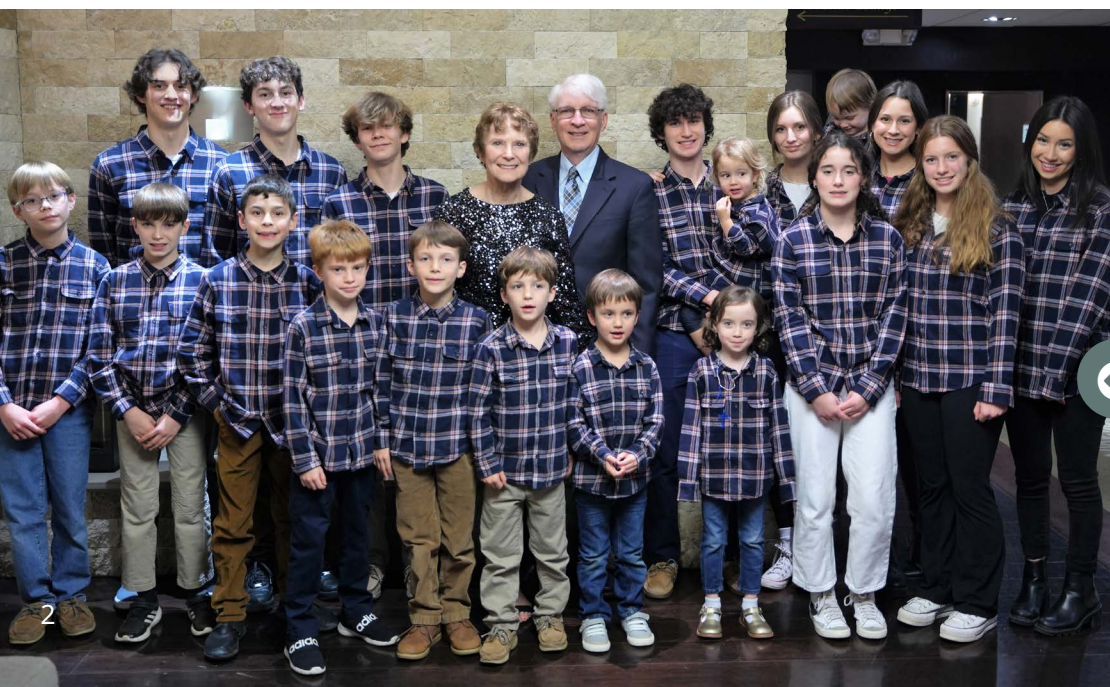
That yes has brought forth so much fruit. We had no idea where that yes would lead us. It's been quite an adventure, including four years of living in Belgium where two of our children were born, traveling all over the world, writing, speaking, and entertaining thousands of guests over the years—but seeing a picture of all our nineteen grandchildren together really brought it home. Anne's yes was incredibly significant, and her continued yes even amid the ordinary challenges of life continues to bear immense fruit.

I know the same is true for all of you. Your yeses to the Lord have borne and will bear eternal fruit. Sometimes we catch glimpses of this, like I recently did, and sometimes we can't see the fruit but continue moving forward in faith. Either way, you can be assured that every yes you have ever given to the Lord—every yes in the midst of great pain, suffering, and disappointment, and every act of hidden love—has released grace into the world that will only be visible in most cases when all is revealed on the last day.

Thank you again for your yeses and for being companions on the journey and the wind beneath our wings.

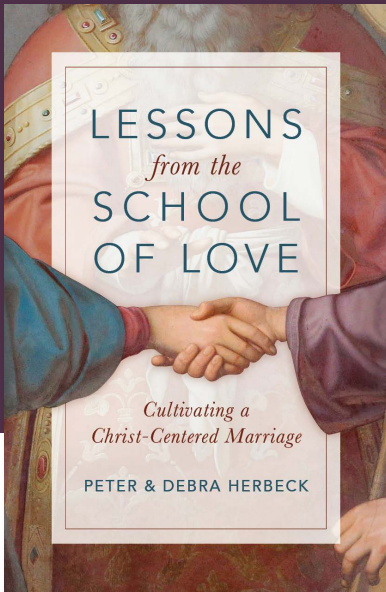
Ralph Martin

Ralph



At a recent family event, Ralph and Anne Martin were blessed to get a picture with all nineteen of their grandchildren. All the grandkids wore flannel in honor of the shirt Ralph likes wearing the most!

While preparing for the evening with his children and grandchildren, Ralph reflected, "Everybody's 'yes' has ripples that go out forever."



New Book From PETER & DEBRA HERBECK

— Coming March 2023 —



Reviews

Ask any married couple about the challenges of sharing life together and you'll hear a litany of interpersonal issues. Communication, wounds, and hardships can weigh heavily on husbands and wives. Today, add the external pressures from living in a hostile, anti-Christian, anti-family culture. Without a firm foundation, couples can collapse under these difficulties.

The good news is that through the Sacrament of Marriage, husbands and wives receive all the grace needed to overcome even the insurmountable. Drawing from the wisdom gained from thirty-seven years of marriage, Peter and Debra Herbeck guide couples in strengthening their marriage and family life through the limitless grace offered to all by Christ.

Lessons from the School of Love: Cultivating a Christ-Centered Marriage will fortify your marriage and family with scriptural and practical wisdom as you learn how to approach your spouse with the love and respect that will transform their heart—and your own!

"This is a beautiful and timely book. Every chapter is filled with wisdom gleaned from the Master of Love, Jesus Christ, and applied to the daily struggles within marriage. . . . I will recommend it enthusiastically to all the married and engaged couples I know."

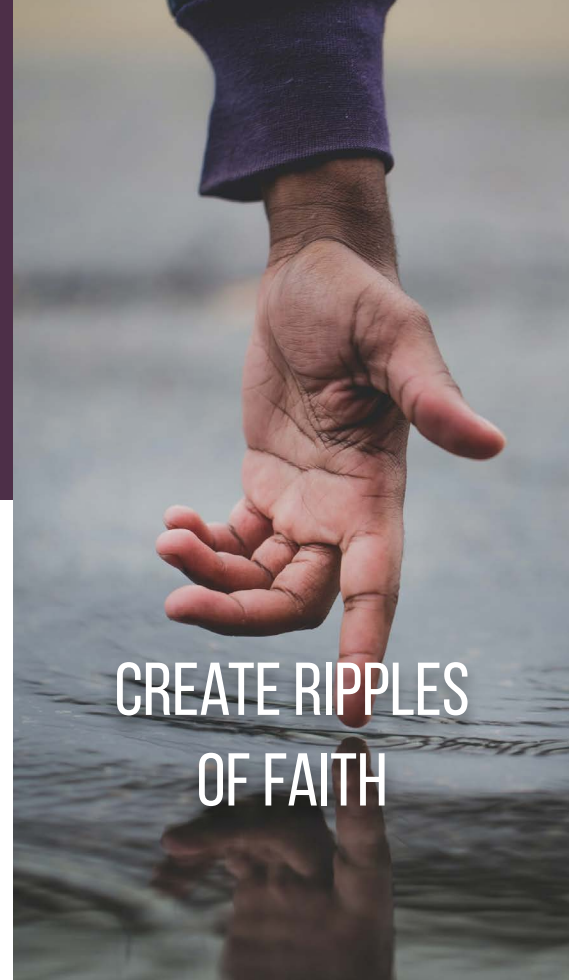
// Bob Schuchts, Author of *Be Devoted* and Founder of the John Paul II Healing Center

"We have known Peter and Debbie since before they were married and have seen them live out the words in this book in their marriage and family for many years. We highly recommend this book to couples. It will strengthen your marriage and deepen your relationship in the Lord."

// Randall and Therese Cirner, Authors of *Ten Weeks to a Better Marriage*

"Short, easy to read, personal, and honest. This is not a theoretical tome on Catholic marriage but a real-life sharing of a real-life couple and their family that many will be inspired and helped by."

// Ralph Martin, President of Renewal Ministries



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For more information, please contact Heather Schultz at 734-662-1730, ext. 130, or hschultz@renewalministries.net.

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Pre-order by Feb. 28, 2023, to receive a signed copy of this book. Order via the reply card or go to: www.renewalministries.net/shop

WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR YOU?

BY RALPH MARTIN

This article is condensed from a YouTube video by Ralph Martin called What is God's Will for You? It can be viewed at [YouTube.com/@RenewalMinistries](https://www.youtube.com/@RenewalMinistries).

What is God's will for your life? The Lord has told us some amazing things: He wills our happiness. He wills our salvation. He wills eternal life for us. He wills to bring us back to the Father's house. He wills to open the gates of paradise for us. He wills to help us get there. He gives us clear indications of how we can conduct ourselves on our way before we're there, where there's still suffering, pain, mistakes, failure, sin, confusion, opposition, hostility, challenges, and tests.

Jesus said,

*"Therefore I tell you do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat, nor about your body, what you shall put on. For life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing."
(Lk 12:22-24)*

Then He talks about how God cares so deeply about human life and for things of much less significance than human life. Jesus continues,

"If God so clothes the grass which is alive in the field today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O men of little faith!" (Lk 12:28)

The Lord wants us to have faith in his care for us. He says, do not seek what you are to eat or drink—don't make it the center of your life—nor be of anxious mind (Lk 12:29).

*"For all the nations of the world always seek these things; and your Father knows that you need them."
(Lk 12:30)*

God knows what we need in this life to fulfill the purpose for which He created us and to bring us home for salvation.

SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD

*"Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things shall be yours as well."
(Lk 12:31)*

There is a condition here: Put the first things first. Seek first the kingdom of God and these other things that you need for life—not just the physical needs but the spiritual needs, including

everything we need to persevere on the way to salvation—will be provided by God the Father. The next passage says,

*"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."
(Lk 12:32)*

The Lord wants to give us the kingdom. The Lord is going to give us everything we need to pass the necessary tests and trials of life.

Let's look at another important text from Philippians 4:4-7: *"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let all men know your forbearance"—*your trust, your patience, your faith. *"The Lord is at hand"—*He's very near to us. *"Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

This is a clear command: Rejoice. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God. The peace of God will keep you in Christ Jesus. You'll have peace of heart and clarity of mind.

Notice how Saint Paul says to make all your needs known to God with prayer and supplications, and how he connects this with not having any anxiety.

How do we not have any anxiety?

We bring our needs to the Lord.

We remember that He cares about us and only lets those things happen in our lives that He has a plan to bring good out of. This is not just about big events in the world or church; this is about our own lives. It's normal for anxiety to rise up in our hearts at different times, but the Lord gives us clear direction about what to do about it: Bring it to Him with thanksgiving.

This is important: We not only have needs that we bring to the Lord; we have an amazing number of things for which to be thankful. Thank You, God, for creating me. Thank You for holy baptism. Thank You for making me your son or daughter. Thank You that I belong to you—that I'm not an orphan, that I'm not lost, that You've found me and I belong to You. Thank You for caring for me amid the pain, challenge, test, illness, sadness, or disappointment. We have so much to be grateful for right now. We are temples of the Holy Spirit. God is dwelling in us right now. We are being changed a little bit at a time, getting ready to see the Lord face-to-face.

First Thessalonians 4:3 contains another clear statement about God's will for us:

"This is the will of God, your sanctification."

God wills your holiness and purification. The verse continues,

"Abstain from immorality."

It's particularly talking about sexual immorality—about chastity. The battle for chastity can be a struggle, but it's clear that in this area, God wills our holiness and chastity according to our state of life. He's going to give us the grace to accomplish whatever He wills for us. If you're fighting a battle with purity, don't give up. Get the help you need. Jesus said,

"If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out . . . if your right hand causes to sin, cut it off" (Mt 5:29-30).

Jesus is not asking us to literally do those things, but He's saying to do whatever it takes to get free from serious sin: join a twelve-step group, go to confession, get an accountability partner, stop drinking, avoid hanging out with certain people, put filters on your computer, or cancel certain channels. St. Augustine got free of serious sin through a long struggle, and he is interceding for us. This is God's will, and we know He's going to give us the grace for our sanctification and holiness, little by little over the course of a lifetime, in all areas of our lives.

Finally, regardless of what we are praying about—medical treatments, how to talk to our children, fasting, almsgiving, or finances—there is something important to remember. First Thessalonians 5:16-18 says, "Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." That's really clear! Whatever happens regarding those secondary issues we are praying about, this is what we should be doing in the meantime. This is how we keep our heads clear and our hearts at peace amid not knowing certain things right

now but trusting that God will help us to know when we need to know. It's really important that this is what we do in the meantime and that this is what we do all the time: Rejoice! How can we rejoice? We have been saved. We are loved. We are being little-by-little changed into the image of Christ. We are being made ready to see the Lord face to face! Rejoice, because we have been given the gift of eternal life!

Paul tells us to pray always. To pray always, we must pray sometimes. If you don't have a daily time for personal prayer and meditation on God's Word, start making one. I sit in my home office and look at an icon of Jesus, and every day I read my Magnificat, just the readings from the daily Mass. Often, the Lord speaks to me through Sacred Scripture and simply by the fact that I am in his presence. All day, we need to remember the Lord. All day, we need to remember He's at our side. St. Teresa of Avila said Jesus is at our side, and all we have to do is pay attention to Him.

*"Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances."
(1 Thes 5:16-18)*

This is hard sometimes—what if you have a bad circumstance? All of us have bad circumstances from time to time—give thanks because you're not alone; give thanks because for those who love God even as imperfectly as we all do, everything works for the good. Even the pain, the suffering, the disappointment, the injustice, the rejection, and the illness—He's working all that for our good. He's getting us ready for an eternal weight of glory, and that's why Scripture says the sorrows and suffering of the present age are not worth comparing to what's coming to us when Christ Jesus appears.

This is God's will for you! You may be wondering about any number of things. You may have questions about what to do, but in the meantime,

*"Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"
(1 Thes 5:16-18).*



PRAY ALWAYS

To pray always, we must pray sometimes.

If you don't have a daily time for personal prayer and meditation on God's Word, start making one.





SPREADING THE GOSPEL IN IRELAND



BY TOM EDWARDS
Country Coordinator

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.

Our work in Ireland centered on the Diocese of Armagh, which encompasses the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. We assisted with an Encountering Christ outreach, presented parish missions, shared the pro-life message in schools, and more.

Ireland has a long history of being a country with strong Catholic roots. In recent years, however, there has been a grave decline in those who seriously practice the faith. This became clear in 2018, when the country voted to legalize abortion. Religious vocations have nosedived. A country once known for sending missionaries around the world now produces almost no vocations. While Ireland has advanced economically, Christianity has given way to the darkness that permeates the culture.

Tom and Jean Marie Edwards minister to people as part of the Encountering Christ as Lord program.



ENCOUNTERING CHRIST

Amid this dire situation, the Lord is raising up individuals with an evangelical zeal to renew the faith and reach lost souls. Two such individuals are Fr. Gerry Campbell and Catholic lay evangelist Terry Quinn. Fr. Gerry has pastoral responsibility for five parishes as well as other diocesan responsibilities. He and Terry are implementing the Divine Renovation plan into his parishes. They are spearheading several efforts to empower the laity and reach out to lost souls and those living on the margins of society.

One of their primary efforts is a weekly Sunday afternoon session called "Encountering Christ as Lord," which features dynamic praise, strong preaching, and an invitation to accept Christ. Confession, healing prayer, and sacramental anointing also are available. A strong team of missionary disciples invites those entangled in various forms of bondage, addictions, and the resulting brokenness. Many of the missionary disciples have been delivered out of such circumstances themselves. The effort is producing much fruit as people are saved, delivered from evil, healed, and set on a path of ongoing spiritual growth.

This is the environment in which we were invited to help with parish missions. Much of the missions were incorporated into the weekend and daily



masses in the parishes of St. Mary in Knockbridge and the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Kilkerehy. Additional parish mission venues included the Community Centers of Knockbridge and Kilkerehy. The meetings held in the Community Centers included a buffet meal followed by a presentation. Other outreaches included a Life in the Spirit Seminar at the Benburb Retreat Center, an all-day “Understanding the Bible” event in Kilkerehy, and a “Come and See” musical drama in Drogheda.

SCHOOLS

One of our goals is always to share God’s Word in schools. This was a difficult endeavor in Ireland. Several people committed to prayer and fasting in hopes that obstacles would be overcome. Gradually, rays of light began to emerge, although nothing was confirmed even as we arrived in Ireland. Jean Marie submitted outlines of the presentations that were subject to the approval of the bishop and principals. Our mention of pro-life teachings triggered a big alarm. Apparently, terms like “pro-life” and “abortion” would not be approved. Catholic schools walk a tightrope because government funds keep the schools afloat and are free for the students. The high school featured posters promoting the school’s LGBTQ club. Such is the nature of the compromise that results from the melding together the of “Gospel of Life” and the “Culture of Death.”

However, the Lord is not without his ways. Suddenly, we had meetings and luncheon appointments scheduled with pro-life Catholic school administrators. Jean Marie shared life-like fetal models and teaching posters. Those who saw and handled them were instantly mesmerized. It was very apparent that the Lord was at work as obstacles dissipated and doors swung open. Jean Marie was given access to two Catholic schools over three days. She quickly modified some teachings

Life-sized fetal models helped high school girls more fully understand the stages of a baby’s life in the womb.



for age appropriateness and the subjects requested. On the first day, she had a hundred four- and five-year-old students. She masterfully kept a semblance of order as she presented a teaching on *How Can I Be Like You, Jesus?*

On the second day, she had two classes of fifth graders preparing for confirmation. The teacher had been instructing them on the traditional Isaiah 11 Gifts of the Spirit—from a perspective that every gift was given to enable the children to keep the school rules. Jean Marie managed to accommodate the teacher’s guidance while presenting a wider view of *Walking with the Holy Spirit*.

A highlight came on the third day, at an all-girl Catholic high school about an hour away. Jean Marie had three one-hour classes with the fourteen-year-old students. The topic was *The Journey of a Child*. At first, the girls sat with crossed arms and frozen gazes. That changed as soon as the fetal models and posters came out, resulting in a complete attitude shift. The girls loved the babies; they even put them under their shirts as if carrying a babe in the womb. They divided into nine groups and learned about the unborn child’s development during their group’s specific month. They then gave lively presentations of what they had gleaned to the rest of the class. One-hundred girls were deeply impressed with the core message: “That’s a baby!” This concept of sharing the pro-life message with the life-like fetal models and teaching posters accompanied by pro-life Scripture passages is extremely effective. We shared the fetal models while having lunch with Fr. Gerry and two other priests. Fr. Gerry immediately expressed a desire to acquire a set. He has people prepared to use them. We left our set with him.

SUPPORTING PRIESTS

While in Ireland, we distributed copies of Renewal Ministries’ April and September 2022 newsletters—which featured Ralph’s work with priests in many countries—at a gathering that included sixty priests of the Diocese of Armagh and Archbishop Eamon Martin. Fr. Gerry spoke briefly to those in attendance about Renewal Ministries’ work and particularly about Ralph’s international ministry to priests.

HOPE FOR RENEWAL

Ireland is fertile ground for a renewal of faith. The need is so apparent when one attends a liturgy where not one congregant sings and the celebrant faces a deadpan array of indifferent faces. The fresh wind that is being stirred through the efforts of Fr. Gerry Campbell and Terry Quinn is producing genuine fruit. This is manifest in both a stirring up of the existing faithful and the successful outreach to souls truly lost but now being found.



IT WAS VERY APPARENT THAT THE LORD WAS AT WORK AS OBSTACLES DISSIPATED AND DOORS SWUNG OPEN.

EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2023

For a complete listing of events, visit RenewalMinistries.net/Events.

Fargo, ND
Real Presence Radio Celebration
February 6
Ralph Martin
Details: yourcatholicradiostation.com/banquet

Detroit, MI
Archdiocese of Detroit Presbyterate Meeting*
February 7
Dr. Mary Healy

Lexington, KY
Encounter School of Ministry*
February 7
Lavinia Spirito

St. Paul, MN
Youth Ministry Summit*
February 9
Dr. Mary Healy

Minnetonka, MN
Evening Talk at Immaculate Heart of Mary
February 9
Dr. Mary Healy
Details: ihm-cc.org

Orlando, FL
Legatus Summit*
February 9-11
Pete Burak

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Arise Women's Retreat
February 11-13
Debbie & Rachel Herbeck
Details: arisecatholicmovement.ca

Palm Beach Garden, FL
Encounter Transformation Night
February 16
Ralph Martin
Details: encounterschool.org/palmbeach

Indialantic, FL
Evening of Renewal
February 17
Ralph Martin
Details: hnj.org

Indialantic, FL
Men's Morning of Renewal
February 18
Ralph Martin
Details: hnj.org

Lansing, MI
Church of the Resurrection Retreat*
February 18
Pete Burak

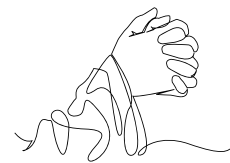
Toledo, OH
Young Adult Leaders Retreat*
February 21-22
Pete Burak

Fremont, NE
Women's Conference
February 24-26
Dr. Mary Healy
Details: stpatsfremont.org

Omaha, NE
St. Gerald Parish Mission
February 24-26
Peter Herbeck
Details: stgerald.org

Baton Rouge, LA
Men of the Immaculata Conference
February 25
Pete Burak
Details: catholicmenbr.com

* *Not open to the public.*



**PLEASE
PRAY**

► For an increased appreciation for the life of unborn children. As one-hundred girls from Ireland recently realized during one of our mission trips, may more and more people be deeply impressed with the message: "That's a baby!"

► That as we prepare for and enter into Lent, we may grow in an awareness of the Lord's will for us to "rejoice always, pray constantly, (and) give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thes 5:16-18).

► 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.



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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