



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In one month, Advent begins—preparation for the great feast of Christmas. It's time to anticipate the Savior's coming. Let's look at our priorities. What most takes our attention, time, and effort? Good things that lead to God or things that distract us from who we are and where we're going?

A well-lived Advent should nurture a desire for watching and waiting for the Lord in our lives.

Before Advent begins, let's consider how to carve out ten or fifteen extra minutes each day to say, "Lord, I want You to come into my heart and into my family more fully. Help us welcome You in body, mind, and spirit." When you open your heart to the Lord in that way, God will come.

Do you remember to thank God? If not, maybe you should pay attention to that during Advent. Is there a major sin in your life? Have you gotten through many other things and put them aside, but not this one area? I encourage you to pay attention to it now.

Do you know God's love for you? Do you read the Scriptures? Advent is a wonderful time to begin cultivating a habit. Read John 14-17 to better see God's love for you, his hope in

you, and his desire for you to live with Him forever. God wants to ignite all of that in your heart. He wants to encourage you to receive all that He has for you so that you can get rid of sin and draw closer to Him.

Give God ten extra minutes each day and say, "Lord, is there anything You want of me now? I look at my life, my sin, and my faults. I can't change all of those—but You can."

What would the Lord like us to look at with Him: problematic relationships, unforgiveness, anger, or animosity? Bring these things to God as well as gratitude for the good things He has done. Do we recall the good God has done for us, or do we forget? Do we recall great moments of grace? Do we cultivate them with gratitude so God can use us more and fill us with more peace?

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FROM SR. ANN SHIELDS

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Cultivating A Fruitful Advent

In preparation for the feast of Christmas, give God an extra ten minutes each day in eager anticipation of his coming. Here are some ideas to get you started on cultivating a fruitful prayer time:

- Thank God for His many blessings. Come to him with gratitude for the good things He has done for us.
- Cultivate a habit of reading Scripture if it's not part of your daily prayer already. Consider praying through Advent with John 14-17.
- Ask God for help with any patterns of sin you are struggling with. Find a time to go to confession and reinforce your resolve to conquer that sin with the Lord's aid. Give God the gift of a clean heart!
- Intercede for others.



This Advent season, look at the Savior who so loves us, He came in the flesh to be like one of us. Through his teaching and presence, and his life, death, and resurrection, Jesus became our Savior. He did that for you! He knows your strengths and weaknesses, the desires of your heart, and the dreams that have been shattered. He knows the pain you've experienced. He knows the moments of great blessing and happiness you've experienced. He knows it all—and He says, “Come to Me.”

Draw closer to Him this Advent. Give God time every day. Read the Scriptures, ponder what God has done for us, intercede for others, and ask God to help you to overcome sin. Put Him first, and other things will take their rightful place.

I remember a time during World War II when I was about five. One of my uncles was able to come home for Christmas, which almost never happened. My family members often met at my grandmother's home to prepare for his arrival. There was a lot of scurrying around. How could we make this time a blessing for him before he had to go back into the horrors of war?

We all had food stamps because of the war, even me. I was asked to give one of my food stamps so that they could get a little more of something for my uncle. Even though I didn't fully comprehend, I was glad to contribute. There was suddenly a light in our lives and a moment of respite from the ravages of war. We couldn't drive much because of the need for rubber in the war zones. There were gasoline shortages. Even little things like rubber bands just weren't around. That's a very small image of the sacrifices people made. We knew as a country that the men on the front lines needed to be supported in every way, and we were willing—even children as young as myself—to sacrifice something to bless them.

Now I ask you: Are you willing to put aside a sin or a fault so that your gift

to God will be a gift of less sin? As you welcome Him into your heart and life this Christmas, will your soul be clean, your heart purified? We need to give up things for that to happen, but it brings great joy when we do.

*Put Him first,
and other things will
take their rightful place.*



I want you to have an infectious joy this Christmas that causes others to ask about its source. Then share with them what God has taught you. Look at your life. What holds you back from deeper intimacy with God?

As we waited for my uncle to come—never being sure that he would but hoping and getting ready—it stirred up stories among us about what my uncle was like and things he had done. We recalled our memories of him—sometimes very funny ones—and longed to see him again. We were waiting, watching.

When the day finally came to meet him at the train station, a quiet settled over the busy household at my grandmother's house. It was the quiet of anticipation that we were going to see him again. God wants to stir that up in our hearts—we're going to see Him one day. Are our souls ready?

Finally, somebody said, “We'd better be going.” We drove to the train station a couple of miles away, got out of the car in the dark, and lined up in silence. My father held me in his arms and my mother held my hand. I sensed their eagerness.

How eager are we to see the Lord return? What will that day be like when we see Him? Do we believe? Does our faith need to be cultivated?

I remember standing on the platform when the whistles blew, signifying that the train was rounding the final corner and would soon be in the station. Then my uncle walked out of the train and down the steps. We all stood frozen for a moment, just staring. Then somebody cried, “There he is! There he is!” And we all ran to see him.

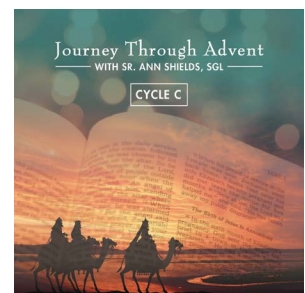
That excitement was for a much-beloved uncle. How much more do we long for Jesus? How attentive are we? How much internal housecleaning is going on in our souls to prepare for his coming? Let's take time each day to say, “Where am I failing and how can I do better? God give me grace.” After all, this preparation to welcome Him at Christmas also prepares us to welcome Him when the time comes for eternal life.

Your sister in Christ,

Sr. Ann Shields

Sr. Ann Shields, SGL

The content for this letter is taken from Sr. Ann Shield's CD, Journey Through Advent: Cycle C. It is available for purchase on our website at: renewalministries.net/shop/category/digital



Youth Ministry Updates

FORGED

Forged has officially launched! Formerly known as Zion, it has received a new director and a new name. The ministry has grown and developed while maintaining the same heart. Forged creates arenas for boys and men to step into and facilitate transformation. It seeks to develop capacity within hearts and minds to surrender to the Lord's will.

Forged hosts squad nights twice a month, monthly intersquad games, monthly evenings of praise and worship, and weekly Bible studies. Visit www.renewalministries.net/forged for more information.

MEET THE NEW DIRECTOR OF FORGED ⬇

Steve Norman has officially joined the Renewal Ministries' team as the director of Forged. He and his wife, Katey, moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, from Stratford, Ontario, with their two children, Jeremiah and Kateri.



"It's been quite a journey, but we know the Lord has paved the way and we find tremendous peace in knowing He still leads," said Steve.

BE LOVE REVOLUTION

Be Love Revolution (BLR) celebrated its ten-year anniversary! Current high schoolers and alumni gathered for a beautiful night of worship and reflection upon the ministry's growth and God's faithfulness.

Be Love Revolutions' annual Daughters of the King event brought together more than two-hundred girls between the ages of seven and eleven for a night of worship, fun, and a message about the Father's love for each of his beloved daughters.

MEET OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS ⬇

The Be Love Revolution team has expanded, allowing us to mentor more girls, partner with more schools, and disciple more middle and high school girls.



Katherine Bernasconi
from New York,
Director of
Outreach



Maria Khym
from Vancouver,
British Columbia,
Social Media
Manager &
Photographer



Delaney Dickey
from St. Louis,
Missouri,
Director of
Communication



PINE HILLS CAMP

PINE HILLS BOYS' CAMP

After forty-one years, Pine Hills Boys' Camp is stronger than ever, as the Lord continues to move in power in the lives of the campers and the staff. The week was full of adventurous fun, dynamic leadership training, and powerful times of prayer.



PINE HILLS GIRLS' CAMP

Pine Hills Girls' Camp marked its thirty-eighth year. The camp reached its capacity with 192 campers and eighty-six staff members! The camp's leadership continues to strive to help middle and high school girls become disciples and know the love of the Father through Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Inviting Others to Deeper Faith

We recently reached out to people who purchased multiple copies of our booklets to learn how they used them to spread God's Word. We hope their responses inspire you to consider new and simple ways to share God's Word! You can view the booklets available in our store at:

www.renewalministries.net/booklets.



'A SIMPLE PAMPHLET CAN BE A POWERFUL TOOL'

A priest from New Jersey shared with us that “a simple pamphlet can be a powerful tool. It offers a wealth of opportunities to impact untold numbers. In my seminary days over sixty years ago, I heard this concept in a talk by Douglas Hyde, a former communist, who spoke of his passion to use every waking hour to spread communism. One simple way he did this was to share pamphlets or leave old newspapers and magazines on buses and in airports and other public facilities. He emphasized the fruitful possibilities if Catholics had the same zeal in sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

“In response, I began sharing a post card published by the Knights of Columbus with the message: ‘Are you seeking peace of mind?’ It contained an invitation to contact the Knights to receive additional material and a follow-up call. Years later, I realized that this was a small first step into evangelization. Since then, I have used a variety of pamphlets, including Renewal Ministries’ *The Final Confrontation*; *Mary’s Mission, Our Response*; and *Fear God and Give Him Glory*, along with many other resources to help share the Good News through home visits, sacramental programs, in classes, at talks, in Christmas letters, and more.”

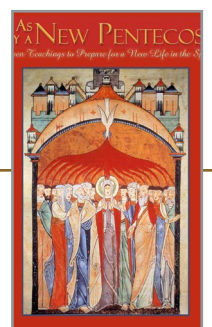
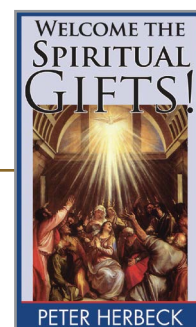


I gave copies of your Join the Resistance booklets to our priests, and I am giving them away to my friends. I also bought additional copies of Ralph's book A Church in Crisis for our pastor. Thank you for your ministry, thank you for being on fire for Christ!



I purchase the booklets that Renewal Ministries publishes and give them to my family and friends. I keep them in my car and try to put one or two in my pocket, so I can give them out to store clerks, my barber, doctors . . . anyone who will take one. I give them to priests and folks at church. Many people are very happy to take a booklet. One of my doctors said it was an answer to his prayers and was open to receiving the book The Fulfillment of All Desire.

One man from Arizona ordered twenty copies of *Welcome the Spiritual Gifts* to help people attending prayer group meetings and a *Life in the Spirit Seminar* “use the gifts of the Spirit and not be afraid of them.” He also used the DVD series *As by a New Pentecost* to provide the *Life in the Spirit Seminar* talks each week, which he said worked well. This man moved to a small parish after retiring with the hope that he could help bring a deeper faith and receptivity to the Holy Spirit to the people there. He wants to share what the Lord has given to him. “Serving the Lord is always different—an exciting and unusual challenge,” he added. Moving forward, his parish is going to add Adoration and confession to these weekly prayer group meetings to help promote the Eucharistic revival.

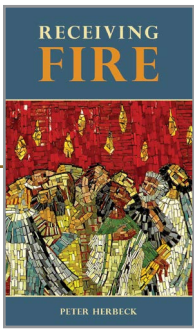


"SERVING THE LORD IS ALWAYS DIFFERENT—AN EXCITING AND UNUSUAL CHALLENGE"

A woman from Arizona ordered thirty-five copies of *Receiving Fire* to share with her parish's Holy Spirit group. "We used it as part of a discussion group," she explained. "All our members were happy to receive a copy. The discussions went well. Peter's writing is very timely for what we're facing right now."

A man in Louisiana ordered one-hundred copies of *Game Changer* to share at a men's retreat hosted at his parish. He said that most of the men had heard Pete Burak speak at a diocesan retreat earlier that year, and he thought Pete's booklet would be a good support for the theme of the Eucharist. He added,

"I thought Renewal Ministries would put out a good, quality product, and I was not disappointed."



A man from Michigan ordered ninety copies of *Receiving Fire* to give to different priests to hand out. He said the priests he shared the booklets with were eager to have them.

A man from Illinois purchased twenty copies of *Receiving Fire* to share with members of an RCIA class and a retreat he was helping with. He said,

"It's a wonderful booklet because it gives a succinct and informative snapshot of the Holy Spirit's importance. It brings together all the important teachings on the Holy Spirit. I think everyone should read it, Catholics especially, because it's gone out of most people's vocabulary."

A woman in Michigan purchased twenty copies of *Receiving Fire* to share with her prayer group and Bible study. She said she wanted to share "a little gift to encourage them." She added that she especially hoped the booklets would help members of her Bible study—who range in ages from their forties to late eighties—with questions they have about the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes, her Bible study also watches Ralph Martin and Peter Herbeck's YouTube videos and then has a teaching about the discussion, followed by prayer. She said,



It gives us a new way of thinking about things. Some people in our group didn't grow up hearing about these things. They were never encouraged to read the Bible, and they grew up not knowing that we were reading the Bible at Mass. These things give them a different perspective.



A man from Texas ordered five-hundred copies of *Fear God and Give Him Glory* to make available to people within his parish.



I put them in the back of the church where we have various types of literature," he explained. "I found this book relevant and spoke with our pastor for permission. He also gave some to a small sister parish of ours. There has been a good response because we have distributed two-thirds of them. I also put them near the confessional.

I liked this booklet, because universalism is prevalent in society and in the Catholic Church. *The question should not be, "Does God love us?" It's, "Do we love God?"*

Most people don't fear the Lord or have a sense of justice. I like the way Peter laid it out in this booklet. It's a message that needs to be shared. I also read Ralph Martin's book *A Church in Crisis*, and I love the way he's very calm and speaks the truth . . . with joy.

I'm drawn to share the message in *Fear God and Give Him Glory*, because you can't love someone you don't know. If you at least fear God and give Him glory, you realize there is a just judge, that judgment is coming, and that we're not all going to heaven. If we at least fear God, maybe we will search Him out. When the only message is "love the Lord," I don't see that it draws us.

Renewal Ministries offers great tools to wake people up. Peter and Ralph share the message in a way that doesn't cause people to throw up a wall. The little booklets make it easy for people to pick one up without interacting with anyone. That might encourage them to read it. One day, our priest said two people mentioned a little booklet that shook them out of their lethargy. I once was there—a lukewarm Catholic who went to Mass every week but didn't realize there's more. The Renewal Ministries' booklets are great tools: they are inexpensive, you can set them out, and then someone can read it and it will impact them.



SPREADING THE GOSPEL IN TANZANIA



BY TOM EDWARDS
Country Coordinator
for Tanzania

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.

This marked our twenty-third year of outreach to Tanzania. The Lord has opened doors for our ministry in twenty-three dioceses in this large country, some of them multiple times. At the invitation of Bishop Joseph Roman Mlola, our outreach this year was directed toward the Kigoma Diocese.

These missions require intense planning. Gathering an experienced team; coordinating with our faithful Tanzanian friends and clergy; preparing teachings; and organizing travel, lodging, and food is a year-long venture. Communications to remote areas are often frustrated by a lack of services. Also, travel to Tanzania requires almost forty-eight hours without a bed! Nevertheless, the Lord responds to the multitude of prayers that underlie every effort. God faithfully accomplishes that to which He calls us.

We were very blessed to have Archbishop Josaphat Louis Lebulu, Archbishop Emeritus of Arusha, join our team. The archbishop traveled with us, joined our presentations, and shared his preaching and teaching skills in a two-day retreat for priests and seminarians. At age eighty-one, Archbishop Lebulu is fully committed to fighting the good fight of faith and proclaiming the Gospel. He stayed with our friend Polycarp Cardinal Pengo, who shared wise advice when we met during my first trip to Tanzania. He said, "Go to the far away dioceses, where we need it the most!" That counsel has borne immense fruit!

RALLIES

One highlight was a large-scale, outdoor rally. People came by the thousands, often walking great distances. Some built little fires to cook on and slept in areas of church property or school yards. As is often the case, this was the first time such a rally had been presented in these towns. People came with faith and expectancy. That's pretty much all they have, but somehow, it's enough. We gave workshops and retreats for three hours each morning. Then, the rallies began at 2 p.m. and continued until sundown. The crowds grew throughout the day.

RETREATS FOR SISTERS AND SCHOOLS

Sr. Mary Justin and Sr. Mary Gianna conducted a retreat for religious sisters and did outreach to schools. Below, they shared about their experiences:

"Thirty sisters from about ten different religious communities attended our two-day retreat. They were very attentive and open to receiving the teachings. There was an awakening of faith, a new assurance that God is real, renewal of love, healing, and an experience



Sr. Mary Justin (left) and Sr. Mary Giana (center) led a retreat for religious sisters.

of joy and peace. Most of them had never known inner healing. Several experienced interior freedom and a new beginning with Christ, their Bridegroom.” (Sr. Mary Justin)

“For the students, I discussed God’s plan of fulfillment for each of them. I shared my personal testimony of discovering God’s plan for my life, responding to his plan one step at a time, and experiencing God’s fulfillment of the desires He placed on my heart. I told them about my ‘yes’ to God, and they were invited to also say ‘yes’ to God’s plan for their lives. Their response was overwhelmingly positive. It was powerful to see so many students stand with arms raised to God, give their lives to Christ, and decide to live for Him.” (Sr. Mary Gianna)

MASSIVE PRO-LIFE WORKSHOPS

When we began hosting pro-life workshops, some bishops and priests told us abortion was not a problem in Tanzania. Afterward, their opinion changed when people rushed to confession because of the sin of abortion. Bishops instituted pro-life teaching in some seminaries and requested more teaching on the development of the baby and Natural Family Planning. Some people resigned from their jobs in foreign-sponsored “health-care centers” that promote abortion and implant contraceptive devices into people with no real knowledge of what they are getting. This dimension of our outreach now outpaces healing and deliverance workshops.

Jean Marie Edwards continues to develop, improve, and disciple others in the presentation of these workshops. She wrote,

“Our African brothers and sisters postponed all other workshops so the people would hear the pro-life message—which speaks strongly to the horrors of abortion they are experiencing. Thankfully, our Lord prepared our team and the participants. Five hundred people came and absorbed every bit of infor-

mation. Each team member read a Scripture passage on life in the womb, walked through the people with life-sized models and posters, and shared how a baby grows. We discussed Theology of the Body in a way that they can bring into their marriages, and smiles covered their faces. My explanation of Natural Family Planning sparked deep interest and rapid note taking.

When we spoke about abortion methods and what happens to the baby and the mother, we saw people’s hearts break as they couldn’t restrain their tears. Sister Mary Gianna, a trained nurse, spoke directly to the five main contraceptives used in Tanzania. People had many questions, and the team was grateful she was there to answer them. Team member Jacinta led us in a gentle prayer of opening ourselves to the heart of our Lord and the breath of the Holy Spirit, and then asking for forgiveness. Many participants cried out to the Lord. The team surrounded the people in prayer and, slowly but surely, peace came.”

Fetal models powerfully impacted our pro-life workshop participants.



Two members of our team from Tanzania will continue the pro-life and Natural Family Planning teachings with two additional visits this year. We left them with the funds, fetal models, and teaching materials to carry on.

‘GOD IS BEGINNING A NEW THING’

Team Member Bohdan Novak, a full-time lay Catholic evangelist from Slovakia, shared the following testimony:

“From the first day, I strongly felt God’s presence. After arriving, we held a workshop for young people, and more than 250 young people and adults came. The hunger for God’s Word was great. Young people were writing down every verse of the Scriptures, and some of them recorded the talks on their phone so they could listen to them again. God acted powerfully in the hearts of many, and the Holy Spirit gently but powerfully touched everyone’s hearts. Men came to the afternoon rally and asked for prayers for problems they were experiencing. God came in a powerful way with healing and deliverance.

“I was very touched by the openness of a man whose son had unexpectedly lost his speech for an unknown reason. After praying for healing and deliverance, the boy’s speech returned. God also powerfully touched his father, who had been looking for help from a sorcerer but now surrendered his life fully to Christ. In the following days, more and more men came to the program. It was indescribable. I believe that even though Kigoma is one of the poorest places in Tanzania, God is beginning a new thing here.”

This outreach to Tanzania allowed us to make Jesus known in his Word and all of his ways. We pray that his Church in this beautiful country will continue to grow in grace and wisdom that overflows bountifully to a world in need.

EVENTS NOVEMBER 2023

Complete event list: renewalministries.net/events

New Boston, MI
Talk at St. Stephen Parish
November 4
Ralph Martin
Details: ststephennewboston.org

Nashville, TN
Legatus*
November 7
Pete Burak

Rochester, MN
Real Presence Radio Event
November 7
Ralph Martin
Details: realpresenceradio.com/banquets

Steubenville, OH
Pints with Aquinas with Matt Fradd*
November 10
Ralph Martin

Baltimore, MD
USCCB Committee on Evangelization & Catechesis*
November 12
Dr. Mary Healy

Columbiere, MI
St. Catherine Academy Senior Retreat*
November 14-16
Debbie Herbeck & the Be Love Revolution Team

Trenton, NJ
Legatus*
November 15
Pete Burak

Charleston, SC
Legatus*
November 16
Pete Burak

Allentown, PA
Diocese of Allentown Men's Conference
November 18
Peter Herbeck
Details: menaliveinchrist.org

Milwaukee, WI
Women of Christ Conference
November 18
Dr. Mary Healy
Details: womenofchrist.net

Dundalk, Ireland
Women's Conference
November 24
Dr. Mary Healy
Details: terry.quinn3@icloud.net

Dundalk, Ireland
Contagious for Christ Conference
November 25-26
Dr. Mary Healy
Details: terry.quinn3@icloud.net

Brighton, MI
Encounter Leadership Retreat*
November 30-December 2
Peter Herbeck

* *Not open to the public.*



PLEASE PRAY

► For the souls of all the faithful departed: "Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace."

► For an increase of reverence and love for our Lord in the Holy Eucharist.

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



*Get used to lifting your heart to God, in acts of thanksgiving, many times a day.
Because he gives you this and that. Because you have been despised.
Because you haven't what you need or because you have.
Thank him for everything, because everything is good.*

// St. Josemaria Escriva



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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