+ RENEWAL + MINISTRIES

CATHOLIC RENEWAL & EVANGELIZATION

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We need a revival of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, but first we need a revival of the understanding of sin. Who's going to repent if they don't think they're sinning?

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This month, I want to share with you content from a talk I recently gave.

Bishop Juan Hervas, a founder of the Cursillo Movement, said one significant thing weakening the Catholic Church today is a minimalist interpretation of the Gospel.

It asks from people less than Jesus asks and offers to people less than Jesus offers. That's not the Gospel.

Jesus isn't offering several optional levels of Catholicism. Jesus says those who love father, mother, son, or daughter more than Him are not worthy of Him (Mt 10:37). Many people today are tied to deep emotional relationships with family members, which is normal. But when family members want us to affirm their sin, many Catholic parents say,

"I value this relationship more than fidelity to the Lord."

They don't use these words, but that's what they are saying when they don't lovingly but firmly speak the truth to their children.

We toss around the phrase "missionary disciples." What happens when a new favorite phrase comes into the Church's vocabulary? It's common for priests to come into the parish and say,

"We're all missionary disciples!"

No, we're not!

Do you realize how radical it is to be a disciple of Jesus?

We shouldn't sell lay people short. The baptized are called to participate fully in Jesus' mission. Most people think being Catholic means to say your prayers at night, not kill anybody, and go to church occasionally. Those are good, but they aren't discipleship.

The American bishops are spending \$28 million to promote Eucharistic revival—but you can't buy a revival. A revival requires repentance—humbling yourself before God and saying,

"Lord, we've departed from You. We haven't obeyed You. We haven't listened to your Word or put You first. We've been negligent shepherds and people. We haven't corrected error. We've let poison spread."

We need a revival of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, but first we need a revival of the understanding of sin. Who's going to repent if they don't think they're sinning? So many people today don't understand what sin is.

I recently read *Paul and the Economy of Salvation* by well-known biblical scholar Fr. Brendan Byrne. Fr. Byrne shows how Paul's epistles are written in light of the Lord's return and the final judgment. The subtitle of the book is *Reading from the Perspective of the Last Judgement*. Yet we hardly hear about the last judgement. That's one reason the Church's main mission of salvation has collapsed while its concerns for this world have grown.

If there aren't consequences to sin, if everyone gets a trophy in the end—views our culture increasingly embraces—why bother to pray, fast, and evangelize for the salvation of souls?

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Renewal Ministries' goal is just to be Catholics—but that's more radical than you may think. It means being charismatic, evangelistic, holy, in communion with the wider Church, eucharistic, Marian, and contemplative. That's our mission. Just to be Catholics. We want to embrace the full deposit of faith. We want to receive everything God has given to us—and help other people do it too.

The Church faces a serious situation today, and concerned, active Catholics are troubled by cardinals contradicting cardinals, bishops contradicting bishops, and whole bishops' conferences, like Germany, calling for blessing same-sex marriages, ordaining women, and basically accommodating to the culture.

The Church in Germany says the clergy sex abuse scandal was so hurtful, we must regain credibility by accommodating to the culture's understanding of sexuality. It allows its employees to be in same-sex relationships and blesses same-sex relationships in some dioceses. The German Church leads the way going over the edge in part due to decades of very skeptical scripture scholarship. Without belief in the Word of God, we are susceptible to reducing the Church's mission to this-worldly goals.

The undermining of Scripture is a fundamental reason why this is happening. One thing we must do—something key to our own lives at Renewal Ministries—is recover our confidence in the inspiration and authority of Sacred Scripture. The Constitution on Sacred Revelation from Vatican II says God is the primary author of Sacred Scripture. While He works through the human authors and their mentalities and culture, what He inspires them to assert is indeed asserted by God Himself:

Everything asserted by the inspired authors or sacred writers must be held to be asserted by the Holy Spirit... as teaching solidly, faithfully, and without error that truth which God wanted put into the sacred writings for the sake of salvation. (Dei verbum, 11)

As St. Paul says, Sacred Scripture is not just a human word, but the Word of God (1 Thes 2:13). Our salvation depends on hearing, believing, and obeying the Word of God. The salvation of everybody we care about depends on believing what God reveals to us about who we human beings are, why He created us, and what we must do to be saved. That's why we need to remind people about the status of Sacred Scripture in all our ministries, conversations, families, and countries.

We also must get clear about marriage and sexuality—which compose the point of the spear that the culture is using against the heart of the Church. If we lose clarity about our God-given identities, we're going to wander around in a massive confusion, being tossed about by every powerful political pressure. God created us male and female for the purpose of coming to-

gether in marriage open to life—that's it. Every exercise of genital sexuality outside of holy marriage offends the Lord and damages people. It darkens our minds, destroys our bodies, and confuses our psyches. That means it's hard to say, but we need to in the right situations—that masturbation, pornography, fornication, adultery, and homosexual activity are offensive to the Lord and hurt people. We hear about the plague of pornography in the Church today, even among Church leaders, and that will darken their minds and hearts. That will take away their zeal for proclaiming the truth. We need to recover the truth about sexuality and marriage. If Satan can destroy basic human identity, he can destroy families and wreck young people, like he's doing right now.

California's governor recently passed a law saying school boards can't exclude LGBTQ material from schools. And in Finland and England, efforts are underway to prohibit people from saying things in the Bible. Underneath this lies a guilty conscience—people want us to condone their actions. But even natural law tells us that, despite temptations or inclinations some people may have, that's not what we were created for.

Scripture tells us that when people commit sins, they often try to encourage others to do the same (Rom 1:32). People who have rebelled want other people to rebel. People who have given themselves over to the darkness want other people to give themselves over to the darkness, so that no one can say there's anything wrong with their actions. They're trying to seal themselves off from any correction and from their only hope—Jesus!

Paul talks about things that need to happen before the Lord returns (2 Thes 3-12). The first is a great apostasy. Apostasy isn't something pagans do; it's something Christians do. It's a turning away from the faith on the part of those who once had it—which is happening now.



A new US study rephrased the question about whether Catholics believe in the Real Presence, and two-thirds of people really do believe in it.¹ However, the Eucharistic Revival campaign grew out of a study that said two-thirds of people didn't believe in it. It depends on how you ask the question, but it also showed that only seventeen percent of US Catholics attend Mass weekly. Whatever the state of belief in the real presence of the Eucharist is, the state of obedience

is very low. Faith isn't just believing the truths of the faith; it's obeying the one who speaks these truths and doing the works of faith. Faith without works is dead.

17% of Catholics attend Mass weekly.

"Jesus became the source of salvation for those who obey him." (Heb 5:9)

Obedience is not popular, but we need to obey Jesus and his Word.

Amid this great apostasy, there are bright spots. The Lord is cultivating a remnant—a relatively small, but still significant, number of people alive in the Lord and committed to following Him. May we all echo the song *When the Saints Go Marching In*:

"Lord, I want to be in that number!"

Paul also says that before the Lord comes, what is restraining evil will be removed (2 Thes 6-7). What is left to restrain evil? Western culture has experienced a systematic attempt to remove any restraint on evil through abortion, euthanasia, the transgender movement, and many other things. Silencing people. Taking away religious freedom. Taking away respect for evidence, logic, and reason. Who would have guessed that the Catholic Church would emerge as one of the strongest defenders of logic, reason, and evidence?

When nations turn away from God, the punishment is awful. People become slaves to sin. Their minds are darkened.



Some people are "destined to perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved" (2 Thes 2:10). When God's Word pierces your heart and mind, it's very serious to bury it or turn away from it. Scripture says,

"To him who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away." (Mt 13:12)

That's truth about union with God, knowledge of God, and salvation. If we don't keep saying yes to the Lord as He unfolds his revelation to us, we may be plunged into darkness as punishment for refusing to love the truth and open our hearts to the light (Mt 13:14-15).

Nevertheless, we should always hope, pray, and sacrifice for people's salvation; never give up on them. In recent years, I've been profoundly struck by the Fatima apparitions. Mary showed the three elementary-age children a vision of hell. She thought it would help these young children, who were being called to a mission of salvation, to know that something's really at stake. There are consequences to believing and obeying and not believing and not obeying. Afterward, those children were totally concerned about the salvation of souls, particularly St. Jacinta. Almost daily, she asked,

"Have you offered some sacrifice for the salvation of souls?"

Mary herself said,

"So many souls are going to hell, because so few people are offering prayer and sacrifices for them."

If Mary was teaching today's children the same things she taught the Fatima children, many religious education programs would immediately fire her. Wow—that is worth contemplating.

Mary also said,

"Pray the rosary every day for world peace, because the world is in danger."

Guess what? The world is still in danger. What's the solution? Keep our eyes on Jesus. Obey Him. Pay attention to the prophetic warnings and reminders He is giving us through Mary. He will never abandon us.

We must stop editing the Gospel. We must stop omitting in our preaching, teaching, and conversations those parts that are disturbing—because they're supposed to be disturbing. They're supposed to disturb us into repentance, holiness, and mission. Calls for the New Evangelization won't be met with enthusiasm unless people believe something's at stake. If God is so merciful that everybody's going to be saved, why bother? God is merciful, but even in the Divine Mercy devotions, Jesus told St. Faustina—nobody talks about this—that "many people are perishing because they're not availing themselves of my mercy. Tell people about my mercy because the Day of my Judgment is drawing near!"

Your brother in Christ,

Rolph Martin

Ralph Martin

ENDNOTE

1. Catholic News Agency, "New study shows that now almost two-thirds of US Catholics believe in Real Presence," Denver Catholic, Sept. 20, 2023, https://denvercatholic.org/new-study-shows-that-now-almost-two-thirds-of-us-catholics-believe-in-real-presence.



ARTWORK
Sermon and Deeds of the Antichrist
by Luca Signorelli



When the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement burst onto the scene, many people of good will, including myself, initially expressed support for its efforts to fight racism. Nevertheless, we quickly learned that BLM's mission extended far beyond overcoming racism.

Reading the group's mission statement, I was surprised to learn that its founding leaders admitted to being trained Marxist revolutionaries committed to "dismantle the patriarchal practice" and "disrupt the Western-prescribed nuclear family." They eventually scrubbed these references from their website.

BLM's attack on "patriarchy" and the "nuclear family" reminded me of an article written by Mallory Millet, the sister of Kate Millet, a founding member of the National Organization of Women (NOW). Kate authored *Sexual Politics*, a book the New York Times called "the Bible of women's liberation." Mallory, a practicing Catholic, wrote the article shortly after her sister's death.

Mallory mentions a shocking description of a meeting she attended, at her sister's invitation, of women in the earliest stages of launching NOW:

At the beginning of every meeting for "consciousness-raising" was a litany of scripted goals and responses such as: "Why are we here today?... To make revolution.... How?... By destroying the family... By destroying the American Patriarch.... By taking away his power.... By destroying monogamy.... By promoting promiscuity, eroticism, prostitution, and homosexuality!"

Like BLM, NOW's founding leaders were Marxist revolutionaries determined to "make revolution"—to radically change the entire political and social order. What stood in the way of their revolution? The traditional family and the authority of the father. Their weapon of destruction was a sexual revolution, the total undermining of the Judeo-Christian sexual ethic.



What stood in the way of their revolution? The traditional family and the authority of the father.

In Awake, Not Woke, Noelle Mering identifies the origins of this revolutionary consciousness in the Frankfurt School, a collection of Marxist intellectuals who moved to New York City in 1935. They brought with them the "dramatic convergence of Marxist philosophy, Freudian psychology, rank

perversion, and all manner of lurid ideas and practices introduced for the destruction and dismantling of Western culture by way of the destruction and dismantling of the family."³

According to the Frankfurt School, the Marxist Revolution failed to take hold in Western society because of its commitment to God and family, especially the traditional family, with the father's role as its protector and defender, serving as a bulwark against the revolutionary ideology. The first step to undermining this "internalized authoritarianism" was to depose the father. Mering summarizes their strategy:

If authoritarianism was the subconscious obstacle to revolution, the remedy...[was] the subversion of the father. Making men lecherous would engender suspicion and distrust in wives and rebellion in children.⁴

Weakening the sexual mores of culture is at the heart of dismantling the family by way of the father... Through sexual coarseness, the father becomes weak and devoid of moral authority, the wife becomes devalued and resentful, and the children grow cynical and rebellious. Everyone becomes wounded.⁵

It's sobering to see how effective this strategy of breaking down the political and social order of society by a conscious deconstruction of the traditional family has been. In the minds of its creators, the sexual revolution was fundamentally *the* instrument for political revolution.

The dramatic rise of the trans movement represents an even more radicalized expression of the same strategy. On the surface, it's about compassion and rights; underneath, it is rage against nature and the created order. Susan Stryker, a trans woman and founding theorist in the trans movement, said,

I am a transexual and therefore I am a monster. This body is destined to channel its rage and revenge against the naturalized heterosexual order, against traditional family values, and against the hegemonic oppression of nature itself.⁶

Like the traditional Marxist, these movement leaders see all human relations as relations of power—a battle between oppressors and oppressed. Family, father, Church, and even nature itself are seen as a constellation of oppressive powers that dominates the weak. Nature itself becomes an enemy to overthrow. And finally, God, the creator of the whole oppressive story, must be deconstructed if the revolutionaries are to reach political utopia and radical autonomy.

People embrace such movements for many reasons: to achieve political utopia, to escape abuse at the hands of bad men, or to navigate sexual identity confusion, etc. These movements attract because they seem to be all about compassion, freedom, helping the oppressed and marginalized, and providing a place to belong and a mission to live for. Even Christian leaders champion and defend their cause.

These movements, however, will never deliver on their promises. They may effectively deconstruct the social order, but they will never construct a healthy social, political, and cultural life. They have "exchanged the truth about God for a lie" (Rom 1:25). They've fallen to humanity's constant temptation to "suppress the truth" about God (Rom 1:19). In their refusal to "honor him as God and or give thanks to him . . . they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened" (Rom 1:21). Pope Benedict XVI describes this dynamic:

The entire life of a society, political as well as personal decisions, can in this way rest on a dictatorship of untruth: of how things are presented and reported instead of reality itself. An entire society can thus fall from the truth into shared deceit, into a slavery of untruth, of not-being . . . What is unnatural becomes normal: the person who lives against truth also lives against nature. People's power of invention no longer serves what is good but the ingenuity and refinement of evil. The relationship between man and wife, between parents and children is dissolved, and in this way the sources of life are blocked up. It is no longer life that reigns but death, and a civilization of death has become established.7

It's a rebellion of the creature against the creator. Society is falling from truth into a shared deceit. The fundamental battle is not political or cultural; it's spiritual. The power behind it is not a handful of atheist revolutionaries; its demonic. The battle is for the eternal destiny of human beings.

Our Lady's prophetic words to Sr. Lucia of Fatima describe what we're seeing in these revolutionary movements:

The final battle between the Lord and the reign of Satan will be about marriage and family. Don't be afraid, because anyone who operates for the sanctity of marriage and the family will always be contended and opposed in every way, because this is the decisive issue... however, Our Lady has already crushed its head.8

Society is falling from truth into a shared deceit.

The fundamental battle is not political or cultural; it's spiritual . . . The battle is for the eternal destiny of human beings.

We don't know whether this is the final battle. We do know that this is a battle between kingdoms of light and darkness, between Christ and Satan. We also know this battle has already been won!

He himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil... (Heb 2:14-15)

Our Lord has won the victory! Let's move forward in faith and confidence. Let's not get discouraged by the tactics of the devil. The Lord said,

"I have said this to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

ENDNOTES

- 1. Mike Gonzalez and Andrew Olivatro, "The Agenda of Black Lives Matters is Far Different Than the Slogan," The Heritage Foundation, July 3, 2020, https://www.heritage.org/progressivism/commentary/the-agenda-black-lives-matter-far-different-the-slogan.
- 2. Patti Maquire Armstrong, "You Need to Know This About the Age in Which We Live," National Catholic Register, March 11, 2018, https://www.ncregister.com/blog/you-need-to-know-this-about-the-age-in-which-we-live.
- 3. Noelle Mering, *Awake, Not Woke: A Christian Response to the Cult of Progressive Ideology* (Gastonia, NC: TAN Books, 2021), 27.
- 4. Mering, "Awake, Not Woke," 39.
- 5. Ibid., 129.
- 6. Emily Glover, "Chris Rufo Releases New Documentary on Trans Takeover," Catholic Vote, July 13, 2023, https://catholicvote.org/chris-rufo-transtakeover-documentary.
- 7. Benedict XVI, *The Yes of Jesus Christ: Spiritual Exercises in Faith, Hope and Love* (Chestnut Ridge, NY: Crossroad Publishing, 2005), 87.
- 8. "Fatima visionary predicted 'final battle' would be over marriage, family," Catholic News Agency, Oct. 13, 2021, www.catholicnewsagency.com/ news/34155/fatima-visionary-predicted-finalbattle-would-be-over-marriage-family.





BY NANCY GREENHAW Country Coordinator for Zambia

Nancy and Lloyd Greenhaw minister in the United States, Haiti, Papua New Guinea, Ethiopia, and several other countries in Africa. They conduct missions, conferences, and retreats for adults and youth. They also are involved in prison ministry and work with the homeless.

Nancy and Lloyd live in Texas and have two daughters, fourteen grandchildren, and eleven great-grandchildren.

Joseph Auno and his wife, Francesca, lead Uganda's Emmaus Community, which has renewed and strengthened the faith of hundreds of priests and many bishops throughout Uganda and other African countries. Joseph recently served as a member of our mission team to Zambia.

We were excited to be in Zambia for the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. We believe it will be a new beginning for the nation and all the participants.

Joseph Aonu, from Uganda's Emmaus Community, joined our team. He was a great blessing! He shared his personal testimony of experiencing the grace of the Holy Spirit, which changed many people's attitudes. They related to his testimony, and as he told them about the remarkable effects baptism in the Holy Spirit is having in many Ugandan dioceses, he really had their attention. We were all stunned to hear that the bishops in ten Ugandan dioceses requested Life in the Spirit Seminars for all their priests in 2023, and that there was a waiting list for several other dioceses!

PRIEST AND SISTERS RETREAT

We began with a priest and sister's retreat. Many had struggled with personal problems for years, trying unsuccessfully to break free. Thankfully, we were able to pray with many of them. We also taught on personal prayer and the Five Keys:

- repentance and faith
- forgiveness
- renunciation
- **taking authority**
- and the Father's blessing.

God set many free! Three priests told us their priesthood was restored! Praise God!



Lloyd then spoke about how all the popes since John XXIII have taught that the Renewal is an essential part of the Church, which exists to evangelize. He also discussed Jesus' model of evangelization. Many had never heard these teachings, and their eyes were opened to their personal missions. We prayed for a release of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the special authority God has given priests.

We also shared testimonies of God's mercy and power. Everyone was taking notes and asking questions. As usual, there was much interest when I taught about forgiveness, saying that it is not a feeling but a decision. God can heal feelings, but He is waiting for us to make a conscious decision to forgive.

We had several ministry sessions. The ones on renunciation and the De-Grandis prayer on forgiveness (www. renewalministries.net/forgiveness-prayer) were especially powerful. Most participants began walking in a deeper understanding of what it means to be a child of God.

We then asked them to pray with each other. They loved it, and several people found freedom.

GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH

Barbara Heil joined us for two days of teaching at Good Shepherd Parish. We taught on the release of the Holy Spirit, the Five Keys, and Catholic apologetics. Barbara's lessons focused on these themes: "Blessed be the God and Fa-

FORGIVENESS...

it is not a **FEELING** but a **DECISION.**

ther of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens" and "For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will" (Eph 1:3,9).

Although I have read those verses many times, Barbara brought home their meaning in a new way. God has given us every spiritual blessing and all wisdom and insight to know his will. Everyone loved it!

I spoke about how Scripture teaches us about the need for greater faith. I shared about "the good thief" who, after a life of sin, became a saint (Lk 23:43). I also taught about the Samaritan woman who asked Jesus to help her daughter. Jesus refused and even called her a dog, yet she persisted in faith and said, "Even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs" (Mk 7:28). Jesus marveled at her faith, and her daughter was healed.

Barbara Heil, a friend of Renewal Ministries, led sessions that helped listeners understand God's Word in a deeper way.

GOLDEN JUBILEE

This was a huge event, and the organizers did a great job. The music ministry was superb, and the participants really know how to praise! There were times of worship before every talk, daily Mass, and evening ministry sessions.

Lloyd taught on *The Holy Spirit of Renewal*. He outlined the history of the Renewal and proclaimed that the Renewal was born for a purpose—to bring everyone to a saving knowledge of Jesus. We should strive to make not just converts, but disciples.

I led sessions on the Five Keys, renunciation, and forgiveness. Very few people had heard of the Five Keys before, but they were more than ready to learn! These beautiful people entered fervently into kicking out those things that have held them in bondage. Afterward, many asked for prayer and shared testimonies of healing and freedom. God was working!

Barbara said that now is the time for everyone to eagerly seek after the gifts of the Holy Spirit. She shared her conversion from pagan to preacher and her journey into the Catholic Church. People were enthralled!

This outreach is bearing much fruit. Some sisters and a group of priests were so excited that immediately after leaving the retreat, they started their own groups to spread the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the Five Keys. God is working!



St. Louis, MO SEEK

January 1-5 Pete Burak Details: seek.focus.org

Louisville, KY Legatus* January 4 Mary Healy

Traverse City, MI Women's Conference

January 13 Dr. Mary Healy Details: absolutecatholic.com

Livonia, MI "Why Be Catholic" Series at St. Michael the Archangel

January 15 Peter Herbeck Details: livoniastmichael.org

Naples, FL St. William Parish Mission

January 18 Dr. Mary Healy Details: saintwilliam.org

Shelby Township, MI St. Kieran Parish Mission

January 25 Peter Herbeck Details: stkieran.org

Lexington, KY Parish Mission

January 29 Lavinia Spirito Details: setonchurch.com

* Not open to the public.



PLEASE PRAY

- ► That the Lord would increase our childlike faith and our trust in Him as we move forward into a new year.
- That the Lord would protect all our families and guide us with his peace in these turbulent
- For the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members, especially as they face the challenges of illness and economic uncertainty.



Man being created in love cannot live without love. Either he loves God, or he loves himself and the world. Without faith, we are blind. He who does not see, does not know, he who does not know does not love, he who does not love God loves himself and his pleasures. He fixes his heart on things that pass away like smoke. He cannot know the truth. only falsehood because he has no light. He is in a mist. If he had light, he would see that all he loves can give him nothing but eternal death. So you see, nothing is solid in this life but God.

// St. John Vianney

MISSIONS



Mexico January 5-15 Jim Murphy & Team

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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