

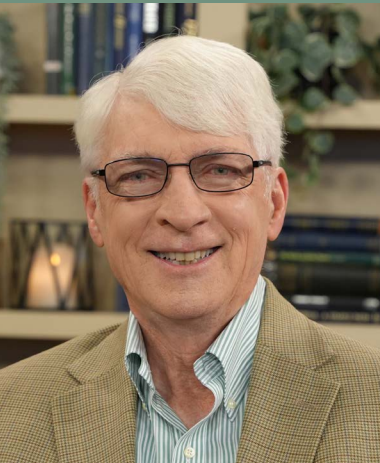


RENEWAL MINISTRIES

CATHOLIC RENEWAL & EVANGELIZATION

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AUGUST 2026



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Dear You,

Without you, we couldn't do it.

I know that's not a conventional opening to this letter, but it's what came to mind as I started to write it.

Lately, we have received several significant bequests from very long-time donors who are truly beloved for their faithfulness, even apart from their bequests, which we didn't know about in advance. If you're interested in remembering Renewal Ministries in your will, you can contact Chris Baker in our office by calling 734-662-1730 or emailing bequests@renewalministries.net.

Those who have been supporting us all these years have also been on my mind as we've been sending out signed copies of my new book *The Coming Judgment: Are We Ready?* to our consistently most generous donors. At the same time, I fully know that Jesus' commentary on the widow's mite applies to many who give little in the eyes of the world but give "more than the rest" as it is given sacrificially with love. **I wish we could give free copies to all our donors, but as that is not an option, we are offering a special 20% discount on the new book for those who order in August.**

I want to share with you the very first response I received after the book had been officially launched:

"I have read many of your books and all I can say is, 'Thank you.' Well, I guess I can say more because I'm about to.

Your books, to some degree, have saved my life, or at least put it back on track. They are very clearly written and of great value. My wife concurs.

I just finished your latest book about judgment. Wonderful book. You mention that you are excited to get to heaven so that you can sing God's praises at the top of your lungs. . . . However, every book you have written is singing God's praises at the top of your lungs and with all your heart."

His reference to singing God's praises at the top of my lungs refers to something I said in the chapter on heaven in the new book.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

20%
OFF

all orders placed
in August!

ONLINE

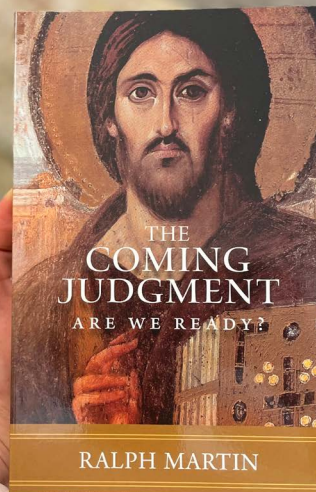
www.renewalministries.net/tcj

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support Renewal Ministries now,
would you consider
remembering us in your will?*

.....

One significant way you can help ensure Renewal Ministries' continued work of Catholic renewal and evangelization is to join the St. Catherine of Siena Society by designating us as a beneficiary in your will or trust.

For more information,
please contact Chris Baker:

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bequests@renewalministries.net

...

renewalministries.net/plannedgiving

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Just a week after receiving this, Peter Herbeck and I were visiting with a major donor who has supported us generously for many years and I was stunned when he looked me in the eye and said:

"You saved my life.

And the lives of my

family members, as well.

That's why I'm supporting you."

The moment was such that I didn't feel that asking for particulars would have been in order. Something very significant had been said and it was a holy moment that was best just to be received in the presence of God.

And then, one of the theologians who gave an endorsement for the book, Dr. Peter Williamson, who holds the Cardinal Adam Maida Chair in Biblical Studies at Sacred Heart Major Seminary, emailed me after having read a "liberal" theologian's take on the four last things (a rather diluted interpretation of what the Bible really says and what the Church teaches). He told me again how important he thought my book was in light of the prevailing skepticism.

Just yesterday, I met with a Dominican priest who works in the Caribbean and to whom I gave a copy of *The Coming Judgment*. He emailed me today:

*"I started reading it. Wonderful!
I fully agree totally!!"*

I also received an email from Brazil commenting on the Portuguese translation of my book *A Life in the Spirit: A Memoir*.

*"I have just finished reading it.
I found it fantastic and the
reading was impactful.
I am sure it will greatly
influence my life in the Spirit."*

As you know, we carry out live, in-person, evangelization missions throughout the world each year,

and continue to grow our TV, radio, and YouTube ministries, but from the very beginning of Renewal Ministries, our books and booklets have been an important way of carrying out our preaching and teaching mission.

As my wife and I say to each other frequently when we repeat something to each other, "I know I said it before, but I really, really liked....," so I'm going to say it again: I *really* am thrilled at the very highly respected scholars and leaders who have endorsed the books. I couldn't have asked for more relevant, insightful backing from such significant scholars and leaders.

Again, thank you for all you have done and continue to do.

Even with all this good news, there is always the suffering that is part of our journey of purification. At each staff meeting, we pray for all our supporters. Thank you for your prayers for us.

Your true brother in Jesus,

Ralph Martin

Ralph

P.S.

I just got off the phone with three of our missionaries who are heading out in an hour for Papua New Guinea. They will travel 14 hours from Detroit to Seoul, South Korea, and then six plus hours to Singapore. They will stay overnight in Singapore, and then they will travel six plus hours to Papua New Guinea and another hour to the interior!

They are going with joy because they know people will be helped. By the time you get this newsletter, they will be back and we will probably be able to tell their tale in the September newsletter.

3 Ways to Love Your Kids

BY DEBBIE HERBECK

I firmly believe that the family is ground zero in the enemy's plan of attack. The Lord has put it on my heart to support, equip, and empower families, in particular parents and grandparents, to fight the strategy of the enemy. We know who has won the victory, but God is calling us to engage in the battle. I want to share with you three very simple but profound ways that we can endeavor to love our children into the kingdom of God in the midst of this battle.



Grow

The first way you can love your children as parents and grandparents is to grow. We cannot give what we do not have. We need to continue to be united to the vine, abide in Christ, and pursue our own relationship with the Lord. We don't get to a certain age in our lives when we're done growing. His mercies are new every morning. Growing doesn't just give us more intellectual knowledge to pass on to our kids. It makes us greater, more authentic witnesses. We want to strive to be saints, especially in the context of our own family. We don't know how our actions are going to affect those around us, but we know that if we continue to love the Lord, He will use that to be an authentic witness to our children. So, don't stop growing in the Lord. Pray daily, read the Scriptures, and dive into the promises of God.



Fight

The second way to love your children is to fight. We have to understand that as parents and even as grandparents in a certain way, God has given us spiritual authority over our families. If he's giving us spiritual authority to preach, teach, and help our kids know Jesus, He is absolutely giving us spiritual authority to fight the battle for our children. Our children are not the enemy. Their friends and the environments they're in are not the enemy. We know Scripture says that we have a spiritual enemy—"the devil who is prowling around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour" (1 Pt 5:8). The enemy is a liar and a thief and he's trying to steal our children from us. Even if we can't be in every single environment that our kids are in, we can pray for them daily. We can pray for them by name with specific things that are on our hearts for them.



Love

Lastly, we want to love. The deepest fundamental desire of every human being is a desire to be loved, seen, and known. Even if your kid is giving you the cold shoulder, rejecting you, or not acting like they want what you have, they want love. So, we pray for the grace to be able to love our children as Christ does. A prayer I would pray often when my kids were teenagers was, "Lord, show me what you love in this child and help me to see what you see." That changed my heart and the way that I prayed for them and loved them. Answering this call to love is the most important thing that we can do. When people asked Mother Teresa, "How do we change the world?" she would say, "Go home and love your family." That is my charge to you today. Go home and love your family, and love them with the love of Christ.

The enemy does not have the final say. God has won the victory. Let's continue to grow, fight, and love our children.

This article is condensed from Debbie Herbeck's YouTube video of the same title, which can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/kGuAi3XSTBo>.

Who Deserves Your Ultimate Allegiance?

— BY PETE BURAK —



I recently read a book that I found very compelling and insightful for this moment we are living in. The book is called *Cultural Sanctification: Engaging the World Like the Early Church* by Stephen Presley. I was captivated by this idea of cultural sanctification. We instinctually understand what culture is and as Catholics, we have a sense of what sanctification is, but to bring the two of them together is an interesting juxtaposition. **What does it look like for us as Catholics to be in the world in such a way that it leads to the sanctification of our friends, families, and neighbors, and ultimately, to the transformation of culture?**

In this book, Dr. Presley analyzes the early Church, particularly in the second century before Constantine legalized Christianity and the faith transformed the Roman Empire. He explores the wisdom

of the early Church fathers and martyrs and considers how we can utilize it today. In the centuries of Christendom, from Constantine up until just recently, the mores—the systems and processes by which we function in the world—were formed by the Christian worldview. By and large, there was a common understanding of who we are, what we're made for, and where we're going,



“

... we are able to transform culture if we are firmly rooted in who we are in Christ.

and it was all heavily influenced and grounded in a Christian ethic and a Christian understanding of truth. **Today, we still have Catholic hospitals, schools, and politicians, and the Church still has influence in the world and is still a player in society, but the mores and rituals of society and the way we navigate our culture now is post-Christian.** Things look more like the apostolic age in ancient Rome than what it has looked like the last several centuries. Dr. Presley shares a few insights about our situation that are critical for this moment.

IDENTITY

The first point he makes addresses identity. He talks about how our identity formation is something that is bestowed by the Lord through catechesis in the formation of the Church and this formation is meant to happen before we engage the culture. In other words, we are able to

transform culture if we are firmly rooted in who we are in Christ. If we're going into the culture trying to find our identity, we won't be able to sanctify the culture. The early Christians had an intense time of catechesis that was designed to transform them so that when they were navigating their life, they were navigating it as a Christian. **The early Church understood that in order to transform society, they had to live and think differently. This wasn't going to happen accidentally and it wasn't going to happen overnight. Yes, there were stories of profound conversions, but that conversion then required discipleship and catechesis.**

Dr. Presley gives examples of the early Christians diving deep into people's lives. When a person went to catechesis, the Christians would ask them what they did for work. If their employment was to build pagan idols that the Romans could worship, then part of the catechesis was to tell them to stop doing that. The community would then be there to support them and help them make that transformation.

As we talk about transforming culture and the sanctification of culture, we cannot skip past our own conversion, discipleship, and catechesis. We have to ask: As we step into the world, is our identity strong enough to withstand the swirling storms of confusing narratives? Has the necessary virtue been formed in us through the Spirit and through repeated good actions in such a way that when we go into the world, we look, sound, and act differently from the people around us?

POLITICAL DUALISM

A second point Dr. Presley observes is that the early Christians lived with what he calls political dualism. The early Christians had a remarkable respect for earthly authority, but their ultimate allegiance was always to God. He shares a story about Poly-

carp who was brought before a Roman consul and put on trial. To the authority, Polycarp quoted Romans chapter 13, which speaks about how Christians are called to respect authority, pay taxes, and be good citizens. Polycarp was arguing that Christians are the best citizens because we respect earthly authority and we understand how it should never supersede our ultimate allegiance to God. This was his intention, even in that moment when he was on trial for being a bad citizen because he was worshipping the one true God instead of the multiple gods and because he was not participating in all that the Roman society was asking of him at the time.

IMPROVISATION METHOD

The third thing that I want to draw from this book is about the method for the sanctification of culture. A word he uses to describe this method is improvisation—to have an ability to navigate the various cultural moments and interactions in the Spirit and not just follow a set of strategies or scripts. **In other words, Christians are called to move society not by simply laying out a strategy and sticking to it, but by being able to flow with the Spirit in each environment that they find themselves in so that whatever is demanded in that moment, they're capable of responding.**

This is most profoundly evidenced in the stories of the martyrs because each martyrdom was different. Every trial and every temptation within a martyrdom was different. He shares how Christians were able to flow in the Spirit and respond in the moment to what was right in front of them to extend the kingdom, to bear witness to the truth, and to remain faithful until the end.

ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE

Perhaps the most recurring theme in the book is that the early Christian Church lived with an eternal perspective while they were committed to the moment. They were engaged in the temporal world around them, but they were always focused on what was to come. Their hope was in the Resurrection, not just in the transformation of a political entity or the culture. Their hope was in Jesus Christ, in Him crucified and risen from the dead. Their hope was in Him extending that life into them.

Dr. Presley gives a compelling example of this. He said that this hope was so tangible that the Romans were trying to squash the early Christians' belief in the resurrection of the dead. In France, a group of Christians were martyred, and afterwards the Romans burned their bodies and threw them into the river so as to prevent them from rising from the dead. The Romans were committed to breaking the Christians' hope because they saw how committed they were to their belief in the resurrection from the dead.

The Church needs to be radically and passionately committed to the here and now and the needs of this moment. We need to be committed to the needs of our world, the poorest of the poor, and everyone that the Lord places in our life, but we also need to keep an eye on where we're going and our destiny in the Lord. Our hope, conviction, and assurance of what is to come can drive us, transform us, and help us to live differently in our society.

Christians are the best citizens because we respect earthly authority and we understand how it should never supersede our ultimate allegiance to God.



This article is condensed from Pete Burak's YouTube video of the same title, which can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/kpDMoatljKU>.



Pursuing HEALING & WHOLENESS

BY JAKE KHYM

I like to begin my testimony by saying that my mom and dad are great people, and I love them dearly. They came into their marriage fairly broken and so their brokenness manifested quickly. My mom ended up needing to leave the home and go into the hospital for an extended stay for mental health reasons when I was little. **So, at a very young age, I experienced abandonment, and the experience of abandonment is completely contrary to what it means to be human.** We are not meant to be alone. My mom didn't do it because she wanted that. She just was not well.

Later, my mom and dad started going to marriage counseling to continue their healing journey. Unfortunately, one of the doctors they worked with prescribed pornography as something to help their marriage. When that occurred, pornography came into our home. My brothers and I found it when I was six years old. The combination of the abandonment and the exposure

to pornography was powerful. The lies that came into my heart with the abandonment were, "I'm not loved and I'm not lovable." The pornography really distorted my perspective of love. These things led me to pursuing love in all the wrong places.

When I got a little older, my brother asked me at one point, "Have you heard of this new thing called the internet? There are things on there that you might want to look at." So, without knowing what that was, I went on the internet and began this deep struggle with and addiction to pornography.

I went to college, and it was the first time that anyone ever told me about sin, what sin does, and this thing called hell. It was a priest who told me this and he said, "Do you realize that these sexual sins are actually mortal sins, that they can separate you from the life of God for good?" That terrified me because I had these wounds of abandonment and the last thing I wanted was to be eternally separated from or abandoned by God. What the priest showed me was that there was a remedy and the remedy was God's love and mercy. He said that the best way to access that love and mercy is through confession.

I began to go to confession like it was about to go out of style. There were times I would go daily because I kept falling. The battle with my own sin began, and I realized that I had an addiction. Here's the beautiful part. I went to confession twice a day sometimes. For example, I would go on a Saturday morning and because of the depth of the pain, wounds,

“Wisdom from the Saints”

“I tell you that you have less to suffer in following the cross than in serving the world and its pleasures.”

// St. John Vianney

and addiction, I would fall again. Then, I would go and knock on Father's rectory door sometime in the afternoon. He got so used to me that he would come to the door already wearing a stole and he would hear my confession right at the threshold. He never once got upset with me. He just showed me mercy upon mercy, and I'm eternally grateful for him.

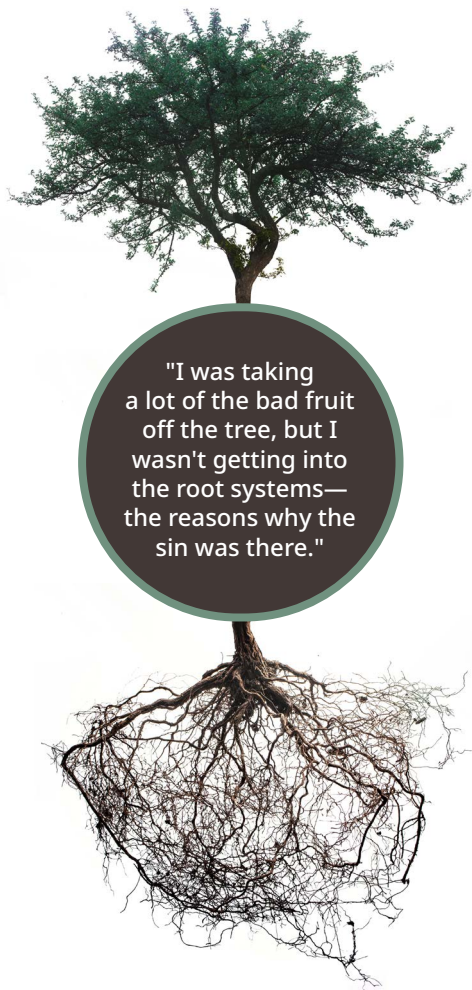
At the time, I was studying psychology at Auburn University, but as I started going to Adoration and learning about the faith at the Newman Center, the priest said to me, "You know, these things you're learning about? There's a really good school you should consider where you can go and get a theology degree. It's called Franciscan University. You should check it out." So, I ended up going there. I went because I wanted to study theology, but when I was there, I encountered the Lord in a powerful way. I would say it was the first time that I consciously knew that the Holy Spirit was real and that I could have a relationship with Him. I also met my wife there.

I wish the story could end here with a nice crescendo of bliss, but it doesn't. My wife and I started dating, and although I was battling and facing the sin, I was not experiencing a lot of breakthrough or freedom. As Bob Schuchts would say, I was taking a lot of the bad fruit off the tree, but I wasn't getting into the root systems—the reasons why the sin was there. We can keep taking the bad fruit off the tree and bringing it to confession, which is important and good, but wouldn't it be nice to not have bad fruit anymore? You get in a cycle, an addictive pattern, and you don't understand what's going on deep below the surface that's fueling it all.

"...it was the first time that I consciously knew that the Holy Spirit was real and that I could have a relationship with Him."

Heather and I got married, and unfortunately, the sin continued. There was a fateful day where, in my pride and arrogance, I was boasting about how I knew which priest was good to go to for confessing sexual sin. Heather—I think by the power of the Spirit—just knew something was off and asked me, "How would you know this?" I was stuck and had to choose: Do I choose honesty and vulnerability, or do I continue to hide? I don't know why, but I chose honesty that day. We describe that day as the best and worst day of our marriage. It was the best day because it was the first day that was fully honest. It was the worst day because of everything that had happened up to that point. At this time, I started to get below the surface.

We had a friend who was a newly ordained priest visiting us, and when he walked into the restaurant, he looked like a different man. We thought, "What happened to this guy?"



He had life in him. He was different. We sat down and just asked, "How are you?" He then proceeded to share about diving into healing and getting serious about the wounds in his life, the lies he believed, the pain he suffered, and how that resulted in and fueled sin. It was right after all this stuff came out between Heather and me. I said, "I need that and I need it bad." He said, "Well, that's really convenient because there's another retreat coming up in three weeks, and I'll go with you." So, I got into healing ministry to receive it for myself.

I went to this retreat and got serious about my own story and how it impacted me. The whole point of healing is to have an ongoing encounter with love and truth. When that occurs, life changes. You're transformed. Confession and going to Mass were helping, but grace builds on nature and my nature was pretty broken. I wasn't disposed to the grace that I was receiving. I needed help to put my nature back together and that's what occurred in that healing retreat. It was a week of intensive healing prayer and psychotherapy, and it radically changed my life.

From that journey, I realized that I loved this deep soul work. I went on to get my graduate degree in counseling and began my practice. That's where Bob Schuchts and I connected. He had been doing ministry for a while when I joined him. We started to do ministry to priests and bishops. It's a beautiful thing because I've been so blessed by priests. They have loved me very, very well. It's a real gift for me to be able to return the favor.



This article was condensed from a YouTube video that can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/C1RxyYJrJgg>.

EVENTS

AUGUST 2026

View complete event list at
renewalministries.net/events.

* Not open to the public.

Jackson, MI
Pine Hills Girls Camp*

August 2-8

Debbie Herbeck & the Be Love Revolution Team

DeWitt, MI
Retreat for Third Order Dominicans*

August 8

Ralph Martin

Sarasota, FL
Legatus*

August 12

Pete Burak

Jupiter, FL
Legatus*

August 18

Pete Burak

Budapest, Hungary
Legatus Danube River Cruise*

August 14-23

Peter & Debbie Herbeck

Ogdensburg, NY
Companions of the Cross Annual Retreat*

August 27

Dr. Mary Healy

THE CHOICES WE FACE

The Choices We Face is the longest-running Catholic television program in the world! Each episode explores an important topic concerning the faith. Watch these and other episodes on our website at:

www.renewalministries.net/tcwf

AUGUST GUESTS & TOPICS:

The Priesthood

08/02/26 // Patti Mansfield

Patti Mansfield offers a teaching on the priesthood as the love of the heart of Jesus. She highlights a threefold purity that the faithful long for in their shepherds: purity of heart, of doctrine, and of the moral life.

Seek the Anointing

08/09/26 // Peter Herbeck

Peter Herbeck preaches at the 2025 Lift Jesus Higher Rally on the importance of being rooted in our identity as a child of God so that we can live out of our anointing and be transformed as we walk in it.

Dual Motherhood

08/16/26 // Janelle Gergen

Janelle Gergen shares about the joyful and sorrowful mysteries of her life and how they prepared her for a life of service to the Church.

Brothers in Christ

08/23/26 // Fathers Zach & Drew Mabee

Fr. Zach Mabee and Fr. Drew Mabee share about their family life growing up, their conversion to Catholicism, and answering the call to priesthood.

Shown in the picture below from left to right: Fr. Zach Mabee, Peter Herbeck, Fr. Drew Mabee.



PLEASE PRAY

- For families to be rooted and grounded in Christ and to have faith in the powerful love of God.
- For greater surrender to the healing and transforming power of the Holy Spirit in the Church.
- For the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members.

RENEWAL MINISTRIES

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.

Scripture references in the newsletter are from the Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition of the Bible unless otherwise noted.



Thank You

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NEWSLETTER

Editor Jess Jenkins | **Design** Emily Bachelor

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