

RENEWAL MINISTRIES

CATHOLIC RENEWAL & EVANGELIZATION

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

MARCH 2024



Dear Friends,

I want to begin this month's letter with a thank you.

Over the past few months, the entire Renewal Ministries' team has been profoundly encouraged by your support. We're greatly blessed to be surrounded by such a cloud of witnesses that partners with us in mission through prayer, words of encouragement, the sharing of spiritual insights, and generous—even sacrificial—giving in unstable economic times. We've always been conscious of this blessing and grateful for it, but this year especially, amid the intensification of the spiritual battles inside and outside the Church, we have felt your support perhaps more than ever. We know we're not standing alone, and we are able to share that knowledge with all who read our newsletter, listen to our videos, attend events at which we are speaking, or live in countries we serve through missions. Thank you from all of us here at Renewal Ministries.

Speaking of the battle, it is surely intensifying! Now more than ever, we need one another. The political and cultural deconstruction of the world is deepening; the godless cult of self-expressive individualism continues to gain ground and do great harm, especially to the young; and, of course, there are growing battles, divisions, and spiritual compromises within the Church, even at her highest levels! That's a lot to face every day. It can be very discouraging, especially when these battles cause division in our own families. As St. Peter reminds us, the devil is on the prowl, "seeking someone to devour" (1 Pt 5:8).

The devil's ultimate strategy for each one of us is simple:

He's trying to get us to quit.

The only way he can win his battle against us is to get us to give up, to give in, to quit the fight. He tries to manipulate us, fill us with fear and discouragement, and cause us to lose hope. He tempts us to compromise, seek comfort, protect our idols, purchase safety, and abandon fidelity to Christ. As a good priest friend of mine has had to remind me over the years when I've struggled with

some of these temptations, the battle has already been won—period! The only way we as individuals lose is if we give up. Combat for the Christian looks different than any other form of battle.



COMBAT FOR THE CHRISTIAN LOOKS DIFFERENT THAN ANY OTHER FORM OF BATTLE.

We win simply by not giving up!

When St. Paul instructs us to put on the armor of God, he defines the battle-posture of the Christian (see Eph 6:10-20). He exhorts us to stand four times. Think about Paul's words. We ask,

"Lord, what should we do?"

St. Paul tells us:

Stand, stand, stand, stand! Stand on the Word of God. Put on the protective armor and stand ready to bear witness with God's Word, the teaching of Jesus, and the testimony of the apostles. Stand ready, not to battle with worldly weapons by attacking our enemies, but by being alert (1 Pt 5:8), keeping your head in all situations, and enduring hardship in order to express fidelity to Jesus and bear witness to the truth (2 Tm 4:5).

A LETTER ▶ FROM PETER HERBECK

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CREATE RIPPLES OF FAITH



For the same reasons you 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 Heather Schultz at 734-662-1730, ext. 130, or hschultz@renewalministries.net.

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RenewalMinistries.net/plannedgiving



Do you need help writing a will?
Renewal Ministries has partnered with My Catholic Will to make the process simple! Visit www.mycatholicwill.com/renewalministries and use code "RENEWAL" to make your will for free!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

These are hard times, but these are the times the Lord has given to us. I often think about the martyrs celebrated in the Book of Revelation:

"And they have conquered him (the devil) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death"
(Rv 12:11).

The martyr is the quintessential disciple. A martyr conquers through being baptized into Christ and washed clean by his precious blood, so that he or she no longer lives under the dominion of the devil and the powers of sin and death. The devil has no hold on them; they are no longer subject to the fear of death and are free from the enslaving power of inordinate self-love (Heb 2:14-15). By God's grace, their loves are rightly ordered, which allows them to make a sacrifice of their lives. They are faithful, suffering witnesses who conquer "not by violence afflicted, but through violence suffered."¹

God has chosen us for such a time as this. Only He knows how difficult these times will become and what He has in store for each one of us. For our part, we're called to live in a posture of readiness, standing each day on the rock that is our Lord Jesus Christ, and ready to bear witness to the truth in words and deeds, no matter the cost.

Let's pray for one another that we may not fall asleep and miss the precious gift of suffering, even a little, for the sake of the name of Jesus.

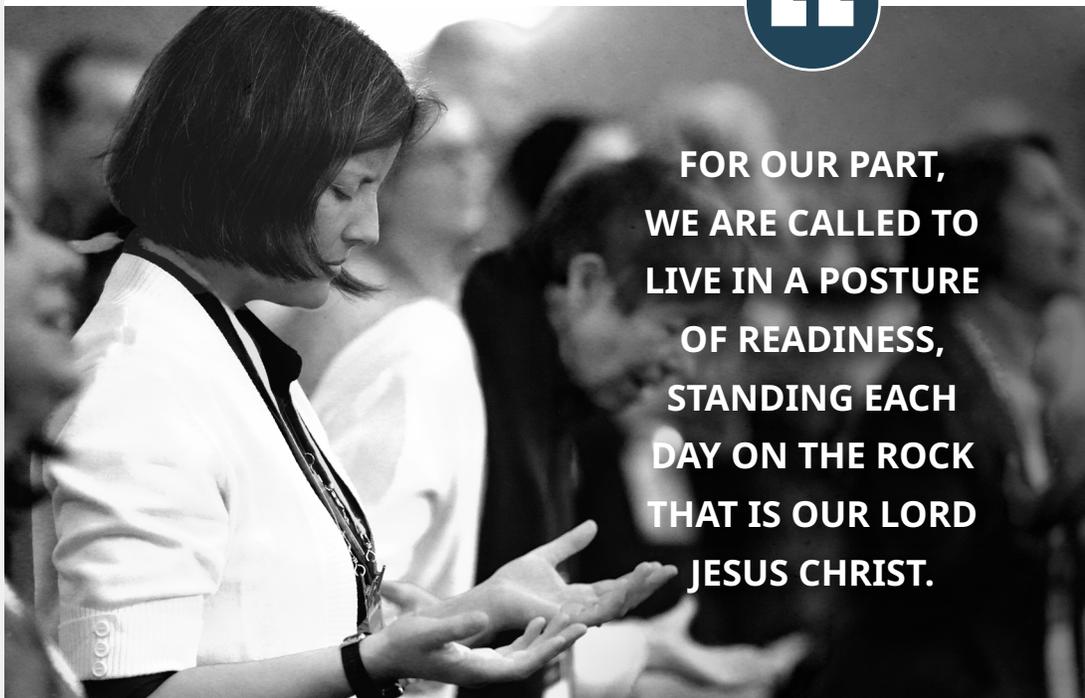
Beloved, do not be surprised by the fiery ordeal which comes upon you to prove you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice in so far as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.
(1 Pt 4:12-14)

Gratefully yours,

Peter

NOTES

[1] Msgr. A. Robert Nusca, *The Christ of the Apocalypse: Contemplating the Faces of Jesus in the Book of Revelation* (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Road Publishing, 2018), 35.



**FOR OUR PART,
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A Spirit-Led Encounter

BY ANTHONY FEOLA

Associate Director of Disciple Formation
for the Archdiocese of Detroit and
a Renewal Ministries' Mission Team Member

This article is condensed from one originally published by the Archdiocese of Detroit.

The powerful Spirit-led encounter between Philip and the Ethiopian in Acts 8:27-35 gives us a roadmap for unleashing the Gospel during this season of Eucharistic revival! Here are three simple points to implement today:

1 OBEY THE HOLY SPIRIT

"The Spirit said to Philip, 'Go . . .'"

Be open, available, and aware that the Holy Spirit wants to help you bring others to Jesus. He is the principal agent of the Church's mission (CCC 852).

2 MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

"Philip ran to him . . ."

At the Ethiopian's invitation, Philip sat with him and inquired if he understood what he was reading.

3 PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

"Then Philip opened his mouth . . ."

Without hesitation, Philip answers the deepest longing of this man's heart by sharing the *"good news of Jesus."*

Last year, at the start of the National Eucharistic Revival on Corpus Christi Sunday, a few hundred parishioners attended a eucharistic procession my parish organized in a public park. During adoration, a sixty-five-year-old man with a skateboard (whom I will call Don) sat down at the front of the crowd. I sensed the Holy Spirit's still, small voice urging me to go to him. I introduced myself and asked if he understood what was happening. Reeking of alcohol and perhaps expecting me to escort him from the premises, Don responded angrily,

"I know you came over here to tell me something, so just get it over with!"

The Holy Spirit guided my response,

"I have four things to say. First, God created you in his image and likeness because He loves you."

This provoked an onslaught of cussing. Once he calmed down, I continued,

"But you have the same problem I do—sin. Your sin separates you from God and his love."

Verbal persecution followed. Not giving up, I proclaimed the good news to him.

"Jesus came for you, died for you, and rose again for you."

Once Don finished his third rebuttal, I invited him to repent and respond to the Gospel. By the grace of God, when I asked to pray with him, Don was ready and willing. I gently placed my hand on his shoulder and invited the Holy Spirit to come.

Moments later, the eucharistic procession began and I invited Don to join us. He picked up his skateboard, and we began to follow Jesus, who was just as present as when He walked the streets of Jerusalem. As we walked, I shared more about God's love. Slowly, Don's heart softened.

I asked if he remembered the story of the Last Supper. He did, so I asked if he could finish these quotes, "Take and eat" and "Take and drink." As Don finished each sentence about Christ's body and blood, I pointed to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, drawing near us in the procession. Don soberly asked if this was Communion. I declared boldly: "That's Him!"

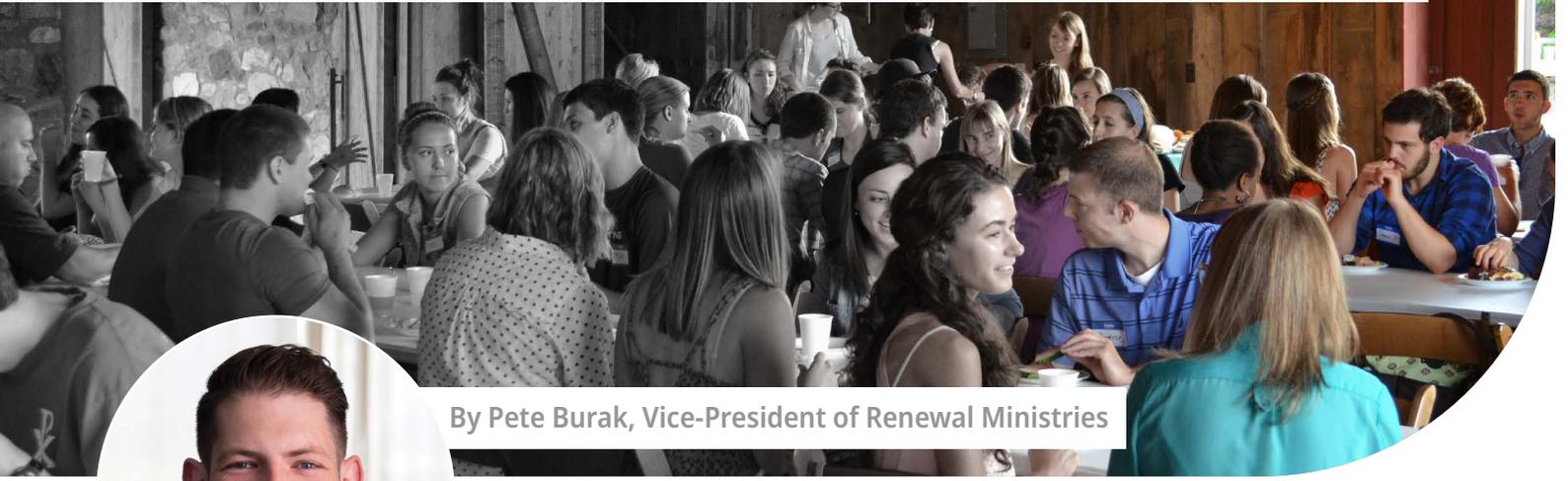
Just then, Jesus in the Eucharist passed directly in front of Don. Without any prompting, he fell to his knees, faced the ground, and reached his hands out on the grass. Moments later, with his demeanor completely changed, Don rose and wiped tears from his eyes.

When we obey the Spirit, meet people where they are, and unleash the Gospel with God's uncompromising love, we will encounter true eucharistic revival! Authentic adoration leads us to proclaim the Gospel to others, and proclaiming the Gospel leads us and those around us to recognize and adore Jesus in the Eucharist. In this way, unleashing the Gospel is eucharistic revival!

Holy Spirit, please consume my heart with the blazing fire of God's love in the Eucharist that not only transforms me but leads me to unleash the Gospel into the lives of the lost and broken.

Young Adult Discipleship

GRATEFUL FOR THE PAST . . . LOOKING FORWARD TO THE FUTURE



By Pete Burak, Vice-President of Renewal Ministries

It was the summer of 2011, and I didn't know what to do next. I had just graduated from Franciscan University of Steubenville with the plan of coming back to Michigan for a Master's Degree in Education. But as I filled out the application and thought about the path ahead, I only experienced peace and joy when I envisioned helping people meet Jesus. I had known Ralph Martin and Peter Herbeck most of my life, as my parents had lived in the same community as them for many years. I had always wanted to be like Peter, so it made sense to share with him my desire to serve the Lord. Sitting in the Herbecks' living room, I asked Peter if Renewal Ministries had any space for me. He replied with, "Not really, but let's pray about it and see what happens."

Soon after, I got a job as a gym teacher at a local Catholic school, and the principal gave me Fridays off to pursue ministry work. Peter graciously offered to meet and pray with me on those days, and I found myself sitting at his

feet, listening and learning about evangelization and discipleship. As time went on, I noticed an ache developing in me for my peers who had left the faith or had never heard the Gospel. I regularly prayed,

"Lord, break my heart for what breaks yours."

Eventually, Jesus answered that prayer. One day in adoration, I found myself crying, distressed to the core over young adults who did not know Jesus. This holy discontent, along with the leadership and sacrifice of many people, helped launch the Renewal Ministries' outreach known as i.d.9:16, and then just id, with the mission of helping young adults become intentional disciples of Jesus Christ.

The ache in my heart has not gone away, even as we've seen both significant mission fruitfulness and frustrating failures. Our team has grown and

changed; parishes we've partnered with have come and gone; the leaders we've formed have grown, built, and moved on. Through it all, we have desperately wanted people to meet Jesus, fall in love with Him, and share Him with others. We've tried to build communities of missionary disciples led by Spirit-filled leaders who have a deep and convicting desire and strategy to engage those in the pews and reach those who are not. We've conducted retreats all over the US and Canada, led Alpha courses, provided dozens and dozens of Disciples' Nights, produced leadership and discipleship content, and haven't stopped innovating and trying new things, because we only want to do what Jesus is inspiring us to do. **"Expectant listening" is one of our team values, which means we believe God desires to communicate with us and that we can hear and discern his will.**

Every year, Jesus invites us to emphasize new things, stop other ones, and trust Him more and more—and 2023 was no exception!

All of this leads to an announcement: Last spring, Director of Young Adult Discipleship Rachel Herbeck, Director of Operations Chris Baker, and I embarked on a period of discernment to hear from the Lord on his perspective



Through it all, we have desperately wanted people to meet Jesus, fall in love with Him, and share Him with others.

and plans for id moving forward. After much peaceful, occasionally surprising, and hopeful conversations, and with the approval of Ralph, Peter, and the Renewal Ministries' Board, we've decided it's time for id to end as a distinct outreach of Renewal Ministries.

To be clear, we are closing the doors only on the concept of id's work as a separate part of Renewal Ministries' overall mission. What remains steadfast is our commitment to our current team and to the young adults we want to continue reaching with the full Gospel. The overall vision and mission of Renewal Ministries also remains unchanged. Over the past year, we have come

to believe that the Lord showed us we can be more fruitful both as individuals and as members of Renewal Ministries by responding to opportunities without the constraints of the current "id model" and "id branding." Instead, we'll look for avenues for preaching the Gospel and helping people grow as disciples, become Spirit-filled Leaders, and live in the power of the Holy Spirit, but in a manner more consistent with how Renewal Ministries has operated around the world for the past forty-plus years.



To be clear, we are closing the doors only on the concept of id's work as a separate part of Renewal Ministries' overall mission.

There's often sadness that comes with something ending, and we definitely feel the bittersweetness of this transition. However, we are confident the Lord is leading us in this direction, and we are excited for the doors He will open moving forward.

I want to thank you all for your prayers, financial support, and enthusiasm for our mission over the years. We never would have started discipleship communities in Jacksonville, Florida; preached the Gospel in Fargo, North Dakota; or developed Spirit-filled leaders in Perth, Australia, without the loyal and faithful friends of Renewal Ministries behind

us. Please don't stop supporting us, because although id is ending, the original heartache remains. Our passion for souls remains unabated, and the need for the younger generations to hear the Gospel has only increased.

In October of 2011, a group of us went on retreat to cry out to God for guidance, and during one of the prayer times, the Lord drew our attention to 1 Corinthians 9:16:

"If I preach the Gospel, this gives me no grounds for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach it."

As the Lord calls us to serve Him and the Church in a variety of ways moving forward, be assured, we will not stop trying to help people become intentional disciples!

id

Have you been donating to id? If so, thank you!

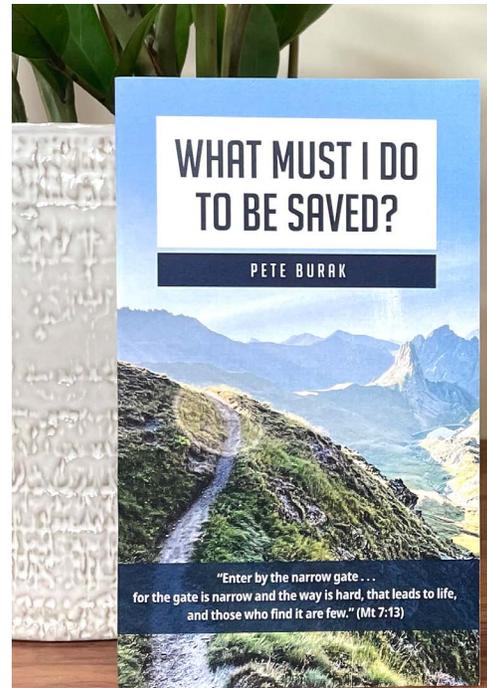
Please continue supporting our work of reaching young adults with the Gospel by supporting Renewal Ministries, at

www.renewalministries.net/donate.

If you have any questions, please email us at donate@renewalministries.net.



The id team has moved into new roles while continuing to lead people closer to Jesus and the Gospel: Vice President Pete Burak, Administrative Assistant Ava Marcarelli, Director of Young Adult Discipleship Rachel Herbeck, Assistant Director of Forged Harrison Raney, and Director of Operations Chris Baker.



NEW! from Pete Burak

In this booklet, Pete Burak examines what the Bible teaches us is necessary to get to heaven: conversion, repentance, and faith. Relying heavily on Jesus' words in Scripture, Burak clearly explains why the Church shouldn't strive to find common ground with the world but rather to help the world—and each of us individually—conform to the Gospel.

www.renewalministries.net/WMI

GET YOUR FIRST COPY FREE!



THE CHOICES WE FACE

40th Anniversary

This month, EWTN will begin airing the fortieth season of *The Choices We Face*. This highly acclaimed program is the longest-running Catholic television show in history! Each week, hosts Ralph Martin and Peter Herbeck explore important topics concerning the faith. This season's interviews engage viewers with discussions on a wide-range of topics important to the life of a disciple of Christ.

CHECK OUT THE 2024 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS . . .



Heather Schultz · *Anchored in the Storm*

▶ Heather Schultz, Renewal Ministries' editor, shares about the Lord's still small voice leading her, even in the storms of life.

Noelle Mering · *Awake, Not Woke*

Author and speaker Noelle Mering talks with Ralph about a Christian response to progressive ideology.



JP DeGance · *Endgame*

▶ Founder and president of Communio, JP DeGance, shares practical steps to support and strengthen the family.

Ralph & Anne Martin · *God is Faithful*

Ralph Martin is joined by his wife, Anne, for a special look into God's faithfulness in their marriage and family life.



Ali Hoffman · *A Living Sign*

▶ Ali Hoffman shares her journey of embracing Catholicism, becoming a missionary, and leading others to Jesus.

David Pevey · *Meeting Jesus*

David Pevey talks about moving from a mechanical faith to a living, dynamic faith after encountering the person of Jesus.



Montse Alvarado · *Joyful Warriors*

▶ Montse Alvarado, president and CEO of EWTN News, talks about finding joy in woundedness and Eucharistic revival.

Kevin Wells · *Be Bold and Fearless*

After suffering a brain aneurysm, Kevin Wells began calling people to radical, bold, fearless faith.





Angèle Regnier · Faith Over Fear

▶ Angèle Regnier speaks at the 2023 Lift Jesus Higher Rally about fostering faith over fear and standing on the Word of God.

Albert Faraj · Passion for Mission

▶ Albert Faraj shares his journey from corporate America to full-time ministry amid being a husband and father.



Dan & Sarah Mishler · Jesus, I Trust in You

▶ Dan and Sarah Mishler speak about the extraordinary survival of their twins when faced with a terminal diagnosis.

Fr. Walter Nolte · The Healing Presence of God

▶ Fr. Walter Nolte shares his journey to the priesthood and how he has seen God's healing power in ministry.



Jesse Sullivan · Stand Boldly for Truth

▶ Jesse Sullivan talks about entering politics, running for governor of Illinois, and the spiritual battle being waged for the truth.

Karen Dwyer · Wrap Yourself in Joy

▶ Teacher and author Karen Dwyer talks about putting on the armor of God to find joy and fight fear.



Patti Mansfield · Power From on High

▶ Patti Mansfield talks about how to experience a personal Pentecost and be clothed with power from on high.

Steve Lee · Graced Moments

▶ Steve Lee speaks about his journey from working with the Legionaries of Christ, to Wall Street, to founding Veritas Catholic Network.



Ikenna Njoku · Living Faith

▶ Ikenna Njoku speaks about leaving the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Nigeria to pursue a PhD in molecular neuroscience in the United States.

Molly McCartney · Made for Worship

▶ Worship leader Molly McCartney speaks about fostering intimacy with Jesus and learning to surrender to God's plan.



ACCESS ALL EPISODES

Recent episodes of *The Choices We Face* are available on EWTN but also can be viewed at our website, renewalministries.net/the-choices-we-face, or our YouTube channel, [YouTube.com/@renewalministries](https://www.youtube.com/@renewalministries).



EVENTS

MARCH 2024 View complete event list at renewalministries.net/events.

* *Not open to the public.*

Toronto, ON

Lift Jesus Higher Rally

March 2

Peter & Debbie Herbeck, Pete Burak, and the Renewal Ministries Team
Detail: ljhr.ca

East Lansing, MI

Lansing Deanery Mission*

March 3-5

Dr. Mary Healy

Grand Rapids, MI

Authenticum Lecture Series at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish

March 7

Ralph Martin

Email: dre@shgr.org

Lyon, France

Priest's Conference*

March 7

Dr. Mary Healy

Lyon, France

Healing Parish Mission

March 8-10

Dr. Mary Healy

Details: helloasso.com/associations/ad-lyon/evenements/prier-pour-la-guerison-avec-Mary-Healy

Lithicum, MD

Catholic Men's Fellowship Conference

March 9

Peter Herbeck

Details: catholicmensfellowship.com

Chicago, IL

Resurrection Prep Retreat*

March 11-12

Debbie Herbeck & the Be Love Revolution Team

St. Paul, MN

St. Paul Seminary Day of Recollection*

March 12

Peter Herbeck

Corn Hill, TX

Holy Trinity Parish Mission

March 16

Lavinia Spirito

Details: holytrinityofcornhill.org

Saginaw, MI

Saginaw Catholic Men's Conference

March 16

Ralph Martin

Details: eventbrite.com/e/2024-saginaw-catholic-mens-conference-tickets-765739004977

Jackson, MI

Queen of the Miraculous Medal Lenten Talk

March 17

Dr. Mary Healy

Details: queenschurch.com

Traverse City, MI

Martinus of Northern Michigan Catholic Business Group*

March 21

Lavinia Spirito

Elkhorn, NE

St. Patrick Parish Mission

March 23

Dr. Mary Healy

Details: stpatselkhorn.org

Plymouth, MI

Our Lady of Good Counsel Men's Conference

March 23

Ralph Martin

Details: olgparish.net/mens-ministry



PLEASE PRAY

- ▶ That we may persevere in uniting our sufferings with Christ's this Lent.
- ▶ For the safety and continued courage of those around the world who face danger in order to live and share their Catholic faith.
- ▶ For the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members, especially as they face the challenges of illness and economic uncertainty.



WISDOM from THE SAINTS



We must always remind ourselves that we are pilgrims until we arrive at our heavenly homeland. And we must not let our affections delay us in the roadside inns and lands through which we pass. Otherwise, we will forget our destination and lose interest in our final goal.

// St. Ignatius of Loyola



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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Editor Heather Schultz
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