



# RENEWAL MINISTRIES

## CATHOLIC RENEWAL & EVANGELIZATION

SPECIAL  
EDITION



ON MISSION IN  
**Uganda**



**A LETTER**  
FROM RALPH MARTIN

**Dear Partners in Evangelization,**

**I am excited to share with you the amazing experience a group of us recently had during an almost-two-week mission to Uganda.**

I was joined by Bishop Scott McCaig, of Canada's Military Ordinariate, who is a long-time friend and member of the Canadian Catholic Renewal Ministries Board of Directors. The organizers also asked my wife, Anne, to come. We were grateful to experience the beauty of God's work in Uganda together. Deacon Larry Oney and his wife, Andi, who are involved in helping a school in Uganda, also assisted us. Deacon Oney is a member of Renewal Ministries' US Board of Directors. And Alicia Hartle, executive director of Pentecost Today USA (the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the US), participated in the general conference.

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SEPTEMBER 2024



➤ Anne visited with primary school children from Emmaus Center School. They wanted to touch her skin to see what it was like and asked her when she could come back.



⦿ A police escort drove alongside our team to offer protection and help us get through the many red lights!



⦿ At the school, the boys' dorm is tightly packed and uses abundant mosquito netting to protect against malaria.

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Renewal Ministries has been blessed to support the work of the Emmaus Center, which is north of Kampala, the capital of Uganda, for more than twenty-five years. The Emmaus Center's efforts are bearing such wonderful fruit! A small community has grown there over the years that now offers an elementary school for poor children, some of them orphans; a medical clinic that provides the only affordable or free care available for many; a farm that raises much of their own food; and retreats and formation events that have had an almost unbelievable

impact on renewal in the Ugandan Church. Over the years, almost a thousand priests—a number of whom are now bishops—have participated in programs at the center, most often in Life in the Spirit Seminars. Also, the center can hardly keep up with the demands from many dioceses and seminaries to provide Life in the Spirit Seminars and other formation for their priests and seminarians. The leaders of the community and outreach are **Joseph and Francesca Aonu Okior**, who are among the wisest and most-gifted lay leaders I have ever met.



To celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal's significant presence in Uganda, they wanted to have the biggest-ever retreat for priests and bishops, along with a massive celebration at the Shrine of the Ugandan Martyrs. They needed significant funding from us to make this happen—and our supporters stepped up! Thank you! Throughout our time there, the retreat organizers continually thanked the Renewal Ministries' supporters who made these powerful events possible. They have never met you, but they know you were there for them, and they sincerely thank you.



⦿ Bishop Scott McCaig is pictured with some young people of Uganda. Joy was the defining characteristic of the attendees!

**To say the retreat and conference were well-attended is an understatement! Over five-hundred priests and numerous bishops gathered for a week of solid teaching and ministry, as well as the enormous celebration at the Shrine of the Ugandan Martyrs. As many as fifty-thousand people participated on the last night (although some say up to two-hundred thousand), and thirty-thousand people participated on each of the previous days (although some say up to eighty thousand). Counting huge crowds like this is tough but suffice it to say: a lot of people were there!**

The retreat for priests and some bishops was very impactful. Two bishops of dioceses in Uganda came to the retreat with all their priests. What an amazing and wise thing to do! They wanted to come together so that the retreat's influence would extend throughout their whole dioceses. In fact, significant numbers of priests came from every diocese in Uganda and from many other countries as well. A South African archbishop came who was deeply touched. Priests from Tanzania, Kenya, Sudan, and other countries came. Lay people from all over Africa—including the Ivory Coast, Gabon, Nigeria, Togo, Zambia, and Cameroon—also attended the big conference. Two very impressive young men, leaders of a community and mission in Croatia, attended too! They were involved in the translation and publication of the Croatian version of *The Fulfillment of All Desire*, and they use it for the formation of young people throughout Croatia.

Bishop Scott and I both gave five talks, and we were very much on the “same page”—the same pages of Sacred Scripture—even though we hadn't consulted much beforehand. Bishop Scott spoke with great clarity and fervor, giving some of the best talks I've ever heard on the basic Gospel message and who Jesus really is! Our Lord is not a tame pussycat but the Lion of Judah! The priests received our messages with their whole hearts and minds, and many said that they were leaving the retreat with a much deeper conviction

of the truth of our faith, the need for holiness in their own lives, and greater passion and urgency in their work for the salvation of souls. Who could ask for more?

The general conference was a sight to behold. Joy characterized the tens of thousands who were there. The participants were grateful for the work of the Holy Spirit in their own

lives and eager to worship the Lord in Holy Mass each day with some of the most enthusiastic singing and dancing I've ever seen. A different bishop or archbishop presided over every Mass. The renewal in Uganda clearly has the strong support of the nation's bishops, who realize what it has done to bring people to Christ and make them enthusiastic disciples.

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🕯️ A massive celebration at the Shrine of the Ugandan Martyrs marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Uganda. Up to two-hundred-thousand people participated in the last evening. Below, the procession of the gifts before Mass was generous and colorful.



During the priests' conference, I had two strong senses from the Lord. One, that the "hour" of the Church in Africa has arrived. When the African bishops as a whole pushed back hard on the ambiguous and gay-friendly documents coming out of Rome, they reached a certain maturity. No longer suffering from an unhealthy subservience to the declining European churches and unreliable theologians, the Church in Africa now knows it needs to stand strong for the faith even when Europe isn't. I felt like the Lord wanted to encourage them in this.

Secondly, I felt that some very significant breaches in the "gates of hell" have been achieved in Uganda, that many doors are now wide open, and that we should pour reinforcements into the breach. We should continue to help the Emmaus Center respond to the many calls to help form seminarians and priests, not just financially, but also by continuing to stand shoulder to shoulder with them by sending seasoned men and women of God to participate with them in their missions.

✔ During the priests' conference, it became clear that the "hour" of the Church in Africa has arrived!

Anne put together a ten-minute video that depicts the highlights of our mission. You can watch it at:

[bit.ly/RMUganda2024](http://bit.ly/RMUganda2024)



Rectors and spiritual directors in the four or five national seminaries in Uganda asked us directly if we would help them. With your help, we will do as much as we can.

**These were great days that revealed how much God has already done; deepened the faith of many priests, bishops, and lay people; and spread the faith among many. One night, two bishops from Uganda and a priest representative from Zambia asked to meet with Bishop Scott and myself to thank us personally and at length both for being there with them and for our financial help that made the priests' retreat possible. They asked us to thank you, our supporters—knowing that you stand behind us and make all we do possible.**

You truly are making possible significant renewal of an entire national Church. Thanks be to God. As they say in Uganda:

*"God is good. All the time.  
All the time. God is good  
because that is his nature.*

*Wow!"*

Your brother in Christ,

*Ralph Martin*

Ralph

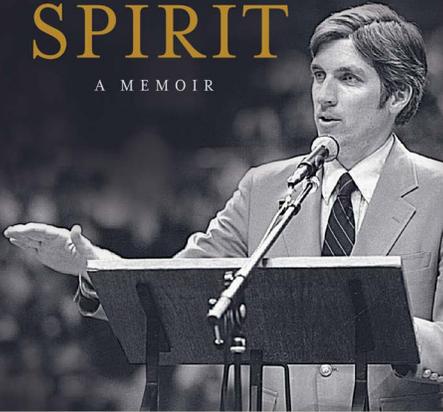
P.S. As you get this, my new book is about to begin shipping! After many people asked me to tell the "true, full story" of my spiritual journey, I finally agreed. I very much enjoyed writing *A Life in the Spirit* and was amazed as I stepped back and looked at the whole journey to date. Sometimes when I was in the middle of it, I wasn't aware of the "big picture." I think you'll find it inspiring and interesting—and many of you are part of the story! You can purchase the book and read the tremendous endorsements at [www.renewalministries.net/RalphMemoir](http://www.renewalministries.net/RalphMemoir). Presales continue until Sept. 1, and the books will begin shipping on Sept. 5.



# ENDORSEMENTS

## A LIFE in the SPIRIT

A MEMOIR



RALPH MARTIN

### NEW BOOK FROM RALPH MARTIN

Orders will begin shipping  
September 5th!

*A Life in the Spirit* chronicles Ralph Martin's journey from the early days of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal to becoming one of the most courageous voices defending the truth of the Gospel during an age of dissension and disbelief.

Ralph shares his initial radical commitment to Christ and, as that commitment deepened, how he entered more fully into the spiritual tradition of the Church and advanced theological studies that grounded his work of fundamental Catholic renewal within the solid tradition of Catholic teaching.

This book recounts Martin's struggles through obstacles and opposition, as well as beautiful reflections on family life and remarkable experiences with the likes of Pope St. John Paul II, Mother Angelica, and many others.

#### ORDER ONLINE:

[www.renewalministries.net/shop](http://www.renewalministries.net/shop)

#### ORDER BY PHONE:

(734) 662-1730

"Ralph Martin's teachings have had a profound impact on my life and my thought. The Church has a lot to be grateful for in the way that Martin has consistently and passionately presented the faith for so many years. Not only has his teaching been intellectually powerful, but the moral authority with which he teaches is born of a life of integrity and transformation by the Spirit. It is a gift to read more about his life and ministry. *A Life in the Spirit* provides an insight into Martin's life, but even more into the way God can work in the life of someone so fully surrendered to the will of God."

// Fr. Mike Schmitz, host of *The Bible in a Year* podcast

"This sincere and humble memoir reads like an omnibus on the unwavering manner in which a man infused by the Spirit does his best to serve God for the entirety of his life. As you read, you might see Martin emerge as I did: as one on fire to serve God and willing to suffer, endure persecution and lonely nights, to travel the world to proclaim Christ—not unlike St Paul. When Martin was flooded by the furnace of God's love and light in the 1960s, he could not have known that that same love and light would move into numberless millions of souls because of his holy, apostolic, and prophetic work."

// Kevin Wells, speaker and author of *The Hermit: The Priest Who Saved a Soul, a Marriage, and a Family*

"A remarkable account of an ordinary life that became extraordinary by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and a radical, ongoing personal yes to the Spirit's leadings. Ralph Martin is known worldwide for his many decades of deep commitment to the truth of the Gospel. Like Augustine's *Confessions*, this memoir gives us a glimpse into his inner life in a spirit of humble amazement at the grace and mercy of God."

// Mary Healy, biblical scholar and professor at Sacred Heart Major Seminary

"*A Life in the Spirit* is a fascinating portrait of a faithful servant of Jesus Christ. Dr. Martin has lived a life guided by the Spirit and has done much to draw people into Christ's redeeming love. I recommend this memorable and encouraging memoir!"

// Curtis Martin, founder & president of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS)

"Ralph Martin's *A Life in the Spirit* stretches far beyond a memoir in its fascinating appeal. He captures so very well in his fast-paced account the turbulence of the post-Vatican period, the spiritual excitement of a deeper discovery of God in the charismatic movement, and the riches of a contemplative spirituality influenced by the great Carmelite saints. He is a master teacher for our time, and this book is a wonderful entry into a greater knowledge of this prayerful man of God and his contribution to the Church in our day."

// Fr. Donald Haggerty, author of *Conversion: Spiritual Insights into an Essential Encounter with God*

"Few have had the unique vantage point of Ralph Martin. He has witnessed crisis, upheaval, and radical renewal in the life of the Church over many decades. He has worked beside some of the Church's brightest lights. To understand his story is to understand the powerful movement of the Holy Spirit in these times."

// Scott Hahn, founder and president of the St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology

"This fascinating memoir moved me to tears several times as Ralph witnessed to the miraculous and divine power of the Holy Spirit at work in his life and the life of the Church. His personal stories not only model faithfulness to Jesus and the proclamation of truth but are an inspiration to open one's own heart to the power of the Holy Spirit and abandonment to divine providence."

// Heather Khym, author and co-host of the *Abiding Together* podcast

# THE UGANDAN MARTYRS: AN ASTOUNDING WITNESS



In this newsletter, I've written about our recent—and ongoing—work in Uganda. One of the most special things about Uganda is the extraordinary example of the Ugandan martyrs.

In the late nineteenth century, a king who was greatly angered by his Christian pages' resistance to his homosexual advances went into a rage and ordered their executions. They refused to deny Christ and truly died as martyrs. Researchers have compiled firsthand accounts from the many eyewitnesses to the events leading up to the persecution and deaths. Of these, I highly recommend *African Holocaust: The Story of the Uganda Martyrs*, by J. F. Faupel (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2015).

King Mwanga took the Bugandan throne after his father's death while he was still a teenager. The Bugandan king had absolute power over his subjects. King Mwanga grew increasingly self-indulgent and unpredictable in his views and behaviors. At some points, he seemed to seriously entertain becoming a Christian; at other times, he played the Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, and pagans against each other and saw religion as an instrument of manipulation to his own benefit.

The king initially welcomed Catholic and Protestant missionaries, who saw growing success in their efforts. But as their numbers grew, the king became alarmed, because his Christian subjects no longer viewed him as the highest power in their lives. Eventually, the Catholic missionaries heard rumors of an impending persecution, and under orders from their religious superiors, they left the country for almost three years.

The relatively small number of converts they had baptized, and the many catechumens who were being taught both the catechism and prayers that lead to an uprightness of life, rose to the occasion in the missionaries' absence. The missionary priests had

known that their new converts might face persecution, so they had taken care to provide them with several years of instruction and preparation before baptizing them. The missionaries also explicitly asked new converts if they were willing to die for Christ. As in other situations where clergy were expelled—such as in Korea and Japan—the new converts continued to evangelize, catechize, and care for one another even in the missionaries' absence.

Most of the believers were young men in their teens or twenties, but some were older, had high positions in the kingdom, and were highly regarded by the king for their loyalty and competence. His closest friend and constant hunting companion was Andrew Kagwa, a leader among the Christians. This did not restrain the king's rage, however, and Andrew was brutally tortured and murdered. His arm was cut off, then he was beheaded, and his body was hacked to pieces.

When the missionaries returned, they found a thriving community of about one-thousand believers, with a truly impressive lay leadership, and many more interested in the faith.

However, there were those who hated the growth of Christianity, includ-



*Wisdom  
from*  
**ST. JOHN OF  
THE CROSS**

*“In sorrow and suffering,  
go straight to God with  
confidence, and you will be  
strengthened, enlightened  
and instructed.”*

ing the chancellor—the second most powerful man in the kingdom—who detested what he saw as an overthrow of traditional religion and pagan gods.

The refusal of the king's pages to go along with the king's homosexual advances was a significant cause for the persecution, but it wasn't the only one. At first, the king only practiced this vice privately, as the Bugandan people did not accept homosexuality. Only after the persecution did he more openly practice it.

**He saw the growth of Christianity as a threat to the loyalty of his subjects, who now placed Jesus as a higher authority in their life than the king. Just like the Roman emperors, who "tested" the absolute loyalty of their subjects by requiring that they burn incense to them and treat them as gods, every totalitarian power eventually requires the same test. The never-ending rank of martyrs throughout Church history attests to this demand that man be worshipped even above God.**

While trouble had been brewing for a variety of reasons, it all related to the king's fear of losing power to Christianity. The event that triggered the ferocious persecution was when the king asked for all his pages, and his favorite sexual partner, a son of the chancellor, was among those who did not respond. The king discovered that the Christians were evangelizing this page, and his personal instability and various addictions fueled his anger and jealousy. He ordered the death of all the Christians in his court, which now were many.

Joseph Mukasa, the leader of the Christians, had already been speared to death by the king himself six months earlier. The hatred behind that death spread to whomever the king could get his hands on among his closest attendants and collaborators. On May 26, 1886, three Christians were murdered at the king's residence at Munyonyo. Charles Lwanga sensed the coming slaughter and secretly baptized four catechumens to prepare them for

their ordeal and heavenly entrance. One of these was fourteen-year-old Kizito. While Kizito was afraid, Charles Lwanga told him, "When the decisive moment arrives, I shall take your hand like this. If we have to die for Jesus, we shall die together, hand in hand."

All the Christian pages and officials were arrested and led on a forced march, chained to each other, and beaten. Some were brutally executed along the way and left on the road to rot and be eaten by wild animals as a warning to others. On June 3, 1886, they were all finally killed at Namugongo, one of the kingdom's designated execution sites. They were burned to death, usually after being fiendishly tortured. In some cases, family members were enlisted to plead with the Christians to not be foolish and to abandon their faith. Encouraging one another, the Christians refused.

The chancellor's own son refused to apostatize despite fervent pleas, promises, and threats. His own father ordered him to be killed—but out of pity told the soldiers to kill his son with a blow to the head before they put him on the fire.

One of the executioners later described what he was ordered to do to Matthias, a martyr killed on the journey to the execution site:

The chancellor had ordered us not to kill him quickly, but to make him suffer a long time. Therefore, we began by cutting off his arms at the wrists, and later at the elbows. And then his legs at the knees. After that we cut pieces of flesh from his body and left him there.

More than a hundred executioners participated in the slaughter of the Christians. Perhaps they were experiencing pangs of guilt at the brutal tasks they undertook when they said, "It is not we who are killing you but the gods, whom you called demons, who are doing so."

Twenty-two Catholic martyrs were canonized during a session of Vatican II in 1965, and perhaps as many Anglican

martyrs. Probably at least one-hundred faithful were killed throughout the kingdom, speared to death or bludgeoned by those hunting Christians at the king's command. Of those killed, many could not be identified or documented.

**The courage and fidelity of these "new Christians" is an astounding witness. Many had until very recently been catechumens, just learning the faith. Their recitation of the Our Father and Hail Mary throughout their ordeals, professions of faith in the resurrection of the dead, and professions of loyalty to their true king, Jesus, is extraordinary. So too is the care they took for each other. They continually encouraged one another to remain faithful, supported the wavering, and anticipated the joy of heaven.**

Some of the scripture passages that they repeated to each other were inspired by the Holy Spirit precisely for times like the ones they faced:

• *Every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven. (Mt 10:32)*

• *For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. (Mt 16:25)*

• *I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. (Rom 8:18)*

There were ongoing tensions between the Protestant and Catholic missionaries when the persecution came, but both the Anglicans and Catholics remained equally faithful to Christ and in solidarity with each other.

What an example of lay holiness and mission, true and deep faith, and brotherly love! What a testimony to the truth of Jesus' promise that when we are brought before kings and judges, the Holy Spirit will be with us and show us what to say! Holy martyrs of Uganda, pray for us!

# EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2024 View complete event list: [renewalministries.net/events](https://renewalministries.net/events)

**Ann Arbor, Michigan**  
**The Choices We Face Filming\***  
September 3-25  
Ralph Martin and Peter Herbeck

**Lenexa, KS**  
**Women's Conference of Healing & Forgiveness**  
September 5-7  
Dr. Mary Healy  
Details: [catholicwomensconferencekc.com](https://catholicwomensconferencekc.com)

**New Haven, CT**  
**Connecticut Men's Conference**  
September 20-21  
Peter Herbeck  
Details: [ctcatholicmen.org](https://ctcatholicmen.org)

**Bend, OR**  
**Encountering Jesus: A Call to Holiness, Healing, & Mission**  
September 21  
Dr. Mary Healy  
Details: [stfrancisbend.org/mary-healy-event.html](https://stfrancisbend.org/mary-healy-event.html)

**Ocean Reef, Florida**  
**Legatus Women's Enclave\***  
September 23-26  
Debbie Herbeck

**Steubenville, OH Lecture at Franciscan University of Steubenville**  
September 24  
Ralph Martin  
Details: [Franciscan.edu](https://Franciscan.edu)

**Ann Arbor, Michigan**  
**Country Coordinator Meeting\***  
September 25-28  
Peter Herbeck & the Renewal Ministries Team

**Toledo, OH**  
**Legatus\***  
September 25  
Pete Burak

**Harrisburg, PA**  
**Diocese of Harrisburg Priests' Workshop\***  
September 30  
Dr. Mary Healy

\* Not open to the public.



## PLEASE PRAY

- ▶ For all those mourning the loss of loved ones, that they may find comfort in the Lord.
- ▶ For courage and strength to boldly follow the Lord in all the big and little things He asks of us each day.
- ▶ For the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members, especially as they face the challenges of illness and economic uncertainty.



*Let us remember that love lives through sacrifice and is nourished by giving.*

*Without sacrifice, there is no love.*

// St. Maximilian Kolbe

## HELP US MAKE AN IMPACT FOR ETERNITY!

Together, we can strengthen and encourage priests and bishops around the world, help young adults and youth live in the light of Christ, minister in about forty countries a year, and share the Word of God through speaking engagements, social media, books, TV, radio, podcasts, and more!

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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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