

## A LETTER ▶ FROM RALPH MARTIN

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Ralph recently spoke at a men's conference in Bay City, Michigan.



## Dear Brothers and Sisters,

**We are gifted with the peace that the world can't give—because we know we are loved, are part of Christ's own body, and have his Spirit living in us. The Spirit that raised Him from the dead will raise us also on the last day!**

I would like to stop commenting on troubling things from Rome, but people need reminders about the truth and what can and cannot change. Therefore, I have recorded YouTube videos on such topics as a leading cardinal's call for a "rainbow Church." I've also discussed the slippery language of a recent document that claims to not change Church teaching on married love while slyly leaving open the door to normalizing homosexuality by acknowledging it as a lesser love. A recent press conference also suggested that the catechism's teaching on homosexuality should be reworded to better communicate what we are trying to communicate. But that raises a question: What are we trying to communicate? You can view one of my videos on this at [bit.ly/3xZziBa](https://bit.ly/3xZziBa).

The good news is that the Good News keeps getting communicated, no matter what. So

many faithful, resolute brothers and sisters are sacrificially serving the Lord. Recently, I have spoken at two Michigan men's conferences, where hundreds of men heard the Gospel and responded. I also recently stayed at a seminary for the Neocatechumenal Way in the Archdiocese of Miami, where I gave talks for priests and lay leaders and received an award at their annual gala for my work in evangelization. And Scott Hahn and I are leaving soon to speak to hundreds of priests, lay leaders, and bishops in Brazil, to encourage them to stand firm in the Gospel amid pressure to collapse its meaning into liberation theology or fearful traditionalism.

I also recently spoke at the annual gala for the Chesterton Academy in Omaha, Nebraska—one of many new, parent-run, Catholic

schools trying to faithfully hand on the faith along with a solid Catholic education. I had a delightful visit with students, staff, and parents involved with this fledgling, "classical Catholic" high school. There are about seventy Chesterton academies nationwide that focus on the great classics of philosophy and literature as well as rigorous science and language skills. Only seventeen students currently attend the Omaha academy, but they hope to greatly increase its numbers next year. I found the students exceptionally confident, joyful, and at ease in expressing themselves and conversing intelligently about important things.



*You will never be happy if your happiness depends on getting solely what you want. Change the focus. Get a new center. Will what God wills, and your joy no man shall take from you.*

// Venerable  
Fulton Sheen





☛ Ralph is pictured with student leaders from the Catholic Center at William and Mary College in Williamsburg, Virginia.

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Almost three-hundred people attended the dinner—nearly double the attendance in previous years—and I met many Renewal Ministries’ supporters. I hope my talk inspired them to keep following the Lord with confidence.

While there, a Franciscan University graduate who teaches in the local home school cooperative gave me letters from her high school students. She led her students “into the deep” of the spiritual life by having them read *The Fulfillment of All Desire* and engage with it through group discussions and personal journaling. I found their reflections very inspiring. Here are a few notes they sent me:

*“I am a sophomore and would like to thank you for this book. It is eye-opening and inspiring. I rarely enjoy reading, but when I read your book, I was intrigued the entire time. How you explain the topics is easy to understand and enjoyable to read. Since beginning your book, I have found myself trying to put into action the wisdom of the saints and have worked on my relationship with God. For example, I have practiced the Methods of Prayer and am focusing on praying with intent and speaking from the heart. Another explanation that has helped is the three stages. The Purgative, the Illuminative, and the Unitive stages have inspired me to desire complete union with God and enjoy the journey toward union with Him.”*

*“Your book has been crucial to my faith life, and I found myself wanting a deeper relationship with Christ more than ever before. Your chapter on St. Therese really sparked my desire to follow the Lord, and it made me realize that I shouldn’t wait until later, and that God was calling me right then to Him. Thank you for writing this inspiring book, I wouldn’t be where I am without it.”*

**Thank God for how He is acting in myriad ways, where seeds of new life are sprouting up in challenging circumstances!**

Meanwhile, in Ann Arbor, there are opportunities to spread the Gospel through videos, personal meetings, and events. Many of us at Renewal Ministries support Ave Maria Catholic Radio, which has offices in the same building as us. Some of us helped with their annual fund drive by taking shifts as special guests. I also have done Zoom talks for people in Slovenia and for a

class at the Franciscan University of Steubenville taught by Fr. Dave Pivonka, one of our distinguished board members. Speaking of board members, Bishop Robert McClory of the Diocese of Gary, Indiana, recently celebrated his twenty-fifth anniversary as a priest, and some of us drove to Indiana to join him in a Mass of Thanksgiving.

Another recent highlight was at William and Mary College in Williamsburg, Virginia. FOCUS missionaries invited me to visit with students and give a well-attended talk followed by questions and Adoration. I had to get up at 3:30 a.m. the next morning to fly home, but it was well worth it. What a fine bunch of dedicated young men and women, those serving at the Catholic center and those being served! Several of the students had just come into the Church and were aglow with the Spirit.

One of the townspeople even introduced himself as a Renewal Ministries Partner. I thanked him, and I thank you for our partnership in the Gospel. If you aren’t already a Partner, would you consider signing up with a monthly donation? **You can learn more in the newsletter’s reply card or at [www.renewalministries.net/rm-partners](http://www.renewalministries.net/rm-partners).**

Thank you for being a sign of hope!

*Ralph Martin*

Ralph

☛ Ralph recently spoke at a gala dinner for the Chesterton Academy in Omaha, Nebraska, that featured a performance by the students.



# WE CAN'T CELEBRATE A LIE

BY JESSE SULLIVAN

Jesse Sullivan ran for election as governor of Illinois in 2022. He earned his master's degree at the University of Oxford and his MBA at Stanford Business School. He runs Alter, a tech venture capital firm, to help combat global poverty in the developing world. Jesse is a June guest on *The Choices We Face*.

A Pride Day celebration will soon be hosted near my hometown. I hope our response reflects that of our Savior—who always loved others and called them to repent of their sins. Today's dominant culture warns that if you don't actively support the LGBTQIA+ lifestyle, you will be deemed unloving or hateful. But love without truth is not love at all. True love wills the other's good. What greater good is there than to help someone get to heaven?

The Bible clearly explains where God stands regarding same-sex attraction (see Gn 19:1-29, Lv 18:22, 20:13, Rom 1:26-27, 1 Cor 6:9; 1 Tm 1:9-10, and Jude 1:7), as does the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2357-2359). The Bible says active, unrepentant homosexuality is a grave mortal sin that can prevent one from going to heaven. The Catechism says, "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered . . . [and] under no circumstances can they be approved."

Compassion for our family and friends experiencing same-sex attraction may tempt us to downplay, dismiss, or even deny these challenging truths of Christianity. We may be tempted to reinterpret the Bible in a way that appears "more tolerant," or to reduce Jesus to a loving figure who never preached repentance or warned of hell. However, we must make a choice between believing that the whole Bible is the infallible Word of God or simply picking what we like and dismissing what we don't. As St. Augustine stated,

*"If you believe what you like in the Gospels and reject what you don't like, it is not the Gospel you believe but yourself."*

**Our culture has declared the Christian position on homosexuality to be a hateful, judgmental, self-righteous rejection of a marginalized group of people. Those are lies.** In fact, it is love that motivates a faithful Christian to share the truth, because we want fellow sinners to spend eternal life in heaven. Judgment is the role of Jesus alone; our role is not to judge but rather to live and share God's truth. We must not be self-righteous, for we are all sinners. We all rely on Jesus' saving forgiveness, as long as we repent and ask for it.



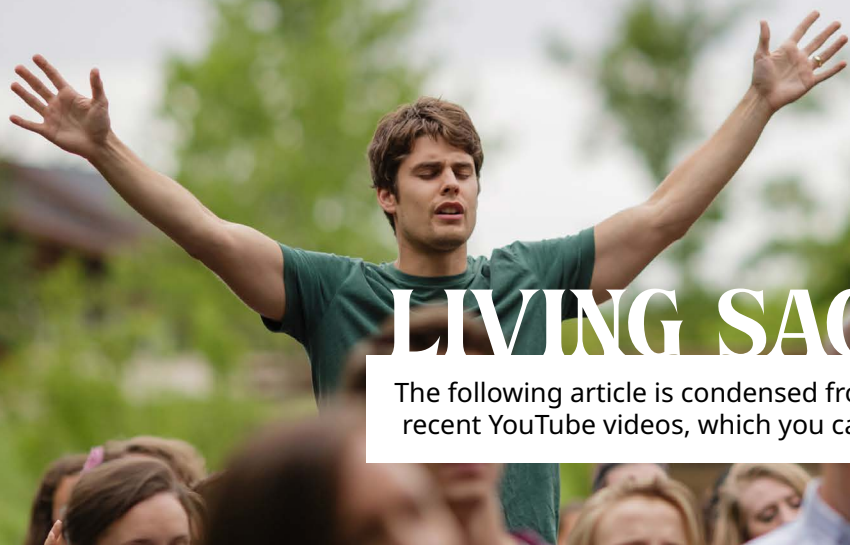
Love without truth is not love at all. True love wills the other's good. What greater good is there than to help someone get to heaven?

**Our society's biggest lie is that sexual inclination determines one's core identity.** Therefore, society incorrectly views a rejection of homosexuality as a rejection of the person. That is false. Our core identity lies in being "a child of God"—that is what makes us worthy of love despite our sins. Thus, the rejection of a sin is not the cruel rejection of the person, but the best way to love the person. Imagine an addict saying, "You must accept and celebrate my addiction." You would say, "No, you are not your addiction. You are a child of God, and I love you despite your addiction." Who is loving: the one who celebrates the addiction or the one who shares the truth and helps them overcome the addiction? We must "hate the sin but love the sinner."

Yes, all are loved and welcome here, but not every act is accepted and supported. We must always love and welcome those with same-sex attraction, but we must never celebrate the sin itself. Pride Day celebrations are not the right way to welcome people struggling with same sex attraction, because such celebrations glorify the sin itself. The right way to love people struggling with same-sex attraction is by encouraging them to choose chastity and a deeper fulfillment with God. (See [www.couragerc.org](http://www.couragerc.org).) When we publicly celebrate Pride Day, we lead others astray—especially our children—to believe that sin is not sin, which brings destruction upon others and ourselves. As Jesus says, "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea" (Mt 18:5-6).

A faithful Christian should not attend Pride Day celebrations. If you've been infected by the lies of our culture, you might view this Christian message as unloving, mean, or cruel—when what is actually unloving, mean, and cruel is to celebrate a sin and lead a child of God to distance themselves from his truth. As Christians, we must lovingly welcome our neighbors with same-sex attraction, recognize that homosexual behavior is a sin, and prudently share that truth with our neighbors out of our abundant love for them.

Let us pray for those struggling with same-sex attraction and for those who mistakenly celebrate it, that we may all experience the transformational love and truth of our savior, Jesus Christ.



# LIVING SACRIFICE

The following article is condensed from one of Ralph Martin's recent YouTube videos, which you can view here: [bit.ly/rmls](https://bit.ly/rmls).

True worship is not just prayer time but obedient service with our whole life. Jesus says,

*"If you love me, you will keep my commandments." (Jn 14:15)*

And Romans 12:1 exhorts us,

*"I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."*

**It's a command: "present your bodies as a living sacrifice." What constitutes our body? Our whole life, mind, heart, soul, intellect, activity, and capability. And how do we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice? It's what the Church expresses in the traditional morning offering—that we want to offer our whole life and all our activities to the Lord.**

Everything we do should be increasingly rooted in our love of God and neighbor, under Christ's lordship, and in harmony with his will. We are called to be obedient sons and daughters of God. Obedience is not popular today, but this is the way to really love God.

## — A LIFELONG PROCESS —

This obedience and love of God is a lifelong process. Over time, we get more life from the Holy Spirit and grow in obedience to the Lord. We experience increased healing in our hearts and souls that enables us to forgive people and love them more. We increase our own desire and love for God. We spend

more time in prayer and loving service of other people. And we grow in our ability to endure suffering, difficult relationships, and illnesses with greater peace and patience, offering them to the Lord as part of our worship.



**Obedience is not popular today, but this is the way to really love God.**

Mary is often presented as a model of discipleship. She wasn't a divinity, but she was a special human being. She was conceived without original sin; there was nothing in her of disordered desire or inclination to evil. At Fatima, Mary said Jesus wants to establish devotion to her Immaculate Heart. That means we should desire a pure heart like Mary's, which for us requires a struggle. We need to engage in the process of spiritual growth.

We need to desire to grow in holiness and be alert to those little warnings the Holy Spirit gives us that say we're doing something that isn't pleasing the Lord. We need to repent and accept the truth that the Holy Spirit reveals to us about

**"We need to desire to grow in holiness and be alert to those little warnings the Holy Spirit gives us that say we're doing something that isn't pleasing to the Lord."**

our own selfishness, mixed motives, or disordered desires. We need to ask for the Lord's forgiveness and healing. When appropriate, we should go to reconciliation and seek inner healing through something like the Unbound method ([heartofthefather.com](http://heartofthefather.com)) or the John Paul II Healing Center ([jpiihealingcenter.org](http://jpiihealingcenter.org)).

Mary and Joseph knew how special Jesus was, but they didn't completely understand how things would play out. They had to walk through human life, and as holy as Joseph was, he still had to deal with the fallenness of our human nature. Part of Joseph's worship was obeying what God showed him: don't be afraid to take this woman, her baby is from the Holy Spirit, leave for Egypt in the middle of the night because Herod's trying to kill the child. It's not a lot of fun to get up in the middle of the night—especially to leave for Egypt—no matter how holy you are! An angel didn't just pick them up and take them to Egypt. And when Mary was pregnant and had to go to Bethlehem, she wasn't miraculously transported there. They endured a jostling donkey ride, long walks, a lot of time spent going from place to place, and just waiting and being.

**Life wasn't easy for Joseph and Mary. They had to walk the path; they couldn't take the shortcut.** They had to go from Nazareth to Bethlehem, from Bethlehem to Egypt, and from Egypt back to Nazareth. Joseph had to build craftsman products and figure out how much to charge, and Mary

had to do laundry and make meals. They had to walk through all those human things—but they did so in obedience to the Lord, which made their lives a living sacrifice. Mary’s “yes” at the Annunciation had to be carried out in daily “yesses,” love, and service. **That’s how our lives also become living sacrifices—by daily “yesses” in our responsibilities of life, with the work He’s given us to do, the illnesses He’s given us to bear, and the disappointments He’s permitting us to experience.**



— SEXUAL MORALITY —

This idea of becoming a living sacrifice also has implications for sexual morality. First Corinthians 6:19-20 says,

*“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”*

Sexual immorality is offensive to our bodies, which are also the bodies of Christ. Our worship is not just in Mass or in our prayer time; our worship is loving and obeying God in all the circumstances of our lives. We do this by not being “conformed to this world but (by being) transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Rom 12:2).

— A DAY IN HIS COURTS —

We renew our minds by meditating on the Word of God, daily prayer, and humility.

*“For by the grace given to me I bid every one among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith which God has assigned him.”* (Rom 12:3)

Often, people are discontented with their lot in life, and such situations require discernment. Sometimes the situation isn’t what the Lord wants, and we need wisdom to make changes. And sometimes, holiness means accepting our lot in life. When discernment indicates that, consider Psalm 84:10:

*“For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.”*

The privilege of being a son or daughter of God with the hope of eternal life is enough for us. The gift of his grace to help us fulfill our responsibilities, resist temptation, and repent and ask forgiveness when needed is enough.

— MEMBERS OF THE SAME BODY —

Our salvation is bound up in our relationships—how we live in our families and whether our families are blessed or suffering. Whatever their challenges or consolations, our salvation depends on how we relate to the people in our immediate and wider families. We all have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us. Let’s use our gifts and accept each other’s differences. Let’s accept that we don’t have every gift that others have. Let’s accept what God has given us and thank God for his gifts. I regularly thank God for having a home,

**“Let’s accept what God has given us and thank God for his gifts.”**

heat, electricity, and food. Many people don’t have basic things that we take for granted. Therefore, let’s be grateful to God even for our existence. He didn’t have to create us or share with us the possibility of eternal life. How amazing that He’s given us the possibility of eternal love and life, if we simply persevere and keep saying “yes”!

— TRUE WORSHIP —

Worship God with your money and your encouragement of others. Worship God with your exhortations and by helping others. Our Lord gives aid with zeal and does acts of mercy with cheerfulness. When living life in obedience to Him,

*“let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord.”* (Rom 12:9-10)

**Lord, let it be! Stir up in us the grace of your Holy Spirit. Let that living flame of love purify our souls. Help us to “rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer” (Rom 12:12).** Worship

includes our obedience, love, service, and using our gifts. The Lord asks us to live in awareness of his presence and talk and listen to Him all day long. He also asks us to,

*“Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you . . . Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly.”* (Rom 12:12-15)

— CARRYING THE CROSS —

In conclusion, remember the example of Mary, who kept saying “yes”—not only at the Annunciation but even when puzzling, painful things happen. When they finally found Jesus in the temple, she said, “Your father and I have been looking for you anxiously” (Lk 2:48). Despite all the graces they had and all the special things that had been shown to them about their child, they didn’t get it all. They experienced pain and hurt, and there are going to be painful and hurtful things in our own lives. **Just like Mary, we need to keep saying “yes” and drawing our strength from the Lord. In doing so, we can truly worship the Lord with our whole lives.**



# SPREADING THE GOSPEL IN SLOVAKIA & CROATIA



**BY TOM EDWARDS**  
Country Coordinator  
for Slovakia

Tom Edwards is Renewal Ministries' country coordinator for Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Tanzania. Tom began full-time ministry in 1974; it soon evolved into an international outreach of lay Catholic evangelization and mission with an emphasis on preaching and teaching Scripture. Tom and his wife, Jean Marie, make their home in St. Augustine, Florida.

In addition to serving in Slovakia, this mission included an invitation from the Catholic community of Nova Srce (New Heart) in Croatia. Bishop Đuro Hranić, of the Archdiocese Đakovo-Osijek, granted the community permission to host us.

We began with three intense days in Slovonski Brod, the sixth largest city in Croatia. It is located on the Savi River, which forms the boundary to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The city has been subject to many conflicts over the ages, with the most recent war in 1992 bringing the city under heavy bombardment and great loss of life.

The leaders asked us to focus on topics like Holy Scripture, the pro-life message, keys to walking in faith, holiness, and principles of unity. Our short time in Croatia seemed very fruitful. The power of the Gospel was tangible, and many responded in heart and

mind during the prayer sessions that followed. We were invited to several homes, where people invited extended family and friends to receive personal prayer.

The Novo Srce community consists of about one-hundred people. Many are families with three generations who all have a fervor for evangelization, growing in faith, and supporting one another through the trials of life. The community was born out of the trauma of a war-torn environment. Many of the original participants are still healing from the physical, psychological, and spiritual wounds caused by the

Our team shared the pro-life message at a Catholic electric engineering school in Slovakia. The students were mostly young men very interested in what we shared with them.



atrocities of war. Team member Marilyn Bergeron shared,

*“The time we spent in Croatia with the Nova Scra community was the highlight of this mission trip.*

*Despite living through war and difficult times, they are amazing examples of resiliency and overcoming painful horrors through faith. They exude joy, genuine love, and great generosity. They were so appreciative of teachings and yet we feel that we learned so much from them.”*

After leaving Croatia, we conducted several programs in the suburbs around the Slovakian capital city of Bratislava. Our first meeting was scheduled by a woman who had heard Tom speak at a FIRE rally in Presov twenty years ago. Many people from the parish and other walks of life attended. It was a great opportunity to reach people of faith as well as people not yet exposed to the faith. All were invited to commit their lives to Jesus. Most participants remained for a time of extended ministry by our prayer team members.

We also spoke at a variety of venues, including an evening of renewal for a local parish, a meeting with community leaders, and three different schools that wanted pro-life teaching for their students.

Jean Marie shared,

*“Every mission trip is different, but this one threw me an unexpected curve. We were to speak on the pro-life message at an electric engineering school. I thought it was a mistake, but I discovered it was a Catholic trade school with mostly young men over twenty who wanted to know more about the subject. Since the door opened . . . we went.*

*“We spoke at two sessions, each with about twenty men and four women. The students were extremely attentive and had many questions. Before they left, we prayed with them. One teacher apologized for leaving and then returning during the first session. She didn’t want to cry in front of her students. During the second session, she came in again, spoke to Tom, and left. A few minutes later, five young men came in with their chairs. She later told us that when her next class came in, they had heard about the talk and asked if they could attend too.*

**“Our team was moved by the students’ honest hunger to know the truth about such a difficult subject. We were also grateful for such a caring, attuned staff. I learned a powerful lesson: never second guess our Lord; go with it and be in awe of what He does!”**

Jean Marie spoke to leaders of the Maranatha Community in Slovakia.



We then traveled to the far north, on the border of Poland. Fr. Branslav has hosted us there several times over the past fifteen years. He has been building up community over the years and now has multiple ministries in several locations.

In Orava, our team conducted a retreat for about twenty staff members, an evening of renewal, and a retreat for forty-two local men. In Poprad, we shared the pro-life message with two public schools, one Catholic school, and an evening with two talks at the parish of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

Our twenty-sixth consecutive year of mission to Slovakia concluded with a teaching session for the leaders of the Maranatha Community. The community has grown to consist of six-hundred members, including 250 children. Our mission closed with our team joining heart to heart in prayer with all the new young leaders.

We spoke on the pro-life message at two public schools and one Catholic school in Slovakia.



# EVENTS

JUNE 2024 View complete event list at [renewalministries.net/events](http://renewalministries.net/events).

## Madrid, Spain Retreat for Charismatic Renewal Leaders\*

June 1-2  
Dr. Mary Healy

## Greenville, SC Legatus\*

June 4  
Peter Herbeck

## Jackson, MI Pine Hills Boys Camp\*

June 8-15  
Pete Burak & Team

## Steubenville, OH Power & Purpose Conference

June 14-16  
Pete Burak  
Details: [steubenvilleconferences.com/  
events/ppc/?gad\\_source=1](http://steubenvilleconferences.com/events/ppc/?gad_source=1)

## Hong Kong Events with the Hope of Glory Community\*

June 14-24  
Dr. Mary Healy

## Ellicott City, MD Christlife Conference

June 19-21  
Ralph Martin  
Details: [christlifeconference.org/equip](http://christlifeconference.org/equip)

## Toledo, OH Encounter Conference

June 26-28  
Dr. Mary Healy  
Details: [encounterministries.us/conference](http://encounterministries.us/conference)

\* Not open to the public.

## MISSIONS



### Lithuania

June 12-21  
Peter Herbeck

### Uganda

June 25-July 9  
Ralph & Anne Martin, Bishop Scott  
McCaig, & the Emmaus Centre  
Community



## 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/  
the-choices-we-face](http://www.renewalministries.net/the-choices-we-face)

## JUNE GUESTS & TOPICS:

### The Healing Presence of God

(06/02/24) // Fr. Walter Nolte  
Fr. Walter Nolte shares his journey to the priesthood and how he has seen God's healing power in ministry.

### The Dangers of Universalism

(06/09/24) // Dr. Michael McClymond  
Dr. Michael McClymond speaks at a 2023 event addressing the question, "Does everyone go to heaven?"

### Stand Boldly for Truth

(06/16/24) // Jesse Sullivan  
Jesse Sullivan talks about entering politics, running for governor of Illinois, and the spiritual battle being waged for the truth.

### Wrap Yourself in Joy

(06/30/24) // Karen Dwyer  
Teacher and author Karen Dwyer talks about putting on the armor of God to find joy and fight fear.



## PLEASE PRAY

► For those in poverty across the world. May the Lord provide for their every need and comfort and strengthen them with his own presence.

► For those facing difficult medical diagnoses or recoveries, that the Lord would bring healing, support, wisdom, financial provision, and strength. May He also grant an abundance of his peace.

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



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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