

World RENEW



Send forth your spirit and renew the face of the earth

Spring 2008

RENEW International presents



When the second largest Catholic diocese in the United States invites your organization to help it create the spiritual environment for celebrating its bicentennial, there is only one answer—a resounding “yes!”

With 2008 marking its two-hundredth anniversary, the Archdiocese of Boston has made a new process from RENEW International the spiritual centerpiece of its commemoration of this important milestone. The process, entitled *ARISE Together in Christ*, was created as a special collaboration between RENEW and the archdiocese to help Boston Catholics gain a renewed sense of unity and vitality as a local Church. Already, over half of the archdiocese’s 295 parishes are on board.

RENEW International’s Director, Sr. Terry Rickard,

OP, welcomes the opportunity to be instrumental in the renewal among the parishes that are home to almost two million Catholics. “The unprecedented response to *ARISE* demonstrates that Boston’s people are ready to embark on a new period of hope-filled spiritual renewal. We at RENEW International are both grateful and excited to journey with the archdiocese on the next phase of its history.”

The groundwork had been laid over several years. With the Cardinal’s blessing, clergy, staff, and RENEW International team members met numerous times to develop a process specifically designed to meet the needs of the Church in Boston. As Father Arthur Coyle, secretary for pastoral and ministerial services, remarked, the process is much needed in Boston “especially with



Cardinal Seán O'Malley, Archbishop of Boston, with diocesan leaders, planning the launch of *ARISE Together in Christ*

>>> **ARISE Together in Christ** (continued)

what we've been through in the last five years," reflecting the challenges faced in the archdiocese in the wake of the clergy abuse scandal and parish reconfiguration efforts.

Cardinal Seán O'Malley, Archbishop of Boston, said, "ARISE provides an opportunity for clergy, parishioners, and all members of our Catholic community to experience God's wondrous love by committing to a period of renewal through prayer and sharing of our faith. The time is right to bring our people together in an endeavor centered on the loving and healing message of Jesus."

ARISE Together in Christ offers a total renewal experience for the parish. Small-group faith sharing is at the heart of RENEW's approach to spiritual transformation, inviting people to adopt this regular rhythm of breaking open the Word of God in a way that leads to concrete action, not just during the three years of the ARISE process, but for life. In addition, special parish activities, resources for youth, and for families with children, as well as Christian social action will all be developed. Because of the variety of ways in which people are engaged, something is available for every parishioner, creating a unifying and enthusiastic spiritual climate in the parish.

Importantly, ARISE Together in Christ responds to the rich diversity of cultures present in Boston. Participant materials will be offered in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and Vietnamese. Additionally, the many colleges and universities in the Boston area will participate with materials that are geared towards a student population.

"I worked with RENEW International during my tenure in the Diocese of Fall River, an experience that enlivened parishes. And I have seen the great effect of *Campus RENEW* at the Catholic University of America as a Board of Trustees member. These results give me confidence that this process will also be life-giving here in the Archdiocese," related the Cardinal. Recently Sr. Terry spoke to Boston's Catholic TV

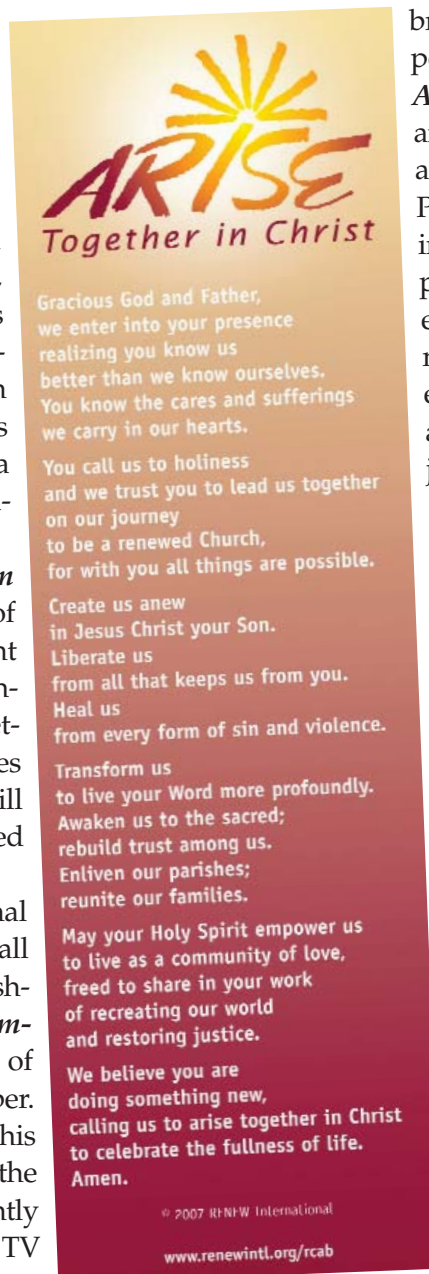
anchor, Jay Fadden, in their studio. You can view this interview by visiting www.renewintl.org and clicking on the link for Catholic TV.

Built on a Foundation of Prayer

One way Catholics in Boston and around the country can ensure the success of this process is to join in the massive prayer effort that is already underway. To create a sense of solidarity and common purpose, a special prayer was written to express the hopes associated with the ARISE process.

Many religious communities have begun praying in a variety of ways for the success of the ARISE process in the archdiocese. Communities of religious sisters, brothers, and priests pray daily for the people and parishes participating in ARISE, observe special days of prayer and fasting, and offer rosaries, Masses, and holy hours of eucharistic adoration. Parishes are also supporting this prayer initiative in a variety of ways: by having parishioners recite the prayer at Mass each day, by asking the homebound members of their parish to pray, and by encouraging students at Catholic schools and as part of campus ministry efforts to join in.

Cardinal Seán O'Malley remarked, "Jesus reminds us that whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. Renewal of the person, the parish, and the Church are entirely dependent upon the grace of God. In prayer, we acknowledge our dependence on God and the need for grace to transform our spiritual lives."



The ARISE Prayer is available as a bookmark, with the prayer in English on one side, and either Spanish or Portuguese on the reverse side.

Available in **packs of 100, \$10.00** per pack (quantity discounts are available). Prayer bookmarks in Vietnamese and Haitian Creole are also available, on a print-to-order basis. Allow 10 working days for delivery.

Available from our secure online bookstore: www.renewintl.org/store

“Don’t Lose Hope”

Margarita Morales,
RENEW Staff Member

“ From the moment I met you guys the message you instilled in us was no matter what your circumstances are, don’t lose hope.”

These sincere words of thanks come from an incarcerated woman to the members of her small faith-sharing group.

It is all too easy for prisoners to feel abandoned, discouraged, and fearful. They need the support of others and the Word of God to show them that they are loved by God and are not alone in their sufferings. Through small faith-sharing communities, many prisoners have been able to reflect on the Word and discover how it moves them to faith and action. They begin to realize how they can make positive changes in their lives and prepare themselves for when they return to society.

A group of volunteers in Louisiana has taken the call of Hebrews 13:3 to heart: “Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them.” They not only visit, but bring words of hope to prison inmates. Using RENEW International’s faith-sharing materials, the volunteers dedicate their time to encouraging incarcerated men and women to deepen their faith through sharing in a small Christian community. The group meets every Monday night and attendance is excellent. The volunteers told us,



Sister Honora Nolty, OP, of RENEW International training prisoners for leadership in *Why Catholic?*

“ Through much prayer, support, and dedication, we feel our ministry is strong. Again, thank you very much for providing materials for us. It has been a blessing!”

Through the generosity of our supporters, RENEW has been able to supply the materials that, the volunteers say, have given structure to their ministry. One of the inmates, reflecting on the scriptural passage, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13), shared this comment with those who visited her in prison:

“ Things were so chaotic in my life that I was ready to give up. You caught me when I was falling, corrected me when I was wrong, and brought me books of comfort that enabled me to get strong in God’s Word. I let down my guard and opened my heart. I’m ready to die to myself and have a new start.”

Recently, lay leaders in Indiana have begun training to bring RENEW’s *Why Catholic?* process to a local detention facility. The chaplain welcomed their initiative as “prophetic timing,” saying it would give his ministry the strong faith-sharing component he felt it needed, and it would help to give greater importance to Christian prayer. All are hopeful that when registration begins early in 2008, many detainees will sign up and attend the faith-sharing sessions in their limited free-time schedule.

It is our privilege at RENEW International to offer our faith-sharing resources to communities with special needs seeking comfort in companionship through community and in the Word of God. With the support of those who believe in the life-changing power of our work, we will continue to expand this ministry.

Our President's 50 Years of Priesthood

Inspiring People I've Met

Hermann Schluter is someone I have always greatly admired. Unfortunately I hadn't spoken to him for years. When he wrote a letter recently from Baton Rouge, about his operation for pancreatic cancer, I knew it was time to reconnect.

Let me share a bit. As a twenty-three-year old war veteran and student at Louisiana State University, Hermann was far away from any connection to church, but he was about to have his life turned upside down. He and a buddy heard about an event that sounded as if it would be a great weekend experience—free food and possibly an opportunity to meet some interesting people. After a good meal on Friday evening, Hermann gravitated to a place that strangely enough looked something like a chapel. When, to his dismay, a priest walked out to give a presentation, Hermann was trapped. He couldn't escape for he had foolishly seated himself in the middle of the crowd.

The priest spoke about the Church's teachings and involvement in matters of justice and in working for the poor. To Hermann's amazement the priest was talking his language. After making a general confession, he returned to L.S.U. and became a strong leader in the Newman Club. His agnostic buddy went on to become a priest.

After graduating from Harvard Business School, Hermann began a very successful and lucrative career in the Worldwide Division of Exxon. He retired early to embrace an extremely promising career as a consultant to the leaders of the eight major oil companies. It was then that Hermann received a call from Bishop Stanley Ott to take on the role of director of a new diocesan process called RENEW. The salary would amount to little more than being a volunteer.

The beginning wasn't easy. Many diocesan leaders believed that this new venture would usher in communism and other evils. A number of the chancery staff looked on skeptically and with some ridicule as "naïve." Hermann called for a meeting of lay people he had made contact with in parishes throughout the dio-

Highlights of Father Tom's



1. September 26, 1976

A broad-based group of sixty people—priests, religious, and lay people—gathered to reflect on the concept of a diocesan-coordinated process for parishes designed for spiritual development and formation. Father Tom is appointed Director of the RENEW process.

2. October 1978

Over 200 parishes in the Archdiocese of Newark celebrate an extremely successful launching of Season I in RENEW. Well over 40,000 are engaged in small faith-sharing groups. Excitement across the diocese runs extremely high.

3. 1980

Steubenville, OH, becomes the first diocese outside of Newark to initiate RENEW. Satisfaction spreads by word of mouth; over 150 dioceses and more than 13,000 parishes eventually become involved in the United States.

4. 1984

Invitations from India and New Zealand bring about the first extended RENEW visitations overseas. In 1985, 92% of all parishes in New Zealand become involved in RENEW. In 1989 thirteen dioceses—all of Southeast India—fully initiate RENEW and extend it to the year 2000, at which point all the bishops of India adopt small Christian communities as basic to their national pastoral plan.

cese. To the amazement of all, even to the delightful surprise of Bishop Ott, over 1,000 showed up at the Chancery's quadrangle. What was happening?

I can still hear the enthusiasm with which Hermann related what transpired: "People were proudly sharing their love for the Lord; for the first time lay leadership was being formed in parishes; parishioners were coming out of the woodwork and taking on responsibility; black and white parishioners broke barriers by starting to meet in one another's homes; and with new confidence people took great pride in their Catholic faith." A man, wanting nothing to do with the Church, sat in an adjoining room eavesdropping on his wife's RENEW gathering. The man became an involved participant in the group and went on to take ministerial leadership in his parish.

RENEW Ministry

5. 1987-95

International interest in *RENEW* continues with Australia, Guam, and American Samoa. Worldwide *RENEW* begins to expand to 24 countries including South Africa, Philippines, Nigeria, El Salvador, Ireland.

6. 1998

RENEW 2000 celebrates the new millennium with themes based on Pope John Paul II's document, *As the Third Millennium Draws Near*. Sixty-five dioceses initiate the process.

7. 2000

RENEW International rejoices as Pope John Paul II, in his bicentennial address to the Americas, calls for an ideal that would see parishes as a "community of many small communities"—a concept *RENEW* International had been promoting since 1981.

8. 2002

In response to sexual abuse scandals across the country, *RENEW* International's *Healing the Body of Christ/ Sanando el Cuerpo de Cristo* helps hundreds of thousands of people to work through their emotions, to experience healing, and to reaffirm their Catholic faith.

9. 2002

Campus RENEW expands its outreach to young adults at the most crucial time in their lives, helping them to clarify their goals in life and strengthen the foundations of their faith.

10. 2004

RENEW International launches *Why Catholic?/¿Por qué ser católico?* in response to a widely experienced pastoral need for a strong faith formation process that combines with effective evangelization.

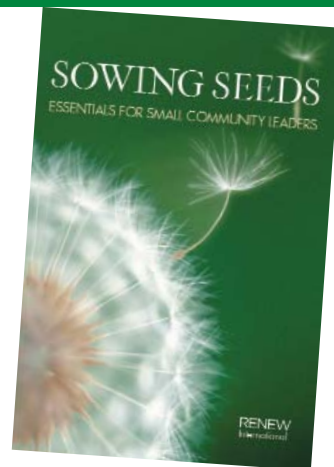
Hermann continued in his diocesan role until every last bit of his financial savings had been used. He had given everything he had.

In a phone conversation Hermann shared that he had successfully come out of a long operation for pancreatic cancer. In the process he lost forty pounds from his already lean frame, but is optimistic and hopeful. I know you'll pray for Hermann.

As I celebrate my fiftieth year in the priesthood, I reflect on a wonderful spiritual journey and the inspiring people I've gotten to know on the way, many of whom are now reading this article. I thank God for so many things, one of which is to have met people like Hermann Schluter and numerous others like you. I not only thank God, I thank you.

Just Published

Imagine **RENEW International's** three decades of experience promoting and sustaining small Christian communities (see chart at left) distilled into one book!



SOWING SEEDS: **Essentials for Small Community Leaders**

offers a comprehensive collection of pastoral insights and practical suggestions to help small community leaders guide their groups in a way that nourishes spiritual growth.

This book overflows with simple but effective ideas and strategies that will enhance the way these groups reflect on and respond to the Gospel.



También disponible en español **Sembradores de semillas**

Una colección completa de sugerencias prácticas y reflexiones pastorales para ayudar a los animadores de las pequeñas comunidades a dirigir sus grupos de una manera que fomenta el crecimiento espiritual.

Price: \$14.95

Member prices available to registered members of one of *RENEW's* processes; login as a member at www.renewintl.org/store to see member price details. *SOWING SEEDS* and *Sembradores de semillas* are in the "Books & More" section of the online bookstore.

If you have remembered RENEW International in your will, thank you.

If you would like to consider doing so, please contact our Director, Sr. Terry Rickard, OP, at 908-769-5400 ext 160, or terryr@renewintl.org

Faith in Action with *Why Catholic?*

Three Days, One Home

**Maryanne Meyerriecks,
Fort Smith Correspondent
Arkansas Catholic**

PARIS, AK – Two days before Thanksgiving, St. Joseph Church parishioner Martha Ullrich headed down Tanyard Mountain Road to bring a food basket to “Miss Mary,” a 77-year-old widow in the parish who was known for her warm smile and generous spirit.

“Whenever we would bring Miss Mary a food basket, she would always give us cookies,” Ullrich said. “She was so appreciative and hospitable to us, whether we came with food or just to say hello.”

When Ullrich arrived that night, she found Mary Farris huddled by a small heater wearing a coat and gloves. Her small home was so cold and leaky that she had to cover everything she owned with plastic sheets. And as Ullrich headed back down the road to host the last *Why Catholic?* session for the fall, she couldn't help thinking about Farris who never complained about living in a leaky home without running water, working plumbing or adequate heat.

After sharing Scriptures and exploring the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, each *Why Catholic?* group member chose a way to “live the good news” during the next week. As Ullrich described her visit to Farris, the group

came up with an ambitious plan—to build a warm, dry new house for Farris before Christmas.

Farris accepted their offer graciously, and, after all the *Why Catholic?* groups met with Father Eugene Luke, OSB, St. Joseph's pastor, work began almost immediately.

Teens from the youth group and other parish volunteers started digging a foun-

ation on land next to Farris' existing home, and a bricklayer laid the foundation the following weekend. Everyone in the parish got involved doing construction work; donating cash, building materials, furniture or household items; and cooking for and feeding the workers.

The 336-square-foot home, consisting of kitchen, living area, bedroom, bathroom and laundry closet, was finished in three days. St. Joseph parishioners started on a cold, rainy Saturday, Dec. 8, and worked all day to get the building “in the dry.” On Sunday and Monday they finished up and helped Farris move in later in the evening.

Although the home wasn't completely finished on the inside, it was warm and dry, with a brand-new green asphalt roof. It was the first time in years that Farris was able to sleep in a bed without worrying about being rained on.

Almost all the materials were donated—windows, flooring, doors, fixtures, appliances, paneling, paint, shower and toilet.

“I think we've got somebody in almost every trade in the church,” Farris, who has attended St. Joseph for 24 years, said.

Bricklayers, electricians, termite exterminators, plumbers, carpenters, and other skilled tradesmen donated their services to the project. Church members also donated a bed, a handmade quilt, a loveseat, a recliner, new dishes and linens.

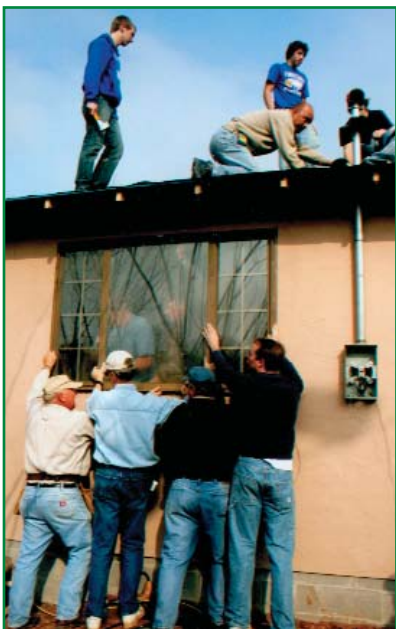
Farris was thrilled with everything in the home, proudly showing visitors the washer and dryer hidden behind double doors, a shower with a built-in seat in the bathroom, a new stove with an overhead range hood, a wall heating/air conditioning unit, and new kitchen cabinets.

“I can tell you for sure prayers are answered,” she said, “and I have been praying for a long time. I'd used up all my savings and was living on Social Security. I tried to get a grant to fix my house, but it never went through. No words are enough to express how thankful I am to them.”

The parish benefited as well, growing closer and coming together as one to help their long-term parishioner.

“I think this was the best Christmas we've ever had,” Ullrich said.

This story originally appeared in the Jan. 19, 2008, issue of Arkansas Catholic, the weekly newspaper for the Diocese of Little Rock, P.O. Box 7417, Little Rock, AR 72217, www.arkansas-catholic.org. It is reprinted with permission.



Dear Friends of RENEW International,

“ I finally get it—my Campus RENEW group brought the Bible to life and now I see how my Catholic faith can make a difference in my life and the life of others.”

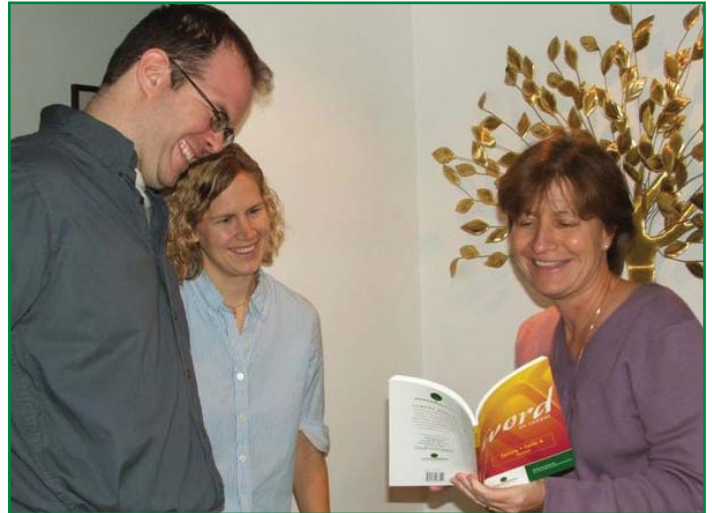
What great words to hear from a college student! All of us, parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, are concerned that when our young adult children leave for college they also may leave behind the practice of their Catholic faith.

I was troubled, but not surprised, to discover from a study in the *National Catholic Reporter*, that only 15 percent of young adult Catholics attend Church weekly. Sixteen of my nieces and nephews are young adults and their Mass participation varies from “no timers” to “some timers” to a few who are “all the timers.”

My faith enlivens my life and lifts me up during difficult times. I want to pass that faith on to my nieces and nephews—and to the thousands of Catholic college students who are seeking meaning and a sense of belonging—in a way that is relevant and meaningful to their lives. It is our responsibility as believing and committed Catholics to provide an environment that helps young people to personally encounter Christ and to embrace the fullness of the Catholic faith.

To address these needs, in 2003 RENEW International strengthened its outreach to college campuses through *Campus RENEW*. This process provides a place for students to recognize the dynamic presence of God in their lives and to increase young adults’ engagement in spiritual activities such as small faith-sharing communities, Mass, and retreats.

Now on over 24 college campuses, with an additional 19 projected within the next 12 months, *Campus RENEW* is providing a setting where Catholic faith can be maintained and strengthened during one of the most formative periods of life.



Sister Terry Rickard, OP, Director of RENEW International admires the latest edition of *Word on Campus* with Kathy Motyka and Joe Arner of the RENEW Young Adult Ministry Team

“ Campus RENEW has become a central part of my college life and has made me stronger in my faith!”

Sadly, funds available for campus ministries are minimal and often, non-existent. Currently, fees cover less than 20 percent of what it costs to bring this ministry to our students.

Your support is essential and urgently needed. The total cost of providing the Campus RENEW process is over \$175,000 per year. We are committed to bringing *Campus RENEW* to any school, offering Catholic students a vibrant process to enliven their faith. Because campus ministry offices pay a fraction of the real cost, we need your help to cover the balance. Help us keep faith central to the lives of our young people!

During Holy Week, we will celebrate a special Mass commemorating the fifth anniversary of *Campus RENEW* and include the intentions of all benefactors who have made this mission possible.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sr. Terry".

Sister Theresa Rickard, OP



RENEW International
1232 George Street
Plainfield, NJ 07062-1717

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In this issue of *World RENEW*, share our excitement at the launch of *ARISE Together in Christ*, our new process of spiritual renewal; go behind bars to see the hope that faith sharing can bring inmates; review the highlights of Father Tom's RENEW ministry and meet Hermann Schluter, a friend from the pioneering days of RENEW; see *Why Catholic?* prompting faith into action; read Sister Terry's plea for help with our outreach to young people on campus.

Save these Dates!

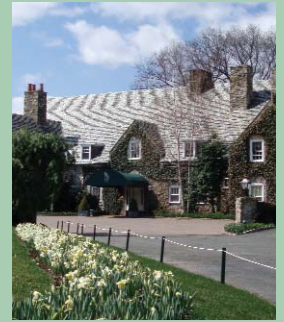
Annual Fundraising Dinner
June 5, 2008

Pleasantdale Chateau, West Orange, NJ



Annual Golf Classic
September 18, 2008

Fiddler's Elbow CC, Bedminster, NJ



For more information about either event, please visit our website: www.renewintl.org or call Margarita Morales at 908-769-5400 ext 140

To make a gift to RENEW International, please go to: www.renewintl.org and visit "Get Involved"

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President: Msgr. Thomas A. Kleissler

Director: Sr. Theresa Rickard, OP

Editorial Committee: Sr. Mary C. McGuinness, OP; Deirdre Malacrea; Patricia McGill; Margarita Morales; Allan Donaldson; Robert B. Kelly

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RENEW International

1232 George Street, Plainfield, NJ 07062-1717

Phone: 908-769-5400

Fax: 908-769-5660

Website: www.renewintl.org