

**Sky Radio Network - Interview of Sr. Theresa Rickard, O.P. by
Dennis Michael, Host of "America's Innovators"**

Dennis Michael: We talk a great deal about branding here and renewing the public's perception of brands in the public view, but it might surprise you how widespread that idea really is.

Our next guest, for example, brings a case in point. In her case, the brand is over 2000 years old. Sr. Theresa Rickard is Executive Director of RENEW International. Their client is the Catholic Church. In this case we're going to talk about how they're approaching a common marketing challenge from an uncommon perspective.

Your approach might be a little longer than the actual term branding. Tell me what RENEW International does.

Sr. Terry Rickard: RENEW International for over 30 years has been bringing innovative ways to reach out to Catholics who are both active and inactive, and to invite them back to the Church. We do this through creative ways and innovative ways to renew people. We've served over 5 million people directly and over 13,000 parishes in the United States, and in over 24 countries.

Dennis Michael: You're bringing modern techniques to reinvigorating this ancient faith. Tell me about the modern techniques.

Sr. Terry Rickard: What we're trying to do is to use the web. We've renewing our website to reach out to all different kinds of people. We also do what's called "train the trainers," helping people to create small Christian communities in their homes, and bring good materials. But part of that now is that they can actually use the web to tell a story that connects faith with life.

The other thing is that our newest thing is that, as you know, we have a lot of people who travel, and they can't be in those small groups week-by-week, so we have begun a virtual faith-sharing group. We just started to pilot that and have eight people involved. They can see each other, they read the scripture, they pray together, use Church teaching, and they share that through the web.

Dennis Michael: What is on your current and past agenda? What are you folks doing right now?

Sr. Terry Rickard: We have a tremendous effort in the Archdiocese of Boston where we have a program called *ARISE Together in Christ*. We have about 30,000 people involved, youth, young adults, and what we do is we have good

marketing techniques to get the word out. Many churches have good spiritual programs, but no one comes because they don't get the word out. It's not enough to put it in the parish bulletin or announce it from the altar. You have to use good marketing techniques. For us we're using the web more and more, social networking, to get the word out to the young people to be more involved and connected to the Church and help them to connect faith with life.

Dennis Michael: Sister Theresa, thank you so much for joining us with Sky Radio – interesting perspective. Sr. Theresa Rickard is Executive Director of RENEW International. We reached her by phone from Plainfield, NJ. They are on the web at www.renewintl.org