

World RENEW

Send forth your spirit and renew the face of the earth

Celebrating our Roots—Together

by Michael Brough, Director

We celebrate all types of anniversaries in life—wedding anniversaries, service anniversaries at work, anniversaries of ordination and religious life. What is so special about anniversaries that we pause to gather and rejoice?

Anniversaries are not just about elapsed time. Instead, anniversaries represent significant milestones precisely because those involved have remained committed to an ideal, a way of life, a relationship for a meaningful period of time. This living out of commitment, faith, and love becomes a witness for others. No wonder anniversaries are joyful occasions for all!

For twenty-five years, RENEW International has had a “meaningful relationship” with people and parishes around the world. Like true love, the path to spiritual renewal is never the easy path. Rather, it takes hard work. As in a family, the fruits of relationship are revealed over time through many simple yet caring efforts. Many of you in your parishes have put in that effort—inviting others, serving on Core Communities, leading small groups. Beautiful things have happened—deepened faith, calls to ministry, welcoming the stranger.

Over RENEW’s history, no one individual has exempli-

fied such commitment more than Monsignor Thomas A. Kleissler. Fr. Tom is at heart a parish priest, except that his parish has now grown into a global church.

His efforts flourished in a shared vision with his co-founder, Monsignor Thomas P. Ivory. Before RENEW even had a name, it had a wealth of dedicated collaborators who formed the “originals.” Visionary benefactors, such as Mr. and Mrs. J. Peter Grace, offered generous support to make RENEW take root and spread.

It is our privilege to honor these faithful and committed people as we celebrate our 25th Anniversary of ministry beyond our home Archdiocese of Newark. We thank God for the relationships formed within our RENEW family.

This coming year will see a variety of celebrations for RENEW’s anniversary. On June 2, 2005, RENEW honors its founders, Msgr. Tom Kleissler and Msgr. Tom Ivory at the 25th Anniversary Dinner Gala. September 22, 2005, sees RENEW benefactors hitting the links at our Annual Golf Outing at Fiddler’s Elbow. Last but not least, we celebrate and give thanks to God at a Mass of Thanksgiving at the Cathedral Basilica in Newark on October 23, 2005.

Join us on **Thursday, June 2, 2005**

as RENEW International celebrates its

25th Anniversary



*taking root,
reaching beyond*

This year we are proud
to honor our founders



Msgr. Thomas P. Ivory



Msgr. Thomas A. Kleissler

Dinner Gala

at the

Hyatt Regency

2 Exchange Place

in Jersey City New Jersey

For more information, please visit us at www.RENEWgala.org or call Jose Hernandez at (908) 769-5400 x112.

Meet RENEW's Founders

More than a quarter century ago, Msgr. Thomas Ivory and Msgr. Thomas Kleissler realized they shared the same vision for a renewed Church. With the blessing of Archbishop Peter L. Gerety, they worked together with laypersons, religious, and priests to fulfill this dream and co-founded RENEW in the Archdiocese of Newark.

Known nationally as a leader of the catechumenal model of Church, Msgr. Ivory presently serves as pastor of the Church of the Presentation, Upper Saddle River. He has offered workshops and courses on sacramental theology and adult initiation in dioceses in the United States and Europe. From 1988 to 1992, Msgr. Ivory served as Rector of the Theological Seminary at Louvain, Belgium, and was Adjunct Professor of Pastoral Theology.

Msgr. Ivory authored *Conversion and Community: A Catechumenal Model for Total Parish*, which includes an epilogue on the follow-up to RENEW. He is a founding member of the North American Forum on the Catechumenate and past president of the National Conference of Diocesan Directors of Religious Education.

Appointed Director of RENEW from its inception, and its heart and soul ever since, Msgr. Kleissler currently serves as President of RENEW International. The implementation of his pastoral vision for a renewal of parish life and the collaboration of lay people and priests, led to his being recognized as a world leader in spiritual renewal, evangelization, and the development of small Christian communities.

His untiring zeal has impelled the spread of RENEW to over 160 dioceses in the United States and 140 dioceses in 23 other countries. His early desire to be a missionary saw fulfillment as he traveled extensively to plant seeds of RENEW's message in North America, Latin America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Oceania.

Msgr. Kleissler co-authored *Small Christian Communities: A Vision of Hope for the 21st Century*. He is one of the founding members of the North American Forum for Small Christian Communities.

The collaboration begun twenty-five years ago between Msgr. Kleissler and Msgr. Ivory continues to reap pastoral benefits in the Archdiocese of Newark, as well as in countries throughout the world.

President's WORLD

by Msgr. Tom Kleissler

The Lord Hears the Cry of the Poor

"The Lord hears the cry of the poor." How many times at Sunday Mass have we sung this responsorial psalm with great gusto and exuberance? Why is it then that every time we do I feel disturbed? Surely God loves and cares for the poor. But today we are the body of Christ. The poor can only experience God's love through us.

Yes, I am troubled. Have I done enough for the poor in my life? Am I doing enough now? Have we? Have you?

Has RENEW done enough for the poor? It is true that we have worked in some of the poorest and most troubled places of the world. When published pictures showed the tsunami crashing over a particular beach in India, my heart was wrenched because we had been on that beach many times. Scores of people actually lived on the beach in utter poverty—without running water, toilet facilities, or any of the conveniences to which we are accustomed. It was our privilege to form a number of them into RENEW small groups where they shared their faith in God and supported one another in their desperate struggle for existence. They are with the Lord now. By God's grace, we were able to bring some hope into their lives while on earth.

Still, I am troubled. Yes, we have been with the poorest before, during, and will be in the aftermath of the tsunami. RENEW's presence goes beyond the time of a disaster crisis. Yet there is so much more to do before we celebrate another twenty-five years of RENEW. So much more!

Surely, God wants us to help the poor—I would suggest, perhaps, even to the point of heroic sacrifice and effort on our part. We are called to cooperate with God's grace all the more to bring about the changing of hearts that leads to strong and effective action. RENEW is resolved to serve the poor with the utmost commitment.

As we move into our future, our goal as a united RENEW family is to be able to put our whole selves into singing, "The Lord hears the cry of the poor."

RENEW Updates

Adventures with Theology on Tap

A snow storm couldn't hold them back! Nearly 50 young adults showed up at the first RENEW Theology on Tap session on Feb. 28. Inspired by the RENEW approach to invitational ministry, core team members shared their own hopes and concerns and together grew into bearers of the Word: "To all who have been away...to all who have been Catholic in name only...to all who feel marginalized...to all who thirst for more from their Catholic faith...Come and see!" From early planning meetings through implementation, the driving force for the leadership team has been the realization that they can make a positive impact on the Church today by inviting and, yes, sometimes challenging other young adults to recognize and claim their rightful place in the life of the Church.



The Theology on Tap series was offered at The Mile Square, a local Hoboken, NJ, bar/restaurant. Titles including "Sunday Self vs. Wall St. Self: Get Real, You're Only One," "The Spirituality of Career Choice," "The Art of the Relationship," and "U2's Legacy of Faith, Justice, and Rock and Roll" attracted a cross section of young adults from destinations well beyond the selected venue. Spontaneous, exuberant expressions of faith recharged became commonplace on the streets of Hoboken as Theology on Tap sessions came to an end. Young adults saying, "It's so

great to be back with the Church!" or "I haven't felt this good since campus ministry when I worked on the retreat team," offer examples of the impact of this first program. Please see www.renewTOT.org for details.

Canadian Seeds Result in Geneva Growth

Hailing from over seventy countries, the members of the Parish of John XXIII, Geneva, Switzerland, include workers in the international business sector, employees of governmental and non-governmental organizations, diplomatic representatives to the United Nations, and students. In January, during the RENEW Sign-Up Sunday talk, Paula Murphy-Ives, a small community leader, recalled, "When I was eight or ten, I remember my parents going through the RENEW program in our small town in Canada. And though I did not participate directly, I can still feel the energy and renewed vigor that the small faith-sharing groups had left imprinted on all who were connected to the community. I would love to see us build together this kind of energy and concern for each other here in Geneva."

Paula continued to share RENEW's value, "Although we first thought it would take up too much of our time and energy, we quickly realized it was the beacon in our week—giving us more energy and resources to navigate through the various issues and relationships during the week. Being able to spend that time together—enjoying a lot of silence and prayer in an atmosphere of peace and acceptance—was so worth it!" Members of the parish core community come from New Zealand, Malawi, Ghana, Ireland, England, Philippines, United States, and Switzerland.

Westminster Diocese Launches Largest Christian Unity Effort

The new season of Westminster's RENEW, launched this February, is the largest experiment in Christian unity ever carried out in England and Wales. All over the capital city and in Hertfordshire, thousands of Catholics in parish small groups invited local Christians to join them in a six-week Lenten course of Scripture reflection and discussion. Church leaders, including the Secretary of the Free Churches group and the Anglican Bishop of London, backed the initiative, under the banner "Together We Can!" The Rev. Geoffrey Roper and Bishop Richard Chartres asked their vicars and ministers to recommend that members of their congregations join with Catholic groups for Season IV of Westminster Diocese's RENEW program.



Michael Brough, Director, presents to a group of RENEW participants at Garston.

About 18,000 Catholics in 170 parishes across the diocese met in small groups during Lent. Members of local Anglican, Methodist, and other Christian churches joined their weekly meetings to reflect together on materials prepared by Westminster Diocese's team. The materials were designed to reflect the Lenten theme of reconciliation.

Meanwhile, a newspaper sent to all Westminster Catholic parishes listed one-sided ways in which Catholics see other Christians and vice versa. It invited participants to examine their prejudices by talking with each other and praying together. The initiative came at a time when "official" dialogue between the Catholic and Anglican Churches has lost momentum.

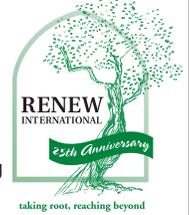
Empowering for Peace

It is a very graced time for RENEW International as our peace efforts begin to take shape in the conflict-torn nation of Burundi. Stéphane Kalonji, international presenter, reports that while challenges abound, dioceses are moving forward in their commitment to use the RENEW process in the implementation of the Burundi peace project. Recently, the Sisters Bene-Terezia attended a two-day presentation on Christian Reconciliation and faith-sharing materials are now being translated and inculturated—critical steps of empowerment along the path toward peace. Diocesan training will begin in May.

One of the latest challenges for the Burundi people is recovery from several days of torrential rains that began on January 28 and destroyed more than 700 homes, schools, crops, and much more. As they strive to be resilient in the face of this devastation, we ask all to join us in holding the people of Burundi in prayers as we work toward providing them with much needed support.

PAGE FOUR

World RENEW: Newsletter of RENEW International.
Distributed without charge to friends of RENEW.
President: Msgr. Thomas A. Kleissler
Director: Michael Brough
Coordinator: Jose A. Hernandez
Editorial Committee: Mary C. McGuinness, OP;
Deirdre Malacrea; Beverly O'Malley
Design: Eberly Designs, Inc.
RENEW International
1232 George St., Plainfield, NJ 07062-1717
Phone: 908/769-5400 **Fax:** 908/769-5660
Web sites: www.renewintl.org; ParishLife.com;
RENEWgala.org; WhyCatholic.org; renewTOT.org
E-mail: renew@renewintl.org



Fiddler's Elbow Country Club • Thursday, Sept. 22, 2005

For more information please call 908-769-5400 x 131

World RENEW: Newsletter of RENEW International / EASTER 2005

Address Service Requested

RENEW International
1232 George Street
Plainfield, NJ 07062-1717



Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 127
Plainfield, NJ

Dear Michael,

Yes, I want to spread the gospel through RENEW. Here is my gift of \$_____.

Please pray for my intentions, which are listed at the right.
(Your intentions will be remembered in all Masses and prayers we offer at RENEW International.)

I/We pledge \$_____ over the next year.

My intentions

Please make your tax-deductible gift to RENEW International.

(Please Print)

NAME _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail Address _____

Telephone (optional) _____

Please print and mail to

**Mr. Michael Brough, Director
RENEW International
1232 George Street
Plainfield, NJ 07062-1717**