

We Are In A War – The Lord And His People Win
Parish Mission at Saint Philip Neri in Linthicum, MD with Ralph Martin

The information contained in this document is the result of notes taken during my attending the conference. Some of the quotes are paraphrased and are not meant to be exact but to simply give food for thoughts. At times they may be very choppy.

Sunday Night 3/17/2013

Fr. Dale opened with Isaiah chapter 43 verses 16 – 28: “I am Yahweh, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your king. ¹⁶ Thus says Yahweh, who made a way through the sea, a path in the raging waters, ¹⁷ who led out chariot and horse together with an army of picked troops: they lay down never to rise again, they were snuffed out, put out like a wick. ¹⁸ No need to remember past events, no need to think about what was done before. ¹⁹ Look, I am doing something new, now it emerges; can you not see it? Yes, I am making a road in the desert and rivers in wastelands. ²⁰ The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches, for bestowing water in the desert and rivers on the wastelands for my people, my chosen one, to drink. ²¹ The people I have shaped for myself will broadcast my praises. ²² But, Jacob, you have not invoked me; no, Israel, you have grown weary of me. ²³ You have not brought me lambs as your burnt offerings and have not honored me with your sacrifices. I have not subjected you to cereal offering, I have not wearied you by demanding incense. ²⁴ You have not bought expensive reed for me or sated me with the fat of your sacrifices. Instead by your sins you have treated me like a slave, you have wearied me with your crimes, ²⁵ I, I it is who blot out your acts of revolt for my own sake and shall not call your sins to mind. ²⁶ Remind me, and we will judge this together; state your own case and justify yourself. ²⁷ Your first ancestor sinned, your interpreters revolted against me. ²⁸ That is why I deposed the chief men of my sanctuary, why I put Jacob under the curse of destruction and subjected Israel to insult.”

Interestingly Jim Murphy had the same word to share at intercession that Sunday morning.

Saint Paul told the Philippians that it is a supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus as our Lord. We are to love. We have to open the door and what opens the door is Faith. People today would pay millions to stay young. The fountain of youth flows from Jesus’ heart and there is nothing that can separate us from His love. We are called up into the life of the Holy Trinity. No one can see God and live. Nobody has seen him except Jesus. Jesus has come to enable us to see Him. Everything is rubbish given as a gift temporarily by people, money etc. **We need to do an attachment check:** What are we holding on to? Jesus has taken a human nature through death unto transformed life. He took human where he had not gone before. He is preparing a place for us. It is decision time for Catholics. What wisdom does God Provide? Take a look at Ephesians 6 v 10- 24: “¹⁰ Finally, grow strong in the Lord, with the strength of his power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so as to be able to resist the devil’s tactics. ¹² For it is not against human enemies that we have to struggle, but against the principalities and the ruling forces who are masters of the darkness in this world, the spirits of evil in the heavens. ¹³ That is why you must take up all God’s armor, or you will not be able to put up any resistance on the evil day, or stand your ground even though you exert yourselves to the full. ¹⁴ So stand your ground, with truth a belt round your waist, and uprightness a breastplate, ¹⁵ wearing for shoes on your feet the eagerness to spread the gospel of peace ¹⁶ and always carrying the shield of faith so that you can use it to

quench the burning arrows of the Evil One. ¹⁷ And then you must take salvation as your helmet and the sword of the Spirit, that is, the word of God. ¹⁸ In all your prayer and entreaty keep praying in the Spirit on every possible occasion. Never get tired of staying awake to pray for all God's holy people, ¹⁹ and pray for me to be given an opportunity to open my mouth and fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel ²⁰ of which I am an ambassador in chains; pray that in proclaiming it I may speak as fearlessly as I ought to. ²¹ So that you know, as well, what is happening to me and what I am doing, my dear friend Tychicus, my trustworthy helper in the Lord, will tell you everything. ²² I am sending him to you precisely for this purpose, to give you news about us and encourage you thoroughly. ²³ May God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ grant peace, love and faith to all the brothers. ²⁴ May grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, in life imperishable." Scripture is Dei Verbum, the Word of God. We have to get our strength from on high. What are the tactics of the devil? Jesus said that the devil is the father of lies and a killer. 2 Corinthian 11v14 says: "¹⁴ There is nothing astonishing in this; even satan disguises himself as an angel of light". **We look for teachers who tell us what we want to hear.** We have to be grounded in the Word and the teaching of the church. James 4 v 7: "Give in to God, then; resist the devil, and he will run away from you." Hold your ground. We are swept away because we build our house on the sand. Truth and Righteousness = Holiness. The strong holds of satan are built in our mind. John 8 v 32 says: "The truth shall set you free". Deliverance can also occur by abiding to the Word. Put on the shield of faith – Jesus used the truth of the Word. The fiery darts – **A lot of people are spreading his lies without knowing they are being used by him.** There is a difference between wisdom that comes from above and that which comes from the world. For example, when a thought comes to mind ask the Holy Spirit if it is coming from the Lord. If not, deflect it. Don't be careless in your thoughts. Do not entertain lustful, unforgiving, hostile, negative etc thoughts. Recognize it and reject it. **People who do not know there is a spiritual war may have been captured already.**

What is **Faith**? Hebrews 11 v 1 says: "Only faith can guarantee the blessings that we hope for, or prove the existence of realities that are unseen." It is a gift of God of knowing, perceiving realities. It is certain knowledge. Faith was given to Peter to know that Jesus was the Son of God. It is a miracle of faith to have faith. What is the recipe for Evangelization? It starts with Faith. Believe in your **heart** and profess with your **lips**. Then it takes perseverance through the testing of your faith. How does Faith help us in the world today? We fear not for the Lord is in control. The providence of God governs the affairs of the nations. Hebrews 13 v 5 says: "⁵ Put avarice out of your lives and be content with whatever you have; God himself has said: I shall not fail you or desert you". The Lord will never forsake nor abandon us. Contentment is a function of who we know. He will never abandon to forsake us. Therefore, we need to be growing in our faith and confidence in the Lord. What enables us not to be oppressed/ smothered by the world is our **Faith**. The Lord himself said: "This is my beloved son, **listen** to Him". One of the greatest sin is the sin of unbelief. Not to believe in God is to make him a liar. Do not be provoked by evil doers. Be still and wait for God.

Monday Night 3/18/2013

Father Dale opened with Revelation Chapter 3 v 20: "²⁰ Look, I am standing at the door, knocking. If one of you hears me calling and opens the door, I will come in to share a meal at that person's side."

We need the shield of Faith for discernment and to know the Word of God, the sword. We are the light of the world. We need to participate in the mission of the church. We have just reached the 50th anniversary of Vatican II. What was its purpose? The renewal was for the sake of evangelization. Media's interpretation was "power to the lay people". The document on ecumenism was misinterpreted. There are seeds of gospel in non Christian religions; but that lead to confusion. Some people taught about the fact that there was going to be a Vatican III.

What is evangelization? Paul VI said that there is no evangelization if the name Jesus is not proclaimed. The Lord is not looking to improve the world but to re-create the world. John Paul II's definition of evangelization has to do with conversion. It is possible to come back to mass but not be converted. That is not having made a personal decision to accept Christ and be his disciple. To be active in the parish does not mean that people have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord. **We have to know the goal we aiming for.**

What is the new evangelization? John Paul II started it and Benedict XVI institutionalized it. Excerpt from the definition in section 33 of the Redeemer says that it has three aspects:

- Primary - to the nations that never heard about Christ.
- Pastoral care – they heard about Christ
- Re -Evangelization – lost sense of faith and live far from Christ.

Who does it? **You, Me**

There are four ways we can transform the culture:

- Witness of our lives. When faith hope and love shrivel, fear takes over
- Works of mercy
- Renewing of the temporal order. Working to make life better for others
- Speak about Jesus with words share the Gospel; invite people to parish missions, to prayer group meeting.

The culture is very different; there is a lot of hostility and relativism. Matthew 7 v 13-14: ¹³ 'Enter by the narrow gate, since the road that leads to destruction is wide and spacious, and many take it; ¹⁴ but it is a narrow gate and a hard road that leads to life, and only a few find it.' Many are called and few will be saved. Saint Thomas of Aquinas says that there was a division at Calvary one thief versus the other. This was a foreshadowing of the separation of the human race. This was also echoed by Simeon in Luke 2 v 34: ³⁴ Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'Look, he is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is opposed'. We are free to love or not, trust or not, believe or not. We are not robots. Like in a real marriage, it is a free gift of ourselves to the other. Take chances; take people off the broad way that leads to destruction. No one lives in a neutral environment; we are all wounded by original sin. **We live in an anti Christian culture.** If we really love people, we will pray for their salvation. Be ambassadors for Christ. God wants to appeal through us.

About the Speaker

Ralph Martin is the president of Renewal Ministries (www.renewalministries.net), an organization devoted to Catholic renewal and evangelization. Renewal Ministries is the sponsor of “The Choices We Face” – a popular weekly Catholic television and radio program distributed throughout the world – and engages in a wide variety of mission projects in over 30 countries.

He is also the Director of Graduate Theology Programs in Evangelization and an assistant professor of theology at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in the Archdiocese of Detroit. He holds a doctorate in theology from the Angelicum University in Rome.

In December of 2011, Pope Benedict XVI appointed Ralph as a Consultor to the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization for a five year term.

He is the author of a number of articles and books, the most recent of which is *The Fulfillment of All Desire: A Guidebook for the Journey to God Based on the Wisdom of the Saints*. He and his wife Anne reside in Ann Arbor, Michigan.