



January 2009 Newsletter

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THE COMING HOME NETWORK INTERNATIONAL



A Glorious Journey

— Dr. Paul Chaim Benedicta Schenck

I chose to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church when it became apparent to me that I no longer could confess the Creed, in which I made the claim to believe in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church and not be in communion with the Bishop of Rome, the Successor of St. Peter, and Pastor of the universal Church.

Unity is the foremost characteristic of the Body of Christ. The two most splendid descriptions of the Church, *the Body and the Bride of Christ*, can only be conceived of as one, and never, as many. Our Lord has only *one Body* and only *one Bride*. St. Paul emphatically declares this in Ephesians 4:5

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

There was no such unity outside the Catholic Church. My brother and I researched hundreds of denominations for a book we called “The Constitutions of American Denominations.” They conflicted with each other in the most

important and the most trivial matters. Those divisions have wounded and weakened the Body of Christ, and have sapped her strength and vitality. The visible Church in true unity with Christ and His members is the True Church.

Pope John Paul II lamented our current situation in *Ut Unum Sint*, where he quotes the Decree on Ecumenism of the Second Vatican Council, “Division,” he says, “openly contradicts the will of Christ, provides a stumbling block to the world, and inflicts damage on the most holy cause of proclaiming the Good News to every creature.”

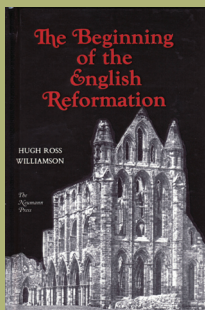
When I refer to the Catholic Church as the True Church, I do not mean that all others are false. I use it in the way a carpenter might: as the standard against which all others are measured. In *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, the statement of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, it unambiguously states, “Outside her visible structure, namely in Churches and ecclesial communities which are joined to the Catholic Church by an imperfect communion, there are to be found many elements of sanctification

Journeys Home

FEATURED RESOURCES

The Beginning of the English Reformation

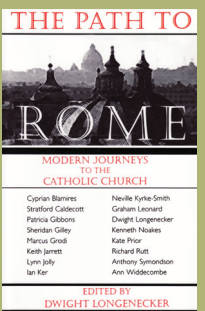
By Hugh Ross Williamson



If people neglect the study of the past, they cannot fully understand the present. This is particularly true of the Reformation in England. Hugh Ross Williamson cuts through the superficial, oversimplified causes of the Reformation, showing how complex political and economic forces obscured, for the men of that time, the religious nature of the issue; the extent to which the subsequent doctrinal reform was of Continental origin; the extent also to which the imposition of the new order was facilitated by the lethargy, cowardice, weakness & cupidity of Tudor Catholics, especially those in high places.

The Path to Rome

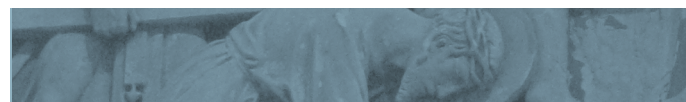
Edited by Dwight Longenecker



Recent years have seen the largest influx of laity & clergy into the Catholic Church in England since Catholic emancipation. During that time the flood of converts has included four Anglican bishops, a member of the Royal Family, two ministers of the Crown & a host of ordinary clergy and lay people. Pick up this book & be inspired by the stories of some of the Christians who have struggled, thought & sacrificed much to finally find their home in the Catholic Church.

Receive either book with any donation of \$35.00 or more!

Receive both books with any donation of \$50.00 or more!



Journeys Home A Glorious

and truth [which], as gifts properly belonging to the Church of Christ, possess an inner dynamism towards Catholic unity.”

Indeed, the Catechism is quite clear, “All who have been justified by faith in Baptism are incorporated into Christ; they therefore have a right to be called Christians, and with good reason are accepted as brothers in the Lord by the children of the Catholic Church.”

And “...many elements of sanctification and truth, are found outside the visible confines of the Catholic Church: ‘the written Word of God; the life of grace; faith, hope and charity, with other interior gifts of the Holy Spirit, as well as visible elements.’ Christ’s Spirit uses these churches...as means of salvation, whose power derives from the fullness of grace and truth that Christ has entrusted to the Catholic Church. All these blessings come from Christ and lead to him, and are themselves call to ‘Catholic unity.’”

For these and many other good reasons, I have not repudiated my conversion to Christ, my Baptism, discipleship, or my training in God’s Word outside the Catholic Church. I have in fact brought them with me into the Catholic Church where they belong.

I was raised Jewish. My father and his siblings were the first American generation born to descendants of Polish and Austrian Jewish immigrants. My mother was not born Jewish. Her mother was Catholic and her father Episcopalian. My mother’s mother, only sixteen years of age when she gave birth to my mother, saw to it that she was baptized in the Roman Catholic Rite. On the way to St. Mark’s parish, where my mother was baptized, is a small mission called “St. Margaret’s,” while my mother’s given name is Marjorie, her Christian name is Margaret.

My maternal grandmother died while my mother was still young and her father raised her in the Episcopal Church. After a tragic first marriage that ended in her husband’s suicide, my mother was left a young widow struggling to raise two daughters. My father met her and came to her aid. She converted to Judaism and married him in the Jewish ceremony. Their agreement was to raise their children Jewish. That is why when my twin brother and I were born, we received ritual circumcision, were inducted into the Covenant of Abraham, given Hebrew names (Hillel and Chaim), and enrolled in Hebrew school for six years.

When I entered high school, I was introduced to a group of Christian young people who took their faith very seriously. They met for prayer in the mornings, gathered for late night Bible studies in homes, and were conscientious about church attendance. They were Protestants and Catholics. I began attending a small Methodist chapel in our neighborhood. The minister was a Salvation Army officer, as the congregation could not afford a pastor. I attended the Sunday School, the youth group, and Sunday church services. It was there my brother and I requested baptism after responding to the call to accept Christ in a parish mission. I was baptized “in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” on October 11, 1974 by immersion in the river.

My brother and I both became involved in Christian fellowship in school. We attended the prayer meetings, the Bible studies, joined the youth group on evangelistic efforts such as sharing witness in church services, in public places

us Journey

like malls, and door-to-door visitation. I became a volunteer youth counselor with the Billy Graham Association and the Christian Broadcasting Network. I discerned a call to Christian service and thought at first that I would attend the Methodist college and seminary. Then I learned about a missionary Bible college nearby. I arranged to graduate from my high school a year early and I applied. It was necessary to obtain two referrals from ordained ministers. The pastor of a large evangelical church and my own minister provided the requisite letters, and I was accepted.

I had begun a special friendship with Rebecca Wald whom I had met at the prayer meetings. It became an exclusive relationship, which did not include “dating,” but a friendship based on our mutual church activities. Before leaving for college, I asked her parents for permission and their blessing in asking her to marry me. We intended to marry when I completed my program. However, after the first year we were married and I returned to school. I had to suspend my program, and then resumed my studies part time. Our first born child came two years later after our first child miscarried. My wife and I became house parents for Baker Hall, a public funded Catholic program for delinquent boys. During the day I was also the director of an evangelical Christian drug and alcohol intervention program called Teen Challenge. I attended school at night.

After five years I received a Pastoral Ministries certificate, and after two more years, the Bachelor of Arts in biblical studies. I was examined and called as pastor of a non-denominational community church in western New York.

In the course of my studies, I read the Church Fathers in addition to the Scriptures. As I followed Church history, I became aware of the distinct differences between the beliefs and practices of the evangelical churches and the Apostolic Church. These differences were explained in reference to the Reformation. For a time that was sufficient, but after a while it was no longer an effective explanation. I was becoming aware that the Fathers were Catholic.

While still a minister in the community church, it quietly troubled me that we were not in communion with the Catholic Church. As I matured in the ministry of Christ, I recognized that the Church was the guardian of the great truths of revelation: The Scriptures, the Trinity, the Councils and Creeds, the Episcopacy. The more I learned from Church history, and especially the Fathers, the more I yearned for rootedness and continuity with the early Church. In 1983 I was invited to conduct a preaching mission in the UK. I was stationed at St. John’s Church (Anglican) Poole, Dorset. The vicar was the Rev. John Blythe, a missionary priest. In long discussions late into the night we explored the liturgy, the Church Fathers, and the first ecumenical councils. I returned from the UK with the Book of Common Prayer, and an appreciation for the history of the Church of England. In a very basic way, I saw the Anglican Church as a connection between the evangelical churches and the Apostolic Church. I introduced the Creed, certain parts of the liturgy, vestments, and a higher view of the Lord’s Supper into our community church, and it was generally received. I had begun my journey to the Catholic Church.

I began to look for attachment to a church that embraced the ancient liturgical forms of worship and had a high view of the sacraments and a visible hierarchy.



QUO VADIS NEWS

<http://www.quovadis youth.org/>

The Coming Home Network International’s youth apostolate Quo Vadis was established to provide peer support for the children of clergy of other faiths who are either on the journey to the Catholic Church or have already been received into the Church. If you are a young person who is interested in the Catholic faith or if you are a young person who would like to share your Catholic faith with others we invite you to discover *Quo Vadis*.

Interested in learning more?

Quo Vadis has a web site, www.quovadis youth.org with information about the network and ways to become involved. *Quo Vadis* would particularly like to invite you to come to our weekly chats, they are every Thursday night at 8pm EST in the *Coming Home Network* chatroom. The chats are a great means to learn more about the Catholic faith and to experience fellowship with other young people. We hope you can come! If you would like to learn more about *Quo Vadis*, or you have a question about the Catholic faith you are welcome to contact Mary Clare Piecynski at maryp@chnetwork.org or call her at 740-450-1175 ext 105.



THE Journey HOME

THE JOURNEY HOME

on EWTN television and radio

TELEVISION

Mondays live at 8:00 PM EST

Encores: Tuesdays 1:00 & 10:00 AM EST

Wednesdays 1:00 PM EST

Saturdays 11:00 PM EST

RADIO

Mondays live at 8:00 PM EST

Encores: Wednesdays 2:00 PM EST

Saturdays 6:00 PM EST



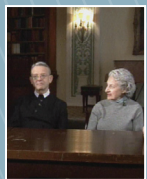
January 5

Open-line
Dr. Paul C. Schenck
Former Reformed
Episcopal minister



January 12

Tom Peterson
Revert from Secularism



January 19

(English Pre-Tape)
Roundtable with Jules
Chadwick, Ruth Rees, and
Fr. Ronald Creighton-Jobe



January 26

(English Pre-Tape)
Sr. Mary of the Trinity, SOLT

Journeys Home A Glorious

My Grandparents (my mother's father and her first father-in-law) were Church of England men, and my interest in the Anglican Church developed. At that same time I had begun a collaboration with Dr. Jakob Jocz (PhD Cambridge, LHD, Edinburgh), professor of systematic theology at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto. Dr. Jocz was a third generation Jewish Christian and an Anglican priest. He had been rector of St. John's Church, East End London, and was in residence at Church of the Messiah in Toronto. Through Fr. Jocz I was introduced to Anglican men in Canada and at the same time met an Episcopal priest from the Diocese of Birmingham who urged me to consider the Episcopal priesthood.

I contacted the Reformed Episcopal Seminary in Philadelphia and eventually petitioned the Bishop for entry. I resigned from the pastorate and my family and I moved from Buffalo to Chesapeake, Virginia, where I joined the American Center for Law and Justice, a public interest law firm advocating for pro-life, family, and religious liberty issues. I read theology, church history, and liturgical studies for the Reformed Episcopal Bishop.

After completing the program of guided independent studies, I stood my examinations for ordination at the Reformed Episcopal Seminary in 1995. I was received as a Deacon in St. John's Episcopal Church (ECUSA), Portsmouth, Virginia. The following year I was ordained a presbyter by the Most Rev. Leonard W. Riches, (Yale Divinity School) by then the Presiding Bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church in the United States.

The year previous my brother and I had challenged a Federal District Court injunction that restricted pro-life "sidewalk counselors" from approaching abortion clinic clients and others with Bibles, tracts, and a peaceful, pro-life message. I was sentenced to two years in federal prison for violating the federal judge's order for counseling a couple leaving the clinic, passing a Bible to a woman who thanked me, and speaking with a man who refused a Bible. The case, called *Rev. Schenck V Pro-Choice Network* reached the US Supreme Court, which ruled 8-1 in my favor, striking down the judge's order as a fundamental violation of the First Amendment right of Freedom of Speech.

When I began my prison sentence, I was told that the Protestant chaplain was "pro-choice" and wanted nothing to do with me. My conscience would not allow me to worship in her chapel or receive communion from her. When the Catholic sacristan heard about it, he came to me and said, "Father says that you're welcome at Mass!" Because I was a good prisoner, my family was allowed to worship with me. So every Sunday my wife packed up our seven children and drove nearly two hours to attend Mass with me in the prison Chapel. That was

...I had challenged a Federal District Court injunction that restricted pro-life "sidewalk counselors" from approaching abortion clinic clients and others with Bibles...

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when the Church opened wide her arms to us. Each week I eagerly awaited Mass, where I could commune spiritually with our Lord and pray with my family.

After my release on appeal, I was appointed vicar in the Reformed Episcopal mission in Virginia Beach and chaplain to the law faculty at Regent University. There I met Deacon Keith Fournier who began tutoring me in Catholic doctrine, especially ecclesiology. I attended the campus Mass, and discussed theology with priests and deacons who visited the campus. Deacon Fournier also had faculties in the Melkite (Greek Catholic) Church, and he invited me to join him at the Eparch's residence in Methuen, Massachusetts. When I explained my earnest interest in entering the Catholic Church, the Eparch, Bishop John Elya, invited me to a diaconal formation week at St. Basil's Seminary and I attended (he later explained that Anglican men go to the Roman Archbishop). About the same time I was elected a Trustee of Thomas More College in Merrimack, NH, a Catholic school, which also granted me the honorary Doctor of Humanities. I found myself being drawn ever closer to the Catholic Church.

I began praying for the reunion of the whole Church Catholic, but began to realize it would have to start with my heart. When I became the rector of an old evangelical Anglican parish in Baltimore, I was welcomed by the Catholic priest in the next parish, Fr. Victor Galeone (now Bishop of St. Augustine), who began joining me for the Stations of the Cross at the abortion mill. We became friends and then co-counseled a couple that was about to divorce. The husband was a member of my parish; the wife was a member of his. So Fr. Galeone and I co-counseled them and they were wonderfully reconciled. At the same time, another couple in my parish was separating. The husband said, "I know its God's will that Julie be my wife, but I don't want to live with her. We'll have separate houses and we can share the children."

"No" I insisted, "there must be an organic unity to marriage. It is not enough to be 'legally' married; you must share the same bed and board, live together under one roof, in mutual submission, with Christ as your head. These are the visible signs of your union."

When they left I said to myself "You hypocrite! You told them there has to be an organic unity to marriage, but you're content to be separated from Christ's true Body." I began praying more fervently for reunion with the Church.

Then in 2000, our oldest child, at twenty-one, told me that she intended to become Catholic. She would be confirmed at the Easter vigil the following year. I told her she had my support, and I would be present with her.

In Baltimore I shared our church campus with an Ethiopian Orthodox parish. When the Ethiopian Bishop, Abba Melkisedek, learned that I was traveling to Egypt to teach at a Protestant minister's conference in Alexandria, he asked if I would visit the Ethiopian Bishops in Jerusalem. They were in a crisis of faith as some of the faithful had begun converting to Judaism. He thought I might have some helpful advice, which I did not, but in charity I offered to go. There was also a priest who had immigrated to Washington, but his wife and children were still in Jerusalem and the Intifada had broken out – and he needed someone to intercede for them at the Embassy in Israel. I promised to help and was successful and the family was reunited.



DEEP IN SCRIPTURE

Live Radio program with
Marcus Grodi & Guests

Wednesdays **LIVE** at 9:00 PM EST
Encores: Friday @ 9 PM EST
Sundays @ 6 AM EST

Following our Holy Father's call to rediscover the inspiration of St. Paul and his writings, our *Deep in Scripture* live radio programs will be featuring guests discussing their favorite verses from St. Paul.

The live broadcast of the program has moved to **WEDNESDAY EVENINGS AT 9 PM EST**. Marcus Grodi and his guest will be taking your calls and emails about the evening's text from St. Paul.

Go to www.deepinscripture.com for more information.

DIS guests January 2009

January 7 Joseph Pearce
January 14 Rob Evans
January 21 Johnnette Benkovic
January 28 Chris Osgood

THE COMING HOME NETWORK INTL'

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Journeys Home A Glorious

After my visit to Jerusalem, I went on to Egypt. When a former student of mine, who was an Egyptian national, from a Coptic family and living in Cairo, picked me up at the airport, he announced, “You have an appointment to go to the Basilica tomorrow where Pope John Paul II is conducting an ecumenical encounter!” We went early the next morning and waited for nearly two hours as our host, the president of the evangelical college, argued with police. We were denied entrance, and I returned to my hotel dejected. I felt so strongly that an encounter with the Holy Father would somehow seal my reunion with the Catholic Church. It did not happen, and I went on to teach in Alexandria and returned to the US crestfallen.

I was teaching at the Reformed seminary in Philadelphia when I received a call from Bishop Elya. He told me that he had arranged for an invitation from the Greek Catholic Archbishop of Jerusalem, Lufti Laham (now Patriarch Gregorius III), to accompany him on the Papal Pilgrimage from Bethlehem to Jerusalem.

When I returned to the Old City, the Archbishop received me and said, “Now, Father Chayam, (He called me by my Aramaic name), you did bring your Eastern vestments and you will concelebrate with the Holy Father in Bethlehem?” I realized he did not know I was not yet Catholic. I said, “Your Grace, I’m not Catholic, I’m an evangelical Anglican.”

“Oh!” he exclaimed. “Nevertheless, you will have an honored seat among the priests in Bethlehem. You will see, the Holy Father will be there, I will be there, and you will be there. You will see, you will be absorbed!”

The next day indeed, I was seated to the right of the Holy Altar in Manger Square. John Paul the Great was offering the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass, the Body and the Blood all around me – “a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity.” A sea of humanity flowed forward to receive the Communion of the precious Body and Blood of Christ. There, where “tribe and tongue and was every hue of skin of dress. Everything that head. It was an oasis midst of the storm of the grandest display of my life. It was truly “a

“
You will see,
the Holy
Father will be
there, I will be
there, and you
will be there.
You will see,
you will be
absorbed!”
”

of the Nativity with the there. As we walked Father and the Latin the Archbishop turned Holy Father, here am you see, you’re absorbed, at the end of the week to Jerusalem. There, in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher,

us Journey

the Holy Father declared with a jubilant countenance “He is not here, He is risen!” Before the sanctuary was a truly ecumenical assemblage: the Anglican Bishop, the Lutheran Bishop, the Coptic, Armenians, and Ethiopians. When it was time for the Peace, the Bishops embraced one another, as did all the faithful – born Jews and Palestinians, black, white, and Asian. And they were all praying and participating in the Holy Mass in one tongue: Latin.

...in the midst of the Anglican and Lutheran Bishops, the Ethiopians and Copts, Jewish holocaust survivors and Palestinians, every language and nationality, I believe I became Catholic in my heart.

After the Mass, the Pope lingered for some time like a Great Father amidst his affectionate children. Then, as he left, the congregation swelled and rose behind him like a torrent sweeping through the cavernous man-made mountain that is the Sepulcher Church. As he passed through the ancient doors, the Israeli officials pushed the doors closed – something they were not expected or permitted to do, as there is an ancient protocol conducted by the Muslim sergeants-at-arms. A hue and a cry went up, followed by a muted sigh and then

a hush as the daylight was shut out and the Church became gloomy. It was as if the Holy Father had been stolen away. Then, panicked security personnel reopened the doors and the Holy Father was there again, above the crowd on top of his vehicle, and imparted his blessing to all of us below. There – in the midst of the Anglican and Lutheran Bishops, the Ethiopians and Copts, Jewish holocaust survivors and Palestinians, every language and nationality, I believe I became Catholic in my heart.

I had already become Catholic in my head, but in Jerusalem, I became Catholic in my heart. It was a biblical journey – from the footsteps of Christ in Jerusalem, down into Egypt, out of the Holy Land, only to be swept back again to the sacred sites. I had walked from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, speaking French badly with a Franciscan Friar from Cote d’Ivoire. I followed the Papal train to the place of Christ’s saving death and glorious resurrection. I had prayed in Hebrew, Greek, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Latin. When the Holy Father entered the convent in Bethlehem to meet barely more than a handful of us, I fell to my knees and clutched a rosary so tight that it left its imprint on my palm. I knew there was no place else for me to go, but to the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, and to its one true pastor.

When I returned to Baltimore, I began praying for a doorway through which I could bring my family and myself into the Catholic Church. Full time Christian service was all I had ever known, my entire adult life and throughout our whole marriage. We lived in the church rectory, drove a church car, and my children attended the church school.

DEEP IN HISTORY MP3s

The *Coming Home Network International* is moving history forward with past *Deep in History Conference* talks available in MP3 format through our web site.

Go to www.deepinhistory.com and click on a previous year’s conference page. There you will find a list of all the talks with a link for downloading. Each talk will cost \$5.

Take our Catholic history wherever you go as we continue to make our resources more accessible to you.



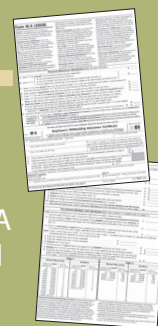
NEW LOOK

To usher in the new year, the *Coming Home Network International's* newsletter has received a new look. With the same great content, we hope you will enjoy our new layout. *CHNI* looks forward to hearing your comments and suggestions concerning the new design. Please contact Mary Clare Picynski to give your feedback.

Mary Clare Picynski
maryp@chnetwork.org
740-450-1175 ext. 105

TAX LETTERS

If you need a record of your contributions for tax purposes, please contact Laura Corrigan. A statement will be mailed to you by January 31, 2009.



Laura Corrigan
laura@chnetwork.org
740-450-1175 ext. 102

Journeys Home **A Glorious Journey**

I had been reading the biography of the Holocaust martyr Edith Stein, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross. There was so much I could identify with, being the descendant of European Jewish ancestors. I asked St. Teresa Benedicta to join her prayers to those of the Blessed Mother, to intercede with the Lord to find a way for my family and me into the Catholic Church.

I left it in the Lord's hands, and I was at peace. I began making arrangements to leave our home, our community, our children's school, and step out into the deep.

The next year, I was told that Fr. Frank Pavone wanted to talk to me. He invited me to his office in Staten Island, and I told him about my desire to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church. He invited me to join *Priests for Life* and six months later, I was received into the Church with the proper permissions in the Archdiocese of New York by Fr. Pavone and Fr. Leo Prince, pastor of St. Roch's Church, Staten Island. I received the sacraments of penance and reconciliation, confirmation, marriage, first Holy Communion and I was inducted into the Confraternity of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, and invested with the brown scapular. I was in the ark!

My wife and children were some steps behind me and they remained members in the former church for another year. We began looking for a good Catholic school for the children and found it at York Catholic High School in the Diocese of Harrisburg. We sold the rectory which we had purchased from the former church and relocated to York, Pennsylvania, so that the children could begin their Catholic formation and education. We joined Holy Infant Church in York Haven, and began our formation as a Catholic family. My wife and our children at home were confirmed on January 8, 2005 by the pastor, Fr. Ed Malesic, and our youngest is now in formation for first Holy Communion.

Our journey has been an adventure that has presented its trials and triumphs. In many ways, the journey reflected the experiences of the first believers and those who have persevered within the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. I am a late comer, but have inherited the great legacy of this Glorious Catholic Church! ■

Dr. Paul Chaim Benedicta Schenck is founding Chairman of the National Pro-Life Action Center on Capitol Hill near the US Supreme Court in Washington, DC. A former Anglican minister, he is a pastoral associate with the Missionaries of the Gospel of Life, founded by Fr. Frank Pavone.

Raised Jewish and baptized at age 16, he attended a missionary Bible college, an Evangelical Seminary, and a Catholic University. He holds degrees in Holy Scripture, Theology, and Humanities. He is a trustee and Visiting Professor of Evangelization at The Thomas More College, and was recently appointed by Bishop Kevin Rhoades as Director of the Respect Life Office of the Diocese of Harrisburg.

Paul and his high school sweetheart Rebecca were married at age 18 and they have one child in heaven and eight on earth, ages 7 to 29, as well as a daughter and son in law. Paul will be a guest on the Journey Home on January 5.

Why the Church?

By Dr. Kenneth Howell*

Many years ago I had a conversation with an older colleague whom I admired very much. He was an accomplished scholar of the New Testament and especially of St. Paul's epistles. We were discussing the teaching on the Church in the New Testament when he made a statement that took me back. "According to such-and-such a scholar," he said, "every instance of the word *ecclesia* (church) in the New Testament refers to the local church." I was astounded at this claim because I knew what he and this other scholar meant by that. For them, the local church was the individual congregation whether it had any institutional connection with other churches or not. They were claiming that there is no justification in the Bible for a church beyond the local congregation (parish).

My mind immediately went to Paul's treatment of the Church in Ephesians where he speaks of the Church "in the heavenly realms." I couldn't help myself. I blurted out, "That sounds to me like a man who had a prior conception of the church in his mind and then thought he found it in the New Testament."

Let's face it. Everyone has preconceptions of the Church when they read the Bible and they think they find support for their thoughts in the New Testament. How can we truly discern the meaning of the Church in the Bible without prejudging its teaching? How can we subject our ideas of the Church to the New Testament in hopes of arriving at its own teaching without imposing our ideas on it? Can we see clearly in the Bible that the Church is necessary? Perhaps an analogy will help. If you get cold symptoms, you may have a number of things such as bronchitis or influenza. If you go to the doctor, he or she will have to tell whether your symptoms are a result of a bacteria or a virus. If your condition results from a bacterial infection, he or she can prescribe antibiotics to heal the infection. If it is a virus, the doctor can do nothing. Your body has to fight it off. The medicine prescribed corresponds to the nature of the sickness you have. In a similar way, the necessity of the Church of Jesus Christ corresponds to the nature of the Church. If we can truly discern the nature of the Church, we will have an answer to its necessity.

No writer in the New Testament has a richer teaching on the Church than St. Paul and perhaps none of his letters is so rich in content as Ephesians. The perspective of this letter is unique in its looking at the Church from the point of view

of heaven. This is why Paul says that God "made us alive with Christ when we were dead in transgressions ... and he raised us up and seated us with Christ in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus" (Eph 2:5,6). Accomplishing salvation in the Paschal Mystery, Christ intended the Church even as he died and rose again. But Jesus did not think of the Church first when he was on earth. Paul assures us that the Church in its mystical reality was planned by God from before the creation. When Paul speaks of God the Father "predestining us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ for himself" (Eph 1:5), he is showing us that God foresaw the Church as the community of all the redeemed who would be in Christ.

There are many treasures hidden in the bosom of the Church given by Christ Jesus himself. When Paul speaks of us as "God's poem" in Eph 2:10, he alludes to baptism as the sacrament of the new creation, "For we are God's poem (*poiema* means craft, verbally or manually), created in Christ Jesus for good works for whom God prepared them beforehand that we might walk in them." This idea of baptism as the new creation (cf. 2 Cor 5:17) comes from Jesus himself who stressed to Nicodemus the absolute necessity of having the grace that comes through baptism (see Jn 3:3,5). This is the same grace that Paul declares is our salvation in Ephesians 2:8, "for it is by grace that you have been saved through faith." So the treasures of grace, without which we cannot be saved, come to us through the sacramental ministry of the Church. That is why the Church is a necessity on this earth.



Cyprian of Carthage

* In lieu of my usual monthly article I asked Dr. Howell, our theological advisor, to submit this article on the necessity of the Church. — Marcus Grodi

The second treasure of the Church is its catholicity. Paul teaches that the Church was planned in eternity and established on earth as the communion (and community) of all peoples in and through Christ. The great privilege of gentile Christians is “we too have been brought near in the blood of Christ” (Eph 2:13). Even though we were “alienated from the commonwealth of Israel” and “strangers to the covenants of promise” and in fact “with hope and God in this world” (Eph 2:12), Jesus’s death on the cross “abolished the dividing wall” between Jew and Gentile. His flesh “destroyed the enmity” (Eph 2:14). The result was that he “created one new man by making peace.” The new man he created is not simply the individual, though our individualistic perspective may be tempted to read it this way. No, the “new man” is the Church which consists of both Jew and Gentile. This is why Paul says elsewhere that in Christ there is not “Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female” (Gal 3:28). In this new creation of the Church there is “no Greek or Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free because Christ is all and in all” (Col 3:11). The reason the Church possesses catholicity is that Christ intended his salvation for all the world. No one is excluded from his redeeming work and therefore the Church is given as necessary to proclaim and transmit His saving work.

The third treasure of the Church is its ordered life. Many modern Christians see no real necessity for the structure of the Church but Paul in Ephesians thinks otherwise. The way in which the Church lives out its unity is through its structure. When Paul urges on us the pursuit of unity in

Ephesians 4:1-3, he explains our call to unity on the grounds that Christ establishes that unity through the gifts he gave to the Church (see Eph 4:5-8). Those gifts or charisms are the offices he established in the Church. The “apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers” (Eph 4:11) are given for the unity of the body. The diversity of gifts serves the purpose of unity in the Church. The ordered structure of the Church is necessary for the unity of the Church.

The Church is necessary because of what Christ made it to be. Grace is necessary to be saved and so he made the Church an instrument (or sacrament) of grace. Catholicity of the Church is necessary because Christ wanted all men to come to the knowledge of the truth and so to be saved. Ordered structure and hierarchy is necessary so that the Church would achieve the status Christ desires for it, that of the “perfect man” (Eph 4:13). There was an ancient maxim expressed by Cyprian of Carthage that runs *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* (“outside the Church there is no salvation”). This idea was so widely believed among ancient Christians that the early Protestant Reformers also felt an obligation to embrace it. But these teachings about the Church held by the Fathers were rooted in the witness of the New Testament itself. I believe that a careful study of the doctrine of the Church in the New Testament would lead any honest Christian to realize that the Church is necessary for salvation. ■

Dr. Howell is the theological advisor for the Coming Home Network International and has authored the recent book “Ignatius of Antioch: A New Translation and Theological Commentary.”



Spouses Network

The *Coming Home Network Intl'* is pleased to announce the introduction of a *Spouses Network* to our apostolate. The mission statement of the *Spouses Network* reads:

The *Spouses Network* exists to aid and provide fellowship for the spouses of clergy on the journey to the Catholic Church as well as those who are new Catholics. The mission of the *Spouses Network* is that through one-on-one assistance given by spouses of clergy who have embraced the Catholic faith, clergy spouses who are on the journey to Catholicism or have recently become Catholic will find a source of friendship, support, and increased love of Jesus Christ and His Church.

If the *Spouses Network* is something you feel called to, whether you be a spouse of a clergy who has made the journey home and would like to assist someone, or if you are a spouse of a minister and are either on the journey or a new Catholic, we would like to invite you to contact *CHNI* to assist us in the development of this network. For more information contact Mary Clare Pieczynski by e-mail at maryp@chnetwork.org or by phone at 740-450-1175 ext 105. We do ask all the *Coming Home Network International's* members to please keep the *Spouses Network* in your prayers as we seek to answer the needs of those spouses of clergy on the journey home and those who are new converts.

“Come, follow me.” Luke 18:22

Prayer List

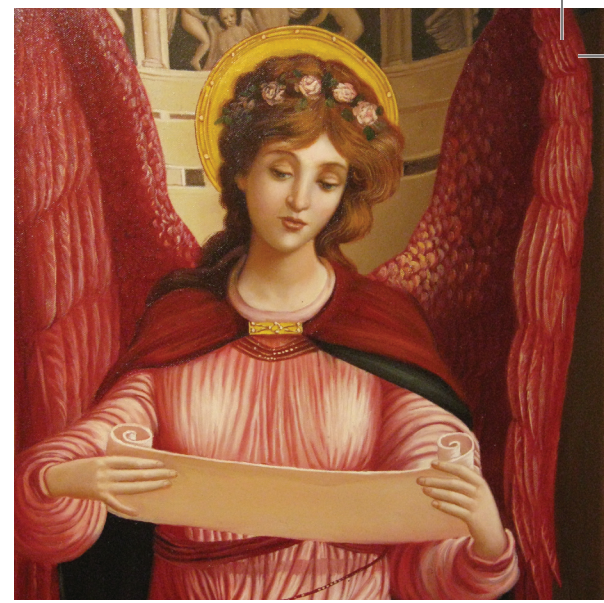
Clergy

- For Randy, a former United Church of Christ minister in Illinois, that Jesus would fill him with His healing and His peace.
- For Bob, an Episcopal priest in Maryland, that the Lord would grant him the grace to discern the Holy Spirit's lead.
- For Michael, a Southern Baptist youth minister in Illinois, who is confused, bewildered, and more than a little scared, from his discoveries about *Sola Scriptura* and authority, that the Lord Jesus grant him the peace that passes all understanding in His holy Church.
- For Tim, a Non-denominational minister in Colorado, that God would guide his step of faith in resigning from his pastorate.
- For Mark, a Church of Christ missionary in Africa, that Jesus would reveal to him the true and full mission that He has prepared for him in the holy Catholic Church.
- For Pam, the wife of a Lutheran minister in the mid-west, that as she discovers the wonders and truths of the Catholic faith the Holy Spirit would soften her husband's heart towards the Church.
- For Mark, a former United Methodist minister in Indiana, that God would fill the valleys and make the mountains a plain before him as he seeks a new vision from the Lord.
- For William, a Presbyterian minister in New York, that as he explores the teachings and worship of the Catholic Church, Jesus would call him home to full communion with Him and His Church.
- For Harri, a Lutheran minister in Finland, that he would find his true home in the Catholic Church and become an instrument of bringing his people back to the Church of their ancestors.

- For William, a United Methodist minister in North Carolina, that the Holy Spirit would be a lamp unto his feet as he journeys toward a deeper relationship with Jesus in the Catholic Church.
- For Kristen, a former Vineyard Fellowship seminarian, that she would find true and deep fellowship with God and His people in full communion with his Church.
- For Fred, a former Presbyterian minister in Florida, that God would renew him in faith, hope and love as he comes to know and understand the truths of Christ's holy Church.
- For Leroy, a Presbyterian minister in Illinois, that he would discover the true New Testament Church of Jesus Christ as it has been passed down and preserved by the Holy Spirit in the Catholic Church.
- For Scott, a Nazarene minister in Colorado, that he would discover deeper holiness and love as he discovers the richness and depths for God's truths in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

Laitiy

- For Kathy and her children that they find peace in their journey of faith.
- For Steve, his family, and his personal needs.
- For Mike, Kelly, and their family as they deal with emotional struggles.
- For the conversion of Bob, his daughter Lisa, and her family.
- For all within the *Helpers Network*.
- For all the members of the *Coming Home Network*, that during this new year they may come to a deeper love of Jesus Christ and His Church.



- For all families who have loved ones who have walked away from the faith and for their re-version to the fullness of truth.
- For all those who feel called to the Catholic Church, that the Holy Spirit guide them upon their journey of faith.
- For the upcoming Catholic Paul conference on May 16th.
- For all our priests and religious and those discerning their vocational calls.
- For Teresa and her upcoming surgery.
- For all the members of Quo Vadis (QV).
- For Melissa and her family in this time of hardship. That God may give them His healing and His peace. (QV)
- For Caroline and her current cancer treatment.

In every issue we include timely prayer concerns from the membership. Each person mentioned has contacted us and is somewhere along their journey home. All members are encouraged to pray at least one hour each month before the Blessed Sacrament for the needs in general and specific of the CHNetwork, its members, and supporters.

Please submit all prayer requests & answers to:
CHN Prayer List
P. O. Box 8290
Zanesville, OH 43702

You may also email your prayer requests to:
prayers@chnetwork.org

We use only first names to preserve anonymity, and the following codes: (QV) Quo Vadis

The Coming Home Network International
P.O. Box 8290
Zanesville, OH 43702

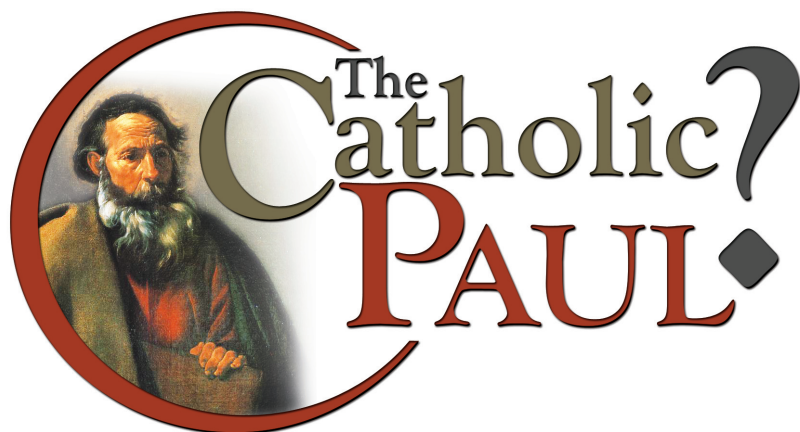
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Marcus Grodi & Dr. Scott Hahn

— along with —

**The Coming Home Network International &
The Saint Paul Center for Biblical Theology**

— present —



Saturday - May 16th, 2009 - Hilton Easton - Columbus, OH

SCHEDULE

9:00 The Catholic Paul—*Dr. Scott Hahn*

10:15 Paul through Jewish Eyes—
Dr. Jeff Marrow

11:45 Mass

1:00 Lunch

2:15 Saint Paul and the Mystical
Life—*Dr. Mary Healy*

3:15 The Mystery of Redemptive
Suffering—*Jeff Cavins*

4:30 Dinner

5:45 The Pauline Texts: Conversion
through The Verses I Never
Saw—*Marcus Grodi*

6:45 Romanism to Rome—
Father Mitch Pacwa

7:45 Closing—*Marcus Grodi*



For more information contact:
COMING HOME NETWORK INTL.
1.800.664.5110
www.chnetwork.org

www.thecatholicpaul.com