



## July 2025 CHNewsletter

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# THE COMING HOME NETWORK INTERNATIONAL

## Journeys Home

## No Longer a None: How I Became Catholic

By Rae-Mi LeRoy

I was born in 1979 in Seville, Ohio, and got off to a great start by being baptized as a Catholic when I was less than a month old. However, my parents left the Church when I was around two years old, for reasons that are still unclear to me. This led me to grow up without a faith tradition. We did not pray, we did not talk about Jesus, and we certainly did not go to church. The topic of religion was simply not discussed. In my mind, it was something that was for other people, but not for me. My life was focused on pleasing my parents, getting good grades, and dancing. My mom opened a dance studio when I was five years old, and performing became my entire life. I could not wait to go to Broadway one day!



This led to my pursuit of a Musical Theatre degree at Otterbein College (now Otterbein University) in 1997. As part of the curriculum, Otterbein required a religion course. Since I had no interest in religion, I simply wanted to pick a course that fit most conveniently into my schedule. It turned out to be Buddhism and Zen. I had no idea what that meant; I was only focused on getting my "A" and moving on. As it turned out, that course was my first exposure to spirituality of any kind, and I loved it. In fact, when I could pick any topic for my Senior Project, I picked Buddhism and Zen. I was very attracted to the concept of non-attachment and meditation. I read a great number of books, went on a Buddhist retreat, and wrote a final paper on the topic. While I found it all to

be very interesting, when I was done with school, I completely dropped my spiritual pursuit. I was extremely excited to get started with *real life*!

### "Real Life" in Hollywood

Instead of going east to Broadway, I decided to go west to Hollywood to pursue my dream of becoming a performer. It took about eight years to realize that *real life is really hard*. I had some wonderful experiences, but I also had some significant difficulties, which prompted me to return to my spiritual journey. I dusted off my Buddhism books, returning to the only spirituality I was familiar with. This eventually led me to yoga, and I became extremely open to anything under the umbrella of the New Age. I threw myself into this pursuit and eventually found myself with a 200-hour Yoga Teaching Certification. I loved Louise Hay and anything from Hay House Radio. I followed

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## ...Journeys Home Continued...

gurus such as B.K.S. Iyengar, Paramahansa Yogananda, Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche, Ram Dass, and Krishna Das.

At the same time, my career really began to take off, as I decided to move into the business side of the entertainment industry. I went back to school and got my MBA from the University of La Verne and worked for about twelve years at Universal Studios Hollywood in the Creative Department. I then shifted into TV Distribution at NBCUniversal and eventually to Worldwide Contract Management at Twentieth Century Fox. I really felt as if I had it all figured out. Not only was I super spiritual, but I was a successful businesswoman climbing the corporate ladder. I even had plans to start my own consulting business, teaching yoga to businessmen and women, called MBA Yogi. I am pretty certain I used the phrase, “spiritual but not religious” on at least one occasion. I also loved using the word “universe” instead of God. This verbiage is very common for those who are into the New Age movement and practice eastern religions. Between my spiritual practice and worldly success, my future seemed brighter than ever before.

### I Don't Know Who I Am Anymore

You can imagine my surprise when I found myself feeling unexpectedly empty. It did *not* make sense. I had everything I wanted and expected to continue to achieve even more. However, when I was on Christmas break in 2014, I found myself actually telling my parents, “I don't know who I am anymore.” I was not sure what I meant by that statement. I didn't feel depressed emotionally and was in the best shape of my life physically. I just felt like I had lost myself. The only solution that came to mind was that I had to leave LA. I thought that if I got closer to nature, where it was quiet, I would figure out what was wrong.

As I reflect on my spiritual practice at the time, it was very much about “emptying” and “surrendering.” Apparently, I was so good at emptying, I had completely lost who I was. At the same

time, I had no idea who or what I was surrendering to! This felt very good initially. I had always been tightly wound, and the idea that I was “nothing” and “nothing mattered” was attractive. It helped me to relax. On the flip side however, it could lead to a kind of nihilism and depression. Simultaneously, there was not much structure to my spirituality. My patterns were simply based on my mood and what I wanted to do that day. Of course, I would have labeled them as “spiritual,” but in the end, I was making myself God. I found this juxtaposition of emptying and yet making oneself God very common in the spiritual practices that fall under the New Age/eastern religion umbrella. It drew me in because it seemed to relieve stress, while also giving the illusion of empowerment. However, it eventually led to confusion and despair, because we were made for so much more.

We will never achieve complete peace and the fullness of joy on our own. Jesus is the only One who can give us what we are seeking: “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10). Underneath all of this spiritual seeking, I was in a state of mortal sin. Even though I did not know or understand the concept of sin yet, I could instinctively feel my separation from God. That is likely why I did not know who I was any more. For the very core of who I am is bound to the One who created me. This is a testament to the indelible mark of baptism that I had received years before.

Of course, I didn't know any of these things at that time. All I knew was that the situation was dire, and I had to do something. I went into my boss's office and told her that I would work remotely or it would be my two-week notice. Working remotely full-time was not looked upon favorably in 2015, but she begrudgingly agreed to it. Everyone thought I was crazy. While I could not explain it, and did not try, I was prepared for any consequences resulting from my decision. I put everything I could fit into my car, threw away the rest, and moved to Sedona, Arizona. I can now see God's hand in this movement of the heart. Because of this

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

### RAPTURE: END TIMES ERROR

DAVID CURRIE

Will Catholics be “Left Behind?” What does the Church teach about the idea of a Rapture, tribulation, and end-times prophecies in Daniel and Revelation? David Currie, who used to believe in the modern idea of the Rapture, shares why it doesn't square with the Biblical record, and what Catholics believe about these texts.



#3034 - \$24.95

### CHRISTIFIDELES LAICI

POPE ST. JOHN PAUL II

Following the 1987 Synod of Bishops on the topic of the lay faithful in the Church, Pope John Paul II issued this letter detailing the theological and aspects of the role of the laity in the Church as well as their formation and mission, and how it flows forth from the Mass and out into the world.



#3049 - \$4.87

### MADE FOR MORE

CURTIS MARTIN

In this book, renowned Catholic leader Curtis Martin presents the evidence that we have been “made for more” than just the intoxications of this world—sex, partying, and money. We have been made for greatness—and we will only reach such heights when we first come into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.



#3119 - \$6.99

## ...Journeys Home Continued...

experience, the Scripture verse, “I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her” (Hosea 2:14), has taken a special meaning in my life.

The first year I was in Sedona, I felt as if I had everything figured out once again. I was able to buy a home, which I could never have afforded in LA. Working from home gave me a lot of extra time to hike and get into nature. I found myself on a trail almost every day. The New Age scene is very prevalent in Sedona, and I dove into it headfirst. I went to meditation centers, yoga festivals, the Buddhist Stupa, and tried every New Age treatment I could find.

### Coming Home

In June 2016, about a week before I was going to attend a Buddhist Retreat, I had a dream of Jesus. I woke up completely confused. I thought, “Why would Jesus come to me? I do not pray or go to church. He must have gotten lost!” Even though it seemed incredibly real and made an impression, I brushed it off and headed to my retreat with Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche. I loved the retreat and decided I was officially Buddhist.


However, over the next six months, some strange things started to happen. I always say that Jesus was courting me. I read a book about a Buddhist nun called *Cave in the Snow: A Western Woman's Quest for Enlightenment* by Tenzin Palmo. She lived in a cave for twelve years, and after she emerged from the cave, she went to Assisi, Italy. She spoke very highly about the nuns of Assisi, which led me to look up Assisi and learn about Saint Francis. As many people do, I easily fell in love with him. Then, I was listening to a Buddhist podcast from Lama Surya Das, where he spoke about the *Serenity Prayer*. He urged his listeners to look up this prayer, especially the second part. I did and fell in love with the prayer as well. Another time, I was listening to a talk by the famous New Age guru, Ram Dass, and he spoke about sin! This was the first time I had heard someone talk about sin, let alone say that if you sin, you will not get to God. I had never thought of such things before. Finally, when I went to pick up my dog from a boarding

facility, I noticed a wooden cross on the counter. The owner saw that I was intrigued by it and encouraged me to take it. Attached to the cross was a piece of paper that said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). I thought to myself, “Could this be true?”

As December rolled around and these experiences settled in my mind and heart, I thought to myself that perhaps I should check out the Catholic Church. After all, I was baptized Catholic. I visited the website of my local Catholic Church, St. John Vianney. It was woefully out of date, but I do remember it saying that people should come because they have the seven sacraments. However, I had no idea what that meant. I decided to call to get more information. I asked the secretary if I needed to buy a ticket; I had no idea that a person could just show up to church, free of charge. I asked if someone would show me to my seat and let me know what to do. My only frame of reference was the theatre. She told me to just simply come and find a seat.

It was January 2017 when I finally went to my first Mass. I sat in the back and had no clue what was going on but imitated the movements the best I could. I do not remember what was said, but I do remember being intrigued by the Eucharist. I thought that if everyone was drinking out of the same cup, something really good must be in there. I also noticed the care and time taken to “do the dishes” afterwards. On my way home, I called my father, and he explained that Catholics believe that the Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. By the grace of God, that instantly made complete sense to me after what I had just seen at Mass, and I never questioned it.

The next time I went, I decided to approach the priest. I explained that I did not know what was happening, but I wanted to know. I asked him how I could find out. He replied, “Just keep coming to Mass,” and walked away. I knew that was not going to help, because I had no idea what was happening at Mass. I felt like the Ethiopian in Acts, when “Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’ And he said, ‘How can I, unless some one guides



**“Take Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. Thou hast given all to me. To Thee, O lord, I return it. All is Thine, dispose of it wholly according to Thy will. Give me Thy love and thy grace, for this is sufficient for me.”**

**ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA—FEAST DAY: JULY 31**





# Introducing Journeys Home 3



Dear Friends,

This month, I wanted to share with you the preface to our brand new book: *Journeys Home 3: Pentecostals and Charismatics* which is now available for order. Get your copy of JH3 today and thank you for your supporting our work!

*"And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven gathered together and those*

*who were with them, who said, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread."*

*Luke 24:33-35*

When I was five years old, my father, a Presbyterian pastor, left his pulpit and his ministry to bring our family—my mother, my younger brother, and me—home to full communion with the Catholic Church. I have only fleeting memories of those years before we became Catholic—seeing Dad in his preaching robes and singing bible school songs. But ever since we entered the Catholic Church, now over 30 years ago, one of the primary and enduring images and themes in my life has been seeing and hearing my father and so many other pastors and laypeople like him standing up to share *what happened to them on the road*; how they came to know and surrender their lives to Jesus Christ, how they strove to serve him as faithful disciples in one of the many Christian denominations they were born or born-again into, and how eventually, the Holy Spirit drew them home to full communion with the Catholic Church.

The conversion story has always struck me as an essential impulse of the Christian believer in response to the life-changing encounter with Christ. The Faith is not at its core merely a set of theoretical propositions but a relationship—an encounter on the journey that changes the route and trajectory of the journeyer forever. The conversion story told by the faithful disciple implies the *status viatoris*—the state of being *on the way* of the Christian soul. He has a past but has been changed as the result of an encounter with Jesus Christ. So too, he has a future that will now be defined by continual conversion deeper into the heart of Christ. This side of heaven, he remains a person on the journey.

For over 30 years, the Coming Home Network International that my father founded to help other pastors and lay people come home to the Catholic Church, and EWTN's *The Journey Home* Program which he was invited to host by Mother Angelica and which I am now privileged to host in his stead, have been a crossroads upon which thousands of men and women, clergy and laity, from every conceivable religious or philosophical background, have met to share their stories of conversion to Christ and His Church, to learn from each other, and to encourage each other on the continuing journey. Our mission at the Coming Home Network

is to meet fellow Christians at whatever crossroads or turning point they may be on right now, to share the truth and beauty we have discovered in the Catholic Church, and to help them—through witness, resources, encouragement, and prayer—to simply take the next steps forward with faith in Christ.

The Emmaus Road experience has become, over the years, one of the scriptural images we associate with our work here at the Coming Home Network. In the encounter with Christ on the road, the disciples have their eyes opened to "the rest of the story." Not only is Jesus indeed alive, risen from the dead as he promised, but He makes himself known in a new sacramental way in the "breaking of the bread." The significance of this mysterious sacrament which Jesus introduced in theory to the scandalized crowds in John Chapter 6 and then instituted in the flesh at the Last Supper, now truly begins to dawn on the disciples. In response to this revelatory encounter, they run back to tell their fellow Christian brothers and sisters the joyful news.

At the Coming Home Network, we have heard from thousands of Christians from every conceivable Protestant background over the years—including those Pentecostal and charismatic traditions which are represented in the stories you will read in this book. We have been blessed to witness the journeys of so many of these Christians as their eyes too have been opened to what we believe is the fullness of Christ in the Catholic Church and His presence in the Holy Eucharist, the mystery of the breaking of the bread. And we continue to hear from hundreds more each year who are on the journey, considering the claims of Catholicism and striving to hear the guiding voice of the Holy Spirit.

As my father has often quipped, we never presume to "push, pull, or prod" these fellow believers into becoming Catholic, nor do we presume to pass judgement (positive or negative) on the state of their souls. We greet them with "respect and affection as brothers" (CCC 818) and we simply seek to share—primarily through the medium of our own testimonies—the truth and beauty we have discovered in the Catholic Church. For those Protestant brothers and sisters who find themselves drawn to explore and consider the claims of the Church, we then walk beside them, assist and encourage, and pray with and for them, as they (and we) continue the journey of faith in Jesus, one step at a time. We believe firmly that it is only through continually deepening conversion to Christ on both sides, that authentic and truth-seeking dialogue can occur, that hearts can be softened and opened, that wounds to unity can be healed and forgiven, and that the true and authentic unity for which Christ prayed can come about by His grace.

The book you hold in your hands is a continuation of a project that began 30 years ago out of a practical necessity. After founding the Coming Home Network and beginning to reach out to and network with clergy converts and inquirers, my father began to publish a simple newsletter comprised of their stories and reflections. As the network grew, slowly at first, he would make copies of these short newsletters to share with new members of the network. Eventually this became cumbersome as the



# Joyful Journey Updates

## Angel L., former Jehovah's Witness and Atheist

I was born and raised as a Jehovah's Witness, but I left at 17 and became a staunch atheist. For years, I never imagined I'd believe in God again – let alone become Catholic. If you had told me even five years ago that not only would I return to faith, but convert to Catholicism, I would have laughed in your face.

But thanks be to God, my husband and I were baptized and confirmed at Easter in 2024. We both agree that becoming Catholic was the best decision we've ever made. Life still has its ups and downs, but because we put our faith in Jesus and place Him at the center of everything we do, the difficult parts of life are so much easier to face. Relying on our own strength just doesn't compare to the peace we've found in Him.

We are more at peace than we've ever been, and we're so grateful to everyone who helped us along the way. Your kindness, patience, and lack of judgment of us truly meant the world to us. ■

## Val W., former Christian and Missionary Alliance

It has been a year since I entered the Church (Easter Vigil 2024) and I have found peace and happiness in the Church. Initially, I felt alone since my family is not Catholic, and I wondered how and where I would fit into the Church. I was offered a free membership as a member of the Catholic Womens League and I found a warm and friendly circle of women there who embraced me. I also joined the choir and lately have been an occasional lector/reader at Mass. If anyone feels a little alone or "lost" when they first come into the church, I would really encourage them to reach out and volunteer and they will quickly find friends. I have grown in my faith this last year and come to value the sacraments, (even Reconciliation!)—something I never thought I would do as a Protestant! I am only sorry that I didn't find the Catholic Church earlier in my life. ■

Do you have a journey update to share?  
Submit it to [info@chnetwork.org](mailto:info@chnetwork.org).

## WELCOME HOME!

Were you received into full communion  
with the Catholic Church this Easter?

Are you celebrating a milestone anniversary  
of your reception into the Church?

Let us know! Email us at [info@chnetwork.org](mailto:info@chnetwork.org)

**EWTN'S THE JOURNEY HOME** on television & radio, hosted by JonMarc Grodi, CHNetwork Executive Director

Monday, July 7

**Deacon Scott Carson**

*Former Agnostic and  
Episcopalian*

*Orig. Air Date: 11/9/20*

Monday, July 14

**Keith and Tami Kiser**

*Former Presbyterians*

Monday, July 21

**Dr. Matthew Levering**

*Former Quaker*

Monday, July 28

**Dr. Michael Root**

*Former Lutheran*



### TELEVISION

Mon. 8PM ET—Encores: Tues. 1AM ET, Thurs. 2PM ET  
*The Best of The Journey Home*: Sat. 6PM ET

### RADIO

Mon. 8PM ET  
Encores: Sat. 7AM ET, Sun. 1AM ET and 5PM ET  
*The Best of The Journey Home*: Mon.–Fri. 1AM ET

Monday, Aug 4

**Rhonda Gruenewald**

*Former Agnostic*

*Schedule is subject to change.*

To access the full archive of past *Journey Home* programs go to [chnetwork.org/journey-home](http://chnetwork.org/journey-home)





# The Blood of Jesus

## A BRIDGE OF FAITH

By Kenny Burchard

As a former Pentecostal pastor, I'll always look back with deep gratitude on the countless times we lifted our voices in worship, singing, "Oh, the blood of Jesus, it washes white as snow!" The theme of Christ's Blood was everywhere—songs, sermons, altar calls, and prayers for deliverance. When I entered the Catholic Church in 2019, I discovered something beautiful: this same devotion to the Blood of Jesus, so central to Pentecostal faith, also pulses at the heart of Catholic life and worship, especially in the liturgy I now call home. It's not a dividing line—it's a bridge uniting us in the love of Jesus who "has freed us from our sins by his blood" (Revelation 1:5).

Across both traditions, the power of the Blood of Jesus is grounded in the Word of God. Scripture proclaims that "the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7), that "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (Hebrews 9:22), and that the faithful "have conquered [the accuser] by the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 12:11). Whether in a Pentecostal prayer meeting or a Catholic Mass, believers cling to the same promise: the Blood of Jesus saves, cleanses, protects, and gives life. It's not merely symbolic—it's the very substance of our hope, poured out for us on Calvary.

In the Pentecostal world I once called home, the Blood of Jesus was not a theological abstraction—it was a living force in our worship, prayers, and daily walk. We sang it often: "Nothing but the Blood," "Power in the Blood," "The Blood Will Never Lose Its Power." When someone struggled with temptation or oppression, we cried out, "We plead the Blood of Jesus!" During altar calls, I heard broken men and women pray, "Lord, cover me with your Blood!" It was raw and real—a deep conviction that Christ's Blood was our covering, cleansing, and only hope. That devotion never left me—it found new depth in the Catholic Church.

In Catholicism, I found that same reverence—expressed differently, but burning just as brightly. At the center of Catholic life is the Eucharist, where bread and wine become the true Body and Blood of Christ. This isn't symbolic. Catholics believe that in

every Mass, we are brought to the very foot of Calvary, partaking in the Eucharist the very Blood that was shed for us on the cross. As the Catechism teaches, "The Eucharist is thus a sacrifice because it re-presents (makes present) the sacrifice of the cross... and applies its fruit" (CCC 1366). To receive the Precious Blood is to be *in communion* with the Lamb who was slain.

Catholics also express this devotion through prayer and adoration. *The Litany of the Most Precious Blood* invokes Christ's Blood over every moment of His passion—"Blood of Christ, poured out on the cross, save us!" The *Anima Christi* prayer pleads, "Blood of Christ, inebriate me." **This entire month of July is dedicated to the Precious Blood.** And in Eucharistic adoration, Catholics sit in silence before the Blessed Sacrament.

I didn't lose my love for the Blood when I became Catholic. It was intensified, sacramentalized, and made present. Though Catholics and Pentecostals may express it differently, the love for the Blood of Jesus runs deep in both. When a Pentecostal "pleads the Blood" over their family, they're leaning into a biblical instinct that something powerful is available to them in Christ. That instinct is gloriously fulfilled when, as a Catholic, I receive the Blood of Christ in the chalice at Mass.

Protestants may wonder whether Catholics "add" something to the Cross through the sacraments. But the Church teaches that the Eucharist doesn't replace the Cross—it makes it present and applies it to our lives. In these shared perspectives, Catholics and Pentecostals can recognize a common devotion to the same saving mystery. In many ways, we are kneeling side by side at the foot of the Cross, longing to be washed in the same flood of mercy.

If you're a non-Catholic Christian considering the Catholic Church—especially a Pentecostal—know this: your deep devotion to the Blood of Jesus won't be lost—it will be fulfilled. And if you're a Catholic, take heart in the fervent songs and prayers of your Protestant brothers and sisters. Their longing to proclaim the Blood of Jesus is a longing to receive that treasure you receive every time you come to the Eucharistic table. ■

# Prayer List

## Clergy

- **For Jay, a minister in training** who has begun to study the case for Catholicism and is quickly becoming convinced, that the Holy Spirit will lead him.
- **For Jeremiah, an Evangelical pastor** struggling deeply with how he would make a living and support his family if he were to leave his current position to become Catholic, that God will give him courage and wisdom.
- **For Erik, a Mennonite pastor** who is in OCIA and planning to enter the Catholic Church, that the Lord will give him wisdom as he seeks to lead his wife and children into the Church as well.
- **For Frank, a Methodist minister** and Christian media personality who has struggled for many years with the thought that he might become Catholic and who has seen obstacles in the way; that God will hear his prayers and make the path plain to him.
- **For Randy, a Protestant minister** with many years of successful ministry who began a deep dive on the Catholic Church and is now facing the difficult question of what to do; that the Holy Spirit will enlighten him and give him the courage he will need.
- **For Derrick, an Adventist academic** who was recently received into the Church and is surrounded by Adventists with no interest whatsoever, including his wife and children; that the Holy Spirit will grant him wisdom and courage as he navigates a very difficult situation.
- **For Joseph, an Anglican priest** who finds himself drawn back to the Catholic Church in which he was baptized and raised, that the Holy Spirit will lead him as he considers what this would mean for his wife and children, not to mention his ability to earn a living.
- **For Arthur, a Lutheran pastor** who has come to reject sola Scriptura and has poured himself into listening to Catholic podcasts and reading Catholic books; that the Lord will make his way straight as he is just beginning to think through the implications of becoming Catholic.

■ **For Joseph**, who after many years as a pastor in various Protestant denominations has begun to explore Catholic teaching and finds himself drawn to the Church, that the Lord will encourage him as he attempts to communicate what he is learning to his family, some of whom are extremely anti-Catholic.

■ **For Aaron, a Protestant pastor** who recently resigned his ministry and entered the Church with his wife on Easter Vigil of this year, that the Holy Spirit will lead him as he considers what kind of occupation to pursue in his new life as a Catholic.

■ **For Terry, a non-denominational academic** who has been researching the early Church and ecclesiology and is attracted to Catholicism but would face significant headwinds with his family should he move forward with becoming Catholic; that God will give him wisdom in how to share what he has learned.

## Lay

■ **For Meg, a Protestant Christian**, that she may be granted patience, self-control and mindfulness toward others with regard to her own actions as well as clarity when she seeks conversation with some dear older friends in her denomination; that God would make clear an opportunity to seek out her local priest for his pastoral counsel; and a prayer of thanksgiving for the freedom her husband affords her to follow her inner promptings and to constantly attend Mass.

■ **For Anna**, that the Lord would shower her with consolation over the loss of her grandfather who recently passed away, and for God's providence in finding good employment opportunities.

■ **For Gal, a Jewish woman**, that she may receive an increase in faith and spiritually edifying catechesis as she continues her studies.

■ **For Priscilla, a Non-denominational Protestant**, that the Lord may grant her healing and good health.

■ **For Sara, a Baptist**, that she may receive the grace of discernment regarding

becoming Catholic as she is feeling drawn to the Church and in need of wisdom.

■ **For Ashley, an Anglican**, that she may receive the gift of patience as she waits on reception into the Church, and consolation for her family and friends as she shares the news of becoming Catholic.

■ **For Adam, a Non-denominational Evangelical**, that our Lord Jesus would call him to himself to through the holy Eucharist.

■ **For Daniel, who is from a secular background**, that the Lord would give him a hunger to embrace the fullness of the truth in the Catholic Church.

■ **For Seth, a member of a Non-denominational Bible church**, that he and his wife may soon be able to have their marriage convalidated.

■ **For Michael, a Southern Baptist**, that the Holy Spirit would bless and guide his conversations with his Evangelical coworkers.

■ **For Sean, a young Non-denominational Evangelical**, that the Holy Spirit would soften the hearts of his parents toward the Church.

■ **For Bob, an Independent Baptist**, that our Lord Jesus would guide him and his wife to full communion with the Catholic Church.

■ **For Miguel, a Seventh-day Adventist**, that Holy Spirit would open the hearts of his friends and brothers to his journey to the Church.

■ **For Michael, a Non-denominational Christian**, that he may find proper guidance in his search as to how to enter the Catholic Church.

■ **For Tim, a former Baptist**, that God would guide him back home to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

■ **For Jonathan, a former Atheist**, that as he prays, reads, and ponders, the Holy Spirit would guide him Home.

■ **For Walter, a member of the Presbyterian Church in America**, that he may find good answers to his questions about the Catholic Faith.



Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

JOHN 20:27-29

FEAST OF ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE: JULY 3

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CHNetwork was founded to help men and women, clergy and laity, from every background imaginable, discover the truth and beauty of the Catholic Church and make the journey home.

# COMPASS

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... Introducing *Journeys Home 3* continued ...

newsletters contained more information and the size of the network grew. This led to the assembly and publication of *Journeys Home*, a book containing many of the conversion stories of Protestant Clergy and lay-convert members of the Coming Home Network. Years later, *Journeys Home 2* was published as a follow up, containing many more stories that had accumulated through the publication of the CHNewsletter and the growth of our network of converts and journeyers.

For many years since, we had considered simply collecting and publishing a third collection of stories much like the first two. However, in prayer and discussion, the idea formed of assembling denomination-specific volumes, which brought together stories and resources of converts from similar faith traditions. It is thus with great excitement and gratitude that I present to you the first of these new resources: ***Journeys Home 3*, a new collection of thirteen stories from Christians coming from a Pentecostal or Charismatic background who found themselves drawn home to the Catholic Church.**

For those lifelong Catholics and fellow converts who read this volume, our prayer is that these stories are an encouragement to you—a rekindling of your Faith, Hope, and Charity and a reminder of the many numerous ways the Holy Spirit has worked and continues to work to bring renewal and conversion amongst Christians, despite our sin and divisions in the Body of Christ. It is likewise our hope that this volume will help to give Catholics a greater understanding and appreciation of the theology, experience, and charisms of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians.

And for Protestants who may read, especially from a

Pentecostal background, our prayer is that you encounter in these stories brothers and sisters in Christ—brothers and sisters who share your spiritual gifts and yearn, as you do, for a faith animated by the presence and movement of the Holy Spirit. These are not Christians who have abandoned or refuted the most important elements of this faith in becoming Catholic, but rather these are fellow disciples who believe they have come to discover the very fullness and fulfillment of these truths, gifts, charisms, and experiences. Our hope is that, like those gathered in the street in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, you might hear these stories as people declaring the mighty deeds of God in a language you understand (cf. Acts 2:8).

Wherever you are on your Christian journey and whatever your current relationship with the Catholic Church, our task today remains the same: to hallow the Father's name, to follow His son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, and to attend to the presence, power, and guidance of the Holy Spirit, purifying our hearts and helping us to persevere in love.

Let us pray for one another and continue the journey together.

Come, Holy Spirit!

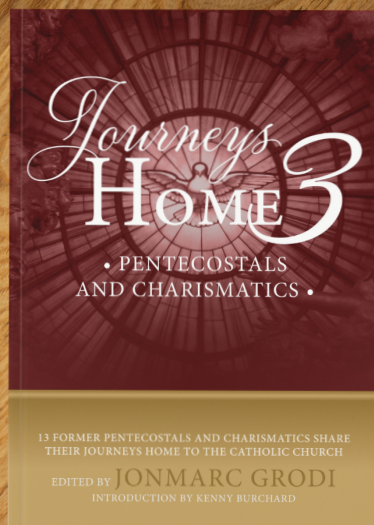


JonMarc Grodi

Executive Director of the CHNetwork  
Host of EWTN's *The Journey Home* Program

## “Who can tell me what is most pleasing to God that I may do it?”

ST. KATERI TEKAKWITHA—FEAST DAY: JULY 14



## Coming Soon!

*A new collection of stories is hitting the shelves this month!*

***Journeys Home 3*** highlights the experiences of thirteen former **Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians** as they discovered the fullness of faith present in the Catholic Church and made the decision to come into full communion with the Church. Though created especially for converts and those exploring the Catholic Faith from a Pentecostal background, this compilation is sure to provide insight, encouragement, and inspiration for all.

Order your copy today at [chnetwork.org/jh3](http://chnetwork.org/jh3)

me?” (Acts 8:30–31). I was determined and called another parish down the road. Thankfully, they had an RCIA program, and the teacher, Janis Cassiere, also became my mentor and my friend.

### My Eyes Were Opened

It was now February of 2017, so it was too late for me to come into the Church at Easter Vigil. Instead, they decided to offer a special class beginning in June, which would allow me to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation during Advent. As it turned out, it was one of the most magical years of my life. I remember hearing the Gospel for the first time and my heart was burning. I thought, “Why isn’t everyone here!? This is amazing!” I felt as if I had discovered a treasure. All my life I was yearning to hear words like, “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?” (Matthew 6:25). I could not get enough of the beautiful words I was hearing each week and finally got a Bible of my own and began to devour it.

I remember attending a Bible Study during this time and revealing my favorite part to the group, as if they had never heard it before: “The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit” (John 3:8). I gleefully dropped my Bible and looked around, expecting everyone to be as excited about this verse as I was. Instead, I found that they were all quite familiar with this chapter. They explained that John 3:16 was often shown during football games. I was shocked that everyone knew this, and somehow, I had never gotten the memo! I had a similar experience at Mass when I heard of the raising of Lazarus. I looked around expecting everyone to be losing their minds over what we were just told. On the contrary, I found everyone to be acting as if this was normal “everyday” information.

I went to the Triduum that year, even though I was not yet officially Catholic. On Good Friday, the church was kept dark. I remember kneeling and looking up at the Crucifix and realizing for the first time in my life that Jesus died for me. God incarnated as a man so that He could die for me and save me. This must mean that I am important to Him, which meant that I needed to live my life in a particular way now. In fact, the only appropriate response to this information was to give my life to Him completely. I never have and never will get over the fact that the King of Heaven and Earth died for me. I am reminded of the verse in “O Holy Night” where we sing, “He appeared, and the soul felt its worth.” This perfectly describes what happened to me in that amazing moment.

I did experience a temptation during this special year. My boss at Twentieth Century Fox called to joyfully tell me that they wanted to give me a promotion. It would be a Director level position with a six-figure salary. This was everything I had been working toward in my career. The only caveat was that I had to move back to LA. I knew that if I moved back to LA, I would fall right back into my old life. With that said, I did consider it but ultimately decided not to accept the offer. I had discovered a treasure and knew I was too weak to hold onto it if I was put into a position of temptation. It was not worth the risk. I told my boss that I loved my life in Sedona, and that I just couldn’t leave. Her response was to scold me for not recognizing this amazing opportunity. She explained that there were many women my age who would want what she was giving me. I was not swayed. I knew in my heart, mind, and soul that I was making the right decision. I was a woman, too, and I wanted Jesus. Three years later, Twentieth Century Fox was bought by Disney, and the entire department was eliminated.

When RCIA began that summer, Janis brought ruby slippers to class on the first day. She explained that it might seem silly, but she brought them to remind us that we could always come home. I almost fell out of my chair. The Wizard of Oz was my favorite movie when I was a kid. I did not just love it; I was obsessed with it. I had every line and song memorized and knew all of the trivia. I knew at that moment that God was with me. My heart was full, knowing how specific He is with each and every one of us, letting us know how much He loves us. I left after class each week bursting with excitement at what I was learning. A whole new world was opening up to me that I never knew existed.

I had my first Confession in October and was, understandably, very nervous. I was thirty-eight years old at this time and had many grave sins to confess, many of which I had never spoken aloud. I decided that I needed to write them down, but was concerned that I would drop the paper, and it would somehow be traced back to me. My solution was to write it down in a code that no one would be able to understand but me. When

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***"The first step of humility is  
unhesitating obedience which  
comes naturally to those who  
cherish Christ above all."***

***ST. BENEDICT—FEAST DAY: JULY 11***

**READ, PRAY,  
GIVE AWAY!**

Once you’ve finished reading this issue of the CHNewsletter, consider sharing it with someone who might enjoy it as well! (They can always sign up to receive their own at [chnetwork.org/join](http://chnetwork.org/join).)



## ...Journeys Home Continued...

I found out that my first Confession would be held in a big open room, I was very unsettled with this set up and insisted that a room divider be pulled. I certainly did not want anyone to hear my words and see me inevitably cry. Janis laughed at how nervous I was, knowing that my life was about to change for the better. I dutifully went through my list, expecting the priest to be shocked. To my surprise, there was no expression on his face whatsoever. I naturally assumed that he had a hearing problem. However, he then repeated back to me every single thing that I had said in a calm, clear, and concise manner. That alone seemed supernatural. Then something amazing happened—I was forgiven. I did not realize until that very moment how much I had been defining myself by my sins, not until they were gone. Now, these things that seemed so huge and insurmountable were lifted off of my heart, mind, and soul as if they were a piece of lint on a sweater. I was floating on air.

As I entered December, my Confirmation date was fast approaching. Just five days before the day, I discovered Our Lady of Guadalupe. I was so astounded by what I had learned that I called my mother and insisted on going over immediately to tell her of this miracle. The Tilma is hard evidence of the supernatural and miraculous. The image in her eyes of the people in the room at that moment, the stars on her garment which match the stars in the sky that night, and all of the other miraculous elements still give me chills every time I think of it—not to mention the indisputable result of millions of people coming into the Catholic Faith because of her. She captured my heart as well, and still does. To this day, I keep asking myself, “Why isn’t everyone talking about this? Why isn’t this on the news every night?!”

Finally, the day came—December 17, 2017—the day I became fully Catholic. My Confirmation ended up being at the Spanish Mass, which was a bit unusual. Thankfully, the Confirmation itself was in English, and I was proclaiming everything we had to say with such zeal that the priest put the microphone to my mouth. He put so much oil on my forehead that it dripped all over me, and I relished every moment. I never wanted that oil to be washed off; I was becoming something new. Then, the priest unexpectedly gave us his chalice to drink from, and it was heavier than expected. The Precious Blood ended up overflowing down my chin and onto my neck. I was horrified that I had desecrated our Lord in some way, but Janis assured me that his Precious Blood would be absorbed into my skin. I now smile, realizing Jesus was indeed covering me with His Precious Blood that day, preparing me for what was to come.

### Buckle Up

As I like to say, when you say “yes” to the Lord, buckle up! One month later, in 2018, I started a Master’s Program in Theology and Christian Ministry online at Franciscan University of Steubenville. I did not have specific career goals in mind, but was simply a lover who wanted to know her beloved, and I thought this was the best way to do it. My parents came back to the Church later that year. In January 2020, I was laid off from my job at Twentieth Century Fox and began working for the Church

remotely with DeSales Media Group in the Diocese of Brooklyn. In June 2021, I began working for my parish, St. John Vianney Catholic Church, and the Chapel of the Holy Cross in Sedona, Arizona.

The past few years have been a roller coaster! Our Pastor, Fr. Ignatius Mazanowski, came to our parish in May 2021. He has brought Catholicism to the forefront in Sedona, and it has been amazing to be a part of it. We have worked together to begin live streaming, updated our websites, launched our social media channels, digitized parish communications, expanded our ministries, led retreats each year, and much more! We witness our Lord healing people and bringing them back to His church every single week, especially at the Chapel of the Holy Cross. Father Ignatius began offering Adoration, Confession, and Mass at the Chapel, and it is absolutely beautiful to introduce millions of people to the beauty of our faith each year. We also have plans to build a Northern Arizona Catholic Center to provide healing, retreats, and formation.

I had the opportunity to go on a pilgrimage to France in April 2024, and I will be going on another pilgrimage to Italy in 2025. I graduated with my Master’s Degree in Theology and Christian Ministry with Honors in May 2024 and have already taught my first course in June 2024 with Fr. Ignatius. I’ve also had the opportunity to give several presentations at the Institute of Catholic Theology in Phoenix, Arizona. I often get to be the Cantor at Mass, and I am even in the process of applying to be in the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

Almost every day, I look back in awe of what the Lord has done in my life. I am just happy to be in Mass every week, but He has even more planned for me and all of us. I have learned that He uses everything we have—all of our gifts—to build His kingdom. We were created for this purpose! All we need to do is surrender everything to Him, and He will take us to places we never dreamed we could go. It will not always be easy, but it will lead us closer to Him, and that is really the whole point! As St. Augustine said, “To fall in love with God is the greatest romance; to seek Him, the greatest adventure; to find Him, the greatest human achievement.” I have fallen deeply in love, I am experiencing adventures beyond my imagination and achieving communion with the One my heart has longed for my entire life. ■

*Rae-Mi LeRoy has a BA in Theatre and Dance from Otterbein University and an MBA from University of La Verne. She spent many years working in the Creative Department at Universal Studios Hollywood before moving into TV Distribution and Worldwide Contract Management at NBCUniversal and Twentieth Century Fox. She moved to Arizona and became Catholic in 2017. She is now the Director of Parish and Chapel Initiatives at St. John Vianney Catholic Church and the Chapel of the Holy Cross in Sedona, Arizona and has a Master of Arts in Theology and Christian Ministry from Franciscan University of Steubenville.*

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*JOIN US ON OUR*

# FALL RETREAT

**October 6 - 9, 2025**

**Maria Stein Retreat Center**

**Maria Stein, Ohio**



Intended for converts and those on the journey to Catholicism, both clergy and laity, our retreats are an opportunity to gather with the CHNetwork staff and other members of the network for a time of discussion, prayer, and worship. As we share our stories of how Christ drew us to the Church, the obstacles we faced, and the difficulties involved in finding a home in the Catholic Church, our goal is to promote Christian fellowship among the attendees, assist in discernment for those who are facing tough questions or decisions, and to encourage all in an ever greater walk with Christ. Find full details and register at [chnetwork.org/retreats](https://chnetwork.org/retreats).



July 2025 Newsletter

