

P.O. Box 4100 Steubenville, OH 43952

The Coming Home Network International

Membership Letter

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"Why do that?"

"What did you say you do?"

"Oh, I work with an apostolate... ah, er, lay ministry that helps Protestant clergy, men and women, who are thinking about becoming Catholic."

"Do you help them change their minds?"

"No, no, we help them work through the many issues and hurdles they face as they go through the often difficult process of leaving their pastorates to become Catholic."

Silent stares with mixed looks of disdain and disbelief. "Now why would you want to do that? Does Rome still teach that non-Catholics are going to hell?"

"No, of course not...I mean ..."

"Then why don't you just leave them alone?"

[This caricatured conversation represents a common question many of us have been pressed to answer, by phone, email, letter, or most uncomfortably face-to-face by friends or family, non-Catholic or even sometimes Catholic...]

"Doesn't the New Catechism teach that our separated brethren are innocent of the schism and that they can be saved just like us through their faith in Jesus Christ?"

"Sure, but..."

"Then why mess up their lives? I mean hey, since Vatican II, Protestants

don't even need to convert, right?"

[Sound familiar? At least many of you have reported such comments. But if there is at least partial truth in the above statements—if non-Catholics can be saved through their faith in Christ—then why not leave them right where they are? Especially if their conversions remove them from positions of ministry leadership where they are presently doing great work for the Lord?]

"One answer is that we want them to know and receive with joy the fullness of the Christian faith, as delivered by Jesus to his Apostles and which has consequently been preserved, protected and proclaimed throughout the ages by the Catholic Church. What they presently have is a mixture of truth, partial truth and untruth, depending upon which Christian tradition they belong to. We want them to embrace the fullness."

"Yes, that's true, but apparently the Church teaches that they can still follow Jesus, receive his blessings, and be saved without this fullness."

"Okay. Another reason is that we want them to experience all the avenues of grace provided by the Church through Her Sacraments, sacramentals, and devotions. We don't want to take the chance that without this grace they may not persevere (whether they believe they *need* to persevere or not)."



"But the Church teaches that although we cannot be certain, God can pour forth His grace through any means He chooses, even through the less than complete Sacraments and ordinances of non-Catholic traditions."

"Yes, that is true. But another significant reason we want to help them come home is because, as the Council of Florence taught in 1439, the level of the Beatific Vision we experience in Heaven is directly proportional to the level of grace we attain in this life through our words, actions, and attitudes of the heart, etc. They need to convert so that they know they need to focus their lives on growing in grace; too many of them are caught up in the presumption of "once-saved-always-saved" and are not conscientious about their daily need to grow in holiness."

"What Council? Oh never mind, but again, God can give them whatever grace He wills, and He will hardly hold them accountable for their ignorance. As Jesus said, whatever they do for the least of these they do for Him. They will be rewarded in heaven for their works of charity, even if they know nothing

about quantum levels in heaven."

Sitting in the airport this morning awaiting my weekly flight to Birmingham, I began reading the galley proofs for a book being reprinted by *Sophia Institute Press*. The book is a newly revised version of Fr. Frederick Faber's *All for Jesus: The Easy Ways of Divine Love*, originally printed in 1854. Allow me to say that after all the twentieth cen-

bead of the Rosary, every Sign of the Cross, every drop of holy water, every pain patiently endured, every harsh judgment meekly borne, every good wish...provided there be a devout intention along with all these things, and they are done in union with the merits of our sweet Lord.

One shortcoming with the answers

tury has done to our Catholic Church and faith—good and bad—this book from this highly respected nineteenth century spiritual writer is an inspiring, motivating, and practical *check* as to what it *truly* means to think, live, and love like a Catholic.

In but the first chapter, Fr. Faber answers the above question—why not lead them right where they are?—in a very important manner:

Now, let us look at the interests of Jesus. Let us take a view of the whole Church, which is His spouse. Look first into Heaven, the Church Triumphant. It is the interest of Jesus that the glory of the most Holy Trinity should be increased in every possible manner, and at every hour of night and day. And this glory, which is called God's accidental glory, is increased by every good work, word, and thought, every correspondence to grace, every resistance to temptation, every act of worship, every sacrament rightly administered or humbly received, every act of homage and love to Mary, every invocation of the saints, every

given previously in this letter—which are all true—is that they are primarily self-focused, in the same subtle manner that the gospel itself can too often be expressed in solely personal, individualistic terms. What must I do to be saved? What rewards am I going to get from this? How can I grow in grace? Etc., etc.

But as Fr. Faber so clearly states, the focus of our spiritual lives is to be on increasing the glory of the Holy Trinity, in other words, on *giving. What can I do today, at this moment, in this place, in this situation, with this joy or this pain, to bring glory to God?*

A great example of this was mentioned by Fr. Farber: the Rosary. Many converts have admitted that making the transition in prayer with the Rosary is difficult: How does it help me talk with God? How does it help me express my needs? How does it help me focus my mind? But as Fr. Faber suggests, the key thought and reason for praying the Rosary is because in doing so we increase God's glory: the telling of each bead is a means of giving glory to God. In fact, his thoughts have helped me understand more fully the repeated phrase of the Rosary that too often merely stands as a closing bookend to each decade:

"Glory be...:" *That* is precisely the point of the prayer. Glory be to God.

If this is to be our focus, then is this not the main reason we must help our separated brethren come home? It isn't *only* the amount of truth they need to know, or grace they need to receive, or heaven they might experience, but how clearly their heart is surrendered to giving all to the glory of God.

Yes, a great many of our separated brethren know and preach this (remember the many hymns, "To God be the Glory," etc.), but I know from personal experience that it wasn't until I was confronted by the truth of Catholic spirituality and began to be purged by the power of Sacramental Grace, that I began to realize how self-centered my Christian faith had always been.

Why do we want to help them come home? Not primarily for what they can get, but for how much they are called to love.

May you and I in our words, actions and attitudes—by the assistance of God's grace—be ever conscious and diligent of increasing the glory of God, night and day.

Sincerely In Christ,

Warres Stor

Marcus C. Grodi

Greetings From Our Chaplain: Fr. Ray Ryland

"Call No One On Earth Your Father"

One of the more common objections we receive from non-Catholics is that we call our priests "father," because doesn't Jesus stress in Matthew 23:9, "You must call no one on earth your father...."?

Initially a Catholic might respond, "How do you refer to your mother's husband? What do you call him?" If a Catholic is wrong in calling his priest "father," then everyone who refers to his natural father as "father" is also in the wrong. Both usages would be prohibited by a literal interpretation of Jesus' words. The Catholic might also remind his inquirer that both Old and New Testaments associate priesthood with fatherhood. See Judges 17:10 and 18:19 and 1 Corinthians 4:15.

A further response by the Catholic would be to point out that Jesus came not to abolish but to fulfill the law of the old covenant (Matthew 5:17). If in Matthew 23:9 he literally forbids us even to acknowledge our natural fathers as our fathers, how can we keep the fifth commandment ("honor your father and your mother")? Taken literally, Jesus words in Matthew 23:9 contradict his claim in Matthew 5:17. The Son of God never contradicts himself.

Take a closer look at the whole passage in which Jesus says we must call no one our father (Matthew 23:1-12). In contrast to the attitudes of the Pharisees and others, Jesus is specifying the qualities Christian leaders must exhibit.

The Pharisees aspired to being called "rabbi" or "master" or "teacher," leaders of particular schools of thought. Among the schools headed by teachers called "rabbi," there were many divergences of belief, some of them actual contradictions.

A similar situation prevailed with regard to the term "father" (in Aramaic, *iabbai*, a title of honor). The title was given to well-known Jewish religious authorities of the past. As with "rabbi," so with "father": the term designated a particular interpretation of the Jewish faith.

Why did Jesus declare that no Christian leader is to be called "rabbi" or "father"? He was telling us that no leader, no one, may set up his own interpretation of the Catholic Faith and seek followers for his opinions. The role of leaders in Christ's Church is faithfully to hand on Christ's teaching received through the apostles (Matthew 28:19). The words of the apostle St. Paul epitomize the essential attitude of the Christian teacher: "... this what I received from the Lord, and in turn passed on to you...." (1 Corinthians 11:23)

It all comes down to this. Jesus forbade his followers to call their leaders "father" or "rabbi" (in the first-century sense of these terms) in order to protect the integrity of the faith.

In Matthew 23:1-12, especially in vs 8-10, Jesus is condemning the formation of contradictory schools of thought in his Church. This is exactly what the apostle St. Paul condemns in the Church in Corinth: "...these slogans that you have, like 'I am for Paul,' 'I am for Apollos,' 'I am for Cephas'...." (1 Corinthians 1:12).

The history of Protestantism is essentially the story of this very process: the unending proliferation of sectarian groups saying "I am for Martin Luther" or "I am for John Calvin" or "I am for John Wesley."

The World Christian Encyclopedia (David B. Barrett, editor; Oxford University Press, 1982) reported that in 1980 there were 20,780 distinguishable Christian denominations

in the world. Moreover, at the time the encyclopedia was published, and for some years previously, an average of 270 *new* denominations were springing up each year; more than five every week. (The sectarian founders take off on weekends?) According to the encyclopedia's projection, there would now be well over 25,000 denominations. And the number steadily grows.

Every one of these thousands of competing, contradicting denominations was formed by some person who said, in effect, "Call *me* 'Master,' call *me* 'Teacher': *I* will tell you what the Christian truth is!" And every dissenting Catholic theologian or priest or teacher is saying the same thing.

Jesus foresaw this problem and provided the means for avoiding it. In the passage under

discussion he tells us, ""...you have only one Teacher, the Christ." And how are we to be taught by our one Teacher? By the means he provided. He founded the Church on the apostles and their successors, with a special role for Peter, the Rock, earthly head of the Church. A Catholic knows that when the Church Christ established speaks officially, Christ himself is speaking through her to each member.

Every follower of Jesus Christ wants to know the truth: "the truth [and ONLY the truth] will make you free." (John 8:32). For acquiring the truth in its fullness, the Catholic Church, established by Jesus Christ, offers the only alternative to the chaos of ever-expanding denominationalism.



From Our Director: Chris Erickson

Diocesan ad campaign

We are often asked for statistical information on the number of Protestant ministers entering the Catholic Church. Although the *Coming Home Network* continues to be contacted by at least one new Protestant clergyman every week, we're lacking statistics on many others who have not contacted us.

Recently a prominent member of the *CHNetwork* spoke with His Eminence Josef Cardinal Ratzinger, and communicated to us that the cardinal was entirely unaware of the number of clergy conversions taking place in the United States. Cardinal Ratzinger is the Prefect for the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith at the Vatican.

Pursuing accurate statistics on the number of Protestant clergy entering the Catholic Church would provide some interesting benefits. It would make available important statistical information to the CHNetwork. It would give us the ability to network these converts together so that they could enjoy fellowship of their peers, as well as the opportunity to offer their experience and insight to those seeking advice. It would also offer us an opportunity to initiate dialogue and develop a working relationship with appropriate personnel in the Vatican. Marcus could introduce the Coming Home Network to officials in Rome, provide them with accurate statistics on the number of Protestant clergy converts, and further discuss ways in which the Church could facilitate the process by addressing the difficulties these men and women face.

To accomplish those goals, the *CHNetwork* needs to reach as many clergy converts as possible. One comprehensive way to do this is to advertise in every diocesan newspaper in the United States. Essentially the ad would

invite all clergy converts to contact the *CHNetwork*.

We've researched the number of diocesan newspapers, their circulations and advertising costs, and the projected cost for this undertaking would be approximately \$70,000. That leaves us with the following three alternatives:

If you are a Protestant clergy convert to the Catholic Church, we want to hear from you!

The Coming Home Network International provides fellowship, encouragement and support for Protestant pastors and laity who are somewhere along the journey or have already been received into the Catholic Church.

We are frequently asked for statistics on the number of Protestant ministers entering the Catholic Church. With the hope of getting a more accurate count, we are asking all clergy converts or those still on the "journey home" to please contact us by letter, email or phone.

For information about the purpose and services of the Coming Home Network, please contact us at:

> P.O. Box 4100 Steubenville, OH 43952 Phone: (800) 664-5110

- 1) *CHNetwork* members could submit brief articles on the work of the *Coming Home Network* to their own diocesan papers; or
- 2) Members could purchase ad space in their local diocesan paper on our behalf, using the sample ad on this page; or
- 3) Members could make a tax-deductible contribution to the *CHNetwork* to cover the cost of an ad for their own local diocesan paper. The cost of ads is based on the circulation of the diocesan newspaper, and therefore varies greatly.

If you are interested in any of these alternatives or have any questions, please call me. The benefits of a successful ad campaign would make "the road home" a little easier and possibly more readily traveled in the near future.

In Christ, Chris Erickson

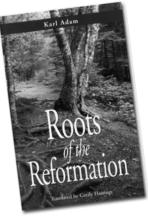
A final thought...

We hope you recognize in our mailings that we have a "low key" philosophy toward fundraising. We try to focus more on what is happening in the work of the Apostolate than on specific financial needs.

We hope you don't assume by this, however, that financially we are always "sitting pretty." The continuing work of the *Coming Home Network* depends daily on your generosity. So please every month consider what you can contribute to our joint work.

Sincerely, Marcus, Fr. Ray, Chris, & Staff





Roots of the Reformation: a bridge to Christian Unity

To o often the task of

following Christ's mandate of Christian unity seems so daunting that we relegate it to high officials and ecumencial committees. While that may be helpful, we all know that unity will ultimately only truly happen at the grassroots level, one Christian to another. And this begins with ourselves. Unity begins in the human hearts. This is what Pope John Paul II means when he says that if we want peace in the world, it must begin in each human heart.

In his Epilogue to *Roots of the Reformation*, Dr. Kenneth Howell, our one time Assistant Director, said that the memories of past injustices and failures often bar the way of reunion among Protestants and Catholics. Well then, why couldn't we join the Holy Father with our own *mea culpa* on behalf of the Church? We could say to a Chris-

tian brother or sister in another faith tradition, "Please forgive the sins of the members of our Church. Would you please consider reading this little book by Karl Adam which tries to explain what happened?"

Roots of the Reformation could be a useful tool to open dialogue, and passing it along is one practical way for each of us to work toward Christian unity. It is now available for \$5.00 a copy (plus S&H) [\$3.00 to CHNetwork

Coming Home JOURNAL

Every thematic edition of *The Coming Home Journal* is specifically designed to be a timeless tool for evangelistic outreach. Please consider ordering extra copies for prayerful distribution to friends

and family.

Mary, Mother of God (Vol. 1)

Our Journey Home • Our Lady's Gentle Call to Peace • Who is Mary of Nazareth • What is Devotion to Mary • Hail Mary • Mary and the Problem of Christian Unity • What About Marian Apparitions • St. Joseph: The World's Greatest Father • A Convert's Response to Friends

The Authority of the Church (Vol. 2)

Searching for Authority • A Hop, Skip, and a Grear Leap • The Crisis of Authority in the Reformation

- Have You Not Read? The Rule of Faith in Patristic Thought Authority in the Catechism Papal Infallibility Explained
- Scripture and Tradition

The Eucharist (Vol. 3)

How I got This Way • Affirming All Things • The Real Presence • Transubstantiation and the Eucharist • But What Do We Mean By "The Real Presence"? • St. Augustine's Belief in the Real Presence • The Holy Eucharist • The Meal of Melchizedek

Salvation and Justification (Vol. 4)

We Do Not Stand Alone • Returning Home • One Saving Action • A Voice from the Catholic Pulpit • But How ARE Catholics Saved? • The Early Church Fathers on Salvation • Justification By Faith

Sola Scriptura (Vol. 5)

Logic and the Foundations of Protestantism • You Are That Man • "What is Truth?" - An Explaination of Sola Scriptura • The Practical

Bulletin Board

An opportunity for clergy converts Clergy converts members who have indicated that we can

release their names will soon receive a letter from Mr. William Gorman, President of Faithful Servant, a Catholic financial planning and consultants firm. It offers workshops on family finances and investing in accordance with Catholic social teaching. Faithful Servant is interested in hiring, initially, part time speakers who would be trained this Fall on a three day training retreat. Ultimately these positions could lead to becoming full-time financial advisors for Faithful Servant. In addition to their web site (www.faithfulservant.com) where people can listen to Mr. Gorman giving a workshop on managing money, and download a workbook (all for free), Faithful Servant speakers would each have a section on the site listing some information about them, the territory they cover, and the dates they have set up to speak. Speakers will earn money through speaking fees and back-room sales of books and tapes. If you would like to learn more about Faithful Servant, please visit their web-site or mail your resume to: Bridget Gorman, Post Office Box 471, 65 Duke Street, Suite 208, Prince Frederick, Maryland 20678. Resumes must be received within the next thirty days.

Suggested reading list We often receive questions on our web forum and

We often receive questions on our web forum and email list inquiring into what books would be good reading material. We would like to hear about the books that have been important in your spiritual journey as Protestants or

Catholics, as well as those books that have helped you discover the Catholic faith. Please provide the title, author, publisher, topic or theme, and any other comments you may have on the book. Please send your sugges-



tions to Chris LaRose: email address is: larose@chnetwork. org; or by mail to: Chris LaRose, 56 Roosevelt St., Massena, NY 13662.

Don't forget the Cate-

chism Tabs

We have tabs for the Catechism of the Catholic Church in stock for only \$3.95 (plus s/h)! [These were formatted by Marcus and the previous staff of the Light and Life Foundation] Use these for quick referencing to particular topics. These match perfectly with the original edition of the Catechism. [The latest edition of



the Catechism added a glossary section, for which there is not a tab.. This is a great gift idea and makes the Catechism a more readily accessible apologetic resource.

Defending the Faith Conference and the CHNetwork Luncheon

The Friday night social and the Sunday annual luncheon were well attended. Familiar faces and names blessed both events! Marcus spoke first but had to leave after addressing the group because his lactating bovine was calling for him:) It gave birth to a beautiful Jersey calf named Bennedict. Our chaplain and vice president, Fr. Ray Ryland, took the helm and answered some interesting questions. Assistant Director Chris LaRose assisted Fr. Ray with MC'n the event. All in all, everyone had a wonderful time with plenty of food and drink. Thank you for attending!

Correction to the Dedication Page for *Roots of the Reformation*

Yes, we fully recognize that there is more than one "woman who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ..." This just goes to show how easy it is for obvious typos to slip through the cracks in the process of publishing a book!





Let us Pray...

<u>Scott</u>, a clergyman from the Reformed Episcopal Church, needs your prayers as he further investigates what "Geneva and Rome" are all about.

Rev. R, an Episcopal Priest who was raised a Roman Catholic and changed to Episcopal during his early adult years, is drawn to the Catholic Church. Please pray that he will receive permission to return to the Catholic Church as a priest.

<u>C.</u>, a laywoman, was in full-time ministry in a non-denominational charismatic church until her pastor discovered her interest in the Catholic Church. Her views on obedience and authority are very akin to Catholics, but she is unsure where the Lord is leading her. She is lonely and her husband is confused over the situation. Please pray for her as she is investigating the possibility of becoming Catholic.

<u>Steve</u>, a Lutheran pastor, needs your prayers to discern the Lord's will as he investigates the claims of the Catholic Church.

Rev. M, a married Episcopal priest, is quite sure that he wants to become Catholic, but his wife is less sure and she is still reading and praying about the situation. Please pray for them, and also for the possibility of his becoming a Catholic priest.

W.B., a Lutheran pastor who has been receiving our newsletter and journal for several years, is struggling with converting to the Catholic Church. His main concern is how he will support his family. He wants to continue teaching the Faith. Please pray that the Lord meets his needs.

Bill, an Episcopal priest and rector,

is planning to come into the Catholic Church. He is pursuing ordination as a Catholic priest. Please pray for his ability to support his family during this transition.

Bruce, a secondary member, has been growing more interested in Catholicism for several years and now seems ready to be more "official" about it. His wife is a fallen-away Catholic. Please pray for Bruce and his wife

that the benefits of conversion will strengthen their marriage bond and their spiritual journey.

Julie, who is having a difficult time keeping the Faith since none of her friends or family are Catholic, asks for our prayers that she can remain strong in the Faith.

<u>Patricia</u>, who was baptized in November, still struggles with doctrinal issues. She asks for prayers that she can find peace, and for her family who did not enter the Church with her.

<u>Janice</u>, who left the Church seventeen years ago and is now considering coming home.

Antonine, Carmen and Robert are tertiary members who have asked that we pray for members in their families to come home to the Church.

"We do not say my Father, but our Father, neither do we say give me, but give us; and this because the Teacher of unity did not wish prayer to be made privately, viz., that each should pray for himself alone; for He wished one to pray for all since He in his single Person had borne all" (St. Cyprian, On the Lord's Prayer, 3rd Century).

"He causes his prayers to be of more avail to himself, who offers them also for others" (Pope St. Gregory I, *Morals*, 35, 21, 6th Century).



Tune in each Friday evening at 8:00 PM EST to *The Journey Home Program* on EWTN. This exciting call-in talk show examines why so many people—fallen away Catholics as well as individuals from other Christian backgrounds—are being drawn home to the Catholic Church. Host Marcus Grodi and his guests [most of whom are *CHNetwork* members] discuss their personal conversion stories and important themes of the journey. Encores on Sundays at 1AM, Mondays at 1PM and Wednesdays at 10AM. *The Journey Home* can also be heard on WEWN

shortwave radio and local Catholic radio networks. Visit EWTN's website for airtimes.

Beginning on September 4, the live broadcast of *The Journey Home* will air on Monday nights at 8 pm EST. Please inform your family and friends of the new time!

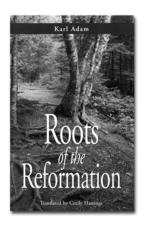


Now listen to Marcus LIVE! or on demand on the Internet. Did you miss a show? Now you can listen to the 'taped' interview at EWTN's website. Point your browser to www.chnetwork.org/ewtn.htm and visit the Audio Library for The Journey Home.

Visit the Coming Home Network Website!

- Web-Based Discussion
- Conversion Stories
- Network Information
- Helpful Resources
- Job Postings
- Reading Lists
- Useful Links
- And more!





*A Special Note About Roots of the Reformation

Dear Members of the Coming Home Network,

A couple weeks ago, in thanks of your generous support of CHN, I mailed you a copy of *Roots of the Reformation* by Professor Karl Adam.

Ever since I ran across this book five years ago, I wished that it could be made more readily available. Now with great joy, the *Coming Home Network* has republished it, as its first project under our new publishing arm, *Coming Home Resources*.

In the mailing, I also included a reprint of Karl Adam's original introduction from *One and Holy*, the larger text from which *Roots of the Reformation* is an edited, smaller version. Since this introduction does not appear in *Roots*, I thought it would be helpful for you to read Karl Adam's own explanation of the book.

I also want to let you know that all *Coming Home Network* members can purchase additional copies for a donation of \$3.00 per copy (plus S&H). The regular price (for non-members) is \$5.00 per copy (plus S&H).

We are making this available to you at this extremely low cost is for one reason: so you can distribute it *widely* in our shared efforts to promote true Christian unity.

Your generous donations have made this project possible, and we pray that *Coming Home Resources* can continue to make this book and others like it available to both our Catholic and non-Catholic readers.

<u>Please seriously consider passing on a copy</u> to a friend or family member for their prayerful consideration, for we believe, as stated by John Henry Cardinal Newman: "to become deep in history is to cease to be Protestant."

We pray that by opening our hearts fully to Jesus Christ and by forgiving past injustices, we may, once again, return to a truly united Christendom.

Sincerely in Christ,

Marcus C. Grodi

President