



January 2012 Newsletter

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THE COMING HOME NETWORK INTERNATIONAL



My Journey Home – In God's Timing

By Mary Stevanus

Before I was thirty years old, I never considered the Catholic faith as anything more than a curiosity. Why would anyone be persuaded to worship the Virgin Mary, the saints, and statues in the place of Jesus? How could Catholics be deluded enough to think they could sin all week, confess to a priest on Saturday, so they could receive communion on Sunday, and still think they would make it to heaven? We were taught many more sinister suspicions about Catholics and warned to stay away from them because ours was the “full Gospel.” We believed even most of the other Protestant churches did not interpret the Scriptures correctly and we were never quite sure of their salvation.

I was a member of the Nazarene Church, which was founded in the early 1900's and evolved from several break-offs from the Church of England. Its emphasis was on holiness of heart. Nazarene theology fully accepted the articles of faith in the Nicene Creed. They also taught that there were two works of grace: “salvation,” accepting Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, and “sanctification,” the infilling of the Holy

Spirit that perfected the believer. I embraced Nazarene teaching and was baptized at age eleven. But I could never quite believe that I was perfect enough to measure up to God's expectations, though I tried exceptionally hard to live this faith.

There are many good Christian people, including some of my family, who continue to worship in my former church, and I hope we will meet in heaven some day for I do not doubt their faith. I am indebted to those teachers who gave me a foundation of faith and helped me to know Jesus at a young age. My mother was a faithful believer, and I am especially grateful that she made sure her seven children went to church with her on a regular basis. I feel confident my father also believed, but he could not follow the strict rule against the use of tobacco, so he felt unwelcome in our services.

Growing Up Nazarene

When I was four years old, our family was invited to attend Sunday School at the Nazarene church in our small Southeastern Washington town.

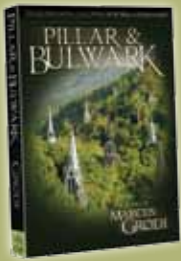
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Journeys Home

FEATURED RESOURCES

Pillar and Bulwark

By Marcus Grodi

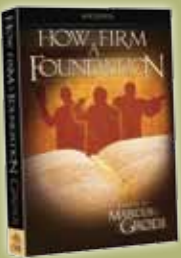


The newly released sequel to *How Firm A Foundation!* After nearly losing his life to an assassin, Stephen LaPointe resigned from his pastorate as a Congregational minister. He made

this radical decision as the result of a crisis of truth. This decision had many immediate ramifications for his vocation, his career, and most significantly for his marriage and family. Now a year later, no one knows where he is. He has disappeared. Out of love, as well as remorse, several people—an old friend, his estranged wife, and a potential enemy—set out separately to find him. This is a story of conversion—of heart, of mind, and of love.

How Firm a Foundation Revised Edition!

By Marcus Grodi



A new, revised edition of Marcus Grodi's popular novel about a Protestant minister who begins to question whether the Bible is the only sufficient, firm foundation for his life.

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...Journeys Home Continued...

I began learning about Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, among many others. I was fascinated with all these stories, and they made the Word of God vibrant and alive as though they happened yesterday. As I grew older, the stories were more complete and I studied whole Bible passages, memorizing many of them. By the end of my high school years, I had read the Bible cover to cover at least twice.

In spite of all that Scripture study, I was a painfully scrupulous teenager, always afraid I would do something to make God angry. The sermons we heard often emphasized our sinfulness and included graphic images of punishment for sin. The remedy was to begin again, that is, come forward at an altar call and be saved all over again because we had become “backsliders.” I thought God loved sinners coming in from the cold more than those who were backsliders. Looking back, I think I was more scrupulous than other kids my age and feared the vengeance of God, rather than knowing His love. I could never quite trust that God loved one so insignificant and flawed as I was. My red-headed, Irish temper was always getting me into trouble with God.

Seeking Truth

Two years at a Nazarene College in Idaho brought some clarity to my mind while studying Scripture and theology, though much of the first 1500 years between the Apostles and the Reformation was not emphasized, except for the Apostle's Creed. But there was little teaching about the formation of the Creed or how it came to be accepted as articles of faith. In a *sola scriptura* and *sola fide* belief system, it was assumed that the entire Creed was based on Scripture alone, and taught by the first Christians. I did not then question how that squared up with the fact that the canon of the New Testament was not finalized until the late fourth century.

It was explained to us that the Catholic Church had become corrupt during the Middle Ages and God deserted it, placing the apostolic succession in Martin Luther, transferring that to the Protestants in order to protect the Christian faith from serious error. The explosion of Protestant break-offs over personal interpretation of the Scriptures was barely covered, but we held that we Nazarenes possessed the “full Gospel” and other interpretations were suspect. Yet, I was fascinated by the juxtaposition of Catholic and Lutheran beliefs of transubstantiation and consubstantiation, and why we could not possibly believe in either. The teachings of John Calvin and other reformers were dismissed as containing many errors. I held tenaciously to what I had been taught – I was on the good side of truth.

To be fair, in the decades between my college years to now, many of those Nazarene attitudes toward other faiths have softened and become

more ecumenical, less critical and judgmental. Yet, to many Nazarenes, the Catholic Church is still heretical, and they fear Catholics are deluded, having no personal knowledge or experience of God's grace. John F. Kennedy once said, "The great enemy of the truth is very often not the deliberate, contrived, and dishonest lie, but the myth, persistent, persuasive, and unrealistic."

It is so very hard for an individual to step back and take a good look at these myths that have been passed from generation to generation for 500 years. I longed for truth, but I hoped I already possessed its core. It would take an epiphany of grace, wholly unexpected and transforming, to open the eyes of my heart. It would come only in God's timing, a time when He could penetrate the walls of those unrealistic myths and suspicions I held so tenaciously.

At the end of my sophomore year, I had to leave college for lack of funds. On my last night in the dorm I went up to the small chapel on the third floor and prayed. I had always believed I must find God's plan for my life and I didn't know what it was. I was desperate for some guidance. After a couple hours of begging God to give me understanding, I opened my Bible to the Gospel of John and began to read, hoping for something that would give me clarity and peace of mind. I eventually came to John 16:12-13: "I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. When he (the Holy Spirit) comes, being the spirit of truth, he will guide you into all truth."

At that time I didn't know what to call it, but I think that was the first contemplative experience of my life. I didn't have to know the road ahead, for the Holy Spirit would lead me and, sometime in the future, I would understand. Time slipped by unawares as I was blessed with a mixture of hope, peace, and awe. The presence of God enveloped me into His love. Like Peter, James, and John on Mount Tabor, I wanted to build a tent and stay there forever. But, like them, I had to come down from the mountain top; still the memory of that night continues to amaze and sustain me.

Truth Knocked at the Door

That next summer, I moved to Portland, Oregon with two college friends, joined a local Nazarene church, made new friends, and volunteered for a number of ministries. Within two years we all married and began our own separate lives in the Portland area, raising children and working. There was nothing extraordinary about my life for the next six years. My marriage was not a particularly happy one; there were a lot of confusing control and isolation issues. It was a struggle every Sunday to surmount the objections against attending worship services, and many times I lost the battle, so my spiritual life suffered. ... continued on page 4



DEEP IN SCRIPTURE

On EWTN radio with Marcus Grodi & Guests

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Deep in Scripture Guests

January 4

Mike D'Andrea*

January 11

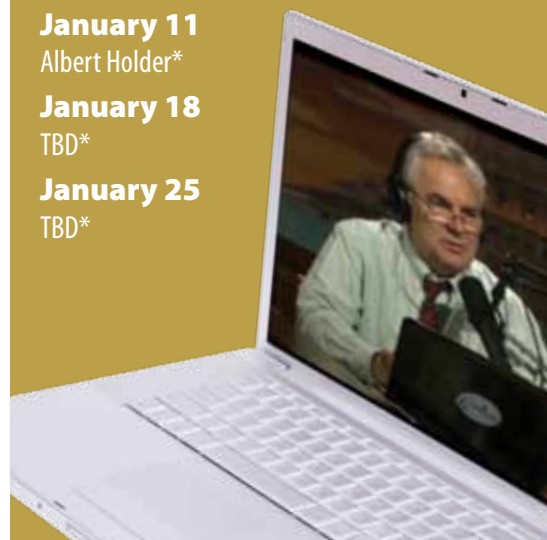
Albert Holder*

January 18

TBD*

January 25

TBD*



**This schedule is subject to change.*



EWTN'S THE JOURNEY HOME

on television and radio, hosted
by Marcus Grodi, president of
CHNetwork

TELEVISION

Mondays at 8:00 PM ET

Encores: Tuesdays 1:00 & 9:00 AM ET

Thursdays 2:00 PM ET

Saturdays 11:00 PM ET

RADIO

Mondays at 8:00 PM ET

Encore: Saturdays 7:00 AM ET

Sundays 1:00 AM ET

January 2

Mike D'Andrea*

Revert

January 9

Albert Holder*

*Former Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter Day Saints*

January 16

*The Best of The Journey Home International**

January 23

Bryan Kemper*

Former Presbyterian

January 30

Peter Huff*

Former Mormon and Baptist Minister

**This schedule is subject to change.*

...Journeys Home Continued...

I often thought of those hours in the chapel in the college dorm – and the message I was sure God gave me. Where was God now, and when would I get some insight about His plan for my life? Surely this was not it.

In 1964 my husband and I applied for jobs teaching school in Alaska for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and were accepted. So we, with our three children, moved to a tiny Russian Orthodox Eskimo village, accessible only by bush plane. The next year we moved to another more isolated village on the Alaskan Tundra, a few miles from the Bering Sea. The people of Chefnak were all Catholic, served by Jesuit missionaries. Two weeks after our arrival, the village priest knocked on our back door, introduced himself, and hesitatingly told us that the former teachers let him come to the teacher's quarters to take a shower once in awhile. Ours was the only house in the village with running water. I laughed, and said, "Sure – and stay for dinner too," (*after you smell better*). And that was the humble beginning of my Road to Damascus and the fulfillment of that message in the chapel.

That night, after dinner, I began asking the Jesuit priest questions about Catholic beliefs. My first question was, "Why do you Catholic priests think you can forgive sins? Only God can do that." I added that I thought it was possible they got that strange custom from some of those "extra" books the Catholics have in their Bible. He replied, "You mean the ones that Martin Luther tossed out?" Not wishing to be deterred from my original question, I politely passed over that one, and back to the "prove it" about the forgiving of sins. So, he asked me to get out my Bible (King James Version), and we looked up passages referring to Jesus breathing on the Apostles, giving them the power to forgive or retain sins (John 20:21-23). After discussing this, I told him that I could see his point, but there must be some other explanation and I would have to think about it.

Then the strangest thing happened: he looked me straight in the eye and said, "Now, don't ask me anything more about the Catholic faith!" I objected and asked why he would say such a thing. He replied, "because I can prove everything and then you'd have to be Catholic." I laughed and told him he had nothing to worry about – I'd *never* be a Catholic! It was *impossible*!

Whenever I think back to that night, I have to smile, for I know I was being brashly bold in my own beliefs, thinking I could convince and convert a Jesuit! No one ever warned me about Jesuits. Nor did I suspect that this was the time the Holy Spirit would break through my theological barricades and bring me to understanding and truth.

Unraveling the Myth

Two weeks later, in conversation after another shared meal, I asked how Catholics could possibly believe in transubstantiation. So we read together the entire sixth chapter of John, and by the time we got to the end I was stunned! I had accepted literally all the miracles in that long chapter, but glossed over the discourse on the “Bread of Life” at the end. Though I had read that chapter many times, I always held that consuming the Body and Blood of Jesus was not meant literally – it was just a symbol. In my church, we celebrated “The Lord’s Supper” four times a year with grape juice and crackers – the symbols of Jesus’ Body and Blood. But now, the unanswered question in my mind was “if it was just a symbol, why did so many of His followers leave Him?” And, I learned the word “Eucharist” for the first time.

That night I couldn’t sleep. All I could think of was, if I had to be Catholic, how would I ever explain this to my family and friends back home? I would be a pariah, an outcast. Even my husband would find it ludicrous, for though he did not practice his own faith, he had even stronger negative feelings than I about the Catholic Church. I resolved to study this further – surely there were many other issues I would not be able to accept, like the rosary, the belief in Purgatory, indulgences, and other Catholic practices. If I could find anything that was heretical, it would free me to continue in the faith I grew up with. The alternative terrified me.

In the next seven months, I studied some of that first 1500 years

of the Catholic Church that I missed in my college theology studies: the sacraments, apostolic succession, the teaching authority of the Church, and sacred Tradition. I had no access to a library, and I wouldn’t have known even what to order if I had a Catholic book catalog. So with what little reading I could find, that Spirit of Truth began to transform me. One by one, my concepts of Catholic practice fell by the wayside as I understood for the first time what they really believed, instead of the myths against Catholics I had been taught.

... continued on page 6

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“One by one, my concepts of Catholic practice fell by the wayside as I understood for the first time what they really believed, instead of the myths against Catholics I had been taught.”



TAX LETTERS

If you need a record of your 2011 contributions for tax purposes, please contact Wendy Hart.

Wendy Hart

wendy@chnetwork.org
740-450-1175 ext. 102

UNSOLICITED MAIL

The CHNetwork would like to remind our members that we are unable to send unsolicited mail. Since our ministry exclusively responds to non-Catholic clergy and laity who initiate contact with us, we cannot add anyone to our mailing list or send materials unless they themselves first make a request. However, if you would like to have CHNetwork send materials with a gift card in your name, or if you have any questions about this policy, please contact our office at 740-450-1175.



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...Journeys Home Continued...

I began to long to be a part of the Catholic Church. An epiphany of understanding illuminated my mind and heart as I hungered to receive the Eucharist and other sacraments.

The Nazarene faith always taught that abortion was wrong, but family planning and contraception were totally acceptable. These issues were rarely discussed or even questioned, so I never searched for answers to the morality of these concepts – they just were. However, as I began to study Catholic thought on the sanctity of life and the teaching authority of the Church, I reached a decision to stop using contraceptives and discussed this change with my husband. So, during that winter I was expecting our fourth child. At the same time, as I studied Catholic teaching, my hunger to be one with the Church intensified. Finally, on Easter, April 10, 1966, in a little Eskimo Village Catholic church on the shores of the Ooksookvak River, I made my profession of faith and received the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist for the first time. The same day my three children were baptized. It was the most joyful moment of my life, and the memory helped sustain me for the avalanche of pain and suffering that was about to follow.

Embracing the Cross

I wish I could say I took the next few years with equanimity, smiles, and gentle responses, but I also had a fair amount of fight and spite of my own to contend with. God gave me a wonderful gift of unbounded grace, but He didn't make me perfect. That would be a lifelong journey, and it is not finished yet.

I wrote my mother telling her of my conversion a week before we were to head south to my childhood home in Walla Walla for the summer – I didn't want her to have time to reply before we left. Still, I was in no way prepared for her reaction when we arrived. I had caused more grief than she could bear; for the first time in my life I heard her sob uncontrollably – and I was the cause. She told me she was so ashamed to have a Catholic daughter that she would not go back to her church for the shame of it. I took the tough love stand and said, "I cannot believe you said that! Do you mean to say that all these years you took us to church so others would think well of us, instead of our need for God?" She did not answer, but the next Sunday she went back to her church. And, though she didn't really accept it, I assured her I still believed in Jesus and His saving grace.

Neighbors from across the street whom I had known for many years were so stunned by my conversion to the Catholic faith that the husband, who was a retired Nazarene minister, turned his back on me. He gave me that dreaded "*backslider*" label and said he would never

look upon my face again – in this life or the next, as he pointed to the door of his home.

My husband said he had no desire to be married to a Catholic and that I had freed him to be unfaithful to our marriage vows. He followed through. I am convinced that his excuse was a smokescreen for the reality – that he felt loss of control and his ability to isolate me from others.

All of these negative responses began in the first three months after I entered the Catholic Church. I was reeling from the sheer impact of it all, like I was in a train wreck, dazed and broken. In the eighth month of my pregnancy I spoke little, went for long walks through neighborhoods and parks of my childhood, attended daily Mass at a local parish, and prayed for healing and patience. In spite of all these difficult events, I never once regretted my decision to come home to the Catholic Church or entertained the notion of recanting. My childhood God of vengeance was replaced by the God of love. I was home.

Never Alone

After our son was born, we returned to Alaska, and taught for another four years – years of intense emotional pain and sorrow. In the aftermath of that first summer, the verbal, emotional, and physical abuse in my marriage intensified and became more than I could endure. So, in 1970 we moved back to Portland and I filed for divorce. I joined a parish, enrolled my children in Catholic schools, made many new Catholic friends, and worked to support my children. Ultimately, I know our separation was a gift of God, freeing me from the sorrow of an abusive spouse and an unhappy marriage.

It was not my Catholic faith that suffered, for I was just as solidly Catholic as I once was Protestant. Every time I received the Eucharist, I thanked God for this wonderful gift, totally unexpected and unmerited. My study of Catholic belief in that winter of '65-'66 was only the beginning of exploring the heights and depths of God's mercy and love. A friend once said, "God's love is like the ocean – as a Protestant I could only swim on the surface, but as a Catholic, I can explore all the wonders of the deep that I never before knew existed." I still learn new things, and like a sponge I absorb and treasure each new discovery.

Life as a divorced Catholic with children was not easy, and many times I nearly despaired, but God was always close to me in my darkest times. I thank my Protestant upbringing for all the Scripture memorization from my youth, for I could often recall Bible verses and songs that helped to sustain me in rough times. I do not know why God would grace me with this wonderful Catholic faith, for I am just an ordinary person with ordinary talents and I have not accomplished great and memorable things. *... continued on page 8*

SHARE YOUR STORY

SHARE YOUR STORY!

The CHNetwork always welcomes those of our members who are converts or reverts to share their written conversion stories of how they were drawn (or drawn back) to the Catholic Church. If you feel called to share your story, please feel free to go to <http://chnetwork.org/converts> to review our writer's guidelines, see sample stories, and upload your testimony.

WWW.CHNETWORK.ORG



The CHNetwork invites you to visit our website where you can read the latest CHNetwork news, follow our blog, read conversion stories, watch videos, and join in discussions on our forum. Keep up to date with the CHNetwork and

become more involved in our mission to assist men and women who are on the journey to the Catholic Church.

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THE COMING HOME NETWORK INTERNATIONAL

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...Journeys Home Continued...

But, I am sure this gift was an answer to my college prayers and my hunger for truth. I love the Beatitude, “Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for God, for they shall be filled.” I firmly believe that God will not disappoint anyone who seeks Him with a sincere heart. His timing is different from ours, at a time and a place where He can break through the brick walls of our misunderstanding. It is simply a gift of grace to the least of us in the Kingdom of God.

In the years since my children grew up and moved on with their lives, I have experienced the great pleasure of helping others on their journey of faith through the RCIA process, and taking part in other parish ministries. I go to daily Mass often, and, even after all these years, I am still in awe of the privilege of receiving Jesus in the Eucharist. Psalm 139 has a beautiful line that I have captured for my own journey home: “If I should take the wings of the dawn; if I settle at the farthest limits of the

sea, even there your hand shall guide me, and your right hand hold me fast.”

On an August day in 1964, we took the wings of the dawn (airplanes) and settled at the farthest limits of the sea, (the Alaskan Tundra), and God was there to guide me and grace me with this wonderful Catholic faith. I am eternally grateful and amazed at God’s goodness. This

was His plan for my life that I sought so desperately in the night hours in that little college chapel: the plan I would not have been able to bear or understand then – only in God’s timing. And that plan continues, always through gifts of His grace. ■

I am eternally
grateful and amazed
at God’s goodness.
This was His plan
for my life ...



MARY STEVANUS lives in Beaverton, Oregon – a suburb of Portland. Mary was employed in the accounting field until retirement. She is a member of St. Juan Diego Parish, the newest parish in the Archdiocese of Portland, where she assists in several parish ministries, including Liturgy Planning and RCIA. Mary considers it a great privilege to help others discover the beauty and wonder of the Catholic faith that she has experienced.

BLOG

Please visit www.chnetwork.org/blog to comment on and discuss this story!



By Marcus Grodi

I Wanted to Write

“...these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.” *John 20:31*

In these words, John the Apostle explained how his written Gospel was in line with the great final commission Jesus had given His apostles. When Jesus commanded them to “go forth and make disciples...”, He had included instructions on baptizing and teaching, but as far as we know He never told them to write. Yet as the Church spread to the farthest reaches of the Mediterranean Sea, the missionary Apostles recognized the supportive and evangelistic necessity of the written word. Saint Paul’s preferred method of passing along the faith was face-to-face, but more often than not—sometimes through no fault of his own, i.e., prison!—he had to augment his teaching with letters, and it was to emphasize the equal authority of his written instructions that he wrote to the Thessalonian Christians, “So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth *or by letter*” (2 Thess 2:15). And I am quite certain that everyone reading this recognizes a great debt of gratitude to the written word, whether it is read or heard.

Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman claimed in his introduction to his *Essay on the Development of Doctrine* that “to become deep in history is to cease to be Protestant.” I know that most converts can confirm the truth of this in relation to their own conversions, but for this to happen in the twenty-first century, our non-Catholic friends and family must *read* as well as *listen* to the fullness of truth found only in the Catholic Church.

But what if our non-Catholic friends refuse to read books that present a balanced, un-revisionist version of history or the Catholic faith? I must admit that even though my wife, Marilyn, and I have in no way hid the reasons for our conversions, none of our extended family (other than my mother, and my father on the day he died) has “ceased to be Protestant.” Even friends who faithfully

watch the *Journey Home* program do not seem to be getting one skosh closer to the Church.

For years I have proposed that the three top reasons most Protestants are not Catholics (besides pride) are (1) *ignorance*: they don’t have the right data about the Catholic faith, (2) *prejudice*: the data they have is inaccurate, and (3) “*bad Catholics*”: either the Catholics they know are poor models of the Catholic faith, or the faithful Catholics they know don’t fit their definition of what it means to be a Christian. Reinforcing these three reasons is the fact that few non-Catholics read books about the Catholic Church written by faithful Catholics. I’m sure most of you will concur with this. Up until I began my journey toward the Church at age 38, the only Catholic book I had read *about* the Catholic faith was *On Being Christian* by Hans Kung (a renegade “Catholic” theologian). Not a great start!

Ever since our conversion, Marilyn and I have given dozens of great Catholic non-fiction and biographies to family and friends, who, with seemingly good intentions, promised to read them. But instead these books usually end up gathering dust on shelves with only the first dozen or so pages cracked—and usually, as a result, our relationships end up slightly strained.

So how can we reach our friends and family? And how many of you face this same seemingly insurmountable barrier?

I believe conversion begins when a breach occurs in the self-constructed walls of our psyche. Like the ancient cities that built tall, thick walls to protect their inhabitants from attack, each person surrounds himself with defense mechanisms that insulate us from invasion. But when a breach occurs—either through a crisis, or tragedy, or an awakening of some kind—often the person, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, becomes vulnerable and open to conversion. ... *continued on page 10*

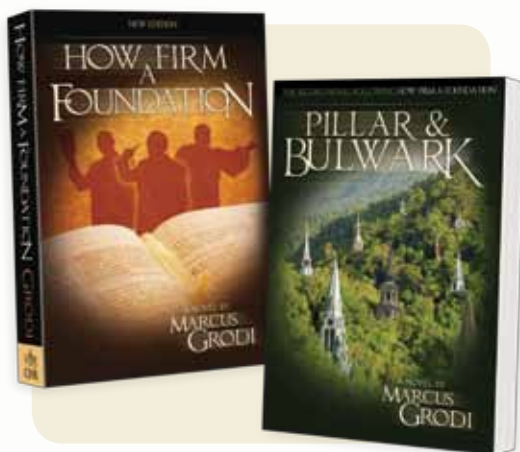
So what can we use to help the Holy Spirit break through the thick walls of ignorance and prejudice?

Well, most of my family and friends, Protestant or pagan, read novels. In fact, I never knew my father to be without a novel, whether it was Clancy or King, Cussler or Grisham, Roberts or Michener. He was always off somewhere in a story, and these stories influenced his thinking. Historical novels by Kenneth Roberts, for example, shaped his views about the American Revolution, while novels by John Le Carre taught him about the world of espionage. And novels have likewise had a powerful influence on my own thinking; books like *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *The Robe*, *Cry the Beloved Country*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, or *The Stand*.

So why not utilize this genre to share our faith with family and friends? This, of course, is not a new idea. There are racks of Christian novels at any large bookstore or library, but few of these are by contemporary Catholic authors—at least with the goal of accomplishing what the Apostle John had in mind. There used to be novels with this goal, written by the likes of Newman and Benson, but today few publishers—Catholic, Protestant, or secular—are interested in taking the risk (which is why the Coming Home Network International felt the need to have a publishing outreach, *CHResources*. Actually over the past twenty years, there has been an increase in good Catholic fiction with this goal in mind, praise be to God!)

I must begin by admitting, though, that I really *didn't* want to write. I've had many dreams in my life (some pretty wild—just ask my wife!), but up until about ten years ago, writing a novel wasn't one of them. Negative experiences in high school and college English classes, reinforced by over ten years of science-engineering education and experience, built a nearly insurmountable writer's block. But recognizing how integral novels have been in my own spiritual conversion and journey—and that a novel was probably the only way I could reach someone like my father—I eventually mustered enough foolhardy determination to scale that wall.

It took over three years of writing, rewriting, critiquing, dialogue, rewriting, researching, and then rewriting, but, with great excitement and relief, in 2002 we released my first novel, entitled *How Firm a Foundation*. Our hope was that life-long Catholics and converts would enjoy the



story enough to then give the book away to non-Catholic friends and family. The book centers on the lives of three people—Stephen LaPointe (a Congregational minister), his wife, Sara, and a member of their congregation named Walter—and the story focuses on what happens in their lives as Stephen struggles with whether the Bible is a sufficient “firm foundation” for his preaching, his faith, and his life. The book was not intended to be a didactic

book of apologetics, but rather an intimate picture into the psychological and relational issues that arise in the process of conversion.

By God's merciful grace, we have received many testimonials to how this book has helped open the hearts and minds of non-Catholics to the beauty of the Church. But over the years, we've also received many queries, “What ever happened to Stephen and Sara?” So, again after “over three years of writing, rewriting, critiquing, dialogue, re-writing, researching, and then rewriting,” we have just released *Pillar and Bulwark*, the sequel. It picks up a year after *How Firm a Foundation* left off, telling the continuing story of Stephen and Sara, and also how their journeys of faith affected their friends and family, particularly a friend named Scott, and a potential nemesis named Raeph.

As I'm sure you are aware, one of the reasons few non-Catholics read Catholic books is because the books appear too *Catholic*. Therefore, *CHResources* has taken every precaution to use “stealth” in our cover design and advertising—it's hard to know these are “Catholic friendly” books until you are well into the stories.

It is our hope that both the newly edited edition of *How Firm a Foundation* and its sequel, *Pillar and Bulwark*, will be more than an enjoyable read but a encouragement to your faith—and that you will want to give them away to non-Catholic family members and friends. We want these two novels to serve as two additional arrows in our quiver of outreach to friends and family for Jesus Christ and His Church. ■

Sincerely In Christ,
Marcus C. Grodi
President, the Coming Home Network International

BLOG

Please visit www.chnetwork.org/blog to comment on and discuss this article!

Prayer List



Clergy

- For Chris, a Lutheran seminarian in North Dakota, that the Holy Spirit would strengthen and deepen his interest in the Catholic faith and call him home.
- For Paul, a Baptist missionary in China, that his in-depth study of holy Scripture would not only lead him home to the Catholic Church but also those to whom he ministers.
- For a Baptist minister in North Carolina, that his time of prayer and study in preparation for the celebration of the Easter Vigil would enkindle an ever brighter fire of love of Jesus and His Church.
- For Charlie, a Lutheran seminarian in Kentucky, that Jesus would guide him step by step home to the ancient Church of the Prophets and the Apostles.
- For Kirin, a Non-denominational minister in India, that he discovers the fullness of faith, hope and love are found in the one, holy, Catholic Church founded by Jesus.
- For Edward, an Anglican priest in Virginia, that he would find a trustworthy and orthodox Catholic priest who is willing to assist him in his journey to full-communion with the Catholic Church.
- For Scott, an Episcopal priest in West Virginia, that the Lord will guide him into the Catholic Church and provide a "new" career for him, so he can support his family. Please pray that God will give Scott courage to follow His calling.

Laity

- For Jeff, a Presbyterian in Kansas, that his wife would realize that his becoming a Catholic is not a violation of his marriage vows.
- For Emily and Andrea's healing and that they will embrace the Catholic Church's teaching on sexuality.
- For Brad, an Evangelical in Florida, that the Holy Spirit would guide him to follow God's timing and manner in his journey to the Catholic Church.
- For Patricia, that her desire to become a Catholic Christian will be granted and she will find a welcoming parish.
- For Michele, that her desire to return to the Church proves stronger than the barriers she is encountering.
- For the Holy Spirit to give guidance to a woman who is struggling with how to gently tell her family of her interest in becoming Catholic.
- For Rachel, that her devotion to the mother of the Savior be enriched and deepened.
- For Daniel in Florida, that, as he prepares for the Easter sacraments, God would truly convert his heart.
- For Debra, that her discouragement stemming from liberal teachings in her local diocese not stop her from seeking truth.
- For Jim in New York, that the Holy Spirit would guide him home to the Catholic Church of his youth and also soften his wife's heart to the Church.
- For Renee, that the Holy Spirit shower her and her family with His gifts and graces.

- For Celene, a young person interested in the Catholic Church, that her desire to become Catholic persevere despite her parents' concerns.
- For William who was recently diagnosed with lung cancer and for his recovery from surgery.
- For a woman who has been studying about the Catholic faith and wants to become part of the Church but is uncertain how best to tell her family.
- For Kym, that her longing to become a Catholic Christian be answered and she know how effectively to share the faith with those close to her.
- For Barbara who is suffering from kidney-related health problems.
- For Marian's husband, that he may be open to the Holy Spirit's guidance.
- For Tara as she goes through RCIA and considers becoming Catholic.
- For Lori as she looks to leave the Mormon church.

In every issue we include timely prayer concerns from the membership. All members are encouraged to pray at least one hour each month before the Blessed Sacrament for the needs, both general and specific, of the CHNetwork and its members and supporters.

Please submit all prayer requests and answers to CHNetwork Prayer List, PO Box 8290, Zanesville, OH 43702. Or email prayer requests to prayers@chnetwork.org.

We use only first names to preserve privacy.

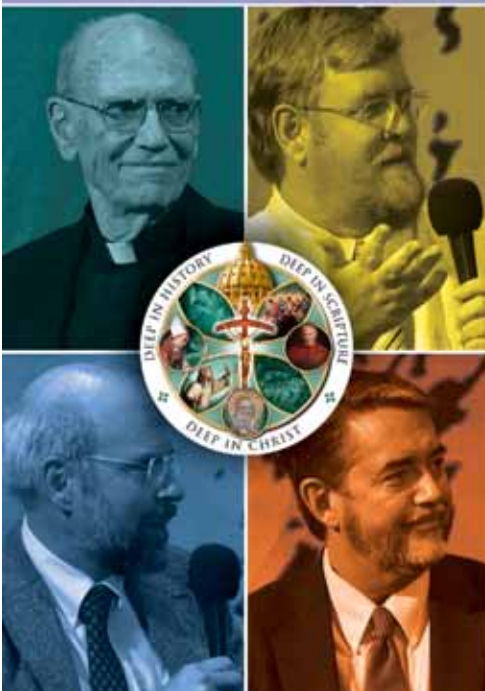
The Coming Home Network International

PO Box 8290

Zanesville, OH 43702

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

SPECIAL EDITION
OF



February 6th, 2012

MARCUS GRODI and THE COMING HOME NETWORK

INTERNATIONAL are pleased to announce that the panel discussion taped live at the 2011 *Deep in History* conference will be broadcast as a special *Journey Home* episode February 6, 2012. Mark your calendars and tune into EWTN to watch this exceptional episode in which four converts — Dr. Scott Hahn, Fr. Ray Ryland, Mark Shea, and Roy Schoeman — discuss Sacred Tradition.