

P.O. Box 8290
Zanesville, OH 43702-8290

The Coming Home Network International

Membership Letter

INSIDE:

- From Our Chaplain: *About the Move*
- Meet Our New Staff
- Prayer List
- Coming Home Resources

A Necessary course correction!

by Marcus C. Grodi

When an ancient mariner on his first night out from a European port checked his sextant in the late evening and ordered his navigator to steer a slightly more northerly course, he did so not out of whim. He knew that a route but one degree off in the beginning might mean the difference between landing in Newfoundland, Boston or New York. We needed to make just such a correction.

The Coming Home Network began in 1993 with a very small mailing list and with very limited goals and dreams. At that point we had no inkling that seven years later we would have over 9400 members, a staff of six, a volunteer Helpers Network of over 150, and an annual budget of around three hundred thousand dollars. We also didn't anticipate that I would be hosting the Journey Home program on EWTN which is watched by an estimated eight million viewers around the world every time it airs—which doesn't count the hundreds of thousand potential radio listeners.

During these years, we have expanded our operation, our staff,

and our vision in response to the growth brought on by God's grace and your generosity and prayers. But several months ago the board and I recognized that we needed to make a major course correction. We were certain this was God's leading, but we didn't realize until we began implementing the plan how clearly this was from Him.

In 1996, my family moved from Steubenville to ten acres on Marilyn's old family farm. We built a house and from there I continued to direct the CHNetwork. However, the main office work—answering the phones, processing the mail, fulfilling orders, etc.—remained in Steubenville subcontracted to the Ridgefield Group (and I must say that their continued assistance has been and continues to be a godsend). Over the next few years we've gone through nearly a dozen secretaries and office assistants, most of whom were students at Franciscan University. When we hired Chris Erickson as director, we solidified our entrenchment as a divided—or virtual—office arrangement: they were in Steubenville and I was two hours away in Dresden.



In many ways this arrangement kept pace with our growth, and for this I extend my great appreciation to all who have served on our staff. But it became continually clear that as we envisioned where God was calling us to steer towards the future, we would need to bring the organization together under one roof. Several friends who direct Catholic non-profit apostolates stressed that when the founder becomes separated from the foundation, the foundation flounders, and we were seeing the signs of this.

As a result, the decision was made in July that by the end of the year the offices of the CHNetwork would have moved here to Zanesville, so that the staff and I could work and pray together daily. These were our plans, but God's timing was slightly accelerated. I won't go through the myriad details, but as I write this

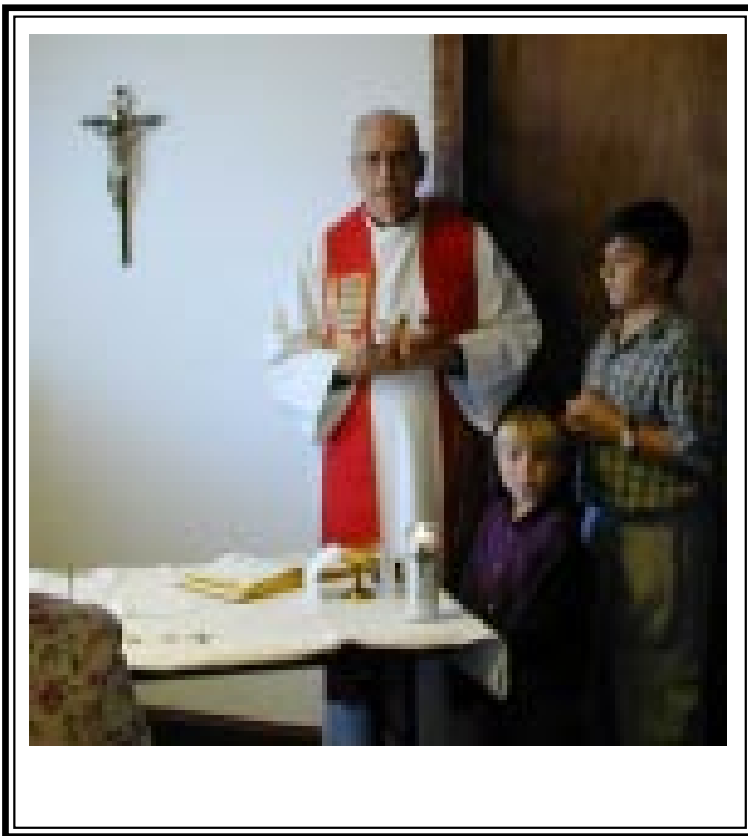
in mid-September, the Steubenville staff have all followed open doors into either new jobs or better situations, and an entire new local staff has been hired here in Zanesville. It is hard to communicate how miraculous this has been, but trust me, I sit here still amazed by how providential, merciful, and generous God has been.

Let me tell you about Chris Erickson as an illustration. When I awkwardly told Chris about our decision he agreed immediately. From his experience as our director for over a year, he was convinced that I needed to be closer to the staff operations. He wasn't sure, however, whether he could or should move his family, and I understood without pressure either way. While Chris was discerning this decision, Robert Smeltzer—a Catholic friend who owns the building where our offices are located and who has run his own businesses for over twenty years—startled me by throwing his hat into the ring for consideration as the new director if Chris couldn't make the move. The next week as I prepared to tell Chris about Bob's interest, Chris cautiously informed me that he had been offered the job as Director of Communications for Catholics United for the Faith (CUF)—a position that fit his main interests and skills. With hindsight and joy we agreed that his time with the CHNetwork had been a blessed

opportunity to hone his editing and writing skills specifically for this new job with CUF.

As far as the rest of the staff Patrick Toner decided to go full-time at Franciscan University, Caroline Morton was also hired by CUF, and Ducie Maria Silva decided to return to California to be with her mother.

In Zanesville, Robert was ready



to start almost immediately as our new director, and the Lord brought us two other very experienced staff members: Debbie Lovensheimer as Executive Assistant and Debi DiVenti as Membership Specialist (and for those who understand, both Deb's received roses as confirmations). As I type, they are all on board, and I can hear their voices working through all the issues and

procedures to make this move as uninterrupted as possible. I knew this whole process—which took less than two months compared to our anticipated six—was worth it when we had our first staff meeting yesterday morning...the first complete staff meeting the CHNetwork has had under one roof in over five years. And the most important part about this was being able to pray together. Thank you Lord!

But lest I forget, though, the one remaining staff member who is unable to enjoy the benefits of this united office environment is lowly Chris LaRose up in northern New York. It would certainly be great to have him here, but I am confident, given the nature of his unique work as the director of the Helpers Network and our e-mail discussion lists, that he can continue to do this from his home office.

But we do have much to do—to keep up with phone calls, bushels of mail, buckets of email, and an increasing wave of book and tape orders, as well as the continuous influx of inquiries from

non-Catholics interested in coming home to the fullness of the Catholic Faith.

As far as finances are concerned, your generosity has continued to amaze me. Thank you! But since this move has forced us to incur some major moving and setup expenses, I would only encourage you to continue to be just as faithful and

consistent (I want the new staff to be able to focus their every effort on the needs of the growing apostolate without worrying about whether the funds will be there for their next paycheck).

But ultimately, why have we made this course correction?

Because as I've mentioned before, we have a long-term direction that guides, empowers, and enriches our work. We look to the year 2017 as a very significant target, for on October 31 of that year, non-Catholics will be celebrating, with world wide festivities, conferences, and publications, the 500th anniversary of Luther's posting of his Ninety-five thesis on the door of Wittenberg Abby—the beginning of the reformation. At that point several theologians and priests made what they believed were necessary course corrections for the Church, which have led to thousands of separate Christian traditions sailing in different directions.

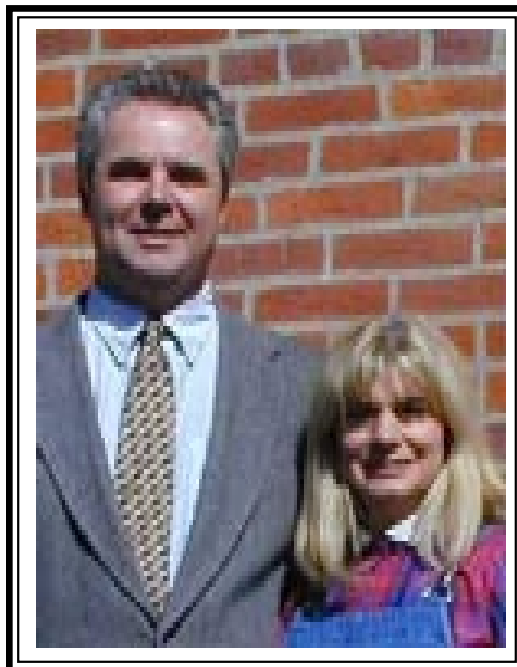
We have the next seventeen years to do all we can, together with God's assistance, to help our separated brethren recognize this momentous day not as a day to celebrate the schism but to seek reparation and unity. From there we look forward to the many other 500-year anniversaries that celebrate the other divisions of Christendom. May we together be constant and faithful witnesses to our separated brethren so that more and more will come home to the fulness.



Marcus C. Grodi

PS. Have you read the new letter released by the Congregation for the Faith and Cardinal Ratzinger entitled *Dominus Jesus*? It very clearly and concisely defines the Catholic Church's commitment to the necessity of Jesus Christ and His Church for salvation.

If you haven't read it, you can either download a copy of this letter from our website, or for a small donation to cover shipping we will gladly send you a copy.



PPS. Also, Dwight Longnecker's book *The Path To Rome: Modern Journeys to the Catholic Church*, recounts the stories of sixteen English converts. The only place, however, to get this book in the United States is through the *Coming Home Network*, so if you would like to order a copy, please use the form on page seven of this newsletter. A suggested donation of \$17 will cover the book plus shipping.

About the Move:

Fr. Ray Ryland, Chaplain

In the last year or two, those of us who work with the *Coming Home Network* have become increasingly concerned about the scattering of our personnel. The staff working in Steubenville have labored diligently but always under the handicap of being geographically separated from Mr. Grodi. The two-plus-hour drive between Steubenville and Marcus' office near Zanesville has made it difficult if not impossible to have frequent staff meetings. Staff members settled in Steubenville were naturally unprepared to move to the Zanesville area.

Providentially (that is to say, in answer to our prayers for the *CH-Network*), new facilities and new personnel appeared on the scene near Zanesville, while all but one of the Steubenville staff members went on to other work. The new director and the executive assistants bring a wealth of experience to their new responsibilities.

On September 19 it was my privilege to offer Mass in the new *CHN* headquarters near Zanesville, with special intentions for the new personnel and the apostolate of the Network. I am very thankful for this uniting of our forces, confident that it will enable us to minister much more effectively to the members of the *CHNetwork*.

Sincerely In Christ,

Fr. Ray Ryland
Chaplain

Meet Our New Staff

Born in the gently rolling hills of eastern Ohio, **Bob Smeltzer**, our new Director, is a cradle catholic from both paternal and maternal families of Catholic clergy and religious. He was an Altar Boy for the family's country parish for thirteen years, and is presently active in both his local parish and diocese, serving in his third term on parish council as well as the parish finance committee. He has assisted as a Lector, Extraordinary Eucharistic Minister, and Usher. Last fall Bob was awarded the "Lay Leader for the Millennium" award from Bishop James Griffin and has served for the last twenty-three years on the "Bishop's Annual Appeal" fund drive.

Bob has been happily married to his wife Ann for the last twenty-two years, and they have four wonderful children. Ann (also a cradle Catholic) is a licensed nurse, and works as a nurse in a school for physically and mentally disadvantaged children.

For the last fourteen years, Bob has served as the Vice President of Smeltzer Insurance Agency, Inc., and for the past four as President and CEO of Security Mortgage Services of Ohio, Inc.

Debbie Lovensheimer, our new Executive Assistant, is a life-long Catholic, and has served in the Church as a Choir Director/Organist for thirty years. In addition, Debbie taught C.C.D. for eight years and also served as the Teen Youth Group Advisor for three years.

Debbie brings a vast array of business experience with her to her position as Executive Assistant. Her past experiences

include a ten-year stint as Office Manager/Accountant for a large retail store as well as various banking and other office positions. Debbie comes to us from the Heart of Ohio Girl Scout Council where she, in her position as Field Executive,

ship Specialist, was baptized into the Catholic Church, along with her mother, at the age of seven. She has been active with contemporary music ministry since 1971. She helped plan and lead a youth ministry, as well as bi-annual retreats for the parish.

From 1971 to 1991, Debi worked for the Social Security Administration in Baltimore MD, starting as a file clerk and finishing her duties there as a Benefit Authorizer. For the next several years she worked for Junior Achievement of Central Maryland as a Program Manager for the Baltimore City program. She trained executives from the business and banking professions and placed them, as mentors, into the inner city school system. Presently, Debi is a dedicated volunteer for the Heart of Ohio Girl Scout Council, and acts as a liaison for twenty troops in the Guernsey County, Ohio area.

Debi is a widow who lives with a very large cat that has an attitude problem.

Pictured below are Chris and Janine LaRose, whose story you've either read in the CH-Journal or heard on the Journey Home program. Chris, a Methodist clergy convert, directs the Helper's Network, monitors the email discussion lists, and with Fr. Ryland, answers most of our theological correspondence.



supervised one hundred-and-fifty volunteers for the past ten years.

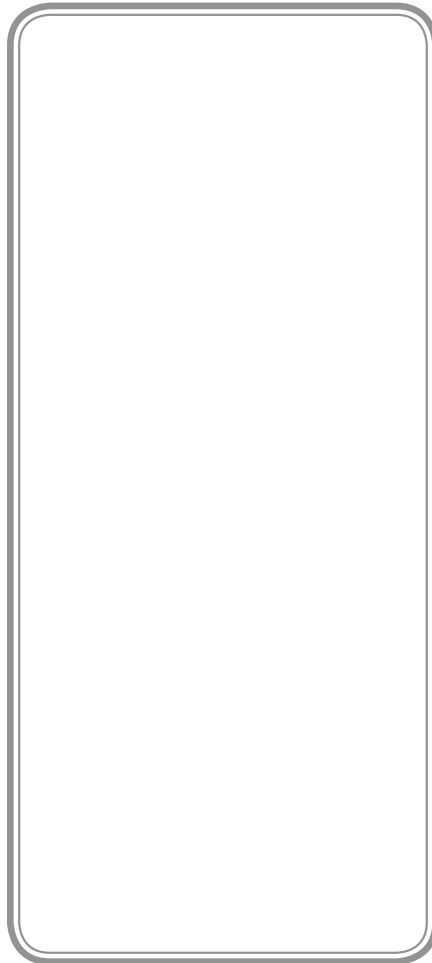
Debbie and her husband, Brent, a convert, have been happily married for twenty-six years. They have one daughter, Kacie, who is a college sophomore.

Debi DiVenti, our new Member-



Let us pray ...

- ✦ Regina, that her non-Catholic husband will come to terms with Confession so that he will continue on his journey towards the Catholic faith.
- ✦ James, an Episcopal priest who wants to convert, but is concerned about how he will support his family.
- ✦ Frank, who's marriage is in trouble and will make a decision in the next few months whether to continue in the marriage or not.
- ✦ Todd, a lapsed Catholic; that he will continue on his journey back to the faith and not be side-tracked by other religions.
- ✦ Emmanuel, an inmate; that he will continue to have faith even in his negative environment.
- ✦ David, a Protestant pastor who is very Catholic in his heart and would like to convert, but is stalled in his journey due to his wife's strong resistance.
- ✦ Alan, who converted in 1991 and is in need of spiritual support and encouragement in New Zealand.
- ✦ Nancy, who wants to become Catholic and to reconcile with her husband. She has moved to a new state, and needs support. Also, she needs continued prayers for healing of cancer.
- ✦ Chris, a cradle Catholic; that she has the wisdom and charity to deal with the constant bombardment from her husband's Baptist friends.
- ✦ Bob, a Lutheran pastor, who is resigning from his church November to become Catholic. He is moving to new state with his family, and is in need of a job and spiritual support.
- ✦ Kevin, a clergy convert struggling with his faith and the loss of his ministry.
- ✦ Several Protestant pastors who have recently contacted us, who are ready to convert, but are in need of jobs to support their families.
- ✦ All who are on the journey, at whatever stage: "In the ways of God, he who makes no progress is losing ground."
- ✦ Sylvia W., a recent convert who is struggling with her children who are Jehovah's Witnesses. She has to hide her cross from them.
- ✦ Anne, who is struggling with the question: Does God answer prayers?



Please pray for the staff
and the membership
of the
Coming Home Network:

Present membership:
9497

Total Primary members
(clergy, academic, and ministry):
510

Primary Inquirers:
201

Total Secondary members (laity):
1220

Secondary Inquirers:
397

Coming Home Resources

The British equivalent to *Journeys Home* or *Surprised by Truth!*



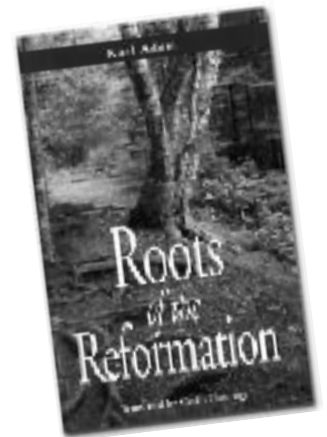
This collection of ‘conversion’ stories relates how former Baptists, Presbyterians, Salvation Army officers, Plymouth Brethren, New Age believers, and Evangelical Anglicans all made their way along the Path to Rome. Each chapter weaves an individual’s conversion story into a wider issue of ecumenical concern, and with contributions from housewives, former bishops, well-known academics and former Protestant pastors, there is a wide range of viewpoints and interests. (*The CHNetwork is the only US distributor for this book.*)

Author Dwight Longnecker has contributed several articles for the CHJournal. He was brought up in an Evangelical home in the USA. After graduating from the fundamentalist Bob Jones University he studied theology at Oxford, and was ordained into the Anglican ministry. After ten years serving as a curate, school chaplain and country parson, he and his family were received into the Catholic Church. He now works as a District organiser for the St. Barnabas Society and as a freelance writer and broadcaster. \$17 (includes postage)

Fr. Ryland’s Recommendation: “THE PATH TO ROME contains accounts of the pilgrimates of sixteen persons, all but three of whom are former Anglicans. Reading the account of these former Anglican’s pilgrimages provides deep insight into the life of the Church of England in the past decade or two. One chapter was contributed by Mr. Grodi. Fortunately for the outreach of the *Coming Home Network*, he sketched not only his own pilgrimage but the remarkable story of the origins and growth of the Network. We confidently expect that this chapter of the book will encourage even wider response to the *CHNetwork* from pilgrims now unknown to us.”

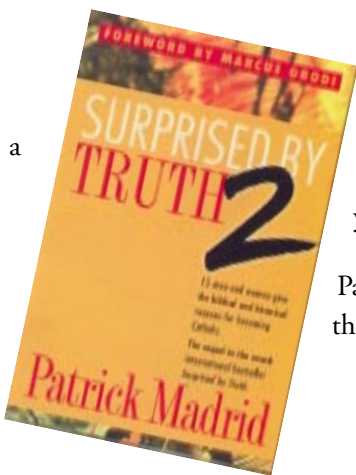
We decided to republish this wonderful little book by Professor Karl Adam because his historically sensitive and accurate analysis of the causes of the Reformation stands as a valid and sometimes unsettling challenge to the presuppositions of Protestants and Catholics alike. We strongly encourage you to read this book with an open mind and a prayerful heart (*and then give it away to friends*). We guarantee that it will lead you to a deeper understanding of your own faith heritage, if not a challenge to it. Of course, it is the hope of the *Coming Home Network* that this book will lead you to a closer walk with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, and a more complete acceptance of the fullness of the Faith He gave His Apostles.

Members: \$4; Nonmembers: \$6 (includes postage)



What do a former Miss Ohio, a pagan webmaster, an Anglican priest, a lifelong Mormon, pro-abortion activist, two Protestant pastors, and two Protestant missionaries all have in common? **They’re all Catholic now!** ...and they want you to know why they converted so you can help others like them find their way home to the Catholic Church.

Patrick Madrid’s second collection of fifteen conversion stories is a true winner, and includes the stories of many *CHNetwork* members. *\$17 (includes postage)*





Twenty conversion stories of CHNetwork members plus the story of how the CHNetwork was established to respond to the needs of the ever increasing number of Protestant clergy and lay converts. Also includes Catholic Answer's *Pillar of Fire; Pillar of Truth*, and a thorough annotated bibliography of helpful books for the journey home. **\$15 (includes postage)**



Dr. Kenneth Howell leads you through the relevant Scriptures about Mary and helps explain, with great ecumenical sensitivity, how intimately bound to one another Jesus and Mary are. This wonderful book explains how troubling Catholic doctrines of Mary are rooted in the biblical testimony. **\$12 (includes postage)**

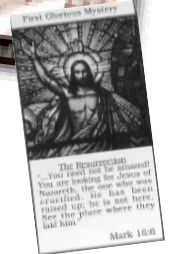
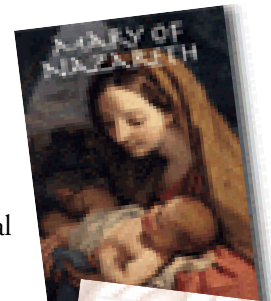
Get that Bible and Catechism read! This guide will help you do it daily and within a year. **\$0.50 (includes postage)**

Paul Key's wonderful annotation of the ninety-five reasons that drew him from the Presbyterian pastorate into the Catholic Church. A very helpful study aid and a great gift for inquiring non-Catholic friends. **\$9 (includes postage)**



These tabs were formatted by Marcus Grodi and the previous staff of the Light and Life Foundation to help you more easily navigate between the many topics of the the Catechism of the Catholic Church. **\$4 (includes postage)**

Desktop Rosary: This beautiful, full-color, 10" x 12" tri-fold presentation of the rosary uses photographs of stainedglass windows plus Scripture references to represent each mystery. A great gift and a very helpful aid for meditation at home or work. You must see this to appreciate it (visible on web site) **\$5 (includes postage)**



Shipping & Billing Information

Product Name	Quantity	Price	Total
Pillar of Fire, Pillar of Truth	1	\$15.00	\$15.00
Read the Bible and the Catechism in a Year	1	\$12.00	\$12.00
TABS... CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH	1	\$4.00	\$4.00
Desktop Rosary	1	\$5.00	\$5.00
Mary of Nazareth	1	\$12.00	\$12.00
Ninety-Five Reasons for Becoming a Catholic	1	\$9.00	\$9.00
The Resurrection - First Obvious Mystery	1	\$5.00	\$5.00
Subtotal			\$70.00
Tax			\$10.50
Total			\$80.50

Shipping & Billing Information

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____
 Zip: _____

Phone: _____
 E-mail: _____

Bill Me Bill Myself Bill Other

CC VISA M/C DISC AMEX

Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

CVV #: _____

Cardholder Name: _____

Cardholder Address: _____

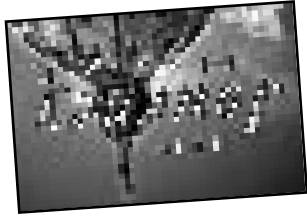
Cardholder City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Cardholder Phone: _____

Cardholder E-mail: _____

Cardholder Signature: _____

Cardholder Title: _____



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

Tune in each Monday evening at 8:00 PM EST to *The Journey Home Program* on EWTN, WENN radio, and on the internet. 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. The live program, now in its fourth season, is rebroadcast on Tuesday at 10 am EST, Friday at 1 am EST, and Saturday at 11 pm EST. You can also watch the *Best of the Journey Home* on Monday at 1 pm EST. *The Journey Home* can also be heard on WENN shortwave radio and local Catholic radio networks.



The Coming Home Network
PO Box 8290
Zanesville, OH 43702-8290

Address Correction Requested

The Coming Home Network International is a non-profit, lay apostolate.