



September 2009 Newsletter

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THE COMING HOME NETWORK INTERNATIONAL



Why I am a Catholic

— Mary Moorman

Shortly after I was received into the Catholic Church, a dear friend presented me with a copy of G.K. Chesterton's *The Catholic Church and Conversion*. While reading this magnificent little book on a retreat a few months after my confirmation, I thanked God for His guidance to the Catholic Church from the earliest years of my childhood. I've often told my friends that although I lived for a long time on the outside of the sacramental life, my conversion to the Catholic Church began when I was about seven years old. I was raised in an old Presbyterian establishment. I was blessed in this upbringing, and I learned many things that have stood me in good stead. But as Chesterton puts it, all children everywhere are born wanting to be Catholics; their natural tactile and imaginative impulses, which ought to be molded into the fruition of integrated worship in the Mass, have to be trained out of them by means of deliberate restraint in Protestant households. I think it's true; thuribles and light streaming through stained glass, and kindly images like family photographs, and the solemn genuflection before the Presence are just the sorts of things that children think are terribly important. And, as is often the case

with children, natural impulses for liturgical worship and the material means of grace reflect the kind of profound truth that Aquinas carefully explains in his *Summa Theologiae*: the human person's faith is united to his body; thus, Christ's provision of the material sacraments is the greatest sort of gift for our faith. Humanity acquires intellectual knowledge through the senses; therefore, sensible signs are aptly used to signify spiritual things. A sacrament is a sign that the senses can grasp; and only then can the human mind adequately apprehend what the sensible sign conveys. The child's grasping little fingers, eager for something real to hold onto, also bears profound witness to the opening words of I John 1: "that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched- this we proclaim concerning the Word of life." As the Gospel writer puts it, the Word became flesh, to dwell among us; and, contrary to what I was taught while growing up, the Incarnate God was not thereafter reduced to a mere text or confession.

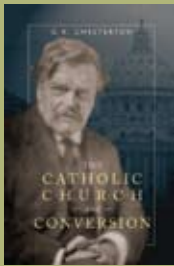
I remember suffering from two real needs in my childhood formation as a ...continued on page 2

Journeys Home

FEATURED RESOURCES

The Catholic Church & Conversion

By G. K. Chesterton



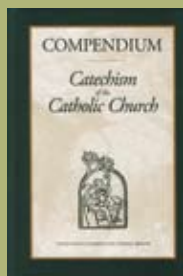
In *The Catholic Church and Conversion*, Chesterton explains his understanding of Catholicism and the Catholic Church and how its appeal to reason and truth eventually won him over. Pick up this book and discover why

Chesterton became a Catholic, described in his unique and colorful way.

Compendium

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Published by The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

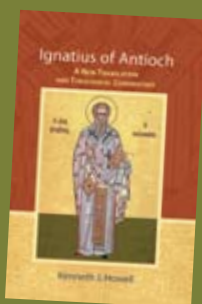


The *Compendium* offers a quick synopsis of the essential contents of the faith as promulgated in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Because of the question-and-answer format, catechetical leaders, parents,

pastors, teachers, principals, and catechists—have a unique opportunity to dialogue with the faithful, and reinvigorate the Church's ongoing mission of evangelization and catechesis.

SPECIAL OFFER!

This fall, CHNI will be releasing the new expanded edition of Dr. Kenneth Howell's book *Ignatius of Antioch: A New Translation and Theological Commentary*. This new version will include his brand new translation and commentary of Ignatius' letters plus the letters of Polycarp. Therefore, we are offering a special deal on the first edition of *Ignatius of Antioch: A New Translation and Theological Commentary*. This book is an outstanding resource on the Apostolic Fathers to read for yourself and to give away to friends. Order your copies today at only \$5 each, while supplies last.



...Journeys Home Continued...

Presbyterian. First, I had no way of making sense of a very real, childlike yearning to be near to Jesus — materially and really. I had a vivid imagination as a child, and I thought of Jesus, of His Passion and suffering, of His promised return in glory, of His tenderness for little children. If someone had only explained to me when I was about four that Jesus really entered the presence of His people at their invocation, as He always promised, such that you could touch Him, I'd have bought it in a second. It's what I was always waiting for.

Secondly, combined with this yearning, was something perhaps a bit more universal — the need for steady and authoritative answers and explanations, along with the desire for moral guidance grounded in this very Jesus who I was learning to love and who I wanted to love fully. It occurred to me very early on that there was something deprived and undignified about the Protestant scramble to rustle through the pages of the Bible that we honored to construe a self-solved solution to a perplexity at a moment's notice. The world was an enormous, quick, and variegated place to me as a child, a world always struggling too much with its own wounds to offer guidance, and my parents and I — like all sons of Adam and daughters of Eve — needed a steady place in which we could be taught and healed.

And then there is another thing; the child's capacity to imagine life in the new creation. St. Paul imagines this new creation in a profound way in Romans, where he speaks of a royal community grounded not in secular modes of community-making, but in something indissoluble, which leads the rest of the world to glory. I recall that as children this kind of proposal made a great deal of undomesticated sense to us, largely from our story books; we wanted to take dominion in a real way, and to live in a grand community of allegiance, waiting together for the Emperor Beyond the Sea, in sworn allegiance to King Peter. While we were given texts to honor and a pantheon of early modern secular heroes, what we really wanted was to be kings and queens in God's coming Kingdom. And perhaps that is why, as a teenager, I once broke into tears when I crossed St. Peter's Square in Rome with a group of well-meaning Protestants who were full of derision in that place, because I somehow knew (regardless of whether or not I agreed with some of their derision at the time) that the occasion of their accusation was the work of the evil one, who hates the Church's place in that Kingdom, and wishes to break her into a thousand pieces. But that Kingdom, and the Christians who populate it, are supposed to be one. Chesterton explains it this way in his book *The Catholic Church and Conversion*: whatever happiness you find in your own piece of the Church, there is still no denying the reality of the thing that you have broken.

My journey towards the Catholic Church continued as I began to study history in high school and college, and I came to see that throughout the story of the universe, God has providentially elected particular people and places. And Jesus elected Peter, who went to Rome. I came to understand that if Christians take Scripture seriously, we ought not overlook those critical

moments which the Gospel writers emphasize with the gravity that the Holy Spirit required. There is something deliberate in Luke's hushed reminder to the reader considering Pentecost: "and the mother of Jesus was there." And

"I have prayed for you... care for your brethren... I will give to you the keys of my kingdom... feed my sheep."

in much the same, understated way, I found great significance in the spotlight which the biblical authors turn on Jesus's exclusive statements to Peter: "*I have prayed for you... care for your brethren... I will give to you the keys of my kingdom... feed my sheep.*"

As a teenager, when I read Henry Sienkiewicz's beautiful novel about the early Church entitled *Quo Vadis*, I began to take the beautiful story of St. Peter very seriously. The story goes like this. When St. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles who is so venerated in the Protestant

tradition, turned to Rome never to turn away again, his final missionary journey made great sense. He was a Roman, a proclaimer of the Gospel to the uncircumcised, and to those who had never worshiped in that Temple and Land in which God had chosen to meet His people. As Galatians reminds us, Paul had already followed apostolic protocol when he submitted the content of his proclamation to Peter and James, the heads of the Church in Jerusalem. And it made sense that Christ's politically transformative Church, as the international institution of the King of Kings, should be established in Rome, the capital of worldly commerce and military power. But then something strange happens, as Scripture tells us; Peter also leaves Jerusalem and turns his face to Rome for one final journey. He left Jerusalem, the holy place of the Jews, for the cosmopolitan center of paganism. Tradition holds that, in Rome, Peter led a church of martyrs, and died with them in Nero's circus, near the Vatican Hill where he was buried. Word spread. The grandchildren of the apostles and the friends whom they evangelized would make their pilgrimages of prayer not to the old sites in Jerusalem, but to the grave site of Jesus's elected leader of His disciples, in commemoration of the personal relationships that are a hallmark of Christianity. Thus, in God's providence, one of the holiest places in the new creation would emerge with the prayers of new Christians, who were led by the chosen successors of Jesus's chosen successor, in the very center of the crumbling Roman empire, from which roads ran to the far corners of the earth for the discipling of the nations, as Jesus had commanded. Later, as a graduate student studying theology, I learned that the leaders of the early Church found the profoundest providence for the discernment of truth and the ordering of all of life in this unfolding of events. As one of the earliest Church Fathers ...continued on page 4

NEWSLETTER COPIES



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DEEP IN SCRIPTURE

On EWTN radio with Marcus Grodi & Guests

Wednesdays **LIVE** at 9:00 PM EDT
Encore: Sundays @ 7 AM EDT

Join Marcus and his weekly guest as they discuss "what verses have inspired us to follow Jesus Christ?"

For more information and a link to watch the program LIVE online go to
www.deepinscripture.com

Deep in Scripture Guests for September:

September 2

Jim Pinto*

September 9

David Currie*

September 16

Tom Cabeen*

September 23

Father C. John McCloskey*

September 30

Mark Brumley*

**This schedule is subject to change*



EWTN'S THE JOURNEY HOME

on television and radio, hosted by
Marcus Grodi, president of CHNI.

TELEVISION

Mondays **LIVE** at 8:00 PM EDT
Encores: Tuesdays 1:00 & 10:00 AM EDT
Wednesdays 1:00 PM EDT
Saturdays 11:00 PM EDT

RADIO

Mondays **LIVE** at 8:00 PM EDT
Encores: Wednesdays 2:00 PM EDT
Saturdays 6:00 PM EDT

September 7

Dr. Ronda Chervin*
Jewish Convert

September 14

Dr. Francis Beckwith*
Former Evangelical Protestant

September 21

Magnus & Lisa Wetterberg*
The Journey Home in Scandinavia

September 28

Mary Moorman*
Former Presbyterian & Anglican

**This schedule is subject to change*



...Journeys Home Continued...

put it less than a hundred years after Jesus' resurrection, the true Church was to be identified with reference to St. Peter:

Since, however, it would be very tedious, in such a volume as this, to reckon up the successions of all the (true) Churches, **we do put to confusion all those who, in whatever manner, whether by an evil self-pleasing, by vainglory, or by blindness and perverse opinion, assemble in unauthorized meetings; we do this, I say, by indicating that tradition derived from the apostles, of the very great, the very ancient, and universally known Church founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul...Since therefore we have such proofs, it is not necessary to seek the truth among others which it is easy to obtain from the one Church.** (*Adversus Hereses III*, Irenaeus of Lyons, AD 115-190)

It is in these ways that Rome began to seem to me to be the place to be, even though I decided in my early twenties to align myself with the semblance of sacramental life which is maintained in Episcopalian communities. There I began to understand that in one way or another, all Christians have always looked to Rome for normative guidance, if only to define what they have chosen to reject. There is more to be said on this point in our broken world, since much of the faith and practices of Rome remain available with great grace, even in schism from Rome. Rome understands that these features of grace persist to lead the Father's children home. These graces, which always tend towards unity, may lead beyond Protestantism because Protestantism can ring hollow. These graces may lead beyond Anglicanism and Episcopalianism because one wishes to avoid guilt by association. And, in my case, I began to see that they led well beyond the relativism offered by my culture as an alternative to all serious commitments.

As a Catholic, I have found that this last point seems to provoke the people who like to dogmatically proclaim that they will refuse to dogmatize mystery, that the Church is presumptuous to define her teachings, and that the sorrowful brokenness of the Reformation hatched from the scholastic egg that Rome laid. I have always wondered about these assertions. The good people who make them might be merely upholding the value of their personal preferences for describing the mysteries of the faith — at which point any pretense to be catholically minded or even potentially obedient to God's established authority structure in the world must fall by the wayside. Or, these good people may be making a very different sort of claim — namely, that the refusal to "dogmatize" the Christian mysteries in certain traditions is somehow evidence of the endorsement of Jesus and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Rome, on the other hand, dogmatizes. She always has. As I've come to appreciate, Rome has an older and gentler pastoral tradition of responding to the human heart, which always seeks understanding when it has fallen in love. As Anselm explained it at the dawn of the Scholastic era, *fides quaerens intellectum*, the faith of God's children seeks understanding, with the kind of hunger and thirst which a true spiritual father provides. It has always seemed



to me that Rome's dogmatizing is her response to her child martyrs; people should know what they are willing to die for.

I am grateful that in addition to making progress in my understanding of the intellectual justification for life in the Catholic Church, I also began to experience more and more of the common calling to love Christ and His Church. While living as a Protestant, I had always suffered from chronic Catholic envy. And I learned from Protestant friends and pastors how to live with it: I had to nestle close in a tightly guarded local Christian community. Ideally, this would be a community that was safely enclosed from the rest of the same denominational community, which too often had succumbed in some way to the prevailing trends of our times. All the while, I was still expected to speak of the visibly one, holy, and catholic church. I glibly appropriated whatever I liked of the gifts of the Church, perhaps in manicured retreat centers, or in Dominican scholarship, or in a paperbacked catechism, or in the attentions of a Catholic spiritual director, or with a pope-blessed rosary, but I freely indulged in all these gifts without any real commitment to the unifying Spirit and the the vicar of Christ who had extended them. And while the zealous Protestant life involved a quest for personal holiness that was nothing less than Quixotic, I discovered soon enough in my graduate studies that to live this way is to live like a Donatist.

The Donatists have always fascinated me. They were the most pious of people, enamored with holiness, purity, and perseverance, which is a wonderful thing to be. But St. Augustine fought them to the end, as schismatics. The Donatists, a group of proto-Protestants, left the Catholic Church in the fourth century because the Catholics believed that grace extended to sinners, and the Donatists thought they could do better. These former Catholics would take their Catholic priests, and their Catholic sacraments, and their Catholic doctrine, and they would form their own "catholic" communion in separation from the original community.

I entertained similar ideas before I became a Catholic. How dare the Catholic Church insist on union with a visible head and exclude all others, I would ask. The Head of the Church is Jesus, period, and all that remains is for each individual Christian to offer worship and witness to Him, I would argue. But I have since learned that the Church invites and provides for a deeper and quieter listening to the Holy Spirit's instruction in the whole narrative of God's people. And when we pause to think about it, we see that God has always given a human mediator. In, by, and for Christ His Son, the Father made Adam to be the head of his garden and his wife and all the creatures. God positioned Noah to lead the new creation, Abraham to capitate a chosen nation, Joshua and the prophets to guide them, Mary to reverse the rebellion of Eve forever, and Peter to lead his brothers by standing in for the One who will return. The headship of someone elected, prepared, and chosen seems to be the order of things. And gradually I came to understand that the Church has one Head, Jesus Christ her Lord, and accordingly, she should have one earthly leader. For those ...continued on page 6



MARCUS GRODI'S SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

September 18-19, 2009

Diocese of Charleston's
Fire at the Beach Conference
"Eucharist: Called, Nourished, Sent"
St. Francis by the Sea Church
Hilton Head Island, SC
www.catholic-doc.org/

October 6-16, 2009

Catholic Answers
Western Mediterranean Cruise
www.catholicanswerscruise.com
800-707-1634

December 5, 2009

Annual Prayer Breakfast for
The Pilgrim Center of Hope
A Catholic Evangelization Ministry
San Antonio, TX
www.pilgrimcenterofhope.org
210-521-3377

December 11-12, 2009

Diocese of Toledo, OH
"History of the Catholic Church in America"
email: mccr@toledolink.com

January 9-16, 2010

KWKY Catholic Radio Cruise
7-Day Eastern Caribbean Cruise
www.catholicradiocruise.com
Be sure to tell them you heard about it from
The Coming Home Network by typing "CHN"

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...Journeys Home Continued...

of us who love getting the glorious Gospel right, it is a matter of symmetry.

When it finally came time for me to enter the Catholic Church, there were a few select passages from St. Augustine's writings *On Baptism* against the Donatists that provided the clincher. As a Protestant, I had firmly relied on the possibility that Protestant appropriations of Catholic life were adequate for the justification that comes from faith; but I found that St. Augustine's rhetoric summarized a good deal of what might be said in conversations among many contemporary Christians when he reminds us all that even the greatest faith will be of no profit without the charity that God has given to bind His people together in one:

"But I have the sacrament," you will say. You say the truth; the sacrament is divine; you have baptism, and that I confess. But what says the apostle? "If I should know all mysteries, and have prophecy and all faith, so that I could remove mountains;" in case you should say this, "I believe; enough for me." But what says James? "The devils believe and tremble." Faith is mighty, but without charity it profits nothing. The devils confessed Christ. Accordingly it was from believing, but not from loving, they said, "What have we to do with You?" They had faith, but not charity; hence they were devils. Boast not of faith; so far you are on a level with the devils. Say not to Christ, What have I to do with You? For Christ's unity speaks to you. Come, learn peace, return... You have been baptized without; have fruit, and return to the ark." *Homilies on John VI.21.*

Augustine sounds a bit like an angry prophet railing against sin in these texts, but I was most struck by the fact that in having written to the Donatists, St. Augustine continues to speak to the educated elite, the holiest of the holy, the enclave of those who had survived persecution with fortitude, the ones who think that their cultivated spirituality is too good for the Church, and that they are bound to preserve a remnant of spotless doctrine and practice for Christ apart from the poor, faltering, stumbling Catholics. And certainly these may be virtuous impulses. But it is here that St. Augustine's work spoke most poignantly to me, quietly reminding me that in God's grace it is the weak who will inherit, it is the children who will enter, and it is the humble who God will find pure in spirit; and that the Catholic Church is the place where God will make humble hearts for Himself if they wish to be united with Him in His Body, in love.

And then, by God's grace, I came to the final realization that to undersand and love the Catholic Church was not enough, and that I was called to become a Catholic because I *need* to be Catholic. Like all persons, I was made by my Creator for the delight and for joy which comes from Him and all that He has given; and He has given His Church as a place in which I am



St. Augustine

happy, in the same way that we are meant to be *happy* in our families and in our friendships.

Sometimes, when people tell me that they cannot understand why anyone would want to be a part of such an antiquated, structured, and hierarchical institution like the Catholic Church, I feel as though I've been asked to justify the reasons why a person would need a home or a family. Certainly the silly case can be made (as our culture often insists) that people don't need homes or families, that individual autonomy and exploration is more valuable and important than anything else, that self-sufficient self-discovery is adequate for human flourishing. But it's all a lie.

I know personally that the myth of flourishing in self-sufficiency is a lie, because like many of my generation, I am a young woman who has lived alone in the lonely modern American city. But more than that, I grew up on a ranch in Texas, and I know (as a lot more of our developing world knows) of coming home late at night through the country. It's a simple thing. Under the vast Texas skies, which darken quickly, the drive from the little town on the edge of nowhere takes you through a lonely front gate, away from the main road and then down dark, deep roads that take up the better part of hours. There are no lights around, no means of communication with anyone, no links to safety and companionship. The shadows hang over the road, and they are sinister, and you are all alone and very fragile in the night. But then you finally round a bend in the road, and you see the glimmer of your own home, the solid island of warmth and safety, where there is a fire burning, and dinner being made, and games being played, and a father praying for the peace and safety of the children that he will tuck into their beds when the time comes. There is no feeling quite like that sight of your home down the road.

I feel that way about the Catholic Church. People often say that to become Catholic after trying something else feels just like "coming home," and I really think there is no better way to describe it. While the world is full of other sorts of way stations and mission outposts and even comfortable inns, where one can find a warming fire and a nourishing table, these are only places on the way. That's the way I felt this time last year, just before I was received into the Church. I had loved the temporary ecclesial lodgings I had enjoyed, but up ahead, I could see the permanent place where I was supposed to live, and it felt a little bit like heading towards home; only this Church, with its papal father and interceding mother, and army of spiritual fathers, brothers, and sisters was also the sort that was not just for me and my interests. It was *this* home that could be a home for the homeless and fatherless, wherein all people of every shape, size, and culture could grow and be nourished, and which, in its integral unity, could show the rest of the world how to live.

Blessed Duns Scotus once wrote that our habits should be postulated not only so that power might act rightly, but so that ...continued on page 8



DEEP IN HISTORY MP3s

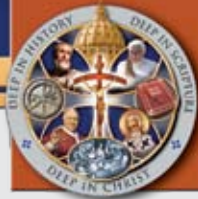
The Coming Home Network International is pleased to announce that MP3s of our recent *The Catholic Paul* conference are now available for download online. All past *Deep in History* conference talks are also available in MP3 format through our website. Go to www.chresources.com to download the MP3s. Each talk costs \$5.



DONATIONS

CHNI is excited to announce that we are now able to accept donations by bank draft (ACH) for one time or recurring donations.

If you are interested in making a donation using your checking or savings account, please contact Ann Moore at 740-450-1175 ext. 101 or ann@chnetwork.org.



The Pillar & Bulwark of the Truth

Tentative SCHEDULE

FRIDAY — OCT. 23RD

- 3:30 Travelers Mass ~ Fr. Ray Ryland
- 5:00 Dinner
- 7:00 A Verse I Never Saw ~ Marcus Grodi
- 8:15 Jewish Roots of the Papacy ~ Dr. Brant Pitre
- 9:15 Social

SATURDAY — OCT. 24TH

- 8:00 Morning Prayer
- 8:30 Mass
- 9:30 Breakfast
- 11:00 Peter and the Keys ~ Steve Ray
- 12:00 The Issue of Authority in Early Christianity
~ Dr. Kenneth Howell
- 1:00 Lunch
- 2:30 Authority through the Trinity ~ Msgr. Frank Lane
- 3:30 Spiritual Authority—Who Needs It?
~ Dr. Paul Thigpen
- 4:30 The Issue of Authority in the Protestant and
Catholic Reformations ~ Dr. Kenneth Howell
- 5:30 Dinner
- 7:30 What Connects Nicaea and Vatican II:
Ecumenical Councils and the Magisterium
~ Archbishop Michael Sheehan
- 8:30 Understanding our Father: The Power of
Prayer and the Eucharist ~ Dr. Scott Hahn
- 9:45 Adoration

SUNDAY — OCT. 25TH

- 8:00 Morning Prayer
- 8:30 Mass ~ Archbishop Michael Sheehan
- 9:30 Breakfast
- 11:00 Cardinal Newman and Papal Authority
~ Fr. Ray Ryland
- 12:00 Panel Discussion
- 1:30 Finish

...Journeys Home Continued...

we might act promptly, and with delight. This is a good summary of my experience of becoming a Catholic. I know that here I am being formed, however slowly, by an absolutely trustworthy authority that has its subsistence in Jesus. There are no longer any hesitations having to do with the need to carefully pick and choose from a myriad of theological interpretations, or of aligning myself with a trustworthy authority; rather, there is a new ability to live spontaneously and to share well-defined truth readily.

I remember asking a Catholic campus ministry worker a few years ago whether I would really make sense as a Catholic. I explained to her in some detail the apparent problems; I loved the aspects of Reformed theologies that trace their origin to Nominalist Catholics, as I still do. I was a bit of a charismatic. I was certainly an evangelical. I wanted a safe and universal church into which I could lead others in good conscience. I wanted to protect the poor as well as the unborn in and through a community that was unified enough to take on the perishing nations of the world and all their illnesses. I wanted to study the Christian faith seriously, and to live fully in the same community that had originally embraced the Scriptures. I wanted to worship beautifully, whether I was in Congo or Dallas, in the world's first missionary community that could still address my personal constant state of culture shock from always traveling too much. Could I remain myself and still be a Catholic, I wondered? I remember the response that I got: the true Church is broad; she encompasses every culture, and she alone can embrace every person.

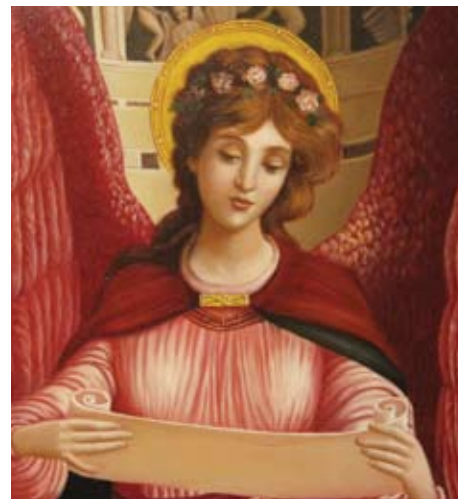
And it's true. The human person is a vast estate, and the Catholic Church is the only situation in the world that's big enough to hold her in such a way so that she can really grow, without hesitation, without unneeded anxieties and enclosure, and without compromise. ■



Mary Moorman is an author, consultant, and doctoral candidate in Systematic Theology at Southern Methodist University.

*With a degree in classics and religion from Hillsdale College, Mary went on to earn a law degree from Boston University's School of Law where she focused on Jewish law and religious legal systems. She completed her masters degree in systematic theology at Yale University. Mary Moorman also has varied professional experience as an attorney, lecturer, writer, and consultant, and has lectured and published widely on theology and Christian apologetics. Her recent research has focused on juridical themes in Christian soteriology and inter-religious dialogue between Protestants and the Roman Catholic Church. She is a board member and director of the World Youth Alliance, an international coalition of young people committed to promoting the dignity of the person. Mary will be a guest on **The Journey Home** program on September 28, 2009.*

Prayer List



Clergy

■ For Tony, a Christian Reformed minister in New England, that the love of God would guide him day by day in his journey home to the Catholic Church.

■ For Scott, a former Episcopal priest in Nebraska, that every barrier to his reception to the Catholic Church would be removed by Jesus who loves him.

■ For a Presbyterian minister in New Jersey, that he may be granted the grace to come into full communion with the Church of the prophets and apostles founded by Jesus on the Rock of St. Peter.

■ For Jim, a Non-denominational minister in Ohio, that the Holy Spirit would speak to his heart so that he may realize that the fullness of the Truth has been preserved in the Catholic Church.

■ For Jeffrey, a former priest of the Church of England, and his family, who were recently received into the Catholic Church, that God may bless and guide him in God's love and grace.

■ For Steve, a Lutheran minister in Wisconsin, that his wife would become more and more open to the Catholic faith.

■ For Bob, a Baptist minister in Pennsylvania, that God would use his new interest in the many Eucharistic miracles to draw him to Jesus himself in the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

■ For a Christian Reformed minister in Maine, that he may return to the Catholic faith and serve Christ most fully with all of the gifts Jesus has given him.

■ For Mike, a Charismatic pastor, that he would come to see the Catholic Church as the true wine-skin.

■ For a Lutheran pastor that he may embrace the fullness of truth.

■ For Eric, a former Evangelical minister considering the Catholic Church.

Lay

■ For Lucy's son who has left the Catholic Church and become a Mormon.

■ For Joe and his health. May God grant him healing that he may walk in Christ's light.

■ For Anne and Felix to return to the Catholic Church.

■ For a man who is suffering from an alcohol addiction and depression.

■ For Agnes's son and grandson who are in Iraq and their families and for all in the military who risk their lives to protect our freedom.

■ For Jerry and his healing.

■ For Lydia and her intentions.

■ For Al's successful back surgery.

■ For all those loved ones who have left the Catholic Church.

■ For Debbie and her family.

■ For Robert and his surgery for glaucoma.

■ For Dan who is on the journey to the Catholic Church.

■ For the faith and conversion of Pat's family.

■ For Rick's wife that her cancer does not return and for her faith journey.

■ For one of our member's daughter who is struggling with a mental illness.

■ For Tim, John, Tony, Ron, Stan, BH, and Charlene that they may return to the Catholic Church.

■ For Sylvia's intentions and for each member of her family.

■ For Theresa and her family and their special intentions.

■ For Louise, her family and their intentions.

■ For Mary, Tom, Judy, and Anne; all suffering in battles with cancer.

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 in general and specific of the CHNetwork, its members, and supporters.

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

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

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

It is True *Because*

Is it enough to believe that something is true because “the Catholic Church says so”? In other words, do you believe in the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, the Immaculate Conception, the Assumption, Transubstantiation, and the immorality of Abortion and Contraception “because the Church says so”?

On the surface, this may sound like a noble and valid submission of faith in the trustworthiness of the Church, and if understood correctly this may be true. Sometimes it is necessary to accept something the Church teaches as true before we fully understand it, which is generally true of most of the doctrines mentioned in the first paragraph.

Yet, there is a subtle danger in this way of thinking. These doctrines are not “true” because the Church says so, but rather the Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, recognizes and affirms that they are already “true” in their essence. This is what Jesus promised to his hand-chosen Apostles when he said, “the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.... When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (Jn 14:26; 16:13). This is the reason, for example, we accept the inspiration and infallibility of the Canon of the New Testament books: not because the Bishops of the Church at the Councils of Carthage, Hippo, and Rome in the late 4th century declared them to be Holy, inspired, and true, but because at these Councils they recognized and affirmed which of the many, many books the various churches were using were in fact holy, inspired, and true, and therefore were to be read in Liturgy.

To believe that something is “true” just because the Church says so is essentially a form of bad philosophy called Nominalism. This philosophy confuses the source of truth with the means through which we know that something *is* true. Nominalism, which was one of the major causes of the Protestant Reformation,

asserts that something is true not because it is true in essence, but only because God decided it was true. This implies that God could have decided any way he felt like it, declaring an entirely different set of standards, possibly the complete opposite: murder, adultery, and stealing are good; love, fidelity, and purity are bad. This thinking has actually become so prevalent in our cultural milieu that one can sense immediately someone rising up in protest demanding why couldn't God do this?! He is omnipotent and the creator of everything! Nothing existed before him! Whatever is true he created. If it was true before he created it, then there was something before God, even above him establishing what he only confirmed what was true!

This thinking, of course, though it sounds logical enough, only pushes into areas which we have no means of exploring. God's very existence is a mystery. What we must accept is that what is true in what he created is true because somehow it is true in its nature, which is based upon the very truth of God's own nature. We accept that something is true in the same way that we accept the existence of God and his inherent goodness: Not because the Church declares this to be true, but rather because the Church, which we can trust because of the guidance of his Spirit, has revealed this to us.

This is exactly what Pope John Paul II declared as the primary responsibility of the Church, in his introduction to the New Catechism: “GUARDING THE DEPOSIT OF FAITH IS THE MISSION WHICH THE LORD ENTRUSTED TO HIS CHURCH, and which she fulfills in every age.” Christians who have substituted the Holy Spirit's guidance of the individual for the Spirit's guidance of the Church have entered a world of chaos. Such individualism eventually leads to moral confusion, calling what is good bad and what is bad good. Sound familiar? Thank God we were given the Church to help us know what is true.

—Sincerely In Christ, Marcus Grodi ■



Trinity
by Domenico Beccafumi



SPOUSES NETWORK

Are you the spouse of a clergy interested in becoming Catholic?

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

If the *Spouses Network* is something you feel called to, whether you are a spouse of a clergy who has made the journey home and would like to assist

someone, or if you are a spouse of a minister and are either on the journey or a new Catholic, we would like to invite you to contact *CHNI* to assist us in the development of this network.

If you would like more information or if you feel called to become a part of this apostolate please contact Mary Clare Piccynski by e-mail at maryp@chnetwork.org or by phone at 740-450-1175 ext 105.

We do ask all *The Coming Home Network International's* members to please keep the *Spouses Network* in your prayers as we seek to answer the needs of those spouses of clergy on the journey home and those who are new converts.

QUO VADIS NEWS

www.quovadis youth.org

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

Interested in learning more?

Quo Vadis has a web site, www.quovadis youth.org with information about the network and ways to become involved. If you would like to learn more about Quo Vadis, or you have a question about the Catholic faith you are welcome to contact Mary Clare Piccynski.

Mary Clare Piccynski

maryp@chnetwork.org

740-450-1175 ext. 105



Helper's Network Update

The Coming Home Network Intl' is updating its information for the *Helpers Network*. If you have not already responded to the survey by e-mail, *CHNI* would deeply appreciate if current helpers would fill out the survey so we can verify and/or update our current information and better serve our members.

If you are currently a Catholic and would like to be part of the *Helpers Network* and assist someone who is interested in the Catholic Church please contact Mary Clare Piccynski.

Please return survey information to:

Mary Clare Piccynski
PO Box 8290
Zanesville OH 43702
maryp@chnetwork.org
740-450-1175 ext. 105

Name: _____

Do you still wish to be considered a Helper? Yes ☐ No ☐

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

Phone number 1 — Cell ☐ Home ☐ Work ☐ : _____

Phone number 2 — Cell ☐ Home ☐ Work ☐ : _____

E-mail address you prefer: _____

Are you a convert to Catholicism? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, from what denomination did you convert? _____

Do you currently have a helpee (a person interested in the Catholic faith)? Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, would you like a helpee? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, would you be willing to have another helpee? Yes ☐ No ☐

Comments: _____

The Coming Home Network International

P.O. Box 8290

Zanesville, OH 43702

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