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My Spiritual Journey into the Catholic Church I grew up on Long Island in a very Jewish community. Everyone on my little block was Jewish and all went to the same conservative shul, except for us. We were different; my parents opted for a Reform Temple. So every Sunday morning I went to Hebrew school and became a Bar Mitzvah and then confirmed.

Soon after my confirmation I stopped going to Temple. I became disenchanted with the lack of passion of anyone I ever met at my Temple or any other shul for that matter that I ever attended. I guess I could be labeled as a "bagels and lox" Jew. I decided to do my own searching for God because I always believed that He existed.

In college I discovered eastern philosophy, humanistic psychology, astrology, and every other weird "new age" belief system. I was attracted by some people in the "new age" movement that seemed to really have some passion about life and the universe. Just to be "fair minded" I even picked up a copy of the New Testament because I figured there might be some good stuff in there too. But at this time I was not attracted to Christianity because I saw the same lack of passion from every Christian I ever knew, and besides I knew that I could not believe in Jesus and remain Jewish. But because I my spiritual hunger to belong someplace I attended a Unitarian Church because this was safe.

Then, I met a beautiful Italian young lady right after college and we fell in love and were soon married. As we were both non-practicing in our native faiths we were married by a Unitarian minister. Our families all shrugged their shoulders but were happy for us. It was a convenient compromise between the Catholic and Jewish backgrounds. And we met many couples just like us in the Unitarian movement. We sang in the choir that was directed by a Jewish composer and sang Handel's Messiah at Christmas. Go figure?

We started our married life off living on Long Island. As married life progressed we wanted to start a family and initially had no success. We finally decided to adopt and the day we learned of our son, Brian's, birth we also found out that my wife was pregnant. We went the first few months enjoying our new son and excited about another baby. As we approached our first Christmas together tragedy struck. We lost our baby son, Christopher, and we were devastated.

The next year my wife was pregnant again and this time she had to be in bed almost full time. As we approached Christmas we lost our second baby, Kristen. This was another deep disappointment. The year that followed was very painful and my marriage was very shaky. I felt like I was just going through the motions because it hurt so badly. The following year at Christmas AGAIN we lost my wife's father. As I look back now it's plain to see that God was trying to get my attention. All of these "Christmas" tragedies took its toll on our lives and our marriage and our marriage nearly fell apart.

I was terribly unhappy and I used to escape into the television. Until one day channel surfing I came across a sermon on forgiveness and this was the first time I ever heard the gospel. I knew then that I needed a fresh start in my life and I was so desperate that I did not even care that it was Jesus that made this all possible. I was willing to try just about anything. I prayed with that TV evangelist. My life would never be the same. I bought a Bible and started reading it from the beginning and very quickly my life started to change for the better.

My wife noticed the positive change in me. She started watching with me and we both decided to find a good church. We started to shop for churches. We finally decided on a Lutheran church because I thought it might be somewhat close in structure to my wife's Christian experience as a Catholic. My wife had been married briefly before we met and I knew enough to know that we could not go back without going through the annulment process and at that time I felt that would be too much to ask of her. So we gladly attended the Lutheran church and we grew very quickly in our faith. I and my son were baptized New Years Eve. I became involved in the lay ministry and lots of Bible study.

A family in our church who knew I was Jewish introduced us to messianic Judaism. This blew my mind that there were congregations of Jewish Christians like me and soon we were off in that direction. I felt at home immediately. We had the sense that this is what it must have been like for the very first believers and we were so excited to be a part of a "new" movement of God. I must admit that I am very grateful for the time I spent in that little congregation of ours, we learned a great deal about the Jewish roots of Christianity and the scriptures. We quickly moved up to leadership positions and for the first 4 years or so we were so happy and excited about life. We were involved in evangelism and I even thought about becoming a messianic leader and began some studies.

Soon after I started my studies I started to see the messianic movement in a different light and I was becoming disenchanted and we soon left the congregation. I also had a crisis of faith. I remembered as a Lutheran how special communion was and I started attending Mass occasionally. Looking back I can remember how special Catholic Mass seemed to me without understanding why. I felt that becoming Catholic was not an option for me or my wife so and we finally decided to attend an Episcopal church because we could all have communion every week. And yet, something was still missing.

We later moved off Long Island and into the Midwest, Indianapolis, where my wife grew up. We would church shop and hop and not feel "right" anywhere. I soon just stopped trying and floundered for many years without feeding my soul anywhere. I was struggling to build a business in our new location so Church and God did not seem to "fit into" my schedule. But God would get my attention once again. Our son, now approaching his teens, was struggling with some mental health issues and our lives turned upside down again on us. My son needed expensive treatment and I did not know how we were going to afford this. And that is when I let God know that if he would help us with our son that I would be willing to give Him anything and everything.

God did provide miraculously and our son is on the road to recovery. God would not forget my part of this deal. After a long illness, my wife's Mom died and we attended her funeral Mass and it really touched me. I could sense something was happening inside me but I could not put my finger on it. We had another Catholic funeral Mass to attend and I remember being angry when the Priest said that only Catholics could receive communion. This provoked me to find out why that had to be. After all every other church allowed anyone to receive as long as they "believed". What was so different about Catholic communion?

I would soon have my answer and my end of the deal would be unfolding soon enough. Shortly afterward, by chance one day riding in the community looking at new homes, which is one of our favorite things to do, my wife and I met a couple. We thought they could tell us if they liked living in that neighborhood but they did not live in that neighborhood. God had other plans in mind and we struck up a conversation and soon we discovered they were from NY, like us, and we were telling them about a great place to eat pizza.

In return they asked us if we went to church anywhere and somewhat embarrassed we said no. They invited us to their Catholic church and we exchanged phone #'s. I remember looking at my wife and shrugging my shoulders because we were always curious about this church. So now that we knew someone there it was just a matter of time before we would visit.

On the anniversary of my wife's mom's death on a Saturday night I convinced my wife to go to Mass at that Church. I know that I had a mystical experience that night with the Eucharist. I knew that Jesus was there, although at the time I could not have explained that. I could sense clearly that I needed to become a Catholic. And I knew there would be many hoops to jump through from this point on. I still had my doubts about how a Jew would be received and whether I was going to hear anti Jewish theology.

So when I got home from Mass that night I got on the internet to find out if there are any other "meshugena" Jews who became Catholic? And that is when I found the Association of Hebrew Catholics. I was so pleasantly surprised that there have been so many Jews who discovered the truth of the Catholic Church and I felt much better about this. It was through this organization that I was able to discover just how Jewish the Catholic Church is. I discovered that Catholicism is post messianic Judaism and that now I had finally found the true place where all the first believers and apostles ended up, the Catholic Church.

I began to study and attended Mass as often as possible and still do. I knew in order to receive the precious Eucharist I needed to join the Church so after almost a full year in RCIA I had my first communion and confirmation at Easter Vigil, 2005. My wife also has just finished her annulment process and we are so happy to be able to worship God together in the Eucharist at Mass. I am looking forward to growing in my new faith and discerning what God would have for me and for us to do. I am also excited that my marriage can now become sacramental. It is so good to be home.

