

I'm a revert, and I can say without reservation I believe God's greatest blessing in my life was placing me in a Catholic family. Like many post Vatican II Catholic families, we attended Mass on Sundays and most Holy Days of obligation, but we had very little involvement with the faith beyond that. While in public school I attended CCD, and went to our Parish school for a couple of years, but only two of the four of us children were confirmed and that only because we were attending Catholic school when the time came for confirmation. I never understood the Mass, I never understood the "Good News" that one of the Sisters who taught me in middle school spoke of, we never learned to pray the rosary, though Dad did teach us to pray the big three, Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be, along with the "Bless us o Lord" before meals. I don't ever recall my parents going to confession, and we kids only did because it was available at school. In many ways we were cultural Catholics more than anything, I certainly did not understand the Real Presence, and I assume no one in my family did, in as much as it was never spoken of. So not having much of a foundation in the faith, and being rather an angry child anyway, I bolted from the Church at the first available opportunity, that being my leaving for the University of Michigan.

What followed is about 20+ years of floundering around in new age nonsense with the anger turning into full blown depression. I functioned in spite of my melancholy outlook on life, graduated college, got married, and earned a Public Administration Masters at the University of Southern California. My Husband and I are entrepreneurs, and have been involved in several successful businesses, really the American dream. All the trappings of a successful life, and yet the depression and anxiety, the vague sense of being lost, the occasional moments I would pause on a Christian radio broadcast and ponder. Not for to long of course, we University educated sophisticates needent such things. Then came the shoulder injuries.

I hurt both my shoulders so badly that I could not dress myself. Not yet 40 years old, I thought I might not ever be able to move without pain again in my life, and all I had on hand were the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be prayed with Dad as a child. I cried out to God with these three prayers and my elementary school comprehension of the things of God, and He being the patient, kind loving Father that He is, met me where I was, and answered my prayer. For relief of pain in my shoulders and for the gentle guidance He has provided ever since I have nothing to offer other than the daily prayer of my life lived for Him, consecrated to His Sacred Heart, through the Immaculate Heart of His Beloved Mother and mine, Mary.

Interestingly enough, as I prayed and asked God for guidance, I was not immediately led back to the Catholic Church. I was led to an Evangelical Church where the Gospel is presented at an elementary school comprehension level, the perfect place for someone such as myself who's comprehension of the Gospel was almost non-existent. Evangelicals tend to spend a great deal of time studying scripture, and so I read and read the bible, reading almost nothing but for over two years. My depression lifted, never to return, and I came to understand that Christ's atonement for our sins is Good News indeed, Satan is a defeated foe, that a life lived with Jesus in eternity as He originally intended trumps any piddling little problem I may encounter here in Satan's realm on

earth. However, I gradually became uncomfortable with some inconsistencies between what I was reading in the scripture and the doctrine taught in the Evangelical church. Probably even more importantly, in scripture I came to recognize the practices and Sacraments of the Church, something I had never understood. And I was yearning for the Eucharist, though oddly enough I still did not comprehend the Real Presence.

The clinchers for me were John's Gospel, Chapter 17, Christ's Unity prayer in the garden, and Matthew 16:18 when Peter is given the keys to the Kingdom. As I pondered disunity among Christians and the somewhat constant attack on the Church of Rome, it occurred to me Jesus did not abandon His people and His Church for the first 1,500 years of Christianity, after all He tells us He will be with us until the end of the age. Gee the Church has it all wrong for 1,500 years and then the reformers came along and got it all squared away? I think not. So without the prejudice of a lifetime of being told the Catholic Church was wrong, and with the immeasurable blessing of Grace I received at my Confirmation, I began to read the Catechism and learn the faith Christ has given His people, and I knew I had to come home to Rome.

Rest of the story, after 14 years, our marriage was convalidated December 2004, my Husband was received into the Church at Easter Vigil 2005, and we live our lives in gratitude to the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, begging each day for the salvation of the souls of all those with whom we have contact. Praying to our Savior that just as Sister Mary planted those little seeds of faith back in middle school, we through the prayer of our lives lived for Christ, and our witness to His unfathomable Mercy and Grace, plant the seeds of the message of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ and the Grace he pours out to His people through His Church here on earth.

Alleluia to the Lamb of God, Amen, Amen, Amen, Thank you Jesus!