

found passion for the Catholic Church and asked her what I should do about it. Her advice was to divorce him. I prayed hard because I love Jimmy and I did not want to lose our family. I began to pray the prayer "Change me Lord". I felt a refreshing of the Holy Spirit that I had not felt before. I began to listen to my husbands observations about the differences in our faiths. I began to study and devour anything that had to do with the Catholic faith. I soon found myself in the same boat as my husband. We now new the truth, and the Lord had restored our family but what were we going to do about it? The Lord put the most precious people in our lives to help us with our journey. Before long we knew without a doubt what we had to do. We had to come home. Despite what we had lost, some of our family, friends, and ministry, we joined the Catholic Church. In return God was faithful to us and gave us back bountifully what we had lost. It was very hard but it was well worth it. We know the truth and the truth has set us free. We have been blessed with another son and look forward to what the future holds for us. I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to our deacon. Deacon Al Girodo has been the most incredible witness to me of what a true Christian is. Thank you for all your patience and prayers. Thank you for being there to make our journey home easier and thank you for loving us unconditionally just as we were.

#### **Jimmy's perspective:**

By 1998, I could no longer deny the truth of the Catholic Faith. This lead to the loss of friendships and some jobs. Being in the South or the "Bible Belt" as many call it, there is a lot of anti-Catholicism. We found a wonderful parish near our home. In Easter of 1998, we were received into the Catholic Church. Our lives have been so richly blessed since our

conversion. I once thought that converting would mean giving up any type of "ministry". I now serve as Choir director in my parish and the Lord has lead us to start an apologetics "ministry" to help educate Catholics about their faith and to defend the Faith against the many anti-catholic websites and material out there. The Lord has blessed us with wonderful friends and an incredible Deacon that serves as Pastoral administrator over our parish. My family even now attends Mass with us when we have special services. That in itself is a miracle. We now have the Communion of Saints, Mary, the Papacy, and most of all the Eucharist. I look back now and the only regret I have is that I did not convert sooner. We have discovered a treasure. We're Finally Home.

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Pamphlet 265

## **The Reno Conversion Story Finally Home: Our Conversion Story**

The Road to Rome is not always easy. In fact for Fundamentalist Converts, the journey can be painful and very emotional. I was raised in a Christian home with a wonderful family. The last thing on earth I ever thought I would be was Catholic! This is the story of our conversions. We hope to help those who are considering the claims of the Catholic Church, and for those who are presently on their journeys home to Rome.

#### **Jimmy's perspective:**

I was working in food merchandising when I first began studying Catholicism. I had a very good friend that worked with me and during our lunch time we would discuss covenant theology. It never came up in our first conversations where he attended church. He was very aware of covenant theology and I just assumed he attended a protestant church. On one particular afternoon, a group of sisters from EWTN came in the store to buy supplies for the convent. I remember thinking to myself on how strange it must be to sacrifice your whole life, to live in solitude all for the sake of the Lord. I was moved by the expression of love and peace on their faces. Of course, this struck my curiosity and I began a conversation with them. I had some basic knowledge of the Catholic faith and tried to hold my own in the conversation with them. They were very generous to share their faith with me and recommended a few books for me to read. I saw that as my opportunity to prove the Catholic faith wrong. Little did I know this would begin my journey home.

### **Christa's perspective:**

We were newly married and very busy. My husband traveled with Trinity ministries and they sang just about every weekend. When we were not traveling with the group we were very active in our protestant church. I remember the day Jimmy came home and told me about the Sisters from EWTN and I felt very uneasy. He had studied other faiths before, but none had quite peaked his interest as these Sisters. I decided not to think about it, because after all he would study his way through this faith just as he had the others. After being married for just four months we found out we were pregnant with our first child. The winds of change were beginning to blow and the incredible journey was fast underway.

### **Jimmy's perspective:**

I had gone to our local Catholic bookstore and picked up a few books that the Sisters had mentioned and began studying. I purchased "Rome Sweet Home" by Scott and Kimberly Hahn, and "Catholicism and Fundamentalism" by Karl Keating. I read "Rome Sweet Home" in about 2 hours when I got home that evening. I could not put it down. I went on to Keating's "Catholicism and Fundamentalism", since I was Fundamentalist, this book really had me interested. I was very anti-catholic and had been for many years, so I wanted to see what kind of defense Keating would give for the various Catholic doctrines. Like many Fundamentalists, I believed the Catholic Church to be the "Whore" of Rev.17. When we would be singing, if I ever encountered a Catholic I would always "witness" to them. I did this out of genuine concern, but it was done out of ignorance of the true teachings of the Catholic Church. As I read "Catholicism and Fundamentalism", I found

much in it made perfect sense. I was never comfortable with my childhood teaching on Baptism. I remember being told, "It is good to be baptized, but it's not necessary for salvation by any means." This never seemed to go along with the scriptures to me, but I pushed it to the back of my mind. Instead of finding the errors in the Catholic Faith, I was finding that the Catholic Church was teaching sound Biblical doctrines. I was very uneasy with this. I began to dissect as much as possible of Keating's book. Comparing everything with scripture, I began to see that many of the beliefs I held from my own studies were being taught by the Catholic Church and had been for almost 2000 years. I began to see the deep covenant theology in Catholicism. Still, I had to find where the Church was in error. My research was now beginning to reach a crisis state. I was more determined than ever to disprove Catholicism, at least to myself anyway. I began to purchase countless Catholic Apologetic works. I devoured hundreds of Catholic books. Out of desperation, I began to purchase and read anything that was anti-catholic. My Faith as I had always known it, was now crumbling before me.

### **Christa's perspective:**

Our lives were about to be changed and blessed, but it took me a little longer than my husband to begin studying Catholicism. During the course of the years my husband would spend hours at a time studying. Before we knew it our first child was born, a healthy baby boy. I was involved more than ever at our church and found myself to be attending alone more often. We had a few hardships financially, but due to a few job layoffs and the expense of a child we were on a sinking ship. Four months after our first child was born we were pregnant again. Jimmy's ministry was beginning to slow down and I felt

like we were losing everything. I began to notice that Jimmy's curiosity about Catholicism had developed into more than a passing phase, it had become a passion. I was having a difficult pregnancy and we had to move in with his parents until we could get on our feet again. I did not want to hear about anything Catholic. I was beginning to wonder where God was in all of this chaos.

### **Jimmy's perspective:**

My studies of Catholicism began to take a "back seat" to finding employment. I tried to push any thoughts of the Catholic Church out of mind. I decided I had to force myself to attend the Fundamentalist Church my wife was attending. After a short time I was able to find work and we moved into an apartment. I resumed my studies because I was still so torn spiritually over the many discoveries I had made. I found the anti-catholic books simply did not accurately portray true Catholic teachings. I discovered these anti-catholic works misrepresented Catholic teachings and strained scripture passages out of context to try and "force" them to mean something they did not. I discovered anti-catholic authors were more interested in effect than in accuracy. Still, I thought there has to be somewhere I can find the error. I knew conversion would be difficult since our family and friends also believed the Catholic Church was a "false" way of salvation. I was desperately searching for a way out.

### **Christa's perspective:**

Things were getting a little better. Our daughter was born and shortly thereafter we were able to be on our own again. I remember having a conversation with a friend of mine at the church we were attending. I told her about Jimmy's new