

# My Journey of Faith

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## My Journey of Faith by Marco A. Fallon

Greetings in the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ! My name is Marco Fallon. I am a Catholic Christian and member of the Emmaus Roundtable of Cleveland, Ohio which is a Lay Catholic Apologetics and Evangelization group. I wanted to take the time to say Happy New Year to everyone and may God Bless you all. I look forward to sharing our wonderful Catholic Christian Faith. I myself am an amateur Catholic Apologist. Am I saying that I am “sorry” for being a Catholic, not at all, I am excited and on fire for fullness of the Faith of Jesus Christ! So you may ask what is an Apologist? Let me shed some light, Apologist is another word for “Apologetics” which simply means giving a reasoned explanation for your faith. A Catholic Apologist charitably defends and explains Catholic doctrine using Sacred Scripture, history, and common sense. Therefore by God’s grace with prayer, reading and study I will be ready to give a reason for the hope I have and be ready to defend the fullness of the truth of Jesus Christ to all who inquire (1 Peter 3:15).

I am a revert to the Catholic Church even though I never officially joined another church my heart rejected the Catholic Church and I was well on my way out of my childhood faith. A revert is someone who leaves the Catholic Church, joins another faith such as Protestantism, or other religion and then comes back to the Catholic Faith. In time I even became anti-Catholic and was opposed to the authority of the Church. I thought the Catholic Church was a mere man-made religion filled with unbiblical teachings until I took my girlfriend Tracy’s (now my wife) challenge and began learning about the Catholic Faith back in late 1996. One day while at a Protestant Christian bookstore Tracy happened to find among the 99% Protestant books a Catholic book called *Catholic and Christian: An Explanation of Commonly Misunderstood Catholic Beliefs* written by Dr. Alan Schreck, associate professor of theology at the Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio. This book was in a very small perhaps 15-20 book selection of Catholic books. At first I did not want to read it cause I was raised Catholic and knew it all, so I thought and did not pick this book up for months. This 205 page soft cover book is also a quick and easy read. If you can read a newspaper you will have no trouble reading and understanding this awesome yet simple book that conveys our Catholic faith and what we have in common and not in common with our separated Protestant brother’s and sisters in Christ.

My wife Tracy is a convert from the Pentecostal Church of God who became Catholic because of her attraction to the sacredness and organization in worship of the Catholic faith. Her College roommate from Case Western University took her to Mass at Holy Rosary Catholic Church. This is my parish church located in Cleveland, Ohio’s historic Little Italy. You would not find me at Mass there or anywhere back then unless it was Christmas Midnight Mass except for a few occasions. She was very inspired and moved by a homily given by Fr. Philip G. Racco, Pastor of Holy Rosary who was celebrating Mass that day. She loved it and entered the “The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults” or R.C.I.A for short, to began her entry into full communion with

Catholic Church. About a little more than a year later I met her through Fr. Frank X. Klamet a resident priest at Holy Rosary during our annual Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Just one day prior to the Feast I said a prayer before the Statue of Our Lady's Assumption asking Mary to pray for me to her Son Jesus that God would put someone decent in my life and to help me to know his will. Praise be to God because he truly answered this prayer!

Well anyway I'm getting off topic. Let get back to the book *Catholic and Christian: An Explanation of Commonly Misunderstood Catholic Beliefs*. The title was no lie because I came to discover all the misunderstandings I had about my own Catholic faith. Starting with Mary whom I came to understand that Catholics do not worship, Confession where Jesus gave his own authority to his apostles to forgive or not to forgive sins, John 20:21-23. Also, the Mass, which makes present the once and for all Sacrifice of Calvary, we do not believe we are re-sacrificing Jesus over and over again. Last but not least, the Eucharist and most importantly to me, the authority of the Catholic Church and the mere fact that Christ himself founded it (Matthew 16:18-19; 18:18; 1 Corinthians 3:10; Ephesians 2:20). All of which I found to be based on rock solid Scripture, History and common sense. I discovered the early Christians held to Catholic beliefs like St. Ignatius of Antioch in the year 110 AD defending the Real substantial presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. He wrote, "they (the heretics) abstain from Eucharist and from prayer, because they do not confess that the Eucharist IS the Flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ...Letter to Smyrnaeans. Also the biblical evidence I discovered like John 6:35-71, Matthew 26:26, 1 Corinthians 10:16, 11:23-29. Wow, what a wake up call that was! Here I was ready to leave the Catholic faith that I really knew nothing about to go elsewhere. So much for my "I know it all because I was raised Catholic" attitude, I knew little and much humility and openness was in order.

As of May 2001, Oxford University Press has counted [33,820 Protestant denominations](#). I wonder which of the 33,820 Protestant denominations I would have picked since they all claim to teach from the bible alone and are guided by the Holy Spirit. Interesting since I know God is not the Author of confusion and Jesus prayed that we all would be one as He and the Father are one (John 17:17-23; Ephesians 4:3-6). Don't get me wrong, the work of the Holy Spirit is not limited to the Catholic church but there is no way God is the author of so much division. Dr. Alan Shreck's book opened my eyes up to the fullness of the Truth, which is in the Catholic Church as given by Christ himself. I in no way mean to imply that other Christians do not have truth, they do but they do not have the fullness of the truth that Jesus gave us, they have but a piece of the pie and the Catholic Faith has the whole pie. After reading the Bible starting with the New Testament my first time I realized that Jesus started one Church and from that realization I was on my search to find it. To my surprise I was already in his church.

This was revealed to me after taking the time to study my faith with that first (and not last) book by Alan Schreck and to seek what and why Catholics believe what they believe and where it was in the bible. Implicitly or explicitly all that the Catholic Church holds to be true is found right in the Bible. Why not? The Bible says that the Church is the Pillar and foundation of the truth 1 Timothy 3:15. Also, we are to hold fast to all the Traditions the apostles taught us whether it be

in person by word of mouth (Sacred Tradition) or in Letter (Sacred Scripture) 1 Thessalonians 2:15. In fact the Bible is like the Catholic Church's family album which came to us by Jesus through Her who has always safeguarded the Sacred Scriptures.

I started watching Eternal Word Television Network ([www.ewtn.com](http://www.ewtn.com)) as well as listening to their short-wave radio signal WEWN. Also in the coming months I would meet a blessed priest named Father Edward Gretchko, Pastor of St. Francis Cabrinni in My wife Tracy's hometown of Conneaut, Ohio. This blessed priest would take the precious time to help me grow in understanding my faith by answering the many questions I had from my studies. He would also prepare Tracy and I for our wedding day October 18th 1997! In Fact Father Ed was the Priest who witnessed as we married each other on that beautiful day in his little Catholic Church in Conneaut, Ohio. Thank you Father Ed for so many blessed memories and may there be many more! (Father Ed has since been resigned and presently resides as Pastor of St. Mary's Catholic Church of Massillon Ohio).

That was the frosting on the cake of my full acceptance of the Catholic Faith and understanding of it. I caught a show on EWTN called The Abundant Life Ministries which interviewed four ex-Protestant Ministers now Catholic, Marcus Grodi, Scott Hahn, Jeff Cavins and Kenneth Howell. Man did I learn a lot about some basic biblical and historical truths. That was the full launch of my Journey back to the Catholic Faith. Here I was ready to leave and there were these Protestant ministers who should have known better who came into full communion with the Catholic Church. I definitely figured these guys knew better than I did. I lacked understanding of History and did not even know that the Catholic faith had any biblical basis for what it taught. Although I began seeing the biblical basis for the Sacraments but every church had a biblical reason for something they practiced. The bottom line that got me was plain old history.

The Catholic Church is the only historical Christian church that goes back to Jesus. All Protestant Churches originated (as they continue to do this day) with the Reformation starting with the Lutherans in 1517. They have splintered into 33,000 different Protestant denominations. Why would I join a church started 1500 years after Christ and leave the very Catholic Church he founded. Historical facts do not lie. You can go to any public library and see for yourself. Another thing was that someone showed me the lists of popes from John Paul II all the way back to St. Peter! That's my home, that's the Catholic Church. Then I seen the writings of the Early Church Fathers and how they upheld what Catholics believe today about the Eucharist, Authority of the Church, the Papacy, the Saints, Mary, the Sacraments and so much more.

I was shocked to find out how little I knew and realized that God had lead me (or keep me) home in His One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. Not just a church based on the bible alone (that very teaching is UN-biblical) but a church which gave the world the bible and persevered it and protected it since it did not just fall out of the sky. So much of what I heard that Catholics supposedly believed from Protestant Radio was plain old misunderstandings like when I heard a preacher claim that Catholics worship Mary (We do not, we honor her and love her and why not? If she was good enough for Jesus she is good enough for me). He misrepresented 1 Timothy 2:5

“Jesus is the one mediator between God and man.” Amen! He wrongly assumed that Catholics were replacing Jesus with Mary and the Saints, that is far from the truth. What we do is the same thing they do when they ask a fellow Christian to pray for them to Jesus. Since death does not separate those who are in Christ (Romans 8:35-39; Mark 12:26-27; Hebrews 12:1) we can ask those Christian now in the presence of God in Heaven to pray for us just like we did when they were here on earth. Also, in 1 Timothy 2:1-4 says that we are to pray for one another, intercede for one another to Jesus our one mediator to God. That is what we are doing when we pray for one another here on earth or ask Mary or a saint to pray for us in heaven. We are one body in Christ (Romans 12:5) and we bear one another’s burdens (Galatians 6:2). This is what we call the communion of the saints. We are all united in Christ Jesus for He is the Vine and we are the branches (John 15). Thanks be to God for opening my eyes to the fullness of his truth. I'll probably be learning the rest of my life but it is awesome to be able to share with others the whole truth of Jesus Christ and His Church (Matthew 16:18-19; 18:17-18).

Before I conclude my story I would like to share a little about my current Journey of Faith and where God has lead me. God has blessed me with a great group of devoted Catholic Christians known as The Emmaus Roundtable of Cleveland. We meet once a month to discuss various topics about the Catholic Christian Faith as given to us by Jesus himself. We come together to learn how to explain, share and defend our faith with everyone who asks us for the reason for the hope we have (1 Peter 3:15). We do this using the holy bible, history and common sense and remain totally loyal to our Holy Father and the teachings of Jesus’ One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. Let me share with you the miracle of how I came across The Emmaus Roundtable and what it has done for my life. A friend named Doug Trout introduced me to this group. I met Doug at the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in Euclid, Ohio in the summer of 1998. I was voicing my concern to Sister Margaret Mary about longing to meet other serious Catholic Christians who love to share their faith and was not shy of expressing their love for Jesus. I hungered for this and right then and there came walking in Doug Trout whom she was telling me about! He had not been to the shrine in months! Coincidence? Not at all. It was God's way of blessing me and answering Our Lady's prayers for me. Our Lord blessed my family with this wonderful group of devoted Catholic Christians whom I love dearly today.

Before all this, Sister Margaret Mary was sharing with me the numerous (physical as well as spiritual) healings that have taken place at the shrine. God has worked in so many lives there as he does all around the world. He answers the prayers of the faithful and especially of Mary and the Saints who are alive and well in heaven praying for us here that we may one day be there and for our intentions like when I ask someone here on earth to pray for me. After Doug came in and meet me sister told me, " see Marco, miracles do happen here!" And that is the way I hooked up with The Emmaus Roundtable and meet Doug Trout, which was nothing short than a miracle. Some may say I was at the right place and right time like when I meet my wife Tracy, I say God answers prayers as long as it is his will for those who are sincere. This group has brought me into a deeper understanding of the very gift of Jesus, namely his Catholic Church that he founded upon Peter the rock (Matthew 16:18-19, 18:18, 1 Timothy 3:15). Also I have been lead into a deeper personal relationship with Jesus and my eyes have been open to all he has to offer; the

fullness of his truth in the Catholic Church especially Jesus present substantially in the Blessed Eucharist and the awesome gift of Holy Mass! Many may ignore this truth but I would love show you right in your own bible if you would like.

Presently I am an Altar Server at Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Cleveland Ohio's Little Italy. Finally, to conclude among God's greatest blessings are, my wife Tracy and our children, Michael Anthony, Maria Therese, Joseph Anthony, Anna Catherine. Dominic and Danielle, my Mom and Dad, brother Rocky and sister Monica, my nieces April & Kayla, and my entire family! God Bless everyone and may the peace and love of Christ be with you all.

Your brother in Christ Jesus and the fullness of His Truth,

**Marco A. Fallon**

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