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THE LOST SHEEP COMES HOME
A journey to God and the Catholic Church
By Myron Moskowitz

I was born to Jewish parents, Irving and Marcine Moskowitz, on June 10, 1949 in the Bronx, New York. My paternal grandfather and uncle were Rabbis. Despite this fact, I was raised with very little religion in my life. This was due, in great part, to the dysfunctional home in which I was raised. By the time I was twelve years old I was already very rebellious and had absolutely no respect for anyone in a position of authority.

Somehow I managed to make it through college and get a degree in physical education, a degree I did not use until almost thirty years later. There was no religion in my life so there was no guilt associated with having broken almost every one of the Commandments.

I also managed to get married. The marriage ended in divorce after seventeen years. I have two wonderful children, Russell and Jessica, who are now 25 and 21 respectively.

I married, Mary, a cradle Catholic, in November 1990. It was not until November 1998 that my life really began to change. While working at a full-time job, I was also pursuing a career in screenwriting. At one point I did have agent representation for almost four years. We came close to a sale once, but it never materialized. The pursuit of this career resulted in numerous feelings of frustration. Frustrations that were now consuming me. I was convinced that my writing ability was a God-given talent and I could not understand why I had not sold anything. This is ironic coming from a person who never gave God a chance to come into his life.

With a dead-end job, no screenplay sales, and now no agent representation, I felt like I was on a treadmill going nowhere. One night, in my typical pessimistic frame of mind, I commented to Mary that I just did not understand life. I told her that there had to be more to life than working and paying bills. Her response was, "there is, why don't you read the Bible." I replied, "whose...yours, or mine?" Mary suggested that I start with the Old Testament and then read the New Testament. To her surprise, I said that I would

I read the Bible from cover to cover. The only part I skimmed through was the Book of Numbers. When I was finished reading, Mary asked me what I thought. I told her that unless the twelve men (the apostles) perpetrated the greatest hoax in the history of the world, you sort of had to believe. "But, being the analytical creature that I am, I could not grasp the understanding of The Trinity. At this point, I asked her to drop the whole

subject. I reminded her that when I said I would read the Bible she would not put any pressure on me after I had finished reading. Mary honored her promise and dropped the subject.

A few weeks passed and there were no further discussions of religion. One night it was close to midnight and Mary was asleep. I was tossing and turning. I suddenly turned to Mary and asked her what she wanted. She responded that she didn't know what I was referring to since she had been asleep. I pursued this line of questioning several more times. Mary was now sitting up. I looked her straight in the eyes and said to her, "didn't you just tap me on the shoulder?" She responded, "no." I said, "you did not just tap me on the shoulder three times?" Mary's eyes opened wide as she said to me, "how many times?" I told her, "three." Mary then said, "and what have you been struggling with?" Before I could answer, she said, "the Trinity." I just looked at her and asked, "where can I sign up for the RCIA program?"

Before the journey officially began I still had a few personal obstacles to clear. How were my family and friends going to react to my decision to convert? Before I told any one of them about my decision, I was firm in my resolve that no matter what their reaction, it was not going to influence my decision. I believed that the taps I received at that time, and continue to believe today, were a direct invitation from God for a new and better life. Now I also know that they were an invitation to eternal life. On April 3, 1999 I was received into the Catholic Church.

The next big event in my life came when Mary persuaded me to attend a Lenten retreat at a neighboring parish. She was very impressed with the priest scheduled to speak having seen him on EWTN. For those of you who may not be familiar with EWTN, it is a Catholic television network. Mary credits EWTN with her spiritual growth and bringing her full circle in her Faith.

The speaker, Father John Corapi was, and still is in my opinion, the greatest speaker on the Catholic faith. I will not even attempt to recreate the power of his talk. Father Corapi's talk had a tremendous influence on my life. I walked out of the retreat that night and told Mary that I had to do more with my life. The phrase that I couldn't get out of my mind was "to he who much is given, much is expected. To he who more is given, more is expected." I felt more had been given to me than I could have ever expected or deserved. How I was going to handle this was beyond me. I responded the way I felt any good Catholic would. I prayed! Our parish is blessed to have Perpetual Adoration. It was there that I took my prayer. My prayer was answered...the Lord wanted me to work with the youth.

Now my problem was, how? I decided I would become a theology teacher. I already had my BA and after some investigating I learned that I would need to acquire 24 credits in religion (18 to start teaching and the remaining completed in two and one-half years).

I completed my studies and I applied for a theology position. It did not materialize. Ironically, a high school in the Archdiocese was in need of a physical education/health teacher. I still do not understand how they got my application. I thought it was understood that even though my degree was in physical education, I was only applying for a position teaching theology. If I had any real desire to teach physical education I would have pursued it years ago. I then started to analyze what my real goals were. They were to try to help kids by spreading the Good News. Maybe I could do this just as effectively, if not more so, in a health classroom and a gymnasium as I could in a theology classroom. Something else I had to grapple with was “Thy will be done”. I wanted to teach theology, but what did He want? I was offered the job and took it.

My first year was rough. I think some of the students that God put into my classes were “payback”. I did spread the news of God whenever the opportunity presented itself. Sometimes I even created the opportunity. I may never know the fruits of my labor. I do know that I taught, and will continue to teach, no matter what subject I am teaching, with God being at the forefront.

Whenever I have the opportunity, I feel honored to share my witness story. Although it is a story about my conversion from Judaism to Catholicism I tell my listeners that the story is bigger than that...it is really about God’s unending love and mercy for each one of us.

My current talks also include the need for orthodox catechesis. As Catholics, we must not be promoting our own agendas. For those of us that teach the Faith, we must, I repeat, we must be in conformity with Church teachings.

For all of us, I like to say that Catholic is more than an eight letter word. We must walk the walk. Going to weekly Mass does not qualify us alone as being good practicing Catholics. I believe it was St. Francis who said, ”Always preach the gospel and when necessary, use words.” To that I say a hearty, “Amen.”

Mary and I have both developed a great devotion to the Holy Eucharist. Plain and simple, it is truly the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Please do not profess to be Catholic if you do not believe this. Should you even be wavering on this belief, I will pass on something that Father Hunt, one of my teachers at the Seminary pointed out in one of his classes. It will stay with me the rest of my life. He read John 6: 54-58. “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died, whoever eats this bread will live forever.” Father Hunt pointed out that “eats” the verb used in this passage is not the classical Greek verb used of human eating,

but that of animal eating “munch, “gnaw.” He was emphatic in stating that you cannot munch or gnaw on a symbol. God love you, Father Hunt.

About a year ago Mary became a member of our parish Perpetual Adoration team. It is a magnificent and loving way to spend time with the Lord. A few months later I noticed in our parish bulletin that they needed adorers to fill the Wednesday 2-3 AM time slot. Understandably, not an easy time to fill. I decided to go to the Chapel for that hour. I love being there. I am at total peace. It is just me and the Lord.

Being aware of the Church’s teaching on private revelation (that you may choose to accept it or reject it) I would like to share with you the most profound experience of my life.

It was the morning of October 10, 2001. It was approximately 2:20 AM. I was sitting in the back pew of the Adoration Chapel and facing the Blessed Sacrament. For some reason I was extremely tired that morning. I closed my eyes for about one minute. I did not go to sleep. When I opened my eyes, standing in front of the Blessed Sacrament, facing the window, in a right profile view was the Lord. His hair was shoulder length and He was wearing a red robe over a white garment. On the bottom of the red robe was the symbol for Christ a large X, with the intersecting P. The Lord took two steps and vanished.

Why He appeared to me I do not know. I constantly pray that He give me the answer. Mary believes that He appeared to me as a blessing for the faithful servant that she believes I have been and a “warrior for the Faith” that I am called to be. I tell Mary that there have been Saints and Popes that have been more deserving than I could ever be and probably have not received such a blessing. She simply tells me to accept it as a gift. I do but it is an overwhelming experience nonetheless.

Now I, of course, make this appearance of our Lord a key point in my talks. It gives me the opportunity to emphasize the Real Presence of the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and the power and mercy of God. Again, I tell my audience that it was me He appeared to. Me, a nobody. If He was there for me, He is there for everyone! We must believe in the power and mercy of God. We must.