

# Foreward

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I collected all the words and strung them together. But I cannot claim to be the author.

I did not create the Universe.

I did not create the Earth.

I did not create the first man and woman.

I did not create myself, I was born of Barry J. and Magda Steil (they didn't create themselves either, thank you MamaLou, DaddyBob and Abuela and Abuelo).

I did not invent the English language, nor did I teach it to myself.

I did not create the Catholic Church.

I did not create the Catholic Catechism.

I did not create the Catholic Bible.

I did not create the Catholic Faith.

I did not create the Saints.

I came to know, love and serve Jesus from my list of saints, most notably:

- MamaLou and DaddyBob - faithful Catholics their entire lives - parents of 11
- My Dad - who showed me the faithfulness of a good husband and Father
- Father Rutledge - who cared so much for the younger generation and for all the pizza!
- Laura and Ramon Reyes - who followed the Holy Spirit and introduced me directly to Jesus
- Father Kane - who was a true shepherd and a true friend
- John Husum and Berta Briceno - who support our youth group so much
- Bill LaBarr - who taught me Faith begins with gratitude
- Timothy Keller who taught me what an idol actually is
- My son Keaton - who helped bring me back to the Catholic faith
- My wife Tyra - who is the most important reason for me to desire God's love and gave me the next seven most reasons of my life
- The myriad of Catholic lay authors and apologists that taught me the beauty of the faith
- Tim Staples
- Trent Horn
- Joe Heschmeyer

There is not a single idea or principle that I came up with for this book.

I was taught by the Church (all of the above) and God gave me a desire to enjoy organizing facts and putting them together.

My prayer my whole life has been to be able to share the deep Love that God shared with me in a way that just makes sense to people.

The author of this book is the Holy Spirit working through the Church.

I am not claiming any semblance of "divine revelation" here. Only that I see my entire life - and yours - as divinely inspired.

And through the Holy Spirit, I am just trying to gather all the wisdom of our Creator into - I hope - the most beautiful and meaningful book you will ever read.

This book will help you to understand everything that the Bible and the Church teaches about God's love - that has been revealed to us through the ages and that my feeble mind could put together into a work.

This book does not stand alone. It relies heavily on and points you to the vast wisdom of the Church and the Holy Spirit in the Bible, the Catechism, Saints, theologians and Popes who have been teaching us about God's immense love for us over the ages. So look at it as a collection of and pointer to the best of the Church's teaching in one place.

While the Church has traditionally grouped virtues and gifts of the Spirit into categories like theological

virtues, cardinal virtues, and fruits of the Spirit, this book offers an additional way to view and understand them as a complementary framework.

The model presented here organizes these facets of love into four tiers: the foundational truths written on the human heart, the disciplines needed to form a loving heart, the fruits that grow when love matures, and the final fulfillment of love in communion. This structure is designed to help modern readers see how every virtue flows from and returns to love — the source and summit of all Christian life.

This four-tier framework also gives us another way to approach and understand the Gospel and everything the Church does, teaches, and calls us to. It shows how each doctrine, each sacrament, each moral teaching is never about guilt or control — but about forming the heart for perfect freedom to love and communion with God and others. The Church does not exist to impose rules, but to safeguard the path that leads us to the deepest desire of our hearts: to love and be loved in truth, justice, mercy, and peace — forever.

“Hard times create strong men. Strong men create good times. Good times create weak men. And, weak men create hard times.”

— G. Michael Hopf

That is the recurring story of God's People in the Bible. Why?

This book will answer that.

Why is there evil and suffering in the world?

This book will answer that.

What is "the Gospel"?

This book will answer that.

What is "the Church"?

This book will answer that.

What is a "Sacrament"?

This book will answer that.

What is the best world view for human flourishing?

This book will answer that.

What does it mean to love your neighbor?

This book will answer that.

What is Love?

This book will answer that.

To conclude this Prologue, it is fitting to recall this pastoral principle stated by the Roman Catechism: The whole concern of doctrine and its teaching must be directed to the love that never ends. Whether something is proposed for belief, for hope or for action, the love of our Lord must always be made accessible, so that anyone can see that all the works of perfect Christian virtue spring from love and have no other objective than to arrive at love

-- CCC 25

If God the Father almighty, the Creator of the ordered and good world, cares for all his creatures, why does evil exist? To this question, as pressing as it is unavoidable and as painful as it is mysterious, no quick answer will suffice. Only Christian faith as a whole constitutes the answer to this question: the goodness of creation, the drama of sin and the patient love of God who comes to meet man by his covenants, the redemptive Incarnation of his Son, his gift of the Spirit, his gathering of the Church,

the power of the sacraments and his call to a blessed life to which free creatures are invited to consent in advance, but from which, by a terrible mystery, they can also turn away in advance. There is not a single aspect of the Christian message that is not in part an answer to the question of evil.

-- CCC 309

**\*\* Technical note:** I also did not create the incredible AI tools that assisted me in researching, writing and editing this book.

This book is all based on the Church's teachings and the Holy Spirit's inspiration, but AI helped accelerate the process

of writing this book and making sure the book is faithful to the Church's teachings and the Holy Spirit's inspiration. **\*\***