



# MESSENGER



## CONVERSION OF THE HEART

### Baptist Bible Study and AM 820 lead home to Catholicism

Natalie knew that a big part of her life was missing during the thirty years that she wandered in faith. As a young woman, Natalie married a charming, intelligent, handsome young man who became very, very ill. She stayed by his side although his illness took her to difficult places where no one wishes to go – ever.

*“I spent six years in the Baptist church, all the time listening to AM 820.”*

Born and raised as a Catholic in Pennsylvania, Natalie moved to Columbus in 2010 following her husband’s death. “In my new home, a neighbor chatted me up about the Baptist church,” says Natalie, “and I just went with it.”

When she came to Columbus she found something else too: AM 820. “Here in Columbus, I spent six years in the Baptist church, all the time listening to AM 820.”

#### **HANDSOME, OUTGOING, FUNNY, SUCCESSFUL, AND CATHOLIC TO BOOT!**

A cradle Catholic, Natalie grew up in an ethnic-Catholic community. “St. Therese of Lisieux was my favorite Saint. At the age of ten or eleven, I read the story of The Little Flower and announced that I would become a nun!” muses Natalie.

God had other plans. At 18, she moved to Cleveland to live with her Aunt and start a job. “I met Frank, a handsome, outgoing, funny guy who was a really smart, successful

accountant. He was Catholic to boot. His uncle was a priest, his family was devout. But I soon discovered that my fiancé wasn’t actually practicing his faith. I struggled with marrying someone who wasn’t a practicing Catholic but finally gave in to the popular ideas of the times. So, in 1967, we got married – but outside of the Church. I trusted that everything would work out in the marriage, and over the years, I did grow to love Frank very much.”

In fact, at about the nine-year milestone, the marriage took an unexpected turn. “Frank began having migraine-like cluster headaches. His doctor practiced ‘Better living through chemistry,’ a popular slogan in the ‘70s, and prescribed Percodan for Frank.

#### **THE GOLDEN LIE**

In those days, not even the experts foresaw that the drug revolution would become an opioid epidemic. Satan is the most cunning liar and hides the death trap of drugs behind a feel-good rush and the sense of omnipotence of the moment.

Frank began having severe back pain that led to surgeries and the use of more pain killers. Natalie was amazed at how freely the doctors handed out these drugs to Frank, as if they were candy. The Percodan led to OxyContin. When the doctors refused more prescription drugs, Frank turned to heroin. “I saw my husband fall into a whole new world,” recalls Natalie.

**[CONTINUED]**



"I enjoy praying in my car to and from work. I am getting a great education from Fr. Ricarrdo in the A.M. and *Catholic Answers* in the evening. I also enjoy the music on the weekends and the broadcast of the Women's and Men's Annual Conferences."

- Faithful Listener in Gahanna

## BISHOP ARCHIVES



Bishop Campbell's *Reflections*, in searchable audio archives online, bring the Bishop's pastoral care to RCIA groups, teachers, Bible study groups and the faithful, looking for spiritual inspiration. On demand at [www.StGabrielRadio.com](http://www.StGabrielRadio.com).

## NEW! LOCAL AM 820 PROGAMS



Gaze into the beautiful connection between spiritual and physical strength with Lori Crock. More information at [www.HolyAndHealthyCatholic.com](http://www.HolyAndHealthyCatholic.com)

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Darlene Phillips serves as an AM 820 Parish Ambassador for Our Lady of Lourdes in Marysville. Darlene also helps prepare

AM 820 "Welcome Home" gifts that all parishes receive for their RCIA catechumens and candidates. Thank you, Darlene!

## CONVERSION OF THE HEART [CONTINUED]

*Frank turned to heroin. "I saw my husband fall into a whole new world," recalls Natalie.*

for his craziness, the loss of his job, his car wrecks, incarcerations, failing health and hospitalizations - and his deep suffering." The struggle continued for 30 years. Natalie says. "I recall walking through a shopping center feeling that a black cloud hung over my head.

"All through these difficult years, my family and friends were kind and compassionate," Natalie affirms gratefully. She worked a lot and found guidance through Al-Anon and emotional support through her family and friends. She never stopped attending Mass.

### RECONCILIATION

In the last year of his life, Frank needed a surgical intervention. The doctor told Frank that the procedure could only be done if Frank were clean from drugs. Frank accepted the challenge, underwent the withdrawal ordeal, and had the surgery. Natalie describes the great gift that Frank gave her, "For the last four months of his life, his mind cleared and he regained his dignity. He recognized the pain that he had caused. He was able to ask for forgiveness and reconcile with his family." Frank passed away in 2005.

The year 2010 brought Natalie to a new life and a new neighborhood in Columbus. Natalie has no children, so she moved to Columbus to be near her family. Natalie also found "The Protestant Neighbor" and AM 820.

### I JUST STUMBLED ONTO AM 820

Natalie can't put her finger on just how she came upon St. Gabriel Radio. "I never was a big radio fan, but somehow I stumbled into Catholic radio and it became part of my life."

*"Reading the Scriptures and what I learned on AM 820 led me back to the Catholic Church."*

gone to church out of obedience to my mother and Catholic teaching. I started to know Jesus through Scripture.

"I especially loved the AM 820 programs because people like Scott Hahn and Tim Staples gave me such good grounding in the Scriptures," explains Natalie.

### LORD, WHEN DID I SEE YOU A STRANGER, OR NAKED, OR SICK, OR IN PRISON?

God was the only anchor for Natalie's life. "God, I don't know what to do!" was Natalie's cry at Mass. "Even so, I felt that the Holy Spirit was with me, helping me to have compassion for my husband,

*Natalie describes the great gift that Frank gave her, "For the last four months of his life, his mind cleared and he regained his dignity."*

At the same time, the protestant neighbor was pestering Natalie, "Come to my church." Natalie caved in and accompanied the neighbor to a Baptist congregation. "It was like a completely new world. Faith had always been important to me but I had never really known Scripture. In fact, I never really had a relationship with Jesus. I had always



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## CONVERSION OF THE HEART (CONTINUED)



“At the same time, I went to this Baptist church for five or six or years and the members of the congregation become part of my family. It was very hard to leave,” Natalie says, “Reading the Scriptures and what I learned on AM 820 led me back to the Catholic Church.

Natalie was introduced to Scripture from the outset as a Catholic – every Mass is full of Scripture. But, the meaning of the Scripture that she heard in Mass didn’t register in her heart. Also, as a child and a young person, she never felt close to Jesus. When

she went to the Baptist services, she rediscovered Scripture and began to discover Jesus. At the Baptist congregation, she opened her mind to what Jesus taught in the Bible. Through her new view of Scripture, coupled with what she had learned growing up as a Catholic and what she was hearing on St. Gabriel Radio programs, Jesus came to life and brought her hope and inspiration.

### AM 820, MY SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

“These programs became my spiritual advisor, and through them I realized that I needed help to make my own journey home. AM 820 programs like *Catholic Answers* became the gateway. Catholic radio taught me where I needed to go and how God’s Mercy is endless. Marcus Grodi’s *The Journey Home* stories especially helped me figure out what I need to do. I am humbled to think what God’s Mercy can do!

“Sixteen months ago, I finally came back to Catholicism. I wanted the Sacraments. Scripture had awakened my need for the Sacraments. I was doing sidewalk counseling outside an abortion center at the time and mentioned my desire to a sidewalk counselor companion. She told me, ‘Don’t wait! You could be run over by a truck! Then, too late!’

*“Don’t wait! You could be run over by a truck! Then, too late!”*

“I realized that she was right,” continues Natalie. “So I found Fr. Bill Arnold. He told me that all I had to do was repent and reconcile through the Sacrament of Confession. I did and the very next Saturday vigil went to Mass and Holy Communion.”

Natalie’s next stop was to talk with her Baptist pastor. “When I told the pastor and his wife that I had gone to Confession, their jaws dropped.” It was a difficult goodbye for Natalie because she was truly fond of her Baptist friends. In her new parish, Holy Spirit, Natalie found a new focus. “I’ve become friends with the people around me in the pews.” Natalie enjoys cooking and hopes to become more involved in parish life.

She is also closer than ever to St. Gabriel Radio. “Programs like Dr. Anders, Fr. Riccardo, and so many others all drive home to me the Truth of Catholicism. It’s wonderful to receive the Sacraments after so many years!”

In retrospect, Natalie sees Divine Providence at work. “God gave my husband and me our own particular life for a reason that only He knows, this side of Heaven. My faith has taught me that I don’t know the big picture, but God does know.”

Out of respect for the deceased husband, the names of both spouses have been changed.

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March 21, 22, 23, & 24

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FEBRUARY 17, 2018**

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**MEN'S  
FEBRUARY 24, 2018**

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## MISSION

St. Gabriel Catholic Radio's mission is to reach more souls with quality programming that is faithful to the teachings of the Church and presented in a way that inspires conversion of heart and a deepening faith while building up the local Body of Christ.

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