



MESSENGER

CONVERSION OF THE HEART



Radio Sparks a Mother's Heart

Heather MacKinnon avows, "I'm in love with the Lord and the Catholic Faith. It's all because one day I listened to St. Gabriel Radio on my commute to work."

In a way, Immaculate Conception parish launched Heather on her radio journey five years ago. "Every time I pulled into the parish parking lot, I saw cars with the AM 820 bumper magnet," says Heather. "So, when Father Matt Hoover encouraged us to listen to St. Gabriel Radio as a way to grow in our Faith, I thought, 'I can do that.'"

Radio was already a regular part of Heather's workday commute, so she gave AM 820 a try. "Driving to work back then, I typically tuned in a little after eight a.m. and arrived at work before nine. So, at first, I didn't know which priest was speaking. He was articulating the Faith in a way that I had never heard growing up as a Catholic."

THE EMBERS GLOW

"It was easy to set the radio to AM 820 and listening became a morning highlight. I figured out that the priest speaking was Father John Riccardo (7:00 a.m. weekdays) and began searching for his *Christ is the Answer* podcasts. I am a cradle Catholic and Father Riccardo opened my eyes to the beauty of the Catholic Faith — I discovered things that I had never heard." A deep prayer life, a relationship with Jesus, the power of

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Eucharistic Adoration, and the "why" behind our Faith were truths that Heather discovered in her morning drives with St. Gabriel Radio and Father Riccardo.

"What draws me to Father Riccardo is that he is always convicting, never condemning. He removed the scales from my eyes regarding many Catholic teachings. Before, I was definitely a 'cafeteria Catholic' and rejected the parts of the Faith that I didn't agree with. Father Riccardo gently, and sometimes not so gently, explained the truth and the 'why' of Jesus's teachings. I now have zero objections to the Catholic Faith. He

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also emphasized thinking critically about what the Faith teaches instead of blindly accepting what the popular culture has to offer. He taught me how to see life from God's perspective instead of the world's perspective. He talked about the Catholic Faith

with humility, opened up the beauty of the Faith, and encouraged me to go deeper."

GLOWING COALS CATCH FLAME

Heather's growing love for the Faith has led her to take part in many activities at her parish and within the diocese. She recalls that during her parish's Alpha program, she had many questions about the Faith. "I grew in courage and began asking questions even if I felt silly. During one session, I blatantly asked, 'How do

[CONTINUED]

WE'RE EXPANDING!



ATHENS FM 106.7

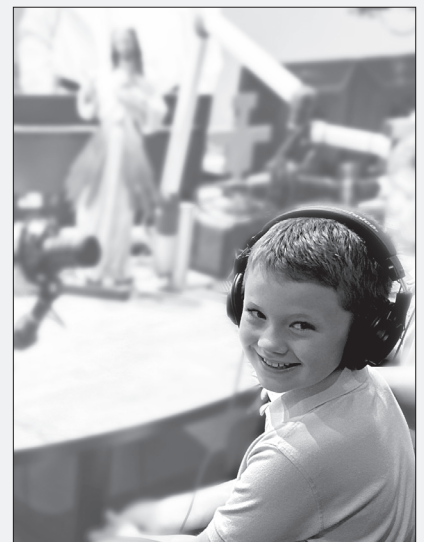
CONVERSION OF THE HEART [CONTINUED]

you pray?’ In all of my years being a Catholic, I had never learned a way to pray. I discovered by asking the question that many of my tablemates didn’t know either. Luckily, the Holy Spirit knew my desire for prayer because soon after that, AM 820 aired Father Riccardo’s three-part session on how to pray!”

THE FLAMES SPREAD

Next, she discovered retreats. “A friend shared her story after attending a Damascus women’s retreat and I knew that I had to attend. My encounter was profound. I am so grateful for AM 820 supporting and airing the *Beyond Damascus* (10:00 a.m. Saturdays) and *Damascus Daily Prayer Lab* (4:00 p.m. weekdays) podcasts because I don’t have to wait for a retreat to hear more from the amazing leaders at Damascus.”

Heather feels confident that she is becoming a stronger Faith influence within her own family. As a child, she absorbed religion through osmosis in her home in Kent, Ohio. “We went to CCD on weekends and Mass on Sundays with my family. However, we didn’t talk about the Faith, Mass, or homilies after Mass or in the home. When I was growing up, it seemed that there was no hint about where God was directing me. In retrospect, I can see He has always been present in my life.



“Faith in my life and our home is no longer compartmentalized, something to do on Sundays. Now, every night my nine-year-old son and I read a daily devotion. Bedtime has become such a sacred time for us to discuss faith and how Jesus is present in all areas of our lives — both in the hard times and the good times. Many nights, he asks insightful questions that turn into profound and deep conversations. I love that he is learning how to think critically about the Faith. I want my son to grow up hearing about the Truth and Beauty of our Faith.”

SETTING HEARTS ON FIRE

A few years ago, having learned more about Enthronement of the Sacred Heart from Emily Jaminet on the *Sacred Heart Hour* (8:00 a.m. First Fridays), all three members of the MacKinnon family — mom, dad, and son — enthroned their home to the Sacred Heart. “Together, we participated in all the prayers leading up to the Enthronement. We were so blessed to have Father Matt share dinner with us before he led us through the Enthronement. Our home is changing as the Holy Spirit pours grace into our family.”

Her enthusiasm has spread to her workplace, a family-owned insurance agency. In 2023, she wanted her individual office enthroned — which then led to the entire office being enthroned. Again, Father Matt led

LISTENER TESTIMONY



“The variety of topics, knowledge, and deep faith conveyed by the hosts help me grow in the Faith.” - *Faithful Listener*

**INVITE A
FRIEND TO
LISTEN THIS
ADVENT**



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Mary Beth Eberhard along with four of the eight Eberhard children brought a special joy to the Fall Spirit Drive.

They greeted visitors, managed the refreshments, and answered phones with bright smiles, generous hospitality, and welcoming voices. Thank you for helping make the Spirit Drive a success!

CONVERSION OF THE HEART

the office Enthronement to the Sacred Heart with Heather's husband Andy (who is also her boss) and Andy's business partner. "It was a very special ceremony because we had the opportunity to pray for current and previous employees — including one of the founders who had recently passed away. It was beautiful to include him in our blessing." Clients who come to Heather's office now see the Enthronement sacramentals on her office walls.

THE BLAZE BRINGS LIGHT

Heather's love for the Faith has an impact in her parish and community, as well. In addition to involvement in small Bible discussion groups and the Rescue Project, she is now following the prompting of the Holy Spirit by starting a high school ministry. "I see how the world is indoctrinating these students. The Lord is calling me to present to them His way for their lives. It will include an intense service component. The students will speak first in every discussion. And it will not include praise and worship music. Honestly, without the Lord prompting me to listen to St. Gabriel Radio, I know that I would not be pursuing this ministry."

For those interested in learning more about the new High School Hangout at Immaculate Conception, please contact Heather at mackinnonhf@gmail.com.

"I want my son to grow up hearing about the Truth and Beauty of our Faith."

A few days ago, Heather and another mom took four Immaculate Conception fourth-grade boys to the St. Gabriel Radio station for a tour and to listen to the Divine Mercy Chaplet that her son's class had recorded. "The four boys were so excited to put on the headphones and talk to each other through the microphones! They also heard their Divine Mercy Chaplet as it was being aired on St. Gabriel Radio at 3 p.m. They were astounded and said, 'Five thousand people will

be listening to us!' I highly encourage parents to schedule a tour with the radio station for their children because St. Gabriel Radio is such a blessing for our community.

"These days, St. Gabriel Radio is always on in the car. *Catholic Answers Live* (6–8:00 p.m. weekdays) provides a deeper understanding of the complicated parts of our Faith. I find encouragement in *Women of Grace with Johnette Williams* (11:00 a.m. weekdays) and *Abiding Together* (4:00 p.m. weekdays)."

Heather sums up her experience by affirming, "St. Gabriel Radio has had a tremendous impact on my life. It was the catalyst that ultimately led me to discover a personal relationship with Jesus, to make Faith a priority with my husband and son, and to fully embrace the beauty of the Catholic Faith."

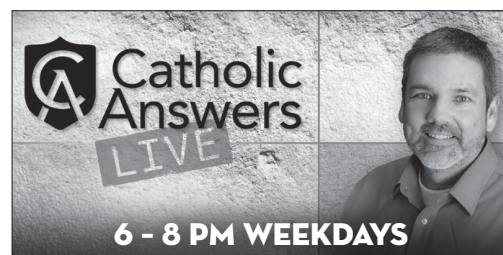
"I highly encourage parents to schedule a tour with the radio station for their children."

LIVE AND LOCAL!



YEAR-END RESOLUTIONS

- 1 LOVE GOD MORE
- 2 PRAY WITH MY FAMILY
- 3 THANK MY PRIEST
- 4 ADD ST. GABRIEL RADIO TO MY ESTATE PLAN



PRAY FOR THE FAITHFULLY DEPARTED

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

May they rest in peace.

Amen.



EWTN

Global
Catholic
Network



ST. GABRIEL RADIO, INC.
4673 WINTERSET DRIVE
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MISSION STATEMENT

St. Gabriel Catholic Radio's mission is to reach souls with faithful Catholic teaching that inspires conversion of heart and deepening of faith while building up the local Body of Christ.

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“THY WILL BE DONE,” (MATTHEW 6:10).