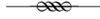


Introduction



Preparing this book has been a labor of love for me—love for the Church and love for my family. As a father, my primary goal is that my wife and children go to Heaven. The best way for them to achieve this goal is to embrace the Catholic faith. I want my family to be Catholic, not so we will all be in the same club—the Catholic club. But because I believe the Catholic Church teaches the truth: about God, about our relations with God, and about our relations with each other. The Church is the surest path to happiness on earth and beatitude in Heaven. Love for my family demands this concern. In an absolute sense, it is all that matters.

The idea for this book was born of the many encounters my college-aged children had with their classmates and professors. My children’s faith was challenged at every turn. Professors proclaimed with great authority that the Gospels are a myth or that science and religion are incompatible. The media made great sport of belittling the Church for its actions during the Inquisition or the Crusades. I could usually come up with a response, but it was frequently not quite adequate to satisfy the more sophisticated and inquisitive minds of university students. I found myself running to the Internet to find a good article addressing the issue at hand.

This book is intended for anyone who wishes to dispel the many myths and misperceptions about the Catholic Church and its teachings that are promoted by university professors, the media, and the uninformed. The book is divided into four parts covering 26 topics. These topics are “hot-button” issues that come up repeatedly.

The material is organized to maximize its usefulness. Each topic has a brief introduction, frequently with a reference to an authoritative source such as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* or an official Church document. This introduction is followed by a short presentation of the highlights, in bulleted format, of one or more articles

addressing the topic, and then the articles themselves, which are reprinted with permission. The book may be read cover to cover or from topic to topic, according to readers' interests and inclinations.

The articles were chosen for their reliability and clarity. Although some of the articles are more challenging, all should be accessible to readers with varying backgrounds and education. The bulleted highlights provide the key points and conclusions. However, the articles should be read in their entirety to get a solid understanding of how the authors derived their conclusions. If we are to understand and later explain these issues to others, we need to digest the ideas and arguments presented. This book is intended as an invitation to further exploration, and additional reading is highly recommended.