

Some questions and answers with Steve Ray

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Inspirational speaker, author and apologist Steve Ray will travel to Guam April 15th with his wife Janet to join Guam Catholics in a series of gatherings celebrating our faith.

Steve, Janet and in fact the entire Ray family underwent a remarkable conversion to the Catholic faith in 1994. Steve and Janet travel throughout the world sharing their faith. They will speak during Inetnon Mangatoliku: A Gathering of All Catholics and Friends 3-6 p.m. Sunday, April 17 at the University of Guam Fieldhouse.

The Pacific Voice conducted a Question and Answer interview via e-mail with Steve Ray this week, which we happily share with you.

PV: What fuels your love for God?

STEVE: From my childhood my father and mother taught me about truth -- that it is important. My love for God is based on truth. He is the truth and without him the world and the universe are meaningless. It is God that gives ultimate meaning to our lives and our existence. It is this knowledge that drives me to understand and love him more. Discovering the Church has only fueled the fire of my love for Our Lord since I see his beauty and grace reflected in her.

I also see the authority -- the continuing presence of Christ in the world both in the call to holiness and the moral authority in the world. No one else has the



voice and world presence that the Catholic Church has. If Jesus were to leave a church on earth -- I suspect it would look just like the Catholic Church. Therefore I submit to and love Christ and his vicar and his Church.

PV: What do you hope to share as you and Janet visit Guam in the near future?

STEVE: In many Catholic lands and countries the people have a simple Catholic faith. They have usually gone many generations without their faith being challenged. In the world today there are over 33,000 denominations and many cults. Great numbers of these groups are flooding into Catholic lands to proselytize and Protestantize the Catholic

people. I find this very troublesome. I was once a Protestant who opposed the Catholic Church and tried to "get Catholics saved". I was convinced they were not "born again".

Now that I have discovered the truth and beauty of the Catholic Church I want to spend my life helping Catholics understand and defend their faith. I have seen hundreds, even thousands of Protestants convert to the Catholic Church. I want to share the depth, beauty, truth, history, and riches of the Catholic faith so Catholics are strong and proud of the Church Jesus founded 2,000 year ago and which is 1 billion strong today.

PV: Was there one thing

that stood out above others in prompting your conversion to the Catholic faith?

STEVE: Yes, the issue of authority and unity. As an Evangelical Protestant trying to figure out which of the 33,000 denominations is the correct one -- teaching the truth as God would want it taught today, I realized that the Protestant world was in spiritual and moral confusion. I began to read the writings of the very first Christians -- many of whom personally knew the apostles -- and I realized they were distinctly Catholics from the beginning and that the Church today taught the same thing.

Protestants had fallen off the track and rolled down the hill. I had to get back in the Church that had the true claim to continuity with Jesus, the apostles, and the fathers of the Church.

PV: What gets in the way of each of us having a stronger relationship with Jesus Christ?

STEVE: There are a number of things that keep us from being faithful, holy Christians. First, we allow the cares and pressures of the world and everyday life to distract and pull us away. Love of money, power, beauty, or popularity is a great distraction. Fear of giving ourselves completely into the hands of God without reserve holds people back.

Confusion and being misled by false teachers has caused many to fall by the wayside but the main reason for failing to have a strong relationship with Jesus is SIN. God will keep you

from sin, but sin will also keep you from God.

PV: Have you heard much about our island? What do you know about Guam and what do you expect?

STEVE: We have not heard a lot about Guam except that we know it played a very significant role in World War II. We also know it is populated by lovely Catholic people who are being infiltrated by the cults and sects. We expect to find a beautiful, tropical island full of friendly and hospitable people and we are very excited to spend a few days sharing the natural beauty and beauty of our faith.

PV: Any message you'd like to relay to Catholics and people of Guam in general at this time, in advance?

STEVE: Those who have been in the faith for generations are frequently unaware of how rich and beautiful it is. Sometimes it takes a foreigner to help the citizen how wonderful their country is. We are new to the Catholic Church. We were anti-Catholic Protestants and now we are excited to share our great and lovely discovery.

We encourage the people in Guam to be open to the love of God, the truth of the faith, and the Catholic Church. I hope they will be ready to stand up and be counted -- to explain and defend the Church to their families and friends to keep them all in love with the Church and protected from all those who try to snatch believers out of the Church.