

## Books that Change Lives

Written by Rev. H.T. Burke

Is the pen still mightier than the sword? If I reflect upon the power of books to change lives and influence the world, it certainly seems so. Many conversions to the Lord have come through books, and my own is no exception. When I was fourteen, I was very concerned about finding a sure and certain way to get to Heaven. I think God saw what I was looking for and provided it for me in St. Louis DeMontfort's, ***The Secret of the Rosary***. In it was a line that changed my life. He wrote, "If you say the Rosary faithfully until death for the purpose of knowing the Truth and obtaining contrition and pardon for your sins, I do assure you that in spite of the gravity of your sins you shall receive a never fading crown of glory." (1 Pt.5:4) I felt this was it. I had a Saint promising me if I did something, it would be the surest way to Heaven. I have since dubbed it the Montfortian Promise. I know that we cannot be certain we will be saved, because we cannot be sure of the grace of final perseverance. As St. Paul says, "I discipline myself, lest after preaching to others I myself be lost." (1Cor.9:27) However, I know that reading that promise inspired me to pray the Rosary every day since I was fourteen. I can also say that it was the Rosary that helped foster my vocation.

I have recently finished another book that I think will change many lives and is destined to be a best seller - ***Rome Sweet Home*** by Scott and Kimberly Hahn. They tell the agonizing story of their conversion from being a devout Presbyterian family to a devout Catholic family. Scott was a dynamic young preacher who was getting his congregation so excited about the faith. He was asked to be the rector of a seminary at age twenty-six! Now we can read his detective-like search for the true Church, a story that gets people excited about being Catholic! It is also on video from St. Joseph's Communications (800-526-2151), or you can buy it from your local Catholic bookstore.

Some people have asked which books I recommend, so here's a list of starter books grouped by topic:

Conversion: ***Rome Sweet Home*** (Ignatius Press), ***Treasure In Clay*** (Ignatius Press);

Spirituality: ***The Imitation of Christ*** by Thomas A'Kempis, ***Introduction to the Devout Life*** by St. Francis de Sales (Tan Books), ***Light and Peace*** (Tan Books);

Apologetics: ***Fundamentals of the Faith*** (Ignatius), ***Catholicism and Fundamentalism*** (Ignatius);

Bibles: ***Douay Rheims*** (Old English) (Tan), ***New American Bible*** (Modern English);

Bible Commentary: ***Navarre Bible Commentary***, ***Douay Rheims Catholic Commentary*** (Catholic Treasures);

Catechism: ***The New St. Joseph's Baltimore Catechism #2***, ***Fr. Hardon's Catechisms***;

Eucharist: ***Eucharistic Miracles*** (Tan), ***The Bible and the Mass*** (Servant);

Reference: ***Fr. Hardon's Modern Catholic Dictionary, Catholic Encyclopedia*** by Stravinskias;

History: ***Church History*** (Tan), ***Christ the King: Lord of History*** by Anne Carroll (Christendom Press);

Saints: ***The Voice of the Saints*** (Tan), ***Dictionary of the Saints*** (Delaney);

Literature: ***The Treasury of Catholic Wisdom*** by Fr. Hardon;

Prayerbook: ***Prayers and Heavenly Promises*** (Tan);

Mary: ***Secret of the Rosary*** (Tan), ***The Sun Danced at Fatima*** (Tan), ***The Wonder of Guadalupe*** (Tan), ***Mary, the Second Eve*** (Tan);

Contraception: ***Sex and the Marriage Covenant*** (Couple to Couple League), ***The Art of Natural Family Planning*** (Couple to Couple League);

Abortion: ***Handbook on Abortion*** by Dr. Wilke, ***Aborted Women, Silent No More*** by David Reardon;

Media: ***Hollywood vs. America*** by Michael Medved;

Art: ***Jesus the Son of Man***, paintings by Carl Bloch, ***The Bible & its Painters*** by Bruce Bernard.