

The Lord isn't the author of confusion, but people can be. Growing up as the son of a non-denominational pastor, I heard many different beliefs, some genuinely Christian, and others mistaken or incomplete. As we moved from place to place, each community offered a "correct" version of Christianity, and my mind filled the gaps with uncertainty.

What became most difficult wasn't only the disagreements between people about doctrine. It was the pressure those disagreements placed on my responsibility as a father. As my children grew, their questions grew too. I found myself struggling to give good answers, and I realized my own understanding of truth felt fractured. In my heart, I knew there should be more to our Christian faith—something deeper and more unified. For two years, I prayed desperately for God to settle the argumentative beliefs I carried.

In that search, Jesus led me toward his Church. I kept returning faithfully and steadily to the Rosary. Praying and contemplating the mysteries of Christ with Mary became the place where salvation and understanding stopped feeling abstract or dull and began to feel intimate. I also began to pair this devotional life with sacred Scripture, and passages I had read many times seemed to harmonize with what the Catholic Church teaches: that the Christian life is not merely a collection of ideas, but a lived relationship with Christ in the concrete life of the Church.

After a season of debate and discernment, I reached out to someone at Saint Anastasia's. I received a tour of the church, and the moment we entered, I felt the presence of God. At the time I wasn't sure what to believe about doctrine, but I knew one thing with certainty: *"I want to be where Jesus is."* That moment became a kind of confirmation for my prayers, because in the Church, faith is not built on shifting preferences, but on truth grounded in Christ and made present through the sacraments.

I began attending Mass shortly afterward. I was unsure of everything and had to watch carefully but my intention was sincere: to be formed. When my children came with me, they were also confused, not because they lacked sincerity, but because they were watching their father search for something stable. Over time, as we kept returning the confusion began to give way to formation.

In the fall I entered OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults), trusting that God was not asking me to simply pick the right opinions, but to be formed into a living faith received from the Church, a faith capable of growth. This process also helped me understand that conversion is not private. Throughout OCIA, questions and doubts I carried began to be answered and so did my children's. I shared what I was learning with my whole family, of teachings, but also of the lived reality of the cloud of witnesses, the sacraments, and the call to holiness.

The three of us were confirmed this Easter Vigil, and we have never been more blessed to be a part of the Church. One truth became unmistakable in our first year of homecoming: in knowing how much I love my family, I can see how much more God loves us. The Lord is faithful, he clarifies, corrects, and guides us on the path of righteousness for his name's sake. And this love has a shape: it meets us in the parish's life, in the sacraments, and especially in the Eucharist, where Christ is truly, really, and substantially present.

Now, I offer thanks to God. And I thank everyone who walked with us through the process because being received into Christ's Church has not been the end of seeking, but the beginning of faithful belonging, in truth and in love.

— **Santana Samora**