

Real Presence Radio Review

RPR
NETWORK

Your Family of Faith & Hope

North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, & Wyoming

Spring 2019



Always Forward

By Steve Splonskowski, Executive Director

A few years ago, I was invited to join my wife and friends on my first sailboat ride. We set out for an enjoyable afternoon, and after a stop for supper, turned back. At this point, the owner asked if anyone wanted to learn to sail, and I jumped at the chance. He put me in his place and coached me on using the wind to move and direct the boat. We moved slowly forward, using the wind to drive us, and it started to get dark. I expected him to take over at some point, but after having coached me for a while, he took a seat and continued to visit with the other passengers. Soon it was dark. He came back and pointed to a row of lights along the shore, telling me to direct the boat towards the last one on the right, keeping the boat moving forward until we lost the wind. I did what he said, still hoping he was going to take over soon, as I was very nervous about landing this expensive boat on a lift I could not see. He had me start the small motor after we lost the wind and told me to guide the boat straight ahead toward a very small light I could see at the end of the dock and lift. Everything else was dark. I continued forward until, as I neared the lift, still only able to see this small light, the boat shuddered and I heard a light thud. Quickly I killed the motor and stood up, thinking I had just damaged his boat. He turned to me along with the rest of the group and said "Are you sure this is the first time you've sailed? That was a perfect landing!" I was shocked, overjoyed, fearful, and totally bewildered all at the same time. I didn't even know what to say, and as others praised me, I could only say, "I don't even know what just happened." Yet something in my heart said, "There is a lesson here; the Lord is showing me something."

After that experience, I ran across a picture online showing a young boy at the stern of a ship with



"The Storm Pilot" by Stephen Sawyer

Jesus pointing out the direction. Having added it as a screensaver, it is a picture I have meditated on many times. We have taken many risks over the years with the expansion of the network, but the past year has been the biggest and most challenging. We expanded into two major markets: Sioux Falls and Rochester, and took on a lot of debt. We have been literally living from month to month financially, and the fundraising campaigns are going slow. With these expansions and increased work load, we have had to add staff positions in key areas to facilitate continual forward movement and to stay connected to our listeners and donors. We have also encountered a number of equipment troubles and unforeseen roadblocks. In prayer, I recently asked the Lord, fully expecting Him to agree with me, "Should we slow down? Do we need to slow this ship down?" I continued to pray, and as I opened the Office of Readings for the day, I read of Moses crying out to the Lord as he was sandwiched between the Red Sea and the Egyptians. The Lord's word to Moses gave me the answer: "Why are you crying out to me? Keep moving forward."

I write this story as I journey with 28 other pilgrims to visit the missions of California built by St. Junipero Serra. This trip has been scheduled and planned for over a year, yet I only learned recently that he is commonly known for saying: "Always forward." So, in faith we will continue forward—often in the dark with only a small light in the distance towards which to point our ship. Despite great efforts to be diligent, very often we have limited knowledge of what we are getting into, and when we achieve success, we stand bewildered as to what just happened. Yet we know that the Lord is pointing the way and will always land us safely ashore!

Jesus Appeared Only to His Disciples— For Good Reasons

May is an important month because it marks the anniversary of Our Lady's appearance to the three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal. I had every intention to write on the subject of Our Lady's appearance, but as I sit at my computer writing, the Resurrection is vivid in my brain.

It is not possible to improve upon Christ's Resurrection and his appearances on Easter Sunday and the 40 days that followed, but that does not mean that I wouldn't have done it differently. What do I mean by that? Well, there are two things I would have wanted to do differently had I been the resurrected Christ. (I know this sounds heretical, but bear with me.)

Had I been Jesus after the Resurrection, one of the first things I would have done is to go and knock on Pontius Pilate's door: "Hey, Pontius, remember me? I am that guy you had crucified last Friday. Look at my hands and feet. What do you think of that?" Then I would have gone to the next gathering of the Jewish Sanhedrin as an uninvited guest to scare the bejeebers out of them, since they were the ones who spearheaded the Crucifixion.

Now let's dissect this a little. How do you suppose Pontius Pilate would have responded? How do you suppose the Sanhedrin would have responded? What I offer is pure hypothetical speculation, but it is food for thought.

My guess is that the Sanhedrin would have tried to put Jesus to death again. There are clear indications in the Gospels that the Sanhedrin accepted the fact that Jesus was doing some amazing things. For example, they admitted that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, but they still killed Jesus and even wanted to kill Lazarus too, since many people were believing in Jesus because of him!

So, the majority of the Sanhedrin were completely close-minded when it came to Jesus. In fact, Jesus even hints at this at the end of his parable of the rich man and Lazarus, when he says, from the mouth of Abraham, "If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced even if one should rise from the dead" (Luke 16:31). That being said, I do not think there would have been any benefit to Jesus showing up at the meeting of the Jewish leadership.

How about Pilate? How would he have responded had Jesus shown up at his door after his Crucifixion and Resurrection? Again, this is pure hypothetical speculation. I think Pontius Pilate would have been awestruck at the appearance of Jesus and his crucifixion wounds and glorified body, but I do not think his response would have been very good.

Remember, Pilate was a pagan. He believed in a whole host of unbelievable mythical characters as gods. I suspect that Pilate would have tried to get the emperor and the Roman Empire to accept Jesus as one of the many gods of their pantheon, and were he successful, what do you suppose would have happened? Christianity would have died out when the Roman Empire ended. Christianity would have become one of those strange Roman mythologies we studied in school, just like Venus and Minerva.

God had a better plan.

Between the Resurrection and the Ascension, Jesus appeared only to those who were his disciples in life.

While we may question why that was the case, and we may think that it would have been more effective if Jesus appeared to some of his enemies, the fact is that Jesus knew what he was doing.

Suppose the Christian message would have had the backing of the Roman Empire from the very beginning. The spread and growth of Christianity would have been attributed to human power. The fact that Christianity spread at a miraculous rate despite the furor of the political power of the day is just that: a miracle. The hand of God, not the hand of man, caused its growth. The very disciples who cowered in fear of the Jewish authorities, the very disciples who ran away and showed themselves to be hopelessly dumb during the life of Jesus, were the ones who were emboldened after his death to spread the Good News.

God's ways are not our ways, and although I think it might have been pretty cool to watch Jesus appear to Pontius Pilate and the Sanhedrin, it was not of God. By appearing only to those who were his disciples before he ascended to heaven, Jesus shows clearly that God's plan is perfect.

Father Richard Kunst is pastor of St. James and St. Elizabeth parishes in Duluth, MN.

"I am so blessed each and every day with RPR and EWTN! I feel like a whole new world has opened up to me—a world of light, hope, love, and teaching."

-Karen from North Dakota



Real Presence Radio Announces New Staff!



Aaron Breen, Producer

Hello, my name is Aaron Breen, and I am the new producer of Real Presence Live. I have lived in Fargo my whole life and graduated from NDSU in 2011. I currently live in West Fargo with my wife, Sarah, and our son, Matthew. I enjoy spending time with my family and friends. Also, I like to spend time outdoors, and, if possible, take a trip to the mountains. I look forward to working here at Real Presence Radio!

Lori Kalgard, Director of Marketing

My name is Lori Kalgard and I'm the Director of Marketing at RPR Network. God took me on the scenic route to RPR with stops along the way in the for profit and non-profit worlds. I earned my bachelor's in management and marketing, then went on to get a master's in management.



Originally from Park River, North Dakota, I now live in Fargo, where I am a member of Sts. Anne & Joachim Catholic Church. God has blessed me with three amazing children and four grandchildren.

I am very excited to work with an organization that nurtures and raises awareness of the Catholic faith. I am excited to lead the marketing effort at RPR, serve our listeners and work alongside a group of people who share my faith!



Brittany Schwebach, Executive Assistant

It is such a joy to be working at Real Presence Radio as the Executive Assistant! I started listening to RPR when I was a teenager and am blessed to be able to give back and help in the mission of RPR. Every day, I get to meet and hear the stories of our listeners, supporters, and volunteers. I am excited to work at RPR, making sure everything runs as smoothly as possible!

In 2011, I moved to Fargo from a small hobby farm near Graceville, MN. I was blessed to work at St. Paul's Newman Center as the Business Manager for several years. I enjoy visiting family and friends, especially spending time with my nieces and nephews, and being active outdoors.



Karen Gebes, Listener Relationships Coordinator—Black Hills

I thank God for His blessings, among which are my husband Darren and my eight children. After spending sixteen years moving around the Midwest, we set down roots on the forty-acre farm I grew up on north of Sturgis, SD. We raise chickens, calves, kids, and lettuce and herbs in our hydroponics greenhouse business. I spend most of my time homeschooling our children and writing up the much-anticipated weekly menu and the not so appreciated chore chart.

I enjoy Real Presence Live as it makes our entire listening area truly feel like a family, and I am excited to hear the stories of our listeners and develop a relationship with those in the Rapid City and Gillette listening areas! My family and I keep all

the employees, listeners, and benefactors of RPR in our daily prayers. As St. John Chrysostom says, "God asks little, but He gives much."

Michael Goldsmith, Listener Relationships Coordinator—Southeast

My name is Michael Goldsmith, and I was just hired and started March 19th, the feast of St. Joseph, my Patron Saint. The Holy spirit works so majestically. I have been married to Sharon for 22 years, the rock of my life. I have three children, Rachel, Joseph, and Elizabeth. I am the Listener Relationship Coordinator for AM 970 in southern Minnesota, and I am so excited and on fire for Christ and RPR! I have been looking for this opportunity to evangelize and spread the faith for a while now. Blessings to all in Christ!





Real Presence Radio

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The RPR Live Drive is on the Road Near You!

The annual Real Presence Radio Spring Live Drive is fast approaching, and we'd like to invite you to join us as we go on the road May 8th, 9th, & 10th! We'll be broadcasting live and local stories of faith and hope from across the Dakotas and Minnesota and into Wyoming, Wisconsin, and Iowa from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. CT. With a lineup of guests that includes bishops, priests, and laity, their stories are sure to touch hearts and draw listeners closer to Christ! Check out the full schedule of guests online at yourcatholicradiostation.com/live-drive/

As we continue to grow, expanding to 23 signals across the Midwest, we are continuously blessed

to hear from people whose relationship with Christ has grown because of Catholic Radio. Because of the generosity of listeners like you, our twice-yearly Live Drive allows us to continue striving to reach souls with the Gospel for Christ.

As our listening family expands, however, so do our expenses. Our goal for the Spring Live Drive is to raise \$550,000. We know we can do this—we just need 1,100 listeners like you to give \$500 or 1,500 listeners to give \$365—that's just a dollar a day! Will you tune in and prayerfully consider making a donation to help us share the Gospel and change hearts across the Midwest?

CT	MT	Wednesday, May 8	Thursday, May 9	Friday, May 10
7 a.m.	6 a.m.	Fargo	Rochester	Dickinson
9 a.m.	8 a.m.	Austin	Grand Forks	Duluth
11 a.m.	10 a.m.	Gillette	Rapid City	Sioux Falls
2 p.m.	1 p.m.	Duluth	Fargo	Rapid City
4 p.m.	3 p.m.	Williston	Aberdeen	Southern MN (Albert Lea)
5 p.m.	4 p.m.	Williston	Aberdeen	Fargo