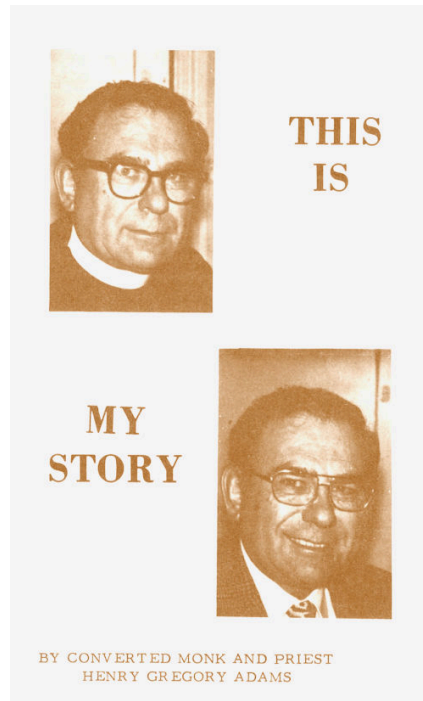


This Is My Story

By Converted Monk And Priest Henry Gregory Adams



What great relief and heavenly peace came into my soul when Christ found me, a lost sinner! I was born of Roman Catholic parents in Wolseley, Saskatchewan, Canada and brought up strictly in the Roman Catholic faith. From early youth I was trying to be good, yet falling progressively into sin. With the rest of the crowd I was heading to perdition.

Salvation through the Monastery

I was told that by becoming a monk and priest, I could avoid sin and be more certain of my salvation. Because I was sincerely seeking salvation, I entered the Bacillin Order of monks, received the long black robe and an adopted monastic name of "Saint Hilarion the Great," and made my vows. As a monk-student I was called "Brother Hilarion," and after ordination, "Father Hilarion."

I Whip Myself

How eager I was to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. By leading a monastic life I thought I was doing just that. I performed all my monastic duties to the last rule. I whipped myself every Wednesday and Friday evening till at times my back bled; in penance I often kissed the floor; often I ate my meager meal kneeling down on the floor, or completely deprived myself of food. I did many forms of penances, for I was truly seeking salvation. I was taught that I could

eventually merit heaven. I did not know that the Word of God says: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

A Priest at Last

After years of studies and manual labor in the monastery, I was ordained a priest. I served five parishes in the Lamont, Alberta area; said Mass every day, heard confession, recited the rosary to Mary, had many devotions to many saints, recited the breviary of formula prayers every day, and, as a monk, performed my penances more fervently than ever. Yet, these did not satisfy my weary soul. I was heading into even deeper distress of soul than when I was a boy, but Christ was faithful in His care for me.

God's Book and My Church

Among the studies for the priesthood we had three textbooks on the Bible, but not the Bible itself. After I was ordained a priest, I became acquainted with the Catholic version of the Bible and in it was striking verses that contradicted my very beliefs and practices. God's Book said one thing, my church another. Who was right, the Roman Church or God? I eventually believed God's Word. The monastic life and the sacraments prescribed by the Roman Catholic Church did not help me to come to know Christ personally and find salvation. After twelve and a half long years I escaped from the monastery, a lost sinner, without peace in my soul. In me was still the old nature of the "old man." I needed a new nature, a new heart. "As the truth is in Jesus...the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:21-24).

This can only be brought about by being born again of the Spirit of God by faith alone in Jesus Christ, and not by monotonous repetition of prayers, penances, sacrifices, and good works. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3) "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31).

I Trust Christ Alone

I realized that the man-made sacraments of my church and my good works were in vain for salvation. They led but to a false security. Soon after, I believed that Christ died for me because I could not save my soul, and I trusted Him alone for my salvation. When I repented of my sins and accepted Him into my heart, believing that on the cross He paid the complete penalty for my condemnation, I knew that my sins were not only forgiven but also forgotten and that I was justified before God. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). The blood of Christ cleansed me from all my sins. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). And now I have God's peace.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).

My Word to You

Friend, if you too are trying to reach heaven on your own, may I impress upon you that it is “not of works, lest any man should boast.” Heaven is infinite and can never be earned; we are finite and sinful. Christ alone is the way and the answer. “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (I Timothy 2:5-6). Come to Him now just as you are, admitting your sins. Ask His pardon and accept Him as your own Savior and Lord. Begin to rely on Him for your eternal welfare for He bought salvation for you. He calls you now: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Then you too can rejoice with me in your newfound Friend and Savior, the living Christ.
