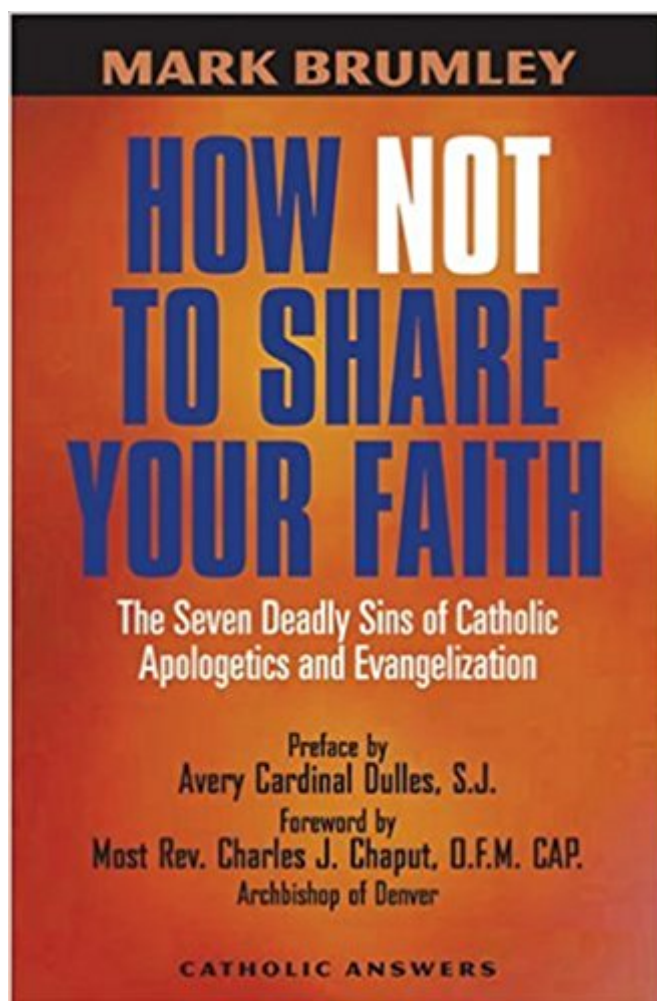


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How Not To Share Your Faith: The Seven Deadly Sins Of Apologetics



Synopsis

Catholic apologetics is back. It's everywhere. As a professional apologist, Mark Brumley sees this renaissance as an immensely good thing--an essential part of the Church's evangelical mission. Even so, grave dangers attend the apologetics renaissance. Some of them are so serious that, left unaddressed, they threaten to undermine the good apologetics can accomplish. Brumley calls these dangers the Seven Deadly Sins of Catholic Apologetics and Evangelization. Like the seven deadly sins of the moral life, they are "deadly" not merely as isolated, individual acts but as vices or evil habits--habitual tendencies to act in a certain way. In this volume, Brumley exposes them for you.

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Customer Reviews

Not long after converting to the Catholic faith, noted author and apologist Mark Brumley found himself in a discussion with a Protestant friend. Secure in his newfound faith--and feeling somewhat superior to his "less-enlightened" friend--Brumley smugly said, "Yes, I, too, used to think as you do." It was an outburst of pride that undermined Brumley's arguments for the faith and likely drove his friend further away from the truth. Brumley had just committed one of the seven "sins" he describes in his remarkable book, "How Not to Share Your Faith: The Seven Deadly Sins of Catholic Apologetics and Evangelization." In "How Not to Share Your Faith," Brumley describes seven of the most common and tragic mistakes he and other apologists have made over the years in their attempts to defend and explain the Catholic faith. More importantly, he reveals how you can avoid these mistakes and become far more effective at sharing your faith in a charitable way. Brumley's

book isn't only about how to argue more effectively or how to make your points more clearly. It's about finding the most effective way to share your faith--even if that means losing an argument from time to time.

Raised without a specific faith or religious exposure, Mark Brumley began a long spiritual journey that led him through several Protestant denominations to arrive finally at the Catholic Church in 1980. Since then he has taught and lectured about the faith in a wide range of forums, including as an adjunct professor for the Institute for Pastoral Theology of Ave Maria University. He is an editor at Ignatius Press, and serves as general editor of the "Ignatius Catholic Encyclopedia of Apologetics." He lives with his wife, Debbie, and their five children in Napa, California.

Well thought out book that enabled the reader to BEGIN sharing the Catholic Faith. Apologetic Evangelical sharing of the Catholic faith is a tough thing to do. UNLESS you have a good foundation of the faith can get into trouble quickly trying to explain our tradition as the Catholic Church has a very long and sometimes VERY frightening history. This book helped you avoid the common types of mistakes when discussing the Catholic Faith with 'Non-Catholics' but still brothers and sisters in Christ. I would recommend this book to anyone that wishes to have a richer understanding of the oldest Christian Church.

The biblical charter of Catholic apologetics is 1Peter 3:14-15: Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts reverence Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence. But far too often Catholic apologists seem to have shortened this in their heads to "always be prepared to make a defense to any one" and then added silently -- implicitly, but really -- "the best defense is a good offense." The end result is not effective apologists but offensive Catholics. Brumley provides a welcome correction that is stern without being preachy and will certainly make those who follow its advice not only more effective apostles but also better Christians. I particularly like his section on what he calls "apologetic gluttony" which is the mistaken and misguided attempt to "prove" all of the mysteries of the faith, essentially biting off more than can be chewed. I expect that this may be a temptation that converts are particularly prone to. In telling the story of how you became convinced of the truth of the faith, it's easy to make it seem like an intellectual achievement rather than a gift of God.

I was surprised by what's included and what's not included in the list of mistakes to avoid. This is a very quick read and I look forward to going back through it in detail as I learn more.

Gifted and enjoyed

Great

In Pope John Paul II's apostolic letter "At the Beginning of the Third Millennium", he called for a 'new evangelization'. This evangelization was to breathe fresh life and a renewed spirit into the world, particularly to those peoples who were once Christian but who had drifted from faith. One facet of the Pope's call was a revival of apologetics, the defense and explanation of Church teaching. In the third millennium, the advent of the Internet opened the door for this apologetical revolution. Writings from church fathers and Saints were introduced online. Quality explanations of Church teaching could be found by anyone accessing a search engine. And professional apologists, authors, and teachers began springing up across the world. In light of this surging interest in apologetics, Mark Brumley, now the President of Ignatius Press, wrote a book titled "How Not to Share Your Faith". The book wasn't written to provide specific apologetical arguments but instead focuses on the dangers apologists face. Brumley calls these dangers the Seven Deadly Sins of Apologetics: 1. Apologetical Gluttony - A failure to respect the limits of what apologetics can accomplish. 2. Reducing the Faith to Apologetics - Looking at all or most spiritual matters "apologetically". 3. Confusing the Faith with Our Arguments for It - Reducing the Faith to our own particular arguments for it. 4. Contentiousness - Going out of your way to look for areas of disagreement. 5. Friendly Fire - Battling Protestants and other absolutists instead of non-Christians and relativists. 6. Trying to "Win" - Aiming to 'win' an argument, even at the expense of bringing people to truth. 7. Pride - Thinking more highly of one's apologetical abilities than one should. Like all Church teaching, though, Brumley's admonitions are not fundamentally No's. He offers corresponding Yes's for each No, Virtues for each Deadly Sin. For instance, while denouncing the reduction of faith to apologetics, Brumley encourages prayer and meditation. Instead of trying to "win" arguments, Brumley advocates hope and charity, among other apologetical virtues. "How Not to Share Your Faith" teaches everyone who shares their faith to do so charitably. Every Christian will find this book somewhat applicable because every Christian talks about faith to some degree. However, Brumley's book holds special importance for those explaining or defending the Catholic faith on a regular basis, either as an amateur apologist or a professional. Anyone who discusses

faith issues through blogs or comment box discussions would do well to consider Brumley's advice. This book should be required reading for all Catholics on the Internet. Participating in the "new evangelization" requires that we communicate the 'good news' of Christ with humility and compassion. Presenting truth without these virtues makes us nothing more than a resounding gong. If you know the content of the faith but want to communicate it more charitably, I highly recommend "How Not to Share Your Faith".

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