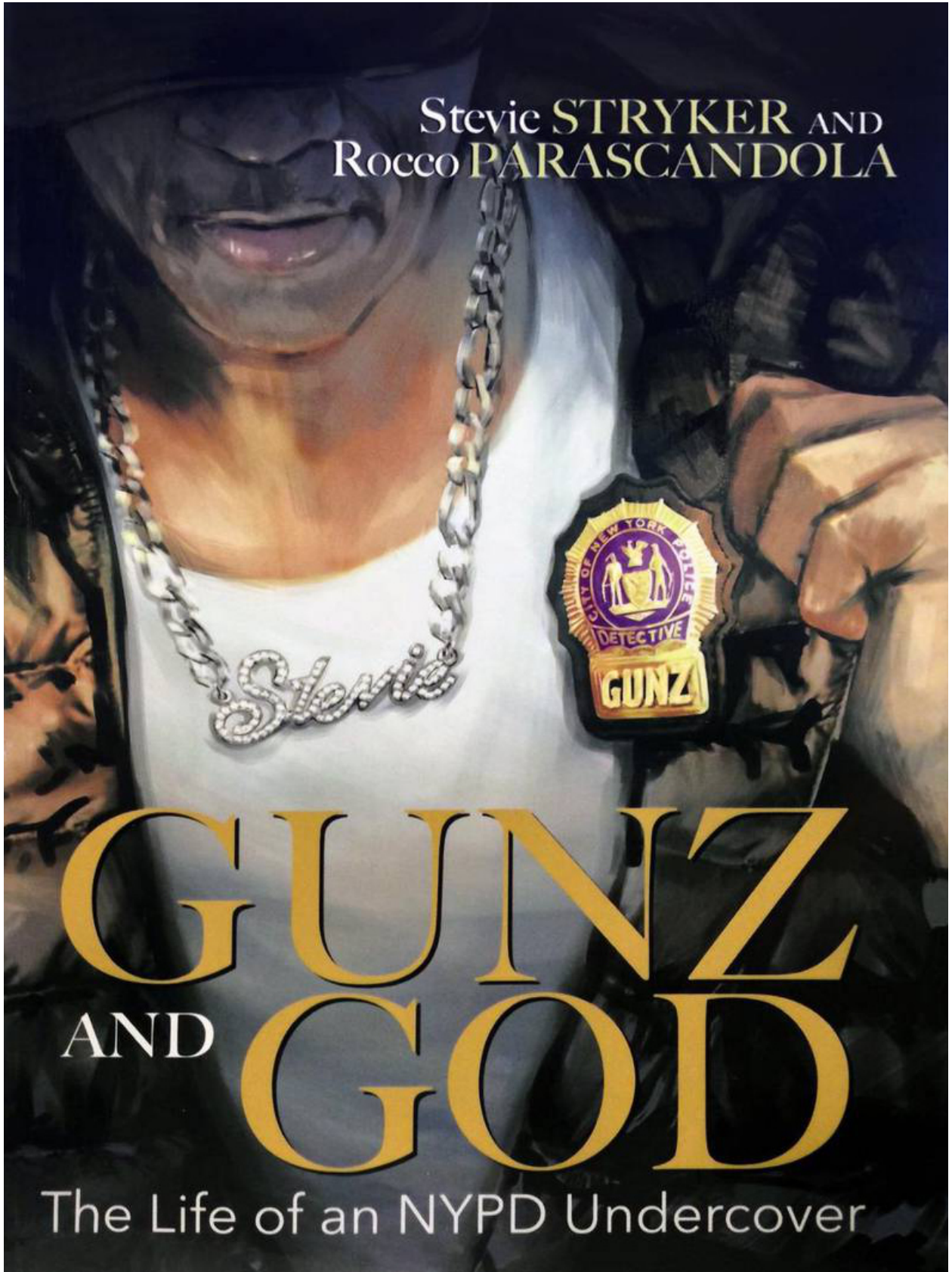


Stevie STRYKER AND
Rocco PARASCANDOLA



Former NYPD Detective Stevie Gunz Shares His Story of Redemption

After meeting Steve at a Christian network gala in Alpharetta GA, he graciously agreed to an interview with Nobility Magazine. Here are the highlights from that interview.

Nobility: Steve Gunz, thank you so much for agreeing to sit down with us! We are so very grateful that you took the time to share your story with our readers.

Steve: Thank you. It's my honor and my pleasure, sir.

Nobility: Steve, you've led a very interesting life. You grew up in New York, joined the Marines, then became an outstanding undercover New York Police Department detective to now becoming a pastor. What is the one takeaway from your collective experiences?

Steve: Well, the first thing is joining the Marine Corps at the age of 17 in 1984. The one thing I learned from the Marines is the ability to never quit. To see a wall and find a way to go around it, under it, or over it, but the wall should never stop you. From the Police Department, I learned that in bad neighborhoods are good people. Just because you reside in a bad neighborhood [it] does not make you a bad person. I've worked in some of the toughest neighborhoods in all 5 boroughs of New York and met some of the nicest people. Lastly what I've learned from being a Pastor and in the office of the Apostle, is that no matter how flawed you are God loves you. He's never going to fall out of love with you. He will take what people throw away and turn it into something that can be used.

Nobility: That's powerful sir! You and I have talked about this next question at considerable length; however, I'm going to ask it anyway so other people will have an opportunity to hear you. What was it that made you want to be a police officer?

Steve: I didn't wake up one day saying [that] I want to be a cop. At [an] age between 7 and 9, it was Easter weekend and my father would give my mother money to buy me an Easter suit for Sunday. Walking home in Brooklyn, my mother had the bags in her left hand and was holding my hand with her right hand. While we were talking, a man ran up and snatched the bags out of her hands. She was bruised and had some scrapes from falling to the ground. At that moment, I developed a disdain for people doing bad things. Growing up in Brunswick, I saw drug dealers and pimps, but they had not had a direct effect on my life until that moment. That incident is how I developed such anger for bad guys. I'm not sure that it gave me the desire to be a cop as much as I wanted to be the total opposite of that guy.

Nobility: Let's shift for a moment to your book, Gunz and God. You presented a copy to me and I could not put it down! The whole plane ride home, I was enthralled with it! It is really quite a page-turner and so very well written! What inspired you to write a book?

Steve: Truth be told, I have always thought about writing a book. Like most people, we think of something but don't follow through with it or we don't want to put the effort into doing it. The way the book came about was that I was already retired and Rocco, (the co-author) who is a bureau chief for the New York Daily News, wanted to write a news article about guns and drugs in the city of New York. He went to the detective's union and said, "Hey, can I speak to a detective about guns and drugs?". At the time, the Chief of Detectives Mike Pallidino said "Well, it would be better if you talked to a detective that's retired as opposed to one that's active right now because we don't want to run the risk of putting information out there and the detective's identity is compromised. But, I have a top-notch guy who's retired by the name of Stevie Gunz. He is the best undercover we had, talk to him." Rocco contacted me,



Photo by :
Steve Gunz

"I have hundreds of stories and quite a few [from] drug and gun buys"

[and] we did the news article which turned out fabulous. It was maybe a year later, that he drew a lot of interest from book companies who said, "Hey, we would like to write a book and we want to talk to Stevie about doing a book." Rocco and I spoke and said [that] we will write the book together. So, we sat down and began writing because I have hundreds of stories and quite a few [from] drug and gun buys. That's how it came about. I wasn't searching for this; the opportunity came knocking at my door. Once I sat down and talked to other senior detectives about writing the book, I didn't want to give away secrets of how we operate, how we move, and how we watch. As long as I didn't put those things in the book and jeopardize my fellow undercover who are still out there working deep undercover then I was comfortable doing it. Had it been a situation where it would have jeopardized operations then I would not have done that.

Nobility: Understood, there's a lot to consider. Speaking of undercover, how did your faith impact your duties as an undercover?

Steve: Well, growing up I was literally born into the church because my parents were Pastors. I have always heard if God be for you, who can be against you? "No weapon formed against you shall prosper." (New King James Version, Isa. 54:17) "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil." (New King James Version, Ps. 23:4) Those are the scriptures that played over and over in my mind when I was out there buying the drugs and guns in those streets. I always felt that I was doing God's work [and] that God was with me. I would pray before we went out. When I got into that car, turned my hat backward, turned up the music, and played the role, I spoke to God before, during, and after the operation.

Nobility: That sounds like a pretty hairy moment. So, what would you say is your greatest achievement?

Steve: I would say my greatest achievement is being a great husband to my wife of 26 years, a great father to my 6 children, and a grandfather to my 3 grandchildren.

"I would have to say my greatest achievement is being a great husband to my wife of 26 years, a great father to my 6 children, and a grandfather to my 3 grandchildren"



Photos by :Steve Gunz



Why do I say that? Because if you came to my house and asked them about Stevie Gunz, they don't care about that. If you asked them about Apostle Steve, they don't care about that either. [Do] you know what they care about? Daddy! At one point I was a superhero in the police department but I was a villain at home because I wasn't there. I was out trying to save the world. So, my greatest achievement is my sons seeing me love only one woman, their mother. My greatest achievement is showing how their mother is treated, and how they should be treated.

Nobility: Very Nice. Having said that, in your opinion, what are three things you believe young men need to focus on?

Steve: The first thing is that you must have a relationship with God because all things are possible with God. I'm not being religious here. Every young man has to have the ability to get on his knees and pray. Every young man has to be able to have a conversation with God. Another thing a young man needs to have is a mentor. Someone to tell you you're wrong. Someone to tell you you're going the wrong way. Not someone who is going to encourage you in your bad behavior. The third thing every young man needs to have is the ability to learn. Having the ability to not think you know it all and the ability to say I want to learn. Learning is the most powerful pill to take for growing. A good mentor will hold you accountable.

Nobility: Great advice! So, what's next for Steve Gunz?

Steve: Well, I'm always continuing to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. The next thing for me is to make sure that my generations to come are set up. The Bible says a wise man plants for his children's children. Now I want to make sure that my children's children's children can sit under the tree that I'm planting.

Nobility: Yes! I recall you and I discussing legacy.

Steve: Yes, you can't leave sneakers and jewelry behind. You've got to be able to leave wisdom, land, property, deeds, and finances. I want to cancel the spirit of lack. I want to cancel poverty. A lot of people will talk about curses in their families; well, maybe you were born to run the curse out. We are not going to be here forever but if you leave something behind you will be remembered forever.

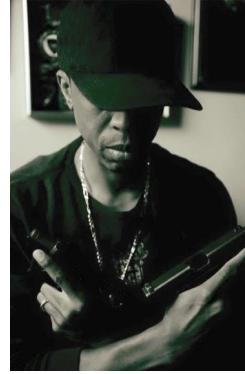
Nobility: Well stated Steve. Thank you for taking the time sir. Much success in all your endeavors. We are including a QR Code where our readers can purchase your book.

Steve: By the way, there is something big coming down the pike regarding the book that is in the works for this summer of 2023 so stay tuned. I am humbled for the opportunity just to have this conversation with you, sir.

#NobilityOpEd

On Legacy

When I was growing up, we never discussed legacy at the dinner table or in the living room. I didn't even know what legacy meant. I am not sure if kids like me growing up in poor neighborhoods even knew what legacy was. We were just trying to just survive. Get a job, pay our bills and save what we could. So I had no idea what legacy was. I only started learning about legacy when I got into my 50's and now being 56. I first had to find out the definition of legacy which means something that is passed on. Now that I know the definition of legacy. The next question is, what am I passing down to those that look up to me especially my 6 children and 3 grandchildren? I also started wondering had I passed on anything trauma, bad habits, generational curses or hurts to my 6 children? I don't want that to be my legacy that I



Steve Gunz

“I wish I could have worked on my legacy earlier in my life because I would have done better at what I passed to my children.”

pass those things down to my generations. I started looking at my children trying to identify what I passed down to them because I was starting to look at my children now as my legacy. I was looking to see what I had passed down to them, the good, the bad and the ugly. I have made sure they saw my relationship with God privately and publicly. They saw how I

loved their mother, my wife of 27 years. My children saw how I treated people with love no matter race, creed for color. They witnessed how I got back up after being knocked down with Crohins disease and ulcerative colitis. They watched how I rose to the top of the NYPD as a Detective with hard work. They have seen me put my arms around the unlovable people. They witness how I forgave those who hurt me and ask to be forgiven by those I hurt. They saw the love



I have for inspiring others to greatness. Why is this important? This is what I hope they can do. Work hard, inspire others, bounce back, get up after being knocked down, being a good spouse and a parent and having a relationship with God. I figured out what my legacy is. My legacy names are Epiphany, Jason, Lexus, Christian

Isaiah, and Anaya. They will carry what I taught them within them and help others. I will live forever in their hearts, minds, mouths and in their actions. I know my legacy now. My questions to you are **what is your legacy? What are you leaving behind that will outlive you? What are you passing down to the future?** When you pass

away will your legacy live on or die with you too? I wish I could have worked on my legacy earlier in my life because I would have done better at what I passed to my children because I see some of the

bad habits I passed to them. We must discuss legacy at an early age in life so that we build and pass down what we want to truly carry on when we leave this world. My legacy is not being a United States Marine, NYPD Detective nor an Apostle/Pastor. My legacy is the success of all my children. You are a legacy and must leave a legacy.