

# DELIVERUS

## EPISODE 1: HOW CAN I REMAIN CATHOLIC?

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### Summary:

As Catholics read and hear about the sexual abuse crisis in the church, many people begin to ask why they should remain part of an organization where so many people have been hurt. This is the question our host, Maggi Van Dorn, takes very seriously in the first episode.

Melinda Henneberger, a journalist for The Kansas City Star, tells Maggi why the latest wave of sex abuse news pushed her to leave the Catholic Church—a community she had been a part of her whole life—last summer.

In the hopes of understanding what the church's future might look like, Maggi also talks to Brian Flanagan, a theologian who puts the sex abuse crisis into historical perspective. The sex abuse crisis is a unique tragedy. But, it turns out, this isn't the first time church leaders have let Catholics down. And it's not the first time the church has had to figure out how to heal.

### Group Discussion Questions:

How has the crisis affected your relationship to the church?

Have you ever questioned your relationship to the church before? What other experiences or concerns have you had about belonging to the Catholic Church?

How would you respond to a family member who cited this crisis as a reason for leaving the Catholic church?

Melinda feels that by remaining in the church she is complicit in its history of abuse. How is this similar to or different from other ways that citizens are complicit in the sins of institutions with which they are connected?

## RESOURCES FROM THE EPISODE

*"Can you be a former Catholic? With new betrayal on child sex abuse, I'm about to find out"* by Melinda Henneberger in USA Today

*Stumbling in Holiness: Sin and Sanctity in the Church* by Brian Flanagan, published by Liturgical Press

Links for all the listed resources can be found on the individual episode pages at [www.americamag.org/deliverus](http://www.americamag.org/deliverus)