

# DELIVER US

## EPISODE 3: IS THE CHURCH STILL COVERING UP ABUSE?

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### Summary:

In this episode of Deliver Us we ask: Is the church still covering up abuse? Do the recent revelations, in 2018, mean that the church has continued to cover up abuse that's happened since the scandal first broke? Or is it that there's still more to learn about the past abuse that was first brought to light more than a decade ago?

We talk to journalist Jason Berry, who reported on an abuser priest in the '80s for National Catholic Reporter, as well as members of The Boston Globe's Spotlight team, who broke the news of the sex abuse crisis in 2002. We ask them: how did the church cover up abuse before their reporting brought it to light?

Then, we fast-forward to today to see whether or not the church is still hiding sex abuse. What can we learn from the past? And why is full transparency so difficult to achieve? Peter Steinfels, who has written critically about the Pennsylvania grand jury report for Commonweal, helps us understand what the church has done and failed to do in its reform efforts, and why this story is so complicated.

### Group Discussion Questions:

What do the accounts of Jason Berry, Tyler and the Spotlight reporters reveal about how abuse was concealed in the past and the culture that enabled this cover-up?

If the majority of abuse cases happened decades ago, why are the church and state attorneys generals disclosing records and opening investigations today? How is this truth-telling important to the ongoing work of justice and healing?

How does Peter Steinfels complicate the Pennsylvania grand jury report? Does his reporting change the way you think about how the church functions on both a global and local scale?

What are some of the obstacles to gaining full transparency in the church today? And what are some ways that both church and state can bring greater clarity to these processes?

## RESOURCES FROM THE EPISODE

[Lead Us Not Into Temptation: Catholic Priests and the Sexual Abuse of Children](#)

by Jason Berry

["Church allowed abuse by priest for years"](#) by the Boston Globe Spotlight Team, 2002

[The Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report](#)

["The PA Grand-Jury Report—Not What It Seems"](#) by Peter Steinfels in Commonweal

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