

How do I cope when a scandal happens?

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In 2002 when the Boston Globe published its investigative report on sexual abuse in the Catholic Church, I was 17 years old and deeply involved in my Catholic youth group. I was dismayed but was able, with the help of adults around me, to continue to follow Jesus in spite of the hurt it caused.

When scandal rocked the Catholic Church again in 2018 from the Pennsylvania grand jury report about sexual abuse, I was now a mother and working in ministry. It felt like an old wound had been ripped open. I had anger that the church could continue to hurt young people like my kids. How was I supposed to lead others to Jesus when other Christian leaders were doing harm and contradicting the gospel by their actions? How could I cope with the scandal?

Be honest with yourself and with Jesus.

Pay attention to your physical and emotional reactions and bring them to God in prayer. Feelings like disappointment, doubt, and anger are normal reactions. God can handle and welcomes hearing your honest thoughts and feelings.

Find others to support you.

We all need people to listen without judgment and talk through our emotions and concerns. Ask them to pray with you and for you, especially when you may not have the words to pray. Guard your heart AND your energy. Go deep with a couple trusted people instead of going wide and spreading yourself thin. Don't hesitate to reach out to a mental health care provider if you feel you can't handle it alone.

Seek out resources for your needs.

Between your local community, health care system, or online tools, there are lots of resources available to help you cope with trauma, grief, and loss. Look for organizations and people that can give you support beyond the care of friends and family.

Grieving is a process that takes time. It also comes in waves. You will feel ok one moment, then poorly the next. Create space to work through your emotions rather than moving on to the next task. Jesus wants us to be whole. He can restore our hearts if we give ourselves the time and space to heal.

Check Out
This Resource
→

[Truth & Trauma](#)



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