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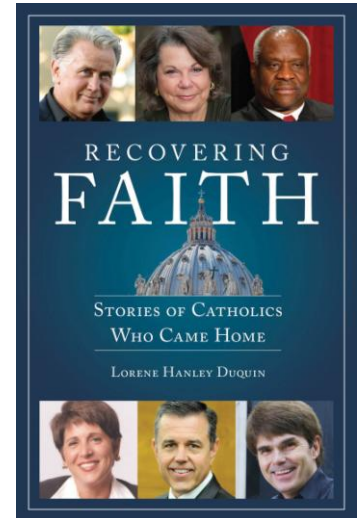
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The famous – and less-famous – tell how they “left” God, and why they came back

HUNTINGTON, Indiana, March 30, 2011 – Eighteen well-known Catholics – like award-winning actor Martin Sheen, best-selling novelist Dean Koontz, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, top model Leah Darrow, and former NFL player Danny Abramowicz, among others – talk about their tumultuous journeys of faith, and what drew them back to the Church. Their testimonies give voice to many familiar viewpoints, and clarify a world of misinformation about Catholicism.



In **Recovering Faith: Stories of Catholics Who Came Home**, by Lorene Hanley Duquin (Our Sunday Visitor, 2011, 176 pp, softback), the author lets the subjects’ stories speak for themselves. The reasons why each left the Church are as varied as they are, and try as they did to stay away, Christ made them each an offer they couldn’t refuse.

“I was a fallen-away Catholic myself!” says Duquin. “I drifted away from the Church as a teenager, and through a series of coincidences over 20 years ago, I realized what I was missing. And I saw how complicated it can be for people who feel drawn back to the Church, but aren’t sure what steps they have to take.” She speaks to lapsed Catholics at conferences around the country.

Sheen was at the height of his film career in the early 1980s, having been away from the Catholic Church some 15 years, when he embarked on a spiritual quest to help him tame his interior storm. While shooting a film in India, Sheen became acutely aware of the deep poverty there, which stirred a spirit of unrest within him. A friend of his in the movie business suggested he read **The Brothers Karamazov**. Sheen was moved by the book’s dramatic interplay of faith, doubt, moral struggle, passion, pain, and free will. He felt as if God was calling him back to the Church. Immediately he walked down the street to the local Catholic Church, pounded on the door until a priest answered, and said, “Father, I’ve been away from the Church for many years, and I’d like to come back. I’d like to go to confession.” After pouring out all his pain and brokenness, the priest absolved him and said, “Welcome back.”

It was in that pivotal moment that Sheen’s fear of dying was supplanted with intense joy and desire to live his life to the utmost. “I have not always practiced my Catholicism,” Sheen admits. “I left it as a youth, and lived for many years without faith. When I returned to the Church I had no love, no

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respect.” He says, “The fact that you feel drawn back to the Church is a grace ... just follow God’s grace ... you shouldn’t be afraid to claim it. Coming back to the Church is a choice that you make. I made that choice. I go to Mass because I choose to, not because I have to. It takes a lot of courage to accept responsibility for our faith ... it is a faith that brings me to the sacraments, and no one can take that away from me.”

The others profiled in the book represent many walks of life, making it easy for almost anyone to identify with at least one of their stories.

There’s award-winning movie producer Leo Severino; clinical psychologist and former atheist Dr. Kevin Vost; Catholic radio and television personality, Teresa Tomeo; successful advertising executive Tom Peterson – founder of Catholics Come Home; former NFL player Danny Abramowicz; and even two Catholic priests who were once far from their faith.

Duquin points to the typical juncture in someone’s life – whether he’s famous or not – that prompts him to re-think his life and faith.

“Often a crisis in someone’s life draws him back to God or the Church,” she says, “and the person has begun to feel a hunger for God or deep desire to reconnect with their Catholic Faith. Sometimes other people are instrumental in inviting them back, sometimes not.”

And others, on their way back to the Church, first seek God on more of an intellectual or artistic level, Duquin says, though they may not realize it.

“Clinical psychologist Dr. Kevin Vost is an intellectual who had become an atheist, but reclaimed his belief in God by reading some of the great theologians and philosophers such as St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Albert the Great,” she says. “And Leo Severino, a young Hollywood producer, has devoted his life to making films that reflect Christian virtues.” Former advertising executive, Tom Peterson, now produces some of the most compelling television commercials for the return to Catholicism the world has ever seen – now being aired around the globe.

The book concludes with information for those interested in returning to the Church.

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The world’s largest English-language Catholic publisher, Our Sunday Visitor serves millions of Catholics globally through its publishing, offertory, and communication services. Established in 1912, Our Sunday Visitor has grown into the largest supplier of offering envelopes, parish and diocesan mailings, books, periodicals, curriculum, address management, and stewardship services. Our Sunday Visitor is a not-for-profit organization, returning a portion of net earnings back to the Catholic community through the Our Sunday Visitor Institute. For more information, visit www.osv.com.

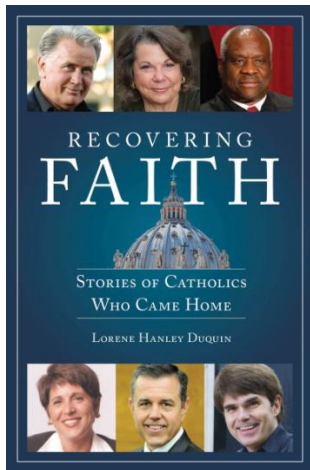
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Product Fact Sheet

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Recovering Faith: Stories of Catholics Who Came Home



Publisher:	Our Sunday Visitor
Author:	Lorene Hanley Duquin
Release Date:	March 2011
Length:	207 pages, paperback
Price:	\$ 14.95
ISBN:	978-1-59276-878-3
Order:	www.osv.com 1-800-348-2440

Description:

This roundup of ‘coming home’ stories by some well-known – and some lesser known – Catholics will touch the heart of anyone who has left the Church, or knows someone who has. Every person’s journey of faith is filled with twists and turns, and **Recovering Faith** traces the paths of 17 notables who’d fallen out of step with the Church – through complacency, poor education, sidetracking by fame and fortune, other faiths ... some even through atheism.

Readers will identify with, and be fascinated and encouraged by the way Christ touched each individual to draw them home. The compelling stories include personal accounts from:

- Martin Sheen, actor
 - Dean Koontz, best-selling novelist
 - Clarence Thomas, US Supreme Court Justice
 - Dr. Francis Beckwith, former president of the Evangelical Theology Society
 - Barbara Curtis, author
 - Leah Darrow, *America’s Next Top Model* finalist
 - Janet Morana, Director of Priests For Life
- ... and others.

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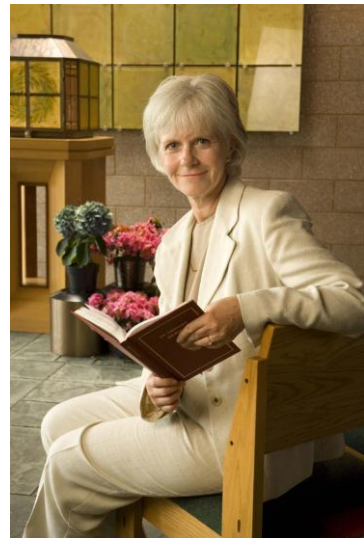
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Interview Questions

Lorene Hanley Duquin

Recovering Faith: Stories of Catholics Who Came Home



1. Was there an event or impetus in your own life which prompted you to write this book?
2. How did you go about choosing the people you highlight in the book?
3. What do you see as a typical juncture in someone's life – whether he is famous or not – that prompts him to re-think his Catholic Faith?
4. It's been noted that certain artists, musicians, scientists, writers – even atheists – are drawn back to the truths of Catholicism through their daily work – not necessarily through a priest, or sermon, or sacramental moment. Has this been the experience of those profiled in your book?
5. What is the first step a person would take to either re-enter the Catholic Church, or to join?
6. How do you see the Catholic Church as being able to "feed" people on an intellectual, creative, or even social level ... beyond the spiritual/sacramental one?
7. What did most – if not all – of the persons highlighted in your book experience personally once they returned to the Catholic Church?

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About The Author

Lorene Hanley Duquin



Lorene Hanley Duquin has been active in ministry to active and alienated Catholics since 1992 in the Diocese of Buffalo. She has conducted lectures and workshops in parishes and at national and diocesan conferences in the United States and Canada.

Some of Duquin's books include: **Seeking an Annulment with the Help of your Catholic Faith, A Century of Catholic Converts, When A Loved One Leaves the Church, and Could You Ever Come Back to the Catholic Church?**

Her articles have appeared in a variety of secular and Catholic publications. She is author of several pamphlets on evangelization topics published by Our Sunday Visitor, including: **Top Ten Reasons to Come Back to the Church** and **When Someone Is Hurt by the Church**.

Duquin has four adult children and three grandchildren, and lives in Williamsville, NY.