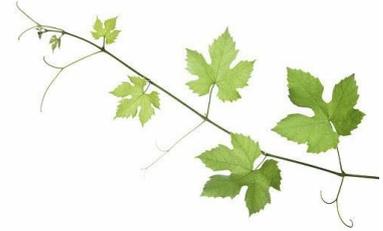


Being Loved



I used to think I went to Church to be good... but now I realise I go to be loved.

If you think that being from a good Catholic family is a safeguard against having an abortion, then think again. I'm from a good Catholic family, but it didn't help me. When the test came back positive, I just went along with what I was told and went off for an abortion – just like everyone else that day.

I have told very few people about it since, but those who know me well, know that there has always been something a bit random about me, which they probably put down to being an expression of my personality. There is, however, more to it than that.

I am still a practising Catholic and even though I have taken my abortion story into Confession about heaps of times and I know that that whole painful chapter of my life has been forgiven, somehow I haven't been able to move on.

I don't regret my life, but I regret the mess my life has turned into in lots of ways.

When I first began to sneak into midday Mass, it was because I knew no one else I knew would be there. I liked being completely anonymous but on familiar ground.

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It has taken a very long time, but I have begun to join in a few things and feel as though I am beginning to be part of something again. I have always enjoyed the singing at 11am Mass and the special Carols and Easter events that the Church puts on and don't mind talking about them to others. But I still don't really admit that I go to church every Sunday. I'm not really sure why, but it all feels too personal to talk about and I don't want other people's opinions.

I don't really fit into or belong to any particular parish but I do have a sense of ownership – a sort of a sense of 'being allowed to be here' in every Catholic Church I go into. It's the only place that I can be alone and be calm and even though my attempts at trying to reconnect with the faith haven't really worked in some respects, I do have a sense of knowledge that I'm on safe ground.

What it comes down to this: I used to think I went to Church to be good... but now I realise I go to be loved.

For more information and support, contact

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