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Gary Sinise Reveals How a Hurricane Drive and a Christmas Eve Surprise Made Him Catholic

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"When we get home, I'm going to the Catholic church, and I'm going to become a Catholic. And I want our kids to go to Catholic school."

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

Gary Sinise, the actor millions know as Lieutenant Dan from Forrest Gump, has told how he became a Catholic - and the story starts with his wife, a hurricane, and a suprise he kept secret for months. In a long conversation on the Lila Rose Show, released on 6 November 2026, Sinise said the road to the Church began when his late wife Moira led the family there first, and ended on Christmas Eve 2010, when he drove his dressed-up family past a steakhouse and into a church car park to be confirmed.

The journey began about nine months into Moira's sobriety. Gary was in Wilmington, North Carolina, filming the movie Bruno alongside Shirley MacLaine, while Moira was in Chicago performing in a Steppenwolf Theatre production of The Playboy of the Western World - ironically playing an Irish Catholic woman. In Chicago, a chance encounter in a church basement set something in motion that neither of them had planned.

Then came the hurricane. As the couple drove to escape the storm, Moira turned to Gary at the wheel and made an announcement he never forgot.

"When we get home, I'm going to the Catholic church, and I'm going to become a Catholic. And I want our kids to go to Catholic school." Gary was stunned.

The woman he had married was choosing a faith neither of them had grown up in - and she was choosing it for the whole family.

Back in California, Moira wasted no time. She enrolled in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults at Our Lady of Malibu, and in the spring of 2000 Gary arranged for an understudy to cover his weekend performances in One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest in Chicago so he could fly home and watch her confirmation.

She was in. He was not - not yet.

For the next ten years, Catholicism became the grounding centre of the Sinise household. Gary went to Mass faithfully every Sunday with Moira and their three children, but he stayed in the pew while they went forward for Communion.

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

READ THE FULL STORY

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