



Debbie Cole

Leinster, Ireland



Debbie was sexually assaulted in 1989 at age 19. Determined that this event would not ruin her life, Debbie (shown with her daughter) has relied on her faith as she has worked as a volunteer helping other victims of sexual assault and campaigning for legislation to help protect others from sex offenders.

LESLIE NILSSON, PHOTOGRAPHER

It is so difficult to try to explain how it feels to experience sexual trauma to someone who has not been through that trial. An experience like this will always be with you—it will never go away. There will be days when something will trigger the memory and you'll feel that your power, your confidence, and your safety is taken from you.

At those times, the only thing I can do is get on my knees and talk to my Heavenly Father. I know without a shadow of a doubt that He hears and answers my prayers. I have a divine heritage, and this gives me the strength to carry on when life gets hard.

Also, knowing that my Savior loves me gives me hope and focus. I love what Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said: "It is not possible for you to sink lower than the infinite light of Christ's Atonement shines" ("The Laborers in the Vineyard," *Ensign*, May 2012, 33). The Savior can help us no matter where we are or what we are going through. I look to Him for an example of what to do in tough times.

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See more about Debbie's journey of faith, including more photos, in the digital version of this article in the Gospel Library app or at [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E9196](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E9196).

Elder Neil L. Andersen testifies of the Savior's healing power at [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/9197](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/9197).