

The Exorcist Files: How a Hit Podcast About Demons Is Leading People to Christ

BYLINE: Abigail Robertson/CBN News

God is using an unusual topic to spread the Gospel in a podcast that has become a huge success: exorcism and spiritual warfare.

With more than seven and a half million downloads, The Exorcist Files has topped Spotify charts for more than 40 weeks. The creators of the show recently launched a Kickstarter to fund season two with a goal of raising \$40,000. They hit that number within four hours of the Kickstarter being live, and have since raised more than four times their goal. Loyal listeners include an array of Catholics, Protestants and horror fans.

The creator, Ryan Bethea, told CBN News he first got into this when he was hoping to do a podcast on miracles, but God instead led him down a very different path that included understanding evil, the demonic realm and modern-day spiritual warfare.

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“Half-jokingly, I actually didn’t want to do this,” Bethea explained. “I had no intention of doing a docuseries on spiritual warfare, the demonic, any of this.”

Bethea says during a 2018 trip to the Vatican, he was connected to one of the leading authorities on spiritual warfare.

“I got introduced to father Carlos Martins, the exorcist on

our show, and I said, 'Hey, tell me a story,' and you know, when you meet an exorcist, you got to say, 'Hey, tell me a story,' and he did," recalled Bethea. "And I went, 'oh man, we all need to hear these stories' – and that is how the show was born."

Father Martins is often called to help with some of the world's more serious and difficult cases of demonic possession.

"When you see a chair levitate for the 83rd time, it gets old, but confronting the mind of the devil, the source of every perversion, every sin, every wickedness, every bad thing, that's scary," Martins explains in a trailer for the show.

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The show depicts dramatic recreations from Father Martins' experience battling the devil to free people from demonic possession. Some of the cases show the potentially dangerous side effects of unknowing victims casually dabbling in things like Ouija boards and psychics, while other episodes give accounts of modern-day witchcraft and generational curses.

Bethea refers to it as redemptive horror because it uses these real-life stories to educate people about Christ, and God is using it to teach the program's diverse audience more about him.

"There are thousands of reviews on Apple specifically, and you can see people saying, 'Hey, I grew up Catholic, and I wandered away but wow, this has awakened me to the reality of evil. I can't afford not to have God in my life,'" explains Bethea. "And then others were like, 'I appreciate this, too. I'm still not sold on God, but if this is at all possible that there's demons, I want to be with God.'"

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