

THE STONES CRY OUT

REPORT ON THE MACSAS SURVEY 2010

**The Response of Churches in the UK to Victims of Sexual Abuse Perpetrated
by Clergy, Religious and other Church Officials**

Anne Lawrence

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



MACSAS May 2011

Minister & Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors www.macsas.org.uk

[Copies of the full report can be downloaded at www.macsas.org.uk]

MACSAS is a voluntary organization with charitable status. We are a support group for women and men from Christian backgrounds who have been sexually abused by Ministers or Clergy, as children or as adults. We support both survivors who have remained within their Christian communities and for those who have left.

When you go to see a clergyperson for help, advice, or as a person in need, you should never expect to be encouraged into a sexual relationship. Just as we understand this should not happen if we were to visit a physiotherapist, doctor or psychologist.

For a clergyperson to breach the sexual boundaries in a pastoral relationship is a violation of ethics. Clergy are in a more powerful position and meaningful consent is never possible when there is this difference in power.

We offer support in the following ways:

- through our telephone Helpline;
- by responding to confidential letters;
- by establishing local support groups countrywide;
- by organizing meetings, conferences, workshops and training to raise awareness;
- by publishing Newsletters and publications to help inform on the issues;
- by advising churches and church authorities on effective policies and procedures.

We are an interdenominational group that does not campaign for or promote religious ideals. We are here to provide mutual support and information to victims and survivors.

We actively challenge the denial, collusion and apathy within Christian communities of Minister and Clergy sexual abuse. We work to raise awareness and educate Ministers, Clergy and Christian communities about sexual abuse issues within churches and religious organisations.

We welcome feedback and contributions from survivors: poems, artwork, your story. Send contributions by email and we'll get back to you.

Free Helpline: 08088 01 0340

Tuesday: 2-5pm
Wednesday: 6-9pm
Thursday: 6-9pm

MACSAS
PO Box 622
BRENTFORD
TW8 1AU

Website:

www.macsas.org.uk

Email:

macsas1@hotmail.com

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The MACSAS Survey 2010 asked victims of sexual abuse perpetrated by clergy, religious or other church officials within Christian Churches to report on how allegations were responded to by Church and statutory authorities. Respondents also gave details about the sexual abuse and the alleged offender/s. In analysis of the responses particular focus was placed on the Catholic Church and the Church of England which accounted for over 75% of the cases.

The findings of the Survey are shocking: victims reported that cases of sexual abuse are still being ignored and disregarded, no actions or ineffective actions are being taken against clergy and religious who remain in ministry in some cases with multiple allegations of and/or conviction for child sexual abuse. Victims are left unsupported, their allegations not determined and with no acknowledgement of or redress for the harm caused to them.

These Survey findings were placed in the context of what is known about the sexual abuse of children and adults within Churches, both in the UK and internationally. A focus was again given to sexual abuse within the Catholic Church and Church of England. Part 2 of the Report finds that the Survey findings are not aberrant results. Institutional dynamics continue to protect the power, reputation and assets of the Churches rather than ensuring that children and adults are protected from harm and that victims of abuse within Churches are responded to appropriately and with compassion.

MACSAS calls upon the Government to order a Commission of Inquiry into the handling of child sexual abuse cases within the Catholic Church in England and Wales and the Church of England/Wales

MACSAS calls for a change in the Sexual Offences legislation to recognise sexual intercourse between those in ministry and clients/congregants as a criminal offence.

MACSAS recommends a number of changes to the current safeguarding procedures for both the Catholic Church and the Church of England. The current procedures are too widely drafted to be consistently applied and the actions that need to be taken within Churches to protect children from harm are too vague to be effective.

For twenty years Church leaders have repeatedly assured the public that *'what happened then could not happen now'* and yet time and again reports and criminal convictions reveal that Church authorities are continuing to cover up abuse, failing to take effective actions against alleged offenders and are ignoring and vilifying the victims. Whilst Institutional dynamics continue to protect the interests of the Churches children and adults will continue to be at risk of harm within church communities.

A fundamental change needs to take place within Churches, a paradigm shift, turning away for the protection of self interests and towards ministering to the needs of the most vulnerable, the wounded and the abused. Isn't that the mission of the Christian Churches?

PART 1 SURVEY FINDINGS

72 victims of sexual abuse perpetrated by clergy and religious responded to the Survey: 64 of the respondents were from the UK and 8 were from overseas; Ireland (2), America (2), Australia (2), Russia and Columbia.

- 53 respondents reported child sexual abuse of which 34 of the victims were male and 19 female.
- 19 respondents reported sexual abused as adults and victims included men and women.

76 alleged abusers were reported; three respondents were sexually abused by more than one person. 71 alleged abusers were men and five were women of which 2 were alleged to have abused children.

- **45 alleged abusers were named in the Survey and two others were partially named.** Only four are known to have been convicted of child sexual offences.
- Ten of the alleged abusers named in the Survey are known to be dead.

Catholic Church

Allegations of sexual abuse in the UK were reported to have taken place in **14 dioceses in England and Wales, 3 dioceses in Scotland, and 1 in Northern Ireland.**

43 of the alleged abusers were clergy or religious within the **Catholic Church**; of these 38 are reported to have sexual abused children.

11 respondents said they were sexually abused in childhood by Catholic priests within their parish communities and 17 reported being sexually abused within Catholic schools, care homes and orphanages. The orders which ran these schools and homes include: Benedictines, Sisters and Brothers of Charity; Marist Brothers; Christian Brothers; Jesuits; Franciscans in the St Joseph Order and the De La Salle Brothers.

Church of England/Wales

Sexual abuse allegations were reported against clergy in **14 Dioceses in England and 2 Dioceses in Wales**

Almost one third of alleged abusers (21) within England & Wales were reported within the **Church of England (and Wales)**: 13 child abuse allegations, and 8 adult abuse allegations

All but one of the child sexual abuse cases reported involved vicars within parish church settings.

Other Churches

12 responses were from other churches, including Methodists, Baptists, Pentecostal and Evangelical Churches. 6 reported sexual abuse of adults and 6 child sexual abuse. In 4 cases the denomination was not reported and of these all involved child sexual abuse.

Adult abuse

All but two of the 19 who reported adult sexual abuse perpetrated by clergy / ministers were receiving pastoral/spiritual counselling and support when the sexual abuse/exploitation began. The remaining 2 were a colleague and a friend and both reported one off incidents of sexual assault.

When Abuse Occurred, Duration of Abuse and When reported

Reported cases of child sexual abuse took place from 1944 to 1998, over half occurred in the 1960s and 1970s.

The majority of the reported adult sexual abuse cases took place in the 2000s.

Over a quarter of all reported child sexual abuse cases involved one off incidents. A quarter of child sexual abuse took place over 1 to 3 years and the longest duration was 16 years. Of the 14 who reported that the abuse lasted more than five years, half took place in Catholic institutions (schools, children homes, orphanages) and half within parish communities.

Over half of the cases of adult sexual abuse took place over 1 to 3 years and the longest duration recorded was between 3 and 5 years.

Over two thirds (53) victims reported the sexual abuse to Church and/or statutory authorities and the majority of these reported in the last ten years.

Actions Taken by the Churches Against Alleged Abusers

(i) Child Abuse Cases

Only 2 reported cases resulted in convictions of the offenders, both in the Catholic Church.

The victims reported that they were not aware of any church actions taken against alleged abusers where they were not convicted and not dead.

Ten cases were ongoing at the time of completing the survey.

Reported cases included alleged abusers with multiple allegations of abuse over many decades at least one with a conviction child sexual offences and one who is reported to have confessed to his Bishop; these men remain in ministry.

(ii) Adult Abuse Cases

No convictions resulted in any of the cases reported to authorities.

In only 2 cases were the victims aware of any church action being taken against the alleged abusers, one Catholic and one Church of England.

Reported cases included clergy who had multiple allegations of sexual assault, and others who were known by church authorities to have sexually abusing women over a number of decades.

Response to the Victims of Sexual Abuse

Regardless of whether it was child or adult sexual abuse, when the abuse was reported or whether the allegation was substantiated, in more than 80% of the cases reported Church authorities provided no support, assistance or redress to victims.

There was no acknowledgment of the harm caused to any of the victims, no apology offered and no process by which a reported case could be substantiated and the victims provided with redress for the harm caused.

CONCLUSION to Part 1

The MACSAS Survey found that Church Authorities continue to ignore the needs of those who reported allegations of sexual abuse and carelessly disregard their suffering and the need for acknowledgement and redress. Those who were able wrote repeatedly to Church authorities before they got any response to their allegations. Others could not face the re-traumatisation reporting would cause, and could not face the repeated rejection and disregard for their suffering. The responses of Church authorities to victims reported in the Survey are shocking.

Whilst victims continue to be treated as pariahs within Churches, whilst their reports of abuse are deemed an inconvenience, and whilst their suffering, distress and needs are ignored by those entrusted to respond to reports of abuse, Churches will remain incapable of protecting children and adults within parishes and other Church institutions. The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures can best be measured by the response to the victims and the commitment of Churches to redressing the harm caused.

PART 2 CONTEXT & CONTINUUM

Part 2 of the report placed the findings of the MACSAS Survey within the context of what is known about Clergy and religious perpetrated sexual abuse within Churches in the UK and around the world

Three areas of concern arose from the Survey findings

- (1) The effectiveness of the Child Protection/Safeguarding procedures and the implementation of the procedures within Church Communities.**
- (2) The lack of any or any effective procedures within Churches to recognise and respond to allegations of the sexual abuse/exploitation of adults by clergy, religious and other church officials.**
- (3) The lack of procedures that recognise and respond to the needs of victims of sexual abuse perpetrated by clergy and religious, and the failure to provide redress, support and assistance to victims who report abuse.**

(1) EFFECTIVENESS OF SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

Four dynamics within Church Institutions were identified as causing a barrier to the effectiveness of procedures in place to protect children from abuse

- (i) An over-reliance upon the criminal justice system and its standard of proof to determine the nature and scope of church actions
- (ii) An ongoing resistance by Church authorities to disclosing reports of child sexual abuse kept on files for clergy, ministers and religious including confessions of child abuse made to Bishops/other clergy
- (iii) an ongoing denial of the scale of sexual abuse perpetrated within Church communities and the consequent assumptions that; adults who report allegations of child sexual abuse by clergy and religious are lying, exaggerating or disturbed; and/or that if the abuse occurred in the past the abuser no longer poses a risk to children
- (iv) Institutional dynamics which continue to protect the reputation, power and assets of the Churches

Ineffectiveness of the criminal justice system in Child Protection

Research in the UK has found that only 3-4% of reported child sexual abuse cases result in the conviction of the alleged offender. Research in UK and the USA has also found that only 2 - 3% of allegations of rape and sexual offences have been shown to be false. Only an estimated 10% of sex offenders are on the sex offenders register (

In the USA only 6% of Catholic priests alleged to have sexual abused children between 1950 and 2002 were convicted of child sexual offences. Over 80% of the allegations investigated were substantiated by Church and religious authorities. Only 1.5% of reported cases were deemed to be false allegations (John Jay Study 2004 www.usccb.org/nrb/johnjaystudy)

In Australia a study of reported allegations of child sexual abuse by clergy within the Anglican Church found that only 12% of cases resulted in a conviction. Over 50% of allegations were substantiated by Church authorities. Only 1.6% of allegations were deemed to be false or erroneous (Australian Study 2009 www.apo.org.au/research/study-reported-child-sexual-abuse-anglican-church)

From research across three continents it can be estimated that more than 90% of sex offenders working within Church communities and among clergy and religious in the UK will not have been convicted of any offence.

The barrier to securing convictions in child sexual abuse cases is that the standard of proof required in criminal law is proof **beyond all reasonable doubt** and the nature of the abuse perpetrated means that there is rarely the independent corroborating evidence required to reach this standard. However in child protection and the civil law, the standard is proof **on the balance of probabilities**, that is whether having regard to all information available it is more likely than not that the alleged abusers has abused a child.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND CHILD PROTECTION

Since the Granada TV broadcast “*Sins of the Father*” in 1992 which concerned a priest who had fled England to America in 1986 and then fled America to Italy in 1988 and was protected from prosecution for some time by Diocesan authorities in England, the Catholic Church in England & Wales has said that ‘*what happened then could not happen now*’ . However time and again new cases have shown that child sexual abuse is still taking place within the Church and is still being covered up, denied and/or minimised and the abusers protected from prosecution.

In **2010 James Robinson** was extradited from America to England and tried and convicted for 21 child sexual offences between 1959 and 1983 and sentenced to 21 years in prison. A former priest in the Archdiocese of Birmingham Robinson fled the country in 1985 whilst police were investigating allegations of child sexual abuse against him. He is the second priest known to have fled from the Archdiocese of Birmingham (Fr Clonan). During the trial it was disclosed that the Archdiocese had continued to pay Robinson £800 per month until 2001 and in 2000 he was given £8,400 by the Archdiocese. At no time did Diocesan authorities inform the police either in America or England of Robinson’s whereabouts. The trial Judge stated in court that the actions of the Catholic Church were ‘*highly questionable*’ and said that “*Others may take the view that a full investigation and full disclosure of the results of that investigation is due to the members of that Church and (Robinson’s victims).*”

Other recent cases where no effective actions were taken include **Fr Michael Hill** finally convicted of child sexual offences in **1997**, **Fr Neil Gallanagh 2005**, and **Fr David Pearce** finally convicted in **2009**. All were known child sexual offenders and at least two had been deemed to pose an ongoing risk to children and yet both had been allowed to remain priests and to remain in an environment where they could continue to abuse children.

Two Commissions have so far considered the procedures for responding to reported cases of child sexual abuse (**Nolan Commission 2001** and **Cumberlege Commission 2007**). A set of procedures were developed following the Nolan recommendations and updated following the Cumberlege recommendations. Unfortunately the recommendations were diluted within the procedures and have since proved to be too vague or to allow too wide a discretion for the procedures to be consistently and effectively implemented

Child Protection Procedures within the Catholic Church

The presumption within the Procedures is that cases will be reported at the time the abuse takes place. There is no recognition of allegations of child abuse reported decades after the abuse took place. This is the first indication of the minimisation of past or *'historic'* cases and is a fundamental gap in the Procedures. Both the John Jay Study in the USA (2004) and the Australian Study (2009) found that only 9-13% of child sexual abuse was reported within the year the abuse occurred and that over 75% were reported when the victims were in their 30s and 40s.

MACSAS contends that the use of the term “historic cases” minimises not only the seriousness of the allegations made but also responsibility and accountability. These cases are not ‘historic’ to the victims and are not historic under criminal law, which recognises child sexual abuse as a crime whenever it occurred.

The Procedures allow for the exercise of a wide discretion as to what actions should be taken against those who are alleged to have abused children and or have been convicted or otherwise found to have abused children. This wide discretion has allowed even those convicted of child sex offences to remain in situations where they can access children. Sex offenders who remain in the priesthood invariably hold authority over children and their families because of their status as priests, even if not in parish ministry.

Independent professional risk assessments are not mandatory for those with credible allegations of child sexual abuse made against them, and the procedures provide that *“no obligation in Canon Law for a member of the clergy to undergo an assessment that asks for an examination of conscience”*. Also *“the informed consent of the cleric is required in all cases”*.

The consequence of the wide discretion allowed at all stages of the procedures can be seen in the attrition rate between reported cases and the record of effective actions taken since the procedures were first put in place in 2002.

Catholic Church Statistics on reported cases and Actions Taken

The Catholic Church has published reports on child abuse allegations since 2002. From these reports it was found that between 2002 and 2009 there were 548 cases of child abuse reported within the Catholic Church and religious orders, of which 435 were sexual abuse cases (79% of all cases)

The total number of alleged offenders reported was 548 of which 375 were recorded as clergy or religious (68% of all offenders)

Up to 2009 there have only been 29 convictions and 13 police cautions from these reported cases (7% of all cases).

Church actions against clergy and religious have only been given for the years 2003 to 2007. Out of those 206 cases 27 are reported to have been risk assessed (13% of 206); 6 have been laicised and 19 dismissed from their community or resigned (12% of 206). A further 18% were removed from ministry or had their ministry restricted (18%).

In total in only 20% of clergy and religious who had allegations of child sexual abuse made against them between 2003 and 2007 had actions taken which could be deemed effective (convicted or laicised/dismissed). Those who supposedly had their ministry restricted or were removed from ministry remain of concern as this must include David Pearce who was later convicted of abusing a child after he was removed from ministry (2009). It is not recorded what happened to those who were risk assessed and of itself a risk assessment cannot be deemed to be an effective action.

MACSAS contends that the attrition rate between reported allegation and effective actions taken to remove accused from ministry and out of any position of authority over children is deeply concerning and having regard to the research set out above reflects an underestimation of the danger posed by those with allegations of child sexual abuse against them.

Ongoing Child Sexual Abuse

Whilst Catholic Church leaders and Safeguarding advisers continue to praise the procedures now in place a look at the published statistics provided indicate that the sexual abuse of children is ongoing and of serious concern.

The annual reports on child abuse cases have recorded that **124 cases** were reported in the year the abuse took place between 2004 and 2009.

With only 9 - 13% of child abuse cases estimated to be reported in the year in which they occur the actual figure for child abuse within the Catholic Church between 2004 and 2009 can be calculated to be at least **1000 cases** of which between 75 and 80% are estimated from the statistics to be child sexual abuse. Therefore it is estimated that **over 750 children may have been sexually abused** within the Catholic Church in the five years from **2004 to 2009**.

Prevalence and Past Cases

To date there have been at least 40 Catholic priests convicted of child sexual abuse since the early 1990s as well as a number of religious who worked within Catholic Institutions in England and Wales. If this figure represents approximately 4% of all child sexual abuse cases, it can be estimated that at least one thousand priests may have abused children since the 1940s.

The MACSAS Survey identified 26 alleged child sex offenders not previously convicted and 10 others whose identities were not given.

Until the Catholic Church is compelled to disclose all files containing allegations of child sexual abuse by clergy and religious; and until victims of clergy and religious perpetrated child sexual abuse are invited to report cases, to an independent commission of inquiry we cannot know how many children were abused within the Catholic Church and its institutions since the second world war, nor will we discover the level of cover-up and denial engaged in by Church authorities in this country.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND/WALES & CHILD PROTECTION

Reported case of vicars and other church officials within the Church of England/Wales began to emerge in the 1980s. Time and again criminal cases have revealed that Church authorities knew about allegations of child sexual abuse by clergy and other church officials yet did nothing to protect children from further harm. This has continued up to the most recent cases (see for instance Colin Pritchard conviction in 2008 and Roy Cotton who died before he could be convicted in 2006).

The MACSAS Survey identified at least two more vicars with multiple allegations of child sexual abuse who appear to have been allowed to continue in ministry within parishes for decades after the first allegations were made. These men pose an ongoing risk to children.

An Inquiry by Baroness Butler-Sloss into the Diocese of Chichester handling of the Pritchard and Cotton cases and other child sexual abuse cases is due to report in the spring/summer of 2011. However MACSAS contends that other Dioceses are dealing with cases in a similar manner to Chichester and also need investigating (see recommendations).

The Past Cases Reviews undertaken in all Dioceses in the Church of England (reported 2010) and in Wales (reported 2011) sounded alarm bells within survivor organisations when published reports only explicitly referenced 13 cases in England and 5 cases in Wales as causing concern. It is known that many clergy are still in ministry who have allegations of child sexual abuse on their files, some even have previous convictions and others have confessed their abuse of children to Bishops. Only some of the dioceses engaged independent consultants to carry out the review of all their files. By shrouding the findings of the past case review in secrecy the Church of England continued to minimise and deny the extent of abuse that has taken place within the Church.

Current safeguarding procedures

A number of concerns were raised when the current child protection procedures were analysed.

Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers can also be a member of the clergy or a relative of the Bishop/member of the clergy. Such conflicts of interest and emotional ties are incompatible with a post that requires the investigation of clergy for serious sexual offences and decisions to be taken which invariably will impact on the accused.

Adults who report '*historic cases*' of child sexual abuse are not mentioned in the '**Responding to Concerns**' section of the Procedures. Once again this is of concern when most allegations are made when the victim is an adult.

The **Procedures** explicitly state that **Canon law** constrains disclosure of details of a crime/offence revealed in the course of **formal confession**. This has invariably meant that when the abuser has confessed to a Bishop he is allowed to continue in ministry or otherwise to work with children (see for example Peter Halliday case 2007 and Peter Cranch case 1999; see also MACSAS Survey case in Diocese of Chelmsford)

The **Procedures** go on to provide that "maybe" it "might be" **appropriate** to continue **disciplinary actions**; and "maybe" a **risk assessment** should be undertaken **if well founded concerns remain**.

Worryingly the Procedures state that where a person has **old offences** of child abuse this **will not normally prohibit otherwise suitable people from working with children**. The Church will always recognise **reformed characters**.

With little chance of any risk assessment being undertaken, abusers protected by the seal of the confessional and such wide discretion over what if any actions are taken against those accused of child sexual offences it is highly unlikely that the current procedures are effective in protecting children from the risk of abuse from those already accused of or convicted for child sexual offences in the Church of England/Wales.

Prevalence of Child Sexual abuse perpetrated within the Church of England/Wales

As there is no policy for the national collation of reported cases within Dioceses and actions taken in respect of each allegation, it is not possible to determine how many children have been and continue to be sexually abused by clergy and other church officials. This is deeply concerning as it means that the National Safeguarding adviser cannot see where problems may arise in the handling of cases within different dioceses. It is clear from reports that some Dioceses are very good at responding to reports of child sexual abuse, however it is also clear that other Diocese are not so effective at responding to cases (for example the Diocese of Chichester).

(2) THE SEXUAL ABUSE/EXPLOITATION OF ADULTS

Research in the USA and Australia has identified that most sexual abuse within Churches is perpetrated against women (see Sipe 1990 & 1995; and Chavez & Garland (2009)). Other research has found that Christian women are seven times more likely to seek assistance with marriage and family problems from clergy (86%) than from mental health professionals (12.5%) (Gengler & Lee 2001), and clergy are more than twice as likely to have sexual intercourse with clients/congregants than psychologists (Fortune 1995)

Research across four continents has found that clergy and religious have sexually abused nuns, the bereaved, those with disabilities, the terminally ill, old, young, those with mental health difficulties, and those who work within church communities and institutions.

Research completed in 2009 involved 63 women who were sexually abused by clergy, ministers and religious in the UK (Kennedy PhD 2009).

No Church in the UK has procedures for responding to cases of adult sexual abuse and exploitation perpetrated by clergy, religious or other Church officials. If disciplinary procedures are engaged with the offence is deemed to be *'misconduct unbecoming ministry'*.

In the Catholic Church sexual intercourse between clergy and religious and congregants or those who come to the priest for spiritual/pastoral counselling as *'consensual'* and *'mutual relationships'*

There is no recognition of the betrayal of trust and the abuse of power and authority involved when clergy and religious engage in sexual activity with congregants and those who come to them for spiritual/pastoral counselling at a time of personal need.

The MACSAS Survey found that many of the cases of adult sexual abuse reported involved alleged abuser who had multiple allegations of sexual abuse of men and women dating back decades. Despite this Church authorities appear to have allowed the accused to remain in ministry and to continue to abuse women and men. In only one reported case was the alleged abuser asked to leave ministry, in another the sexual abuser was assessed to be an ongoing risk to women and yet remains a priest and is reported to be now openly stating that he has been asked by church authorities whether he wants to return to ministry.

Often the victims are blamed for the abuse, some have been hounded from their Churches, and many were ignored when they reported the abuse. In most cases the accused was defended by Church authorities and his actions minimised.

MACSAS contends that the sexual offences legislation in the UK needs to be amended to include clergy and religious as 'professionals' who commit a sexual offence if they engage in 'sexual relations' with a 'client' within a spiritual/pastoral setting.

Further Churches in the UK should develop procedures for recognising and responding to cases of adult sexual abuse and exploitation by clergy, religious and senior church officials.

(3) RESPONDING TO THE VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

The MACSAS Survey findings show that little if any support, assistance or redress was offered to those who reported allegations of child or adult sexual abuse. This was true even when the abuser was convicted or otherwise determined to have sexually abused the victim.

No Church Institution in the UK has a policy for providing redress, support and services to those sexually abused by clergy and religious either as children or adults. The stated policy of both the Catholic Church and Church of England remains that all discussion in response to victims must go through lawyer and hence we have hundreds of civil claims in the courts in the England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

Over the past thirty years there has been a developing understanding of the devastating impact of sexual abuse on victims; this understanding now influences the response to victims within the health and mental health services, social and welfare services and therapeutic services. There has been research into psychological harm, developmental harm and physical harm. There is also now a growing body of research and understanding on the harm caused by clergy perpetrated sexual abuse (CPSA) of children and adults.

MACSAS Survey 2006

MACSAS carried out an earlier survey of responses to victims of clergy perpetrated child abuse within the Catholic Church for presentation to the Cumberlege Commission in 2006 (*'Betrayed or Support'* (Kennedy 2006) found at www.macsas.org.uk/resources). The same story is told time and again.

Response Initiatives within Churches

There have been a number of reports and policies produced for responding to victims of child abuse. From 'Time for Action' published by CTBI (Churches Together in Britain and Ireland) in 2002 up to the Church of England's draft policy "Responding Well" due to be published in 2011. However all these are aimed at responding within churches to all victims of child abuse in society and not specifically for responding to those who have been sexually abuse by clergy, religious and other church officials within the Churches. There are no appropriate procedures within these reports and policies for providing support, counselling funding and for a process of determining allegations and providing redress to victims.

Both the **Nolan Commission (2001)** and the **Cumberlege Commission (2007)** recommended that procedures be put in place for responding to the victims of clergy and religious perpetrated child sexual abuse. In 2006 the Catholic Conference of Bishops rejected the central proposals put forward by a working party following two years work. The procedures finally published "**Healing the Wound**" were roundly criticised by victims of clergy perpetrated sexual abuse as it focused on protecting the Catholic Church from liability. It no longer exists.

Recent discussion between survivor groups and the Catholic Church have proved to be abusive and highly manipulative. The Catholic Church has restated through its Director of the Safeguarding Advisory Service that the Church is interested in developing a policy for responding to all victims of child abuse and not specifically for responding to victims of clergy and religious perpetrated child sexual abuse.

There have been no policies or reports within any Church which recognises the needs of victims of adult sexual abuse perpetrated by clergy, religious and other church officials.

MACSAS calls upon Churches to develop procedures for responding to victims of sexual abuse perpetrated by clergy, religious and other church officials.

These procedures should provide for a support person to be with the victim from the time an allegation is reported until all processes are completed. The support person should not be involved in the investigation or decision making process. Victims should be offered funding for counselling or other assistance required to meet their immediate needs. The Procedures should provide for a process by which all allegations are determined on the balance of probabilities having regard to all the information available about the alleged abusers and the facts of the case. An independent panel should be convened made up of a professionals working in the field of child sexual abuse and the assessment of child sexual offenders. Once an allegations has been substantiated procedures should provide a process by which restitution can be made to the victim and should include an acknowledgment of the harm caused, an apology from Diocesan or religious authorities and compensation paid.

Victims of sexual abuse and organisations that support victims of sexual abuse perpetrated within church communities should be involved in the development of these policies and regard should be had to procedures of responding to victims developed in Australia and Ireland (“Towards Healing”).

CONCLUSIONS

In the USA, Australia and Ireland procedures were only put in place for responding to the victims of clergy and religious perpetrated sexual abuse after a number of commissions of inquiry and other studies confronted the Churches with the prevalence of child sexual abuse that had taken place, the appalling responses to victims by Church authorities and the dynamics of cover up and denial which allowed child sex offenders to continue to abuse children for decades.

Until the Churches in the UK are compelled to face the reality of what has happened here, the suffering caused to the victims and the dynamics that allowed the abuse to continue for decades Church leaders will continue to minimise the abuse, deny the harm caused and ignore the victims.

Media attention over the past twenty years has focused almost exclusively on child sexual abuse perpetrated by priests within the Catholic Church, in so doing the extent of child sexual abuse that took place in Catholic institutions run by religious communities has been overlooked, as has the widespread prevalence of adult sexual abuse. Of more concern given the findings of the MACSAS survey and the research considered in Part 2, has been the failure to call to account the Church of England for the cover up, minimisation and denial of the extent of child and adult sexual abuse that has taken place within parishes and church institutions. The inquiry into the handling of clergy child sex offenders within the Diocese of Chichester is the tip of the iceberg that threatens to undermine the moral authority of the Church of England.

MACSAS contends that only a Commission of Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and the Sexual Abuse of Adults within Church communities in England and Wales (and similar commissions in Northern Ireland and Scotland) which focuses on the extent to the abuse, how reported cases were handled by Church authorities, and how victims were responded to will provide the Catharsis necessary to bring about changes that ensure children and adults are safe within Church communities. Only then will Churches be able to develop restorative communities where the needs of the most vulnerable and hurt are placed above the vested interests of the Institutions.

“The greatest persecution of the Church today, was born from the sins inside the Church, not outside. The Church needs to answer to justice because forgiveness cannot replace justice”

(Pope Benedict XVI, 11th May 2010)