



Introduction by Sue Cox BSc(Hons) Lic.Ac.M.B.Ac.C.
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Primary purpose of Survivors Voice Europe is the connections with, and the care and empowerment of catholic clergy sexual abuse survivors, and the education of the public about the wider implications and severity of catholic clergy abuse.

We acknowledge the work done by others but we have a different focus. Our strength is in our connections.

We are not a fund raising body, we therefore have no allegiances, we are self supporting through our own contributions. Among our membership, we have many transferable skills, in communication, healthcare, neuroscience, PTSD, etc. We use those skills to their full advantage in the furtherance of this cause.

We have connections in the UK , Holland, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Poland, Germany, Austria, Russia, USA, Colombia, Hawaii, Alaska, Australia, and Thailand.

Because today our other colleagues are armed with a vast amount of statistics, which of course, we absolutely endorse, we intend to talk to you more about the human perspective and the effects of clergy sexual abuse.

One would have to be from Mars not to have heard all of the statistics.

Behind every one of those statistics is a human tragedy, and if we just concentrate on the numbers we will do exactly what the Holy See is doing, and see all of those survivors as collateral damage.

The future and present protection of children should be a **given** in the light of the enormous global amount of evidence, **not** something the Holy See should have to be persuaded to think about. But given that they **are** being asked to answer for their failings our main concerns are:

1. The Holy See has little or no understanding of the severity of the effects of clergy sexual abuse. Clergy sexual abuse is NOT a trivial matter, the effects are devastating and permanent. Our own research, and in collaboration with several University researchers has made very clear that Childhood clergy abuse causes:

Permanent brain damage

What has always been referred to as “psychological damage always has a physical root”.
(neuroscience research)

Damage to a person’s immune and metabolic systems,

Making them more vulnerable to life threatening diseases including heart disease, and cancer.
(epigenetic research)

Shortened life span.

This was a Nobel prize winning research.
(research into telomere lengths)

This damage has been shown to even change someone at the level of their DNA, so by extension it can then be passed on to future generations. That damage is further compounded by resulting unskilled behaviour, after someone is forced upon a distorted life path.

Families, communities, and society as a whole inevitably suffer.

It is well documented that the statistics for suicide are far higher in clergy abuse victims, for mental health and addictions, and our prison statistics show a remarkably high numbers of abused people within their establishments.

Sometimes my colleagues and I have rather stupidly been referred to as “High functioning survivors...”.

2. That no line can be drawn under what they refer to as “historical” issues – you cannot put in preventive measures without acknowledging the need to effect corrective measures as well.
*Even if the church answers all of the suggested questions, they agree to sanctions, and they open up their secret files and even themselves to scrutiny, there will **still** be millions and millions of disaffected people, worldwide who’s lives have been destroyed.*

3. The Holy See cannot be allowed to dictate the terms of any corrective measures, they have demonstrated time after time, their inability and unwillingness to do so.
It is our firmly held opinion that the time for protracted dialogue has long gone, and we would now call for the UN to act urgently in this matter.

The Holy See is notoriously clever at using every delaying tactic known to man, and they will procrastinate for years in order to delay taking any responsibility, many of us will be dead before we see any breakthrough, a fact they are also well aware of.

4. The catholic church has a privileged position in society.
It is supposed to care for vulnerable people in that society and it has failed, and is continuing to fail. It’s arrogance and lack of concern are monumental.
Observing all of it’s previous cover ups and lies followed by obsequious and meaningless apologies can surely leave no one in any doubt as to the exact nature of this organisation.

Through fear, guilt, shame, terror and abuse it has been allowed to indoctrinate individuals and these people then infiltrate all organisations, including this one.

So we would ask you all to examine your own consciences – Do you, or indeed your families have any allegiance to the catholic church?

If you favour the power of the church over their cover ups and collusion of these crimes, then you should recuse yourself from this process.

Recommendations

We would ask you urgently to instigate an immediate robust fact finding mission and to endorse a secular unbiased enquiry. We would urge you to demand the opening up of all files pertaining to abuse both past and present.

We would ask you to endorse and assist with the referral of Joseph Ratzinger (and others working in the Vatican's Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith) to the International Criminal Court in respect of complicity with cover ups which have allowed priests and religious to continue abusing unchallenged by their own organisation.

We know that the law is said to be “ Reason free from passion”. But we would ask each and every one of you to become **passionate** about fighting this injustice

We believe that **everyone** working in this field and **everyone** working within the UN should be passionate about the protection of vulnerable people in this world - if we are not, **why not ?**

You may not personally be able to influence each one of those individual survivors, but you have a unique opportunity here to make a real difference to million of people and future generations .

Why on earth would you NOT want to do that?

References

www.survivorsvoice-europe.org

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