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Priests of Religious Congregations in Ireland Who Have Sexually Abused Children and Vulnerable Adults: Some Fundamental Psychotherapuetic Theoretical Considerations in the Provision of a Pastoral Care

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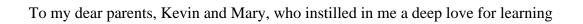Director of the Department of Theology and Ministry, **La Salle University**

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Dedication

To my dear parents, Kevin and Mary, who instilled in me a deep love for learning

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Acknowledgments

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Abstract

The Roman Catholic Church in Ireland finds itself in a perilous state with its continuous trajectory of decline of influence and role in Irish society. A painful catalogue of revelations, beginning in the early 1990's, regarding physical and sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults has been accompanied by a stark decline in vocations to the priesthood and religious life, as well as in church attendance. In this context the perpetrators, mainly clergy and male members of religious congregations, are generally dehumanized, demonized, and ignored by their superiors, colleagues, and the general public. This dissertation seeks to suggest a form of pastoral care toward the healing of the God image in those clergy who have sexually abused the young and vulnerable. Through a variety of longstanding influences both inside and outside the family of origin, it is hoped to suggest a form of pastoral care in the attempt to reconcile the God concept with the God image of such clergy and members of male religious congregations. With this in mind, notwithstanding the integrative contributions of other theories, and the necessity of accountability to the laws of the State regarding such perpetrators, this work focuses on some concepts from Psychodynamic and Cognitive psychotherapeutic theories in particular.

Introduction

Over a period of about thirty to forty years, the influence and role of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland have been severely and perhaps irrevocably undermined. Alongside other institutions such as the banking sector, politicians, the legal profession, and the national police force, the moral and ethical authority of the Roman Catholic Church has been profoundly damaged. Notwithstanding the detrimental and divisive financial effects of the Celtic Tiger, and its subsequent demise – with the widening gap between the rich and poor, the 'haves and the have nots', with all the accompanying problems of social disharmony and anomie, and the rising tide of secularization, with its dismissal of organized religion – clerical child sexual abuse has, arguably, considerably eroded the Church's mission on Gospel concerns. These concerns include peace and justice, integrity and truth, forgiveness and healing, and purpose and meaning in the lives of so many individuals, couples, families, and agencies. With the almost continuous 'drip, drip feed' of the frequency of the horrors of clerical child sexual abuse, particularly since the early 1990s when allegations and accusations began to emerge, the decline of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland has helped deepen a social, spiritual, and moral void which it is likely to never fill again. Irishman, writer and Benedictine Monk, Mark Patrick Hederman, put it very succinctly when he wrote, "We are living in spiritually destitute times. The institutional church, which was for many a bastion of dogmatic truth, a divinely appointed moral law, of sure and certain guidance toward the heaven we looked

forward to, has been discredited in the short space of about thirty years, as the new century turned its course".[1]

While not ignoring the complicity of the Roman Catholic Church and State in Ireland in exposing children and vulnerable adults, particularly young, unmarried pregnant women to rape and torture in such centres as the Industrial Schools and Magdalen Laundries, the preservation of the institutional church, with its systemic cover up of clerical child sexual abuse, took precedence over the safety, security, and wellbeing of children.[2] Thus, the consequent anger at and alienation with the Church continues to be acutely and painfully felt, not only by priests and consecrated members of religious congregations, but also by the dwindling number of Roman Catholics who occupy the pews, and who practice their faith.

Though far from trying to paint a rosy picture, it is suggested that the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland now possesses, and strictly enforces a policy and ministry of child safeguarding that serves as a role model to the Church overseas, and to other faith communities and agencies at home and abroad. Every parish community, every religious community, every active minister both lay and ordained, and every Church agency and organization must now be in compliance with child safeguarding procedures according to Church and State laws. Nevertheless, for the most part, those clerics who have been accused and found to have sexually abused children in the civil courts are marginalized by the public at large and treated like pariahs, with little concern or care for them. Given the enormity of the issue and the toll it continues to

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[1] Mark Patrick Hederman, *Underground Cathedrals* (Dublin: The Columba Press, 2010), 10-11.

[2] Eamon Maher, "Faith of our Fathers: A Lost Legacy?" in *The Catholic Church in Ireland Today*, eds. David Carroll Cochran and John C. Waldmeir (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2015), 3-4.

take on Irish society as a whole, and the evident absence of any 'organized' or co-ordinated response between them, this dissertation, conscious of the perpetration of sexual abuse, will try to outline an appropriate psychospiritual pastoral response to priests/male members of religious congregations in Ireland who have sexually abused children. A central feature of such a pastoral response will be a focus on the healing of the God image of clerical offenders. Notwithstanding the gravity of the offences committed, and the personal, ecclesial, legal, and social propriety of accountability and responsibility of those clerics who have sexually abused children, the almost symbiotic relationship between Catholic Church and State played a role in the development of an unhealthy God image in the lives of many people in Ireland down through the decades, including priests who have sexually abused children. In this process, influences such as the pivotal role of the Irish mother, the 'composite' parenting in the traditional Irish nuclear family, and the ubiquitous, omnipresent power of the Catholic Church permeating just about every element of Irish society could not be overestimated. Consequently, what emerged was an unhealthy, inflexible, judgmental God image that was considerably reinforced in the lives of men and women who entered seminaries or houses of religious congregations. Within this scheme of things, as a matter of Christian justice, those clerics who have sexually abused children are deserving of hope in, and an experience of, a loving, healing and forgiving God; the focus of this dissertation.

The first chapter will serve as a historical context to help situate the emergence of the power, role, and influence of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, from the early days of the nineteenth century, up to the more recent decades that have witnessed its decline. In an effort to briefly outline its history over this time period, reference will be made to the fields where the Roman Catholic Church was

particularly influential, powerful, and controlling, namely, education, social welfare, healthcare education, and family life. In this regard, I am grateful to those academics who have written on the history of this topic. I am particularly appreciative of the work of Irish academic and writer, Tom Inglis. His work has been most informative and helpful.

Chapter two will look at the phenomenon of clerical child sexual abuse in Ireland. It is divided into three main sections. The first section outlines the definition of child sexual abuse according to Irish Statute. In an effort to provide a broader context within the English-speaking world, and because the problem has received so much publicity in those countries, reference will be made to both the United States of America and Australia. The second section will focus on single-theory and multifactorial theories of child sexual abuse. The final section of the chapter will then focus on clerical child sexual abuse within the Roman Catholic Church. On what is acknowledged to being an increasingly recognized complex phenomenon with an almost exponential volume of material emerging, the professional and scholarly work of Irish academic, Dr. Marie Keenan, has been most helpful and illuminative.

With an emphasis on clergy, chapter three will outline how the Roman Catholic in Ireland has attempted to respond to child sexual abuse, beginning with the steps taken by the Irish Episcopal Conference. This will be followed by allusion to the various formal Inquiries established by the Republic of Ireland's governments, *Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse Act* (2000). The subsequent section will attend to the following: some of the repercussions from the various commissions of inquiry, seeking some explanations for the Church's response to clerical child sexual abuse; the role of Canon law and clerical child sexual abuse; reference to how the matter has

been handled by Pope St. John Paul II, Pope Benedict, and Pope Francis, respectively; and the role of the Vatican and local bishops in responding to allegations and incidences of child sexual abuse. The chapter will conclude by looking at themes such as how the Church's systemic, stratified, gender-based locus of power and control, and a particular, clerical understanding of sexuality and masculinity might have served as an impediment to the psychospiritual development of clerics both during and after initial periods of formation.

The theme of the penultimate, chapter four is pastoral and serves as a precursor and preparation for the final chapter of the dissertation. It begins by outlining a scriptural foundation for pastoral care and will be followed by three separate but interconnected sections: the phenomenon of pastoral care in the twentieth century onwards; the relationship between pastoral care and counselling/psychotherapy; and a suggestion of a rationale for spiritually integrated counselling/psychotherapy. The chapter will conclude by suggesting a theology of pastoral care as an evolving dynamic based on specific needs and situations, including those of clerical child sexual abusers who belong to male religious congregations in Ireland.

The sexual abuse of children by clerics – notwithstanding those abuses perpetrated by some religious sisters and lay members – continues to take its toll on the pastoral and moral presence and the role of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland. With its continuous slide to becoming a minority church community, the causes, course, and consequence of clerical child sexual abuse are never far from the surface of public discussion, criticism, and anger. Today, the Roman Catholic Church is no longer *the* voice of the people but rather *a* voice among many in Ireland. In a relatively short period of time, it has lost a tremendous amount of good will and respect in Ireland and

overseas because of the allegations and incidences of child sexual abuse. The evidence of ineptitude among Church authorities in the handling of child sexual abuse is a 'gift that keeps on giving'. However, occupying a muted and marginalized place throughout this sorry and sordid story are the clerical child abusers themselves. Alongside the public disdain and rejection of such men, currently among the male religious congregations in Ireland there is no uniform or harmonized pastoral approach in the care of these men. With how their lives have unfolded, perhaps with both with personal and pastoral distinction, and dysfunction, they live out their daily lives rejected like lepers; Pastors one day, pariahs the next! With the lifelong interconnectedness of a wide range of factors – arguably beginning in their families of origin – namely, conservative and rigid social, political and ecclesial, the net effect for such men has been the development of an unhealthy and dysfunctional God image. A constellation of factors and forces has led to such men being in great need of hope; to live their lives as children loved by God. This chapter seeks to address this gaping need. At this early stage of the dissertation, it is important to state that the church recognizes the horror and sin of clergy who have abused children. Nevertheless, as a matter of Gospel justice, the church bears the responsibility to offer Christian forgiveness. Here, the purpose is to neither restore the Catholic Church to its halcyon days of power, prestige and status, nor is it an attempt to return offending clerics to ministry. Rather, the pastoral goal is to offer an opportunity for healing. Inseparable from this goal is compliance with the norms for the protection of children and vulnerable adults, together with full transparency with ongoing ecclesial and civil investigations and procedures for prosecutions. The final chapter will begin with a review of some of the pastoral and psychology literature on the theme of hope – a central feature of the healing of the God image. Indebted to the work of psychologist,

Glendon Moriarty, in the pastoral care of the God image, the remainder of the chapter

will look at the concept of the God image from a spiritual and psychotherapeutic

perspective. Its goal, is not to provide a template for a universally-applicable practical

program of pastoral care for use by religious congregations or dioceses, but to outline

some theoretical considerations that may be helpful, based on some fundamental

aspects of psychotherapy, with particular reference to psychodynamic and cognitive

psychotherapeutic modalities.

Chapter One

The Roman Catholic Church in Irish Society

Over the last thirty years in Ireland, the Roman Catholic Church has experienced

an almost unprecedented, tumultuous change. Once a powerful force in Irish society,

the Church has lost much of its moral authority and, instead of being a pivotal

influence throughout the entire religious, socio-political fabric of Ireland –

particularly in the Republic of Ireland – it is now struggling to be heard as a voice

among many. While it is acknowledged that its influence had been in decline

beforehand, the long litany of sexual and physical abuse scandals[1] perpetrated by

priests and religious brothers and sisters in recent decades has, arguably, at least for

the foreseeable future, severely undermined its efforts to reclaim the almost

ubiquitous, powerful and moral influence it enjoyed for almost two centuries from the

beginnings of the nineteenth century.[2] This chapter seeks to outline the historical

context and emergence of the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland from

the early years of the nineteenth century up to the present day. It will be followed by

reference to some barometers in particular to situate its trajectory towards the current,

critical malaise: the political arena; the fields of education, social welfare, healthcare;

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[1] For a wide-ranging discussion on the child-abuse scandals, see Andre Auge, Louise Fuller, John Littleton, and Eamon Maher, "After Ryan and Murphy Reports: A roundtable on the Irish Catholic Church," *New Hibernia Review* 14 (2010): 59-77; Patrick Claffey, Joe Egan, and Marie Keenan, eds., *Broken Faith: Why Hope Matters* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2013); Kevin Egan, *Remaining a Catholic After the Murphy Report* (Dublin: Columba Press, 2011); Tony Flannery, ed. *Responding to the Ryan Report* (Dublin: Columba Press, 2009); Brian Lennon, *Can I Stay in the Catholic Church*? (Dublin: Columba Press, 2012); and John Littleton and Eamon Maher, eds. *The Dublin/Murphy Report: A Watershed for Irish Catholicism*? (Dublin: Columba Press, 2010).

[2] Carroll, David and John C. Waldmeir. eds, *The Catholic Church In Ireland Today* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015), 3.

and the role of the mother, and the family. It is important to note here that reference to the mother is not to apportion negative judgement or blame upon her in the decline of Church influence and practice but rather to highlight the traditional, pivotal role she occupied in the spiritual and religious formation within the Irish family for generations until more recent decades. In effect, it could be argued that mothers in family life were manipulated by church authorities in establishing and controlling so many in Irish society at large.

The early years of the eighteenth century witnessed a concerted attempt by the Protestant Ascendency in Ireland, backed by laws such as the Penal Laws[3] passed in English parliament, to make Roman Catholics in Ireland a servile class. These laws were a brutal attempt by a Protestant state to permanently secure the position of the economic dominant class whose interests they solely represented. This assertion was made as far back as just over one hundred years ago by William Lecky, when he contended that the Penal Laws were directed at denying Catholics ownership of the basic means of production. He wrote,

> No Catholic was suffered to buy land, or inherit or receive it as a gift from Protestants, or to hold life annuities, or mortgages on land, or leases for more than thirty-one years, or any lease on such terms that the profits of the land exceeded one-third of the rent. If a Catholic leaseholder, by his skill or industry, so increased his profits that they exceed this proportion, and did not

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[3] Tom Inglis, *Moral Monopoly: The Rise and Fall of the Catholic Church in Modern Ireland* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 1998), 102-107. C.I McGrath, "Securing the Protestant Interest: the origins and purpose of the Penal Laws of 1695,' *Irish Historical Studies* 30 (117) (1996): 25-26. T. Bartlett, "The Penal Laws against Irish Catholics: were they too good for them?," *Irish Catholic Identities, Chapter 9.* ed. Oliver Rafferty (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015).

immediately make a corresponding increase in his rent, his farms passed to the first Protestant who made the discovery.[4]

Similarly, the laws restricting education and religion can also be understood as part of a strategy to demean and demoralize the Catholic population. Without knowledge and discipline, there was every chance the Irish Catholic would remain ignorant, thus undermining the chances of engaging in organized political rebellion.

A central feature of the systemic effort to demoralize Irish Catholics was the effort to ensure that they remained uncouth and ignorant. Again, Lecky summarized the main effects of the Penal Laws when he wrote, "The Catholic was excluded from the university. He was not permitted to be the guardian of a child. It was made penal for him to keep a school, to act as usher or private tutor, or to send his children to be educated abroad; and a reward of £10 (pounds) was offered for the discovery of a Popish schoolmaster".[5] It was at this time that the famous 'hedge schools'[6] came into

[4] William Lecky, *A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*. Vol. 1. (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1916), 146.

[5] Lecky, 148.

[6] Donal Akenson, *The Irish Education Experiment* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), 45-48; With the introduction of the Penal Laws in 1695, educational practices of the two man dissenting groups, Catholics and Presbyterians, was introduced. Despite strict laws, a new derivation of popular education emerged in the early part of the eighteenth century. These schools were called hedge schools, as in some instances they were located near public hedges. Some were located near rivers, under overhanging rocks, in mud huts, in barns, in chapels, in the homes of people, or in rare cases, in the teachers own house. By the end of the eighteenth, there were an estimated 10,400 hedge schools in existence, attended by as many as 400,000 pupils who had to pay a fee to the teacher. By 1793, the ban on Catholic education had been removed from the statute books, but hedge schools continued to flourish reaching a peak in the 1820's. Subject matter included the traditional three R's – reading, writing and arithmetic – history, geography, mathematics, Latin, and sometimes Greek. In the Irish-speaking districts, instruction in all the subjects was given in the vernacular. Some priests encouraged the establishment of hedge schools, and the majority of teachers included some instruction in religious doctrine in their curriculum. The teaching of religious instruction, however, was not left to the teacher alone, with the priest having the final responsibility. The priest either appointed the teacher or approved of his appointment. However, both the parents and priest entrusted the children's spiritual welfare to the teacher, though the hedge school was under the direct authority of the teacher himself. The Ascendency class were suspicious of these schools as memories were still fresh of the 1798 Rebellion, and because the schools were not under Government control. More information on hedge schools can be obtained from Tony Lyons, "'Inciting the lawless and profligate adventure': The Hedge Schools of Ireland," *History Ireland* (November-December, 2016): 28-31; M

existence. These schools were to dominate the field of Irish education until the establishment of the National School (Elementary School) system in the 1830s. Although there was a hedge school in every parish in the country, they varied enormously in quality and consistency of curriculum.[7] It was the persistence and prevalence of these illegal 'hedge schools' which led to the state's strategy of establishing subsidized schools – Charter Schools – to Protestantize the Irish. These schools were based on the principle of the state intervening and detaching children from the influences of their parents. The Charter Schools sought to train children in "labour and industry in order to cure that habitual laziness and idleness which is too common among the poor of this country".[8] However, the attempt to Protestantize the Irish could only be successful if the children were detached from the bad habits of their parents.

Consequently, admission to the schools depended upon Catholic parents handing over all rights to the bodies and souls of their children who, once they entered the schools, were apprenticed to Protestant families and were forbidden to communicate with their parents. The schools were intended, in the words of their program, "to rescue the souls of thousands of poor children from the dangers of Popish superstition and idolatry, and their bodies from the miseries of idleness and beggary."[9] The Charter Schools initiative was an abject failure, and it is thought that at its peak, no more than 2,000 Catholic children were part of the program.[10] Given the abundance of

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Yolanda Fernandez-Suarez, "An Essential Picture in a Sketch-Book of Ireland: The Last Hedge Schools," *Estudios Irlandeses* 1 (2006): 45-57.

[7] Inglis, *Moral Monopoly: The Rise and Fall of the Catholic Church in Modern Ireland*, 105.

[8] Maureen Wall, *The Penal Laws 1691-1760* (Dundalk: Dundalgan Press, 1976), 9.

[9] Lecky, *A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century,* 233.

[10] Ibid, 235.

the illegal 'hedge schools' throughout Ireland and the continued determination of the Protestant Ascendency to ensure social and political stability through Protestant education and moral discipline, the state began to accept the need for a nation-wide, uniform instruction and supervision of education. This resulted in the establishment of the already alluded-to National School system.

The Emergence of an Alliance between the State and the Roman Catholic Church

By the middle of the eighteenth century, British politicians had begun to realize that the attempt to abolish Catholicism and Catholic education through persecution had failed. In the attempts by the state to suppress sedition and crime, and with the growing realization that the bulk of the Irish population would not become Protestant, the "religious ministration" of Catholic clergy could become a means of ensuring greater peace and public order in Ireland.[11] It was at this stage that a tentative power alliance began to form between the British state and the Catholic Church, much to the chagrin of the Protestant Ascendency in Ireland who pursued the return of the Penal Laws to eradicate all forms of Catholic life.[12] However, the Catholic Church's role in the pacification and civilization of the Irish masses was hampered by the lack of clergy manpower.[13] With the increase of the native population, and the closure of seminaries in Ireland by the state following the French revolution, the supply of priests had stopped. The establishment of a national seminary in Ireland – erected in 1795 – was mooted, not only to supply clergy manpower, but to also thwart, as much

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[11] Ibid, 168.

[12] Wall, *The Penal Laws 1691-1760,* 66.

[13] S.J. Connolly, *Priests and People in Pre-Famine Ireland 1780-1845* (Dublin: Gill & McMillan, 1982), 33.

as possible, the return of Irish clergy imbued with a political revolutionary spirit which had swept France. In seeking to provide for Catholic Bishops and clergies' role in the pacification and civilization of Irish Catholics, the state was willing to financially support them. However, such a consideration would only be possible if the state had a veto over the nomination of bishops. This was part of a concerted effort by the state to avoid the appointment of seditious and treasonable bishops. The Vatican was consulted and its rejection of the proposal was seen as an effort to maintain its own centralized power and to avoid any alliance between the Irish Church and the British state.[14] When the state failed to get the hierarchy to enter into an alliance with it, it did its best to ensure that there was no alliance between the Church and the emerging Catholic bourgeoisie, which it viewed as a threat to the Act of Union of 1800. Despite the state's attempts to split the Irish hierarchy by offering appeasements, the hierarchy was gradually consolidating more and more into a unified, organized power bloc in Irish society.[15] With constant advice from Rome, and the fixing of episcopal appointments, particularly through the then-Rector of the Irish College, the future Cardinal Cullen of Dublin, the Irish Church was being reconstituted as a united body directly accountable to and regulated by Rome.

It is important to note that other factors facilitated the emergence of the Catholic Church as a power bloc in Irish society. The physical development of the infrastructure of communications, roads, printing and the postal service increased the development of Catholic discourse. The growth of the popular press, for example, was associated with an increase in the actual reporting of the activities of the Catholic

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[14] Inglis, *Moral Monopoly,* 115.

[15] Ibid, 116.

Church.[16] This, together with the fact that much of the reporting was of a favorable

nature, did much to give the Church a legitimate position, especially among the more

literate Protestant community. At this time, much of the discourse and practice of the

bishops in the first half of the nineteenth century was taken up with tightening clerical

discipline. E. Larkin notes, "what happened between 1800 and 1845 is that the

character and conduct of the clergy, which left a great deal to be desired at the

beginning of the period, was gradually and uniformly improved. By 1830 the worst

was over, since the Irish bishops, with the help of Rome, finally secured the upper

hand over their priests."[17] The increased influence of the Church as a power bloc,

greatly enhanced with changes in Irish economic and social conditions due to

increased prosperity in Ireland, was particularly witnessed with the emergence of a

new class of substantial Catholic tenant farmers. After the establishment of the

National seminary in 1795, the Catholic Church's presence was further consolidated

with an increase in the number of priests in Ireland. Here, the tenant farmer class

played a pivotal role, a role which also enhanced the relationship between them and

Catholic clergy as a whole. It was only they who could afford to send their sons to

Maynooth to be educated for the priesthood, and to enjoy the consequent, growing

social prestige. In 1808, of the 205 students in Maynooth, 159 – 78% - were sons of

tenant farmers.[18] Inglis writes that, "[F]rom the beginning of the nineteenth century,

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[16] Ibid, 118.

[17] E. Larkin, "The Devotional revolution in Ireland, 1850-75," *American Historical Review*, LXXVII (1972): 630.

[18] D. Kerr, *Priests, Peel, and Politics: Sir Robert Peel's Administration and the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 238-248.

the heart of Irish Catholicism shifted gradually from an urban merchant class to a rural tenant farmer class."[19]

The Roman Catholic Church and Education

By the time of the Great Famine of 1845, the Catholic Church had begun to exercise control of the state-subsidized, and supposedly non-denominational, National School system, which was established in 1830 by the British state. It had vetoed state proposals to establish 'godless colleges,' and was preparing to establish its own voluntary Catholic university[20]. At the second level of education (High school), congregations of sisters and brothers, especially the sisters of Mercy and Christian Brothers, had already built a reputation as the providers of a relatively cheap, well-disciplined, moral education, which was to become all-important in the creation of a new rural Catholic middle class. By the middle of the nineteenth century, state supervision of education had given way to a situation in which the Catholic Church was about to take control of Irish education, and without much disapproval from the state. The main transformation in education throughout this period and beyond was not just the enormous expansion in the number of well-built schools, but that the state paid for them, and by and large, handed supervision and control over to the Church.[21] Here, historically, the origins of the Church's domination of Irish education can be traced back to the Penal Laws, with the dramatic increase in the number of illegal

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[19] Inglis, *Moral Monopoly*, 119.

[20] E. Kane, "John Henry Newman's Catholic University Church in Dublin," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 66, nos. 263/263 (Summer/Autumn 1977), 105-120. I. Kerr, *Achievement of John Henry Newman* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2001), 1-34. I. Kerr, *John Henry Newman: A Biography* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). C. Barr, *Paul Cullen, John Henry Newman and the Catholic University of Ireland 1845-1865* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press, 2003).

[21] Ibid, 122.

'hedge schools,' particularly in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The Relief Act of 1782 restored to Catholics the right to teach in schools. From then on, most of the hedge schools became known as pay schools and were linked into the parish system. The growing success of these schools brought evangelical Protestant agencies and societies into the field of education. Their aim was to spread Protestantism throughout Ireland by disseminating Bibles into every Irish cottage, and by eliminating "poisonous hedge-schools," which they constantly reminded the state, were hotbeds of sedition and treason.[22] Their schools, with standardized buildings, school-rooms, and fittings, as well as standardized timetables and curricula, were intended to be institutions in which Protestant practices and doctrines were to be inculcated into Irish children, with a particular emphasis on the teaching of scripture. Inevitably, this approach faced mounting Catholic opposition.[23] In 1826, the Catholic bishops issued a unanimous declaration which stated that, while they accepted the principle of a National School system, they insisted that "in order to secure sufficient protection to the religion of the Roman Catholic children…we deem it necessary that the master of each school, in which the majority of pupils profess the Roman Catholic faith, be a Roman Catholic."[24] They also demanded that the masters who taught Roman Catholic children should be trained and supervised by people of the same faith, and that they (the bishops) should select and approve of the books to be used. The declaration indicated clearly, for the first time, that the Catholic Church had emerged as a power bloc in Irish society, one willing to define and defend its sphere of power over and against all others. For example, with the actual establishment of the

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[22]Quoted in T. Corcoran, *Education Systems in Ireland from the Middle Ages* (Dublin: Dublin University College, 1928), 115, 125, 129.

[23] Inglis, *Moral Monopoly,* 123.

[24] Corcoran, *Education Systems in Ireland from the Middle Ages,* 151-153.

National School system in 1830, the state acknowledged that the principles of the evangelical Protestant societies were at variance with those of the Roman Catholic Church and that "the indiscriminate reading of the holy scriptures without note or comment, by children, must be peculiarly obnoxious to a Church which denies, even to adults, the right of unaided private interpretation of the Sacred Volume with respect to articles of religious beliefs."[25] Their solution was a formally non-denominational system with religious instruction one or two days per week, whether before or after ordinary school hours. However, in fact, intentionally or not, what made the system denominational was that individual managers were not strictly controlled and, in addition, with the vast majority of the school population being Catholic, the manager generally turned out to be the local parish priest. The National School system was a major blow against the Established Church from which it never recovered. It marked the decisive and last battle with the Catholic Church for moral control of the Irish population. Thus, the predominant, and virtually undisputed control of education in Ireland lay in the hands of Roman Catholics for the next one hundred and fifty years when the changing socio-religious landscape in Ireland began to emit calls for change in the status quo.

The Roman Catholic Church and Health Care

Institutional healthcare of the Irish population was not to become a central practice of the Irish Catholic Church until the latter half of the nineteenth century. When it did, it was mainly operated by religious sisters. It was their pioneering work in caring for and nursing the sick poor that was to become the basis of the medico-religious jurisdiction of the Catholic Church in Ireland. At the beginning of the nineteenth

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[25] Corcoran, 165.

century, a number of charitable institutions and hospitals existed in Ireland.[26] The

charitable institutions were small in number and were predominantly Protestant. The

hospitals, of which there was a large number, were mainly for those who could afford

them. There were no institutions which provided systematic healthcare or attended to

their spiritual as well as health needs of the Catholic lower classes. The 1838 Poor

Law established a tightly organized administration for the relief of the poor and,

subsequently, became responsible for the development of a number of health services.

The workhouses established under this act could not be described as hospitals in the

ordinary present-day meaning of the term but, as time went by, hospital services were

developed in them. There was then, no general health, nursing and medical care for

poor Catholics unless they committed themselves to the workhouse. This gap was

filled by the Religious Sisters of Charity who, under their founder, Mother Mary

Aikenhead, opened St. Vincent's Hospital in Dublin in 1834. Now, one could be sick

and in need of medical care and nursing without formally having to declare oneself

destitute, or committing oneself to a Protestant hospital. Although the hospital was

formally for every sect and every creed, Mother Aikenhead was fully aware that in the

public hospitals many poor Catholics were dying without the help of the last

sacraments. She had, in fact, founded the first Catholic hospital run by Catholic

sisters, staffed by Catholic doctors, and with Catholic priests in regular attendance.[27]

St. Vincent's Hospital filled a gap, but long into the nineteenth century Irish hospitals,

continued to be dominated by Protestants. In many of the hospitals, positions were

filled by friendship or the highest bidder rather than by merit; both of which militated

against Catholics. Even when Catholics were trained as doctors, they were trained by

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[26] B. Hensey, *The Health Services of Ireland* (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1959), 3-7.

[27] Inglis, *Moral Monopoly*, 126.

Protestants in Protestant establishments. As one of the few well-known Catholic doctors at the time testified, "There is no use in Roman Catholics in Dublin pursuing the [medical] profession, unless they have a chance of getting those situations [medical officers], because if they do not hold hospitals in a large city, they have no chance of acquiring character; and, therefore, as long as such a system of exclusion exists, you keep Catholics from entering the profession."[28]

In 1861, the Sisters of Mercy opened the Mater Misericordia Hospital in Dublin, which, in its accommodation and design, was one of the most modern in Europe at the time. The sisters, through their dedicated and economically unrewarding work, provided institutions for the care of the Catholic in a Catholic manner, as well as places where Catholic doctors could be trained. The health care of the Irish people was becoming a thoroughly denominational practice: St. Vincent's and the Mater struck the first blow against the Protestant domination of the medical profession. This domination would last a long time.

The Roman Catholic Church, Tenant Farmers, and Mothers

Far from being a non-entity, it could be argued that the Irish mother played a crucial role in the social and economic development of Ireland. It was the mother who, from the middle of the nineteenth century, became the organizational link between the Catholic Church, the family, and the shaping of social values at large in a manner consistent with Catholic teachings.[29] It equally emerged that whatever power an Irish mother had was heavily dependent on the support she received in return from

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[28] Select Committee on Medical charities Vol. 10 (1843), 198. See Edward Mapther, *The Dublin Hospitals* (Dublin: Fanin, 1845).

[29] Inglis, *Moral Monopoly*, 184.

the priests and the Catholic Church. This alliance, and the practices by which it was maintained, helped the Catholic Church become a dominant force in the social and economic life of Ireland. The focus on the role women in their roles of wife and mother is not to undermine the role of husbands and fathers during this period but to acknowledge that women as wives and mothers played a profoundly central role in the development of Irish social and economic history that is only receiving the attention it deserved in more recent decades. Inglis cites three reasons for this: for the most part, men have written about Irish history; Irish historiography has focused on politics and personalities (predominantly, the preserve of men in times past); with little or no income of their own, women were seen to have no power. The social and economic history of Irish women has only begun to be appreciated.[30]

To understand the role of the mother in Irish society of the time, it is necessary to appreciate the transformation that took place in agriculture and, consequently, in the position and role of women in Ireland from the beginning of the nineteenth century. At this time, J. Lee alludes to the decline of women's economic power – gained through the domestic cottage industry of the spinning and weaving of flax – around the time of the great Famine of 1845 when he writes:

> The Famine helped change this situation [women's economic power] in three ways. First, it delivered a crippling blow to domestic industry. The numbers of spinners of wool, cotton and linen fell about 75% between 1841 and 1845…Secondly, the Famine permitted a marked shift from tillage to livestock, and agriculture became less intensive. Women were now less necessary about the farm…Thirdly, the proportion of agricultural labourers to farmers, and of smaller farmers to strong farmers, fell sharply. As women had probably enjoyed greater economic equality among the poorer orders than

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[30] Inglis, 178.

among the wealthier, this in itself sufficed to tilt the balance of economic power within the family in the male direction.[31]

S.J Connolly contends that the tenant farmer class, on the other hand, was largely untouched by the dire social and economic consequences of the Great Famine. The Famine decimated the rural poor.[32] These farmers were the mainstay of the Catholic Church in terms of providing money and manpower. It was mainly they who had the necessary capital for church building, and who could afford to educate their sons and daughters for the priesthood and religious life. It was they who united with the urban bourgeoisie in the push for Catholic Emancipation, which was achieved in 1829. They emerged as the dominant economic class through an alliance with the Catholic Church. Consequently, just as the Church was reconstituted as a power bloc in and through the new tenant farmers, these farmers were constituted as the dominant economic class in and through the Church. The primary mechanism through which the power alliance between the Church and the tenant farmer class was maintained, and which turned out to be crucial through successive generations into the future, was the Church's relationship with the farmer's wife. Inglis goes on to add that "[U]nless the nature and extent of this power, [a mother's/wife's power] how it was established and maintained, and its consequences for everyday social and economic life are understood, there can never be a full comprehension of the power of the Catholic Church in modern Irish society."[33] Also, to further argue this point, reports from various parliamentary commissions, towards the middle of the nineteenth century, began to indicate that the promotion of peace with the absence of rebellion, and the

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[31] J. Lee, "Women and the Church since the Famine," in *Women in Irish society*, eds. M. McCurtain and D. O'Corrain (Dublin: Arlen House, 1978), 37.

[32] S.J. Connolly, *Priests and People in Pre-Famine Ireland*, 17, 23.

[33] Ibid, 187.

promotion of social and public etiquette depended, not just on giving more power to the Catholic Church, but on the transformation of Irish women into 'good mothers'! The Poor Law Commissioners, for example, drew an unfavorable portrait of Irish mothers when it stated:

> Another circumstance, which has a powerful influence in retarding the improvement of the Irish settlers in Great Britain, is the unthrifty and dissolute character of the women as it is on the wife that the care of the house, and on the mother that the training of children, chiefly falls among the poor. The Irishwomen are likewise, for the most part, not only wasteful and averse to labour, but also ignorant of the arts of domestic economy, such as sewing and cooking. Hence they are unable to make the best of the plain food which they purchase, or to keep their own and their husband's clothes in order, even when they require only mending.[34]

This was one of the reasons why, when the National School system was set up, such a heavy emphasis was given to the training of girls to be good mothers. In addition to providing for the promotion of household skills among school-going girls, priests and sisters began to control women, to define the tasks of mothers, and to supervise them in their new role from around the middle of the nineteenth century in post-Famine Ireland. One of the main ways this was done was through the control of women's sexual life, portraying women as "weak fragile beings who must be protected (by the priest) from the sexual viper which lurked within them."[35] G. Rattray Taylor holds that this strategy was not unique to the Catholic Church to control women but part of a wider Puritan strategy, by which women were "forced into an exaggerated femininity, magnifying their relative weakness into complete

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[34] *Report of the Poor Law Commissioners*, 1836, vol. 34, Appendix G, "The State of the Irish Poor in Britain," xiii.

[35] Inglis, *Moral Monopoly*, 188.

helplessness, their emotionality into hysteria and their sensitivity into a delicacy which must be protected from all contact with the world."[36] Women especially were meant to feel ashamed of their bodies. They were interrogated about their sexual feelings, desires, and activities in the confessional, outside of which there was a perpetual, deafening silence. Sex became the most abhorrent sin. For women to attain and maintain their personal and moral power within the family and in society at large, it was considered necessary to retain their virtue and chastity. This was the message mothers began to pass on to their daughters. Here, priests and members of religious congregations encouraged devotion to Our Lady, who provided a model of modesty, virtue, and humility for women. She was a mother figure who was at the same time completely desexualized. This represented an attempt by the Catholic Church to undermine pagan practices, which were rampant in pre-Famine times, and replace them with an ideal-type figure that was fecund and female, and yet remained virgin and pure.[37] The Catholic Church expressed concerns about the relationship between economic individualism and increased urban, industrialization throughout the late nineteenth century. As such, the Church perpetuated a notion that women had a natural vocation as home-bound housewives and mothers. The church's message was consistent: if a mother went out to work, family life would be destroyed. Ultimately, as already alluded to, it was within the home that a new power alliance between priest and mother began to emerge – an alliance that was founded on her dependence for her moral authority and influence which was based on the rules and prescripts of the Catholic Church. The result of that alliance was an embodiment of the rules and

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[36] G. Rattray Taylor, *Sex in History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 81.

[37] Inglis, *Moral Monopoly*, 194.

regulations of the Church among successive generations of Catholics in Ireland. The price of that alliance was a chaste motherhood, with unregulated fertility.

Decline of the Power of the Catholic Church in Ireland

Going back some thirty years, there have been opposing views when it comes to deciding about the current condition of the Catholic Church in Ireland. Liam Ryan, a priest-sociologist, contended that a new Catholic faith was emerging in Ireland. He wrote that there was an increasing number of people in Ireland "who see themselves as having the Christian faith, who wish to remain within the church, who are weekly churchgoers, but who question the Church's authority over their private lives."[38] Hornsby-Smith and Whelan reiterated this view, based on their analysis of data from the European Values Study of 1990, and contended that there was a new type of Catholic emerging in Ireland. [39] Arguably, such views seem to starkly contrast with evidence of church structural/administrative contraction over the last thirty years at least, as well as the data available through surveys, and the national Central Statistics Office (CS0). This part of the paper will suggest that the fallout from the long litany of cases of child sexual and physical abuse by clergy, religious brothers, and some sisters, which came to light in the last 25 years, has given impetus to a trend that was already occurring in Ireland: the secularization of Irish life. Religious practice, religious language, symbols, and rituals no longer framed social life as they once did. Similarly, while Catholicism still dominates the religious field, bishops, clergy and members of religious congregations no longer exercise the same power over the minds and hearts of Irish Catholics – the way they think, understand and relate to the

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[38] L. Ryan, "Faith Under Survey." *The Furrow* (January, 1983): 6.

[39] M. Hornsby-Smith and C. Whelan, "Religious and Moral Values," in *Values and Social Change in Ireland*, ed. Chris Whelan (Dublin: Gill & McMillan, 1994), 7-44.

world in which they live. Inglis would argue that, not only are Irish Catholics becoming more secular, but also more Protestant, which he understands as Irish Catholics devising their own spiritual and moral path to salvation[40] as opposed to the pursuit of salvation through adherence to rules, regulations and sacramental practices of the Catholic Church. On the one hand, the increasing number of people who reject the Roman Catholic Church as the one true path to salvation may not be a sign of secularization but a sign of Protestantization of beliefs and a decline in the institutional Catholic Church.[41] On the other hand, if when, making a major or moral decision, Irish Catholics do not refer to God, sin, or life after death, then, arguably, it is a sign of secularization. The decline of the influence of the institutional Church in the religious field has been matched by a decline in its influence in other fields, including politics, education, health, social welfare, and the media. Insofar as there is no supernatural reference in people's behavior in these fields in deciding what right and wrong, reflects, not only a decline in the influence of the Catholic Church, but also a process of secularization. Towards the end of the 1990s, high levels of belief in God (96%), Life after death (78%), a Soul (85%), Heaven (85%), Hell (50%), the Devil (53%), and Sin (84%) would suggest that secularization had not the same impact as other countries in Europe.[42] However, there are some changes indicated in the nature of Irish Catholic belief. For example, in the period between 1981 and 1990 alone, the proportion who believed in a personal God decreased from 77% to 66%.[43]

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[40] Inglis, *Moral Monopoly*, 205.

[41] Ibid, 207.

[42] Hornsby-Smith and Whelan, *Values and Social Change*, 33.

[43] Ibid, 35. The decline since 1974 is even more dramatic. Then 84% of Irish Catholics felt sure that God's love was behind everything that happens and that their prayers were answered. M. Nic Ghiolla Phadraig, "Religion in Ireland," *Social Studies*, V (1976): 122.

Most Irish Catholics are still born into the Church, baptized and socialized into its beliefs and practices. The vast majority of Catholic children attend Catholic primary and secondary schools (elementary and high schools, respectively), where they receive first Holy Communion and Confirmation.[44] Between home and Catholic school, most children develop a Catholic habitus, a deeply embodied, almost automatic way of being spiritual and moral that becomes second nature and creates a Catholic sense of self and a way of behaving and interpreting the world.[45] Being Catholic becomes a fundamental part of their social and personal identity – the way they are seen and understood by others and the way they see themselves. This can help explain why, even though many Catholics may no longer practice as regularly as their parents or adhere to fundamental teachings of the Church, they still regard themselves as belonging to an Irish Catholic heritage.

Nevertheless, while identification with being Catholic is still strong, involvement in the institution is declining. While, on the one hand, there appears to be still, high levels of religious belief, on the other hand, there is increasing detachment from institutional religious practice. G. Davie refers to this phenomenon as "believing without belonging."[46] Although low levels of religious practice and institutional attachment may indicate that an increasing number of people have ceased to belong to religious institutions in a meaningful way, the comparatively high levels of belief

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[44] Inglis, *Moral Monopoly*, 57-61.

[45] T. Inglis, "Catholic Identity in Contemporary Ireland: Belief and Belonging to Tradition," *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 22, no. 2 (May 2007): 205; The French anthropologist, Pierre Bourdieu, sees 'habitus' to mean a lasting, general and adaptable way of thinking and acting in conformity with a systematic view of the world. For further treatment of his concept of 'habitus,' see P. Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 54-65.

[46] G. Davie, *Religion in Britain since 1945: Believing without Belonging* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 463; T. Glendenning and S. Bruce, "New Ways of believing without Belonging: Is Religion giving way to Spirituality?" *British Journal of Sociology* 57 (2006): 399-414.

suggest that they are not becoming irreligious. In other words, people may have

ceased to belong, but they have not ceased to believe. Thus, there is a difference

between the decline in religious practice and institutional practice and the decline in

personal belief.[47] However, religious life has become increasingly differentiated from

the rest of social life, and privatized and compartmentalized into specific times,

places, and contexts. Here, at the same time, it is acknowledged that the influence of

the Catholic Church on the state, the media, the public sphere, and civil society in

general has declined.[48] With reference to this trend, J. Casanova has suggested that

Irish Catholics, with low levels of religious practice and high levels of religious

beliefs, seem to have been slowly following a pattern evident among European

Catholics and their Protestant counterparts: being Catholic and being religious in

general seems to becoming less of a public manifestation and more confined to the

private sphere.[49]

The findings from the European Values Study (EVS)[50] identify some very

noticeable changes in Irish religiosity.[51] The 1999-2000 EVS revealed that in the

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[47] T. Glendenning and S. Bruce, "Patterns of Religion in Western Europe: An Exceptional Case," in *The Blackwell Companion to Sociology of Religion*, ed. Richard K. Fenn (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 266-267.

[48] T. Inglis, "Catholic Church, Religious Capital and Symbolic Domination," in *Engaging Modernity: Readings of Irish Politics, Culture and Literature at the Turn of the Century,* ed. Michael Boss and Eamonn Maher (Dublin: Veritas, 2003), 43-70.

[49] J. Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

[50] *European Values Study*: is a large scale program of survey research examining trends in values and attitudes in Europe. It was first carried out in 1981, 1990, and repeated in 1999-2000. The1999 study was based on face-to-face interviews with random samples of the adult population in33 European societies. The core data for the 33 participating societies are available from the Zentralarchiv in Cologne, Germany.

[51] Noel Barber, SJ., "Religion in Ireland: Its State and Prospects," in *Christianity in Ireland: Revisiting the Story,* eds. B. Bradshaw and Daire Keogh (Dublin: Columba Press, 2002), 287-297. Here, Barber succinctly presents a picture of the changing landscape of the Catholic Church in Ireland, and in comparison with the Catholic Church in Europe from information gleaned from the EVS. Statistics presented here focus on Ireland primarily.

space of 25 years, weekly Mass attendance had declined from 91% to 66%. Inglis contends that "going to Mass is as much a social as a religious event in Ireland, especially among older people living in rural areas".[52] It noted an even more dramatic decline in the reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) over the same time period. In the early to middle 1970s, almost a half (47%) of all Catholics went to confession at least once per month. This figure had fallen to 14%. These two statistics alone suggest a growing trend of institutional detachment among Irish Catholics: an increasing number no longer adhere to Church teachings, rules, and regulations traditionally understood as necessary for the attainment of salvation. While the salvation aspect of Irish Catholicism may be declining, over 95% of Irish Catholic respondents in the EVS of 1999-2000 considered it important to have a religious service for births, marriages, and deaths.[53] Similarly, evidence suggests that most Irish Catholics do not see the use of contraceptives, non-marital sexual activity, divorce, and homosexuality as sinful. In 1996, an opinion poll found that faced with serious moral problems, 87% of Catholics followed their own conscience rather than the teachings of the Church.[54] Domicile, age, and standard of education also seem to have had a major impact on religious practice, with percentages of Church practice varying noticeably between urban and rural residents, younger and older people, and the level of education achieved.[55] With regard to young people, Louise Fuller, the foremost historian of Irish Catholicism from the second half of the twentieth century up to the present time, notes how Catholic culture was changing rapidly from the

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[52] Inglis, *Catholic Identity in Contemporary Ireland*, 209.

[53] Tony Fahey, Bernadette Hayes and Richard Sinnott, *Conflict and Consensus: A Study of Values and Attitudes in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland* (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration (IPA)), 51

[54] Market Research Bureau of Ireland Survey (MRBI). *The Irish Times*, 16 December 1996.

[55] SJ. Barber, *Christianity in Ireland*, 289-290.

1970s onwards in spite of high levels of religious practice. Young people, she notes, were abandoning Catholicism in large numbers, especially when it came to the moral teachings of the Church, which they found impracticable and out of touch with the reality of their lived experience. The prohibition of contraception and divorce caused many of them to question how they could remain within an institution that outlawed recourse to what they believed to be two basic human rights.[56] At this juncture, this section of the chapter will take a brief look at the decline of power and influence of the Catholic church in Ireland as evidenced in the areas of Church as Institution, the political field, education, health, social welfare, the media, and in the family (with reference to the changing role of the mother).

Decline in Church as Institution

From the time of its emergence as an influential and powerful bloc, particularly with its growing and symbiotic connection with the growing class of tenant farmers and their wives, the Catholic Church occupied a central and pivotal role throughout all corners of Irish society for the next one hundred and fifty years. With its increased financial and spending power and the consequential expansion of schools, hospitals, social welfare facilities (orphanages, homes and hostels), and the bourgeoning growth of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, its influence and control extended across the length and breadth of Ireland. It was able to ensure that its role, goal and mission was facilitated with the abundance of men and women, ordained and/or professed at its service. The Catholic Church had a large number of educated and trained men and women at its disposal, as evidenced by the ubiquitous presence of

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[56] Louise Fuller, "Identity and political Fragmentation in Independent Ireland, 1923-83," in *Irish Catholic Identities,* ed. Oliver J. Rafferty (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 316.

rectories, convents, monasteries, schools, hospitals, and care facilities throughout

Ireland. However, the decline in personnel which began in the late 1960s started to

become more pronounced in the 1970s[57] and its trajectory has not been reversed since

then. For example, the combined total of diocesan clergy, clerical religious orders,

sisters, and brothers in 1970 (33,092) was reduced in 1997 (11,704), representing a

decrease of 35.3%. For each category over this period the decline was 7.2%, 42.6%,

35.1%, and 58.2%, respectively. Similarly, from 1966 to 1996, the combined total of

vocations in the already-mentioned categories was equally alarming, with a total

decline of 92.1%. Again, for each category, the decline was 79.5%, 90%, 96.8%, and

99.4%, respectively. Decline of vocations to, and membership of all categories,

continues to be particularly precipitous among sisters and brothers. With departures of

men and women before and after profession and/or ordination, and deaths, the

numbers continue to decline. Members of religious congregations and priests are

being forced to abandon the large houses they once occupied. The aura of sacred

difference, which came from being in, but different from, the community and which

was at the heart of their symbolic power, is being eroded. The decline in numbers,[58]

with its consequent loss of ownership and control of education, health, and welfare

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[57] Taken from Tables 10 and 11 of the Research and Development Commission, *Irish Priests and Religious* 1970-1975, in Inglis, *Moral Monopoly*, 212.

[58] I have found it very difficult to track down the numbers of men and women entering seminaries and religious houses of formation in more recent years in Ireland. Despite contacting the National Vocations Office which promotes vocations to the diocesan priesthood in Ireland, and Vocations Ireland which promotes vocations to the religious life in Ireland, I have been unsuccessful in attaining the relevant statistics. My only, and partial success – numbers were given for vocations to the diocesan priesthood only - has been gleaned from an article by Irish writer and theologian Greg Daley, "Banish the vocational smoke and mirrors: Clarity and honesty are urgently needed around Ireland's low vocations numbers." *The Irish Catholic*, (September 19, 2019): 12-13. With reference to specific numbers, Daley contends that some of the numbers given for annual admittance to studies for the diocesan priesthood include those men who are entering pre-seminarian studies both in Ireland, and in Spain for a propaedeutic year, akin to formation for novices of religious congregations. Therefore, he argues that the numbers given for admission to diocesan seminaries in recent years are inaccurate, and that the consequent confusion around numbers needs to be clarified by the Catholic Communications Office of the Irish Episcopal Conference.

centers, means that the Catholic Church is losing its source of cultural and political capital. In 2010, 16 men entered formation for the diocesan priesthood, 22 in 2011, 12 in 2012, 20 in 2013, 14 in 2014, 17 in 2015, 14 in 2016, 19 in 2017, 17 in 2018, and 17 for the year 2019-2020. From this trend, even for the last two years of 2018 and 2019, there is no hint of a 'Francis bounce.' Increasingly, instead of religious and clerical differences being seen as a sacred leaven to society at large, and a difference which makes a difference, collectively it will be seen more and more as odd! Quite frankly, the institutional Church in Ireland is dying off.

Decline in the Political Field

For almost one hundred and fifty years, the Catholic Church in Ireland has played a major role in the political field. The ability of the Church to exercise influence in this arena was crucial in its omnipresent hold of influence throughout Irish society as a whole, particularly its sway in the area of public and private morality. Not only did the Church develop a monopoly on the way people were spiritual and moral, but it also had considerable influence on the state, political parties, politicians, and the electorate. This enabled the Church to have considerable input into the formation and acceptance of the Irish constitution, the types of referenda which have been proposed and voted on, and on the type of social and cultural life passed in the parliament of the Republic of Ireland. As Irish historian, Daire Keogh, has argued, the basis of Church-State relations in Ireland after 1922 (after the War of Independence with Great Britain), was an informal consensus among bishops, priests, and politicians about the nature of Irish society and what the Irish people needed. Within the Catholic

nationalist mindset, there was a similar vision of Irish society.[59] From the foundations

of the state, a symbiotic relationship was established and persisted between the

Catholic Church, politicians, and legislators. For example, the Catholic Church sought

as one of its major objectives to reinforce the legitimacy of the new state (referred to

as Free State until the declaration of Republic status in 1949). The post- civil war[60]

political climate of the new state suited and reassured the members of the hierarchy.

With the outbreak of the civil war in 1921, the hierarchy sided with the new state and

condemned those who opposed it. As Keogh notes, in its earliest years, "Church and

state worked in close harmony with little evidence of conflict,"[61] with Catholic-

friendly laws passed in such areas as divorce and censorship.[62] The writing of the

1937 Irish Constitution represents another pivotal moment in the convivial

relationship between the Catholic Church and the state (the Irish Free State). The

anti-Treaty side which lost the civil war in 1922, came to power in 1932 under its

leader, Eamon de Valera. Not surprisingly, from the outset, he had been unhappy with

the original Constitution of the Free State, viewing it as "a British imposition,

possibly 'pagan,' to be got rid of at the first possible opportunity."[63] Orthodox

Catholic opinion was scarcely more favorable: the 1922 arrangement was regarded as

"forced upon us by a foreign non-Catholic power…it was exotic, unnatural and quite

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[59] D. Keogh, "Catholicism and the Formation of the Modern Irish State," in *Irishness in a Changing Society,* ed. Princess Grace Irish Library, 161-169.

[60] The civil war broke out after the War of Independence with Great Britain, between those who accepted and those who opposed the terms of cessation of War in 1922.

[61] "The Catholic Church and the Irish Free State1923-1932," *History Ireland* (Spring 1994): 47.

[62] Ibid, 48.

[63] Republicans in 1922 (anti-Treatyites opposed to the terms of cessation of the War of Independence with Great Britain) denounced the new constitution as 'pagan' and criticised the Catholic Church for supporting such an arrangement. 'Republican appeal to Rome 1923.' *De Valera papers*: University College Dublin: Department of Archives.

foreign to the native tradition."[64] In September 1936, de Valera wrote to the Jesuit

social thinker, Fr. Edward Cahill, seeking his assistance in drawing "a genuinely

Christian constitution."[65] Cahill was keen to be involved. He sent de Valera a copy of

his book, *The Framework of a Christian State*, with specific pages referred to so that

de Valera could devise a constitution that would mark a "definite break with the

liberal and non-Christian type of state."[66] Cahill went on to play an important role in

formulating some of those general principles that underpinned the constitution of

1937 and which were - in his words – "merely an application of the papal teaching

and of the conclusion of Catholic philosophy."[67] Eamon de Valera also drew on the

advice of the then-headmaster of Blackrock College, and future Archbishop of

Dublin, John Charles McQuaid.[68] Accordingly, in a series of letters written to de

Valera in the spring of 1937, McQuaid subjected the proposed constitution to close

inspection, and he "especially scrutinized the clauses in its dealing with widows and

orphans, the family, and that which described the Roman Catholic Church as

occupying a 'special position' in Ireland while it merely 'recognized' other Christian

faiths (and the Jewish religion)."[69] De Valera, though a conservative Catholic, invited

the opinions of both men. The document as a whole remained his responsibility, even

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[64] Fr. Cahill to de Valera, 4 September 1936: de Valera papers, no. 1059.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.: For and assessment of Cahill's role see Finola Kennedy, "Two priests, the family and the Irish constitution," *Studies* 87, no. 348 (Winter 1998): 353-64.

[68] As Archbishop of Dublin, John Charles McQuaid was to become a formidable ecclesiastical figure throughout the entire Republic of Ireland and who garnered influence in the national political arena.

[69] T. Bartlett, "Church and State in Modern Ireland, 1923-1970: Appraisal Reappraised," in *Christianity in Ireland: Revisiting the Story*, eds. Brendan Bradshaw and Darren Keogh (Dublin: Columba Press, 2002), 254; Given the conventional wisdom that the 1937 constitution was a conservative one, if not reactionary, document, this article according recognition to the Jewish faith has not received the recognition it deserves. As a time when the most culturally advanced and sophisticated nation in Europe, Germany, was promulgating the Nuremburg laws and contemplating with equanimity the extermination of the Jews, de Valera's gesture was startlingly progressive.

to the point of disagreeing with some of their contentions, including the 'special

position' of the Catholic Church, other Christian churches, prohibition on

freemasonry, censorship, contraception, and 'just wage.'[70] Decades later, the informal

consensus between the Catholic Church and Irish Republic began to unravel and

break down in the 1970s.[71]

In the 1980s, it could be said that in the struggle to know, understand and represent

the minds and hearts of the Irish people, the Catholic Church won out over the state

and main political parties. Given the success of the referenda on abortion (1983) and

divorce (1986), the Church could have rightly claimed that it still represented the

moral conscience of Irish society. In the newly emerging pluralist society of Ireland in

Europe, this was the role the Hierarchy had identified for itself.[72] However, for

almost the last thirty years, there is ample evidence to suggest that the Church is no

longer fulfilling this function, even though it is still operating within what was then

seen as a largely homogeneous Catholic society. In the 1990s, the two main issues on

which the voters clearly went against the teachings of the Church were, again,

abortion and divorce. Following the famous 'X' case in 1992, when a fourteen-year-

old girl who had become pregnant through sexual molestation was prevented from

travelling to Britain for an abortion, the Supreme Court ruled that abortion was lawful

in certain circumstances. In a subsequent referendum in November of the same year,

the electorate rejected the substantive clause, which would have permitted abortion

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[70] T. Bartlett, *Church and State in Modern Ireland*, 255; For a succinct, scholarly background to the writing of the Irish Constitution see Daire Keogh, "The Catholic Church and the Writing of the `937 Constitution," *Contemporary History* 13, (May/June 2005): 3-12; Daire Keogh, "The Jesuits and the 1937 Constitution," *Studies* 78 (Spring/1989): 82-95.

[71] For a scholarly treatment of the relationship Church and state between 1923 and 1970 see J. Whyte, *Church and State in Modern Ireland* 1923-1970 (Dublin: Gill & McMillan, 1971).

[72] L. Ryan, "Faith Under Survey," 14.

when there was an illness or disorder of the mother which gave rise to a real and substantial risk to her health. However, the electorate voted in favor of the right to travel to another country to have an abortion and to the right to information about abortion services outside Ireland.[73]

The other major issue on which Irish Catholics did not follow the teachings of the Church was in the second referendum on divorce in 1995. As in previous referenda, much of the argument made in the media against divorce was produced by members of the Catholic laity who belonged to different anti-divorce groups. As it happened in previous referenda, the Irish conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement.[74] But again, as happened in previous referenda, individual bishops spoke differently. Archbishop Connell of Dublin emphasized that the Catholic principle of the sacredness of marriage could not be forsaken for pragmatic ends. He stated that a Catholic must inform his or her conscience according to the teachings of the Church as put forward by the bishops. Toward the end of the campaign, Bishop Flynn, the Hierarchy's spokesman, declared that the Church would refuse all the sacraments including the 'Last Rites,' to people who had divorced and remarried. This pronouncement stood in stark contrast to Bishop's Walsh's statement that he might repeat the pro-divorce vote he made in the previous referendum. The result of the referendum was extremely close: 50.3% voted in favor of divorce, with 49.7% against it. A survey carried out on the day of the referendum showed that support for divorce was strongest among Dubliners (64%) and 18-34 year olds (66%).[75] However, the

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[73] For a description and analysis of the abortion referendum and related issues, see Ailbhe Smyth, ed., *The Abortion Papers* (Dublin: Attic Press, 1992).

[74] *Irish Catholic*, 9 November, 1995

[75] *The Irish Times*, 13, 18 and 25 November 1995.

Catholic Church teaching has been ignored not only in the referenda, but successive governments have brought in legislation that does not correspond to the concept of favorable pro-Catholic laws. In 1993, legislation was passed legalizing homosexuality. The necessity for such legislation had arisen from a ruling from a judgement at the European Court of Human Rights, which had insisted on the decriminalization of homosexual acts between consenting adults. The final bill passed defined adults in this instance to be 17 years old, which made the piece of legislation one of the more liberal in Europe. May, 2015 represented another landmark in the increasingly divergent paths being taken between official Catholic Church teaching and the choices of an increasingly, educated, pluralistic, and liberal society. A referendum on the equal rights of homosexuals to marry each other was passed by over a 30% margin.

A number of reasons could be suggested for the decline in influence of the Catholic Church in the Irish political field. First, the separation and differentiation of the religious from the political field is continuing, following the general trend in Western European and North American society. Whereas religion, morality and law were closely intertwined in times past, they are becoming more and more separated into distinct fields. Second, many argue that the Catholic Church continues to be vague about political common good, as well as the common good in relation to sexual morality. As Ireland-based French sociologist, M. Peillon, pointed out some years ago now, the Catholic Church speaks in many different languages on social issues and is ambivalent about capitalism, the state and urban society. He stated, "[T]he Church has abandoned its corporatist positions but no coherent project for society has replaced them. The Church expresses its concern for the most vulnerable groups in society but

relies on social assistance to achieve that end."[76] One of problems the Catholic

Church has in dealing with social inequality, for example, is that it is considered by

many to be an elitist, hierarchical institution. It is viewed to have tended in the past to

legitimate, if not directly reproduce, inequality and maintained social stability through

a legitimization of the state. The extent to which it has been complicit in reproducing

the interests of the dominant bourgeois class has a long history of debate and different

opinions.[77] Third, and arguably, since the disclosure of a long litany of child sexual,

and physical abuse within the Catholic Church mainly by priests and religious

brothers and religious sisters (with a few exceptions), the contribution of bishops,

priests and members of religious congregations to discussions and debates on social

and political issues has become more infrequent and measured. Fourth, there is less

and less, frequent evidence of contact and communication between members of the

clergy, and between members of religious congregations and politicians. Both groups

are no longer as dependent on each other as they once were in times past in the pursuit

of their separate or related agendas. Clearly, the once-powerful Catholic institution

was profoundly damaged by the clerical abuse scandals and by the consequent,

various reports that have made public their findings.[78] In July 2011, a landmark event

took place when the then Prime Minister - An Taoiseach,[79] Enda Kenny, made a

biting attack on the Catholic Church in the wake of the Cloyne Report, which revealed

clerical abuse in that diocese. Kenny, a practicing Catholic and leader of a center-

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[76] M. Peillon, *Contemporary Irish Society* (Dublin: Gill & McMillan, 1982), 99.

[77] C. Eipper, *The Ruling Trinity: A Community Study of Church, State and Business in Ireland* (Aldershot: Gower, 1986), 18, 106.

[78] In Chronological order: *The Ferns Report* (2003); *The Murphy Report* (2009); *The Ryan Report* (2009); and, *The Cloyne Report* (2011). Dublin: Government Publications Office.

[79] Irish Gaelic word for 'Chieftain.'

right political party with strong historical links with the Catholic Church, stated variously:

> …for the first time in Ireland, a report into child sexual abuse exposes an attempt by the Holy See to frustrate an inquiry in a sovereign, democratic republic.

> [Ireland is no longer a country] where the swish of a soutane smothered conscience and humanity and the swing of a thurible ruled the Irish Catholic World.

> This is the Republic of Ireland 2011. A Republic of laws, rights and responsibilities; of proper civic order; where the delinquency of a particular version, of a particular kind of "morality," will no longer be tolerated or ignored.[80]

People found his presentation of the situation accurate, even though there is scant evidence that the Holy See actually interfered with the workings of the Cloyne Report,[81] as was frequently claimed. On an emotive level, it could be argued that the public response is that the Irish nation needed to find expression for their pent-up anger at how the institutional church, and its bishops in particular, failed to accept responsibility for the cruel treatment of children for which the Church was supposed

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[80] "Enda Kenny Speech on Cloyne Report," *RTE News*, July 20, 2011, http://www.rte.ie/news/2011/0720/303965-cloyne1/ (Accessed December 12, 2107).

[81] In 2004, a piece of legislation, *Commissions of Investigations Act*, was passed in the Republic of Ireland to establish a protocol for conducting public inquiries. It formed the legal foundation upon which allegations and accusations of child sexual abuse were handled by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in various dioceses. The Cloyne Report was one such report which was published on July 13, 2011. It investigated allegations and accusations of child sexual against 19 clerics in the period between 1996 and 2009. The report was highly critical of the response of the Bishop of the diocese during this period, John Magee in relation to allegations of abuse. It also strongly condemned the Vatican's response, saying that it had been 'entirely unhelpful, flouting the child protection guidelines, the *Framework Document* established by the hierarchy in 1996, as a 'study document.' J. Wade, "Cloyne report findings 'could not be starker or more disturbing – Shatter." *The Journal.ie* https://www.thejournal.ie/cloyne-repert-findings-could-not-be-starker-or-more-disturbing-shatter-176269-july2011/ (Accessed August 17, 2019).

to have a duty of care. In this regard, it is important to note here that the Catholic

Church since 1996, with the deluge of reports of child sexual abuse of minors – and in

more recent years, vulnerable adults – has taken more proactive steps in dealing with

child sexual abuse.[82] In light of development of legislation, policy and guidance,

alongside learning from reviews of safeguarding practice carried out by the National

Board, and the continued development of good practice across the Church in Ireland,

together with Church personnel and external advisors, a revision of standards led to

the publication of the latest document, *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards*

For The Catholic Church In Ireland 2016.

    With the hostility toward, and increasing detachment by so many from the

institutional Church, with the paucity of clerical and religious commentary about

these sordid scandals, and about Irish life in general, it seems that more and more

public contributions in the public arena from a Catholic perspective come from lay

Catholic individuals and groups such as the Iona Institute.[83]

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[82] In 1996, the Catholic Church in Ireland published its first document, *Child Abuse: Framework for a Church Response* (Dublin: Veritas, 1996). This was followed by *Our Children, Our Church: Child Protection policies and Procedures for the Catholic Church in Ireland* (Dublin: Veritas, 2005). In the following year, 2006, the Irish Bishops' Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI, now called AMRI, the Association of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland since 2017 when it amalgamated with the Irish Missionary Union IMU) established the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland, (NMSCCCI). In 2008, this National Board developed the first *Safeguarding Children, Standards and Guidance for the Catholic Church in Ireland* (Dublin: Veritas, 2008) and which was adopted by the Church as policy.

[83] Founded by religious and social commentator, David Quinn in 2007, the Iona Institute promotes the place of marriage and religion in society. Emphatic about the traditional nuclear family, it puts forward the view that children deserve the love of father and mother, if possible. It believes in the public funding of both denominational and non-denominational schools which reflect the wishes of the parents in an increasingly diverse society. It promotes the freedom of conscience, religion, and the right to life. It also continues to encourage public discussion on issues such as abortion and euthanasia.

Decline in the Educational field

It is argued that the dominance of the Catholic Church in the educational field has been central to preventing a more rapid decline in its position in Irish society. As Inglis notes, "[H]aving direct access to successive generations of young people and to the formation of their religious and social personalities has helped maintain its dominance in the religious field and stem the flow of secularization."[84] The Church's dominance in education has been sustained by the reluctance of the state to change the existing system, particularly in relation to the way schools are funded and managed. Back in 1995, a government white paper on education proposed some minor changes in relation to the management structure of primary (elementary) schools, but none in relation to secondary (high) schools.[85] The White paper concluded that the scope for the state introducing new legislation was restricted, given that the Irish Constitution recognizes the rights and duties of parents as the primary and natural educators. The Irish Constitutions also recognizes the property rights (the vast majority of schools have been owned by the Catholic Church), and the rights of religious denominations to manage their own affairs.[86] The White Paper of 1995 recognized that there may be a conflict between the articles of the Irish Constitutions, in that, on the one hand, it prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion, and, on the other, recognizes the rights of denominational schools to preserve their particular ethos. In effect, this last issue was resolved when the Supreme Court found that a new proposed Government Bill prohibiting denominational schools from discriminating against teachers on the

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[84] Inglis, *Moral Monopoly*, 223.

[85] Government White Paper, *Charting our Education Future Together* (Dublin: Government Publications 1995), 149.

[86] Ibid, 213-15.

grounds of their religious beliefs and values was not constitutional,[87] effectively

guaranteeing the special position of all religious denominations in the field of

education – unless the Irish Constitution is changed with regard to it.

In a social field like that of education, struggles are inevitable between the various

stakeholders in the attempt to maintain and improve their position. The Catholic

Church has been involved in a number of struggles, particularly with the state in

recent decades concerning the field of education: the establishment of

multidenominational primary schools; the appointment of chaplains to non-

denominational secondary (high) schools; the construction of community colleges as

opposed to community Schools (the Church having less control over the former as

such schools would not be built on Church property).[88] Since the noughties, that is,

from the beginnings of the new Millennium, the year 2000, successive governments

have been in lengthy and more difficult negotiations with the Catholic Church,

particularly concerning the divestment of some schools from its control. It is argued

that, with Ireland's changing multicultural, pluralistic, and secular demographic,

parents ought to have the right to send their children to schools that are not under the

control of the Catholic Church, or indeed, of any religious denomination; for example,

the Educate Together School system.[89] This is a current and controversial issue, not

just for Church and state relations, but also for increasingly secular, non-religious,

non-Church practicing parents over the last twenty-five years. Issues such as religious

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[87] The Irish Times, 16 May 1997.

[88] Maire Nic Ghiolla Phadraig, "The Power of the Catholic Church in the Republic of Ireland," in *Irish Society: Sociological Perspectives*, eds. P. Clancy, S. Drudy, K. Lynch, and L. O'Dowd (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1995), 610-611.

[89] The ethos is to develop and support the establishment of multidenominational schools at both Elementary and High School level. One of the aims is to promote an ethos where every child...has equal rights of access to the school regardless of social, cultural or religious background or personal creed Https;//www.educatetogether.ie/about/history/ (accessed, March 19, 2020).

ethos, religious education, sex education, curricula on sex education agreed upon by parents, teachers, and school management, as opposed to such topics being taught within the context of religious education as desired by the Catholic Church, continue to stir avid debate. From a personnel perspective, the struggle to maintain influence in the educational system becomes more and more difficult with the dramatic decline in the numbers of priests, sisters and brothers active in the field of education. For over one hundred and fifty years, they formed the linchpin of Catholic education. Thus, their decline represents an enormous diminution of the religious habitus of schools.

Decline in the Health field

The Catholic Church has had enormous influence in the health field in modern Ireland for a period of two centuries. For such a long time then, many Congregations of religious sisters (not excluding the Brothers of St. John of God, the Brothers of Charity, and the Camillian Order of priests and brothers) were responsible for establishing and running a Catholic health care service and have owned, staffed and run many of the country's hospitals, nursing homes, homes for the disabled and hospices. Also, a significant percentage of the hospitals in Ireland were Catholic voluntary hospitals. The ownership and control of such hospitals and the representatives of Catholic religious on the boards of public hospitals has meant that the Catholic Church has been able to exert considerable influence on the way medicine has been practiced, written, and talked about; on the teaching, training, and appointment of doctors and nurses; and on hospital ethics and the type of medical procedures available to patients. In recent decades, the tensions and struggles between the Church, the state, politicians, and other organizations in the health field indicate a turning tide, which, in itself, is unlikely to change in trajectory given that Ireland in now considered a post-Catholic,

multicultural, pluralistic, and secularized society.[90] An example of the changed climate in the field of health was the recent controversy of the location of a new maternity hospital designated to be located on the grounds of St. Vincent's Hospital in Dublin owned by the Religious Sisters of Charity established by Mary Aikenhead in the nineteenth century. The animated debate over control of the hospital's medical ethic and treatment of patients, including sterilization of women was significantly compounded with the passing of legislation providing for abortion in June of 2018, with a two-to-one majority in a national referendum. Its passing represents an indication in the further decline of the Roman Catholic Church in modern-day Ireland. As in so many other aspects of Irish life, it does not occupy the central role it did for so long. The Roman Catholic Church is predominantly seen as representing one voice among many in an increasingly secularized society.

Decline in Social Welfare

On her last day in office as President of the Republic of Ireland, Mary Robinson opened a social housing project, which had been developed by the Presentation Sisters.[91] During the event, Sr. Stanislaus Kennedy, a well-known activist and spokesperson on poverty and homelessness, emphasized the contribution of the sisters in Irish society. Some years earlier, this would have been just another good story told about work being done by religious sisters, brothers, priests, and Catholic organizations in the care of the vulnerable and disadvantaged. However, the

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[90] John Littleton, "In Periculo Mortis: Can Irish Catholicism Be Redeemed?" in *The Catholic Church In Ireland Today*, eds. D.C. Cochran and J.C. Waldmeir (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015), 19-20.

[91] Irish Times, 13 September, 1997.

emergence of a sad, sordid litany of stories of the abuse of children (and vulnerable

adults) began to further erode the symbolic power of the Catholic Church. Such

stories portrayed the church as an abuser as opposed to a carer to the most vulnerable

in society. In addition, Eamon Maher notes that, "[C]hurch and state were complicit in

many initiatives that resulted in children and young people (mainly women) being

exposed to rape and torture in residential centers such as the Industrial Schools and

Magdalen Laundries[92] …People often ended up in these places for the simple reason

that their parents did not have the wherewithal to feed and clothe them, or, in the case

of women, if they found themselves pregnant outside of marriage."[93] Minors, both

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[92] There is an enormous volume of material available on both the Industrial Schools and Magadalene Laundries in Ireland. For the Industrial Schools, for example, see the following: M. Raftery and E. O'Sullivan, *Suffer Little Children: The Inside Story of Ireland's Industrial Schools* (Dublin: New Island Books, 1999); P. Touher, *Fear of the Collar: Artane Industrial School* (Dublin: O'Brien Press, 1991); P.M. Garrett, "It is With Deep Regret that I find it Necessary to Tell my Story: Child Abuse in Industrial Schools in Ireland," *Journal of Critical Social Policy* 30, no. 2 (May 2010): 292-306; B. Arnold, *The Irish Gulag: How the State betrayed its Innocent Children* (Dublin: Gill & McMillan, 2009); and, Pauline Conroy, "No Safety net for disabled Children in Residential Institutions in Ireland," *Journal for Disability and Society* 27, no. 6 (2012): 809-822. Similarly, for some information on the Magdalene Laundries, see the following: James M. Smith, "The Magdalene Sisters: Evidence, testimony…Action," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 32, no. 2 (Winter 2007): 431-458; S. Killian, "For Lack of Accountability: the Logic of the Price in Ireland's Magdalen Laundries," *Journal for Accounting*, *Organization and Society* 43 (May 2015): 17-32; Katie Gleeson, "A Woman's work is…unfinished Business: Justice for Disappeared Magdalen Women of Modern Ireland," *Feminist Legal Studies* 25, no. 3 (2017): 291-312; Frances Finnegan, *Do Penance or Perish: A Study of the Magdalen Asylums in Ireland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); E. O'Sullivan and Ian O'Donnell, eds., *Coercive Confinement: Patients, Prisoners and Patients* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012).

[93] E. Maher, "Faith of Our Fathers: A Lost Legacy?" in *The Catholic Church in Ireland Today*, eds. David Carroll Cochran and John C. Waldmeir (Lanham: MD: Lexington Books, 2015), 3. In 2013, a group of local people in the town of Tuam, Coounty Galway in the West of Ireland with an interest in history began toraise funds to build a memorial at the site where a mother and baby home has previously existed. It had been knnown among locals that the site had been a cemetery for children from St. Mary's, known as The Home. It was run by the Sisters of Bon Secours from 1925 until 1961. Not uncommon during this period of time, unmarried women in the area who became pregnant were sent there to secretly give birth away from their families. At that time, it was considered shameful to have a so-called 'illegitimate' baby, that is, out of wedlock. When the home closed down, many of the children were moved to Industrial schools around the country. The building was eventually demolished. and on the vacant site houses were constructed. Some years later, in 1075 two boys who were playing in the area discovered some concrete slabs loosely covering a hollow. they moved the concrete and discovered a hole in which there were skeletons of children. There was no subsequent investigation. in 2013, Catherine Corless, a local amateur historian bbegan to investigate the story to find out what had been buried at the site. Having tried to contact the Bond Secoours sisters, and the Western Health board to no avail, she was eventually contact the births and deaths registry office in Galway city and was finally able to get the death certificate for every child who had died at The Home with the total number reaching 796. Ranging in ages from newborn to nine years, the death certificates recorded that the children had died from causes such as malnutrition, neglect, measles,

male and female, were also placed in these centers by the law for committing crimes. Within this controversial and historical context, the first major debate in the public sphere about women, the Catholic Church, and religious sisters and morality – of several to follow in the intervening years – was sparked by the decision of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity in Drumcondra, Dublin to sell off a cemetery to pay some debts. The cemetery contained the bodies of 133 abandoned women who had worked in the convent laundry. Some were unmarried mothers rejected by the family and community in which they lived. Some were women who had become destitute and homeless through mental illness or alcoholism. Others were girls who were considered to be 'wild.'[94] The debate and the media coverage enabled the story of these girls and women, some of whom lived to tell the tale, to be told differently. It led to critical debate and self-reflection inside and outside of the Catholic Church about the position of the Catholic Church in Irish society, the position of women, and the nature and function of religious sisters. Bringing to the surface the bodies of the dead had the unintentional consequence of bringing to the surface a whole series of stories about the experiences of people who had lived their lives in institutions run by the Catholic Church. It thus became exposed in a different light.

Decline in the Media

Until the 1960s, there was homogeneity between the way bishops and priests viewed and understood the world and the way the world was portrayed in the media. Such was the level of symbolic domination that when a commission was established

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tuberculosis, and pneumonia. C. Bohan, "*She was right: How Catherine Corless uncovered what happened in Tuam"* (March 3, 2017). https://www.thejournal.ie/catherine-corless-tuam-mother-and-baby-home-3268501-Mar2017/ (accessed, March 19, 2020).

[94] *The Irish Times*, 4 September 1993.

in 1958 to look into the development of a national television station in Ireland, not only the Vatican but the Pope himself welcomed and took a personal interest in the project. Pope Pius XII believed that "practically all broadcasting and television systems everywhere were under the control of groups who, at best, were not greatly concerned about moral issues."[95] He held that the influence of radio and television had been particularly bad in traditionally Catholic countries. However, the Pope felt that because of geographical location, Irish television would have the potential to broadcast the Christian message to both sides of the Atlantic. However, the Irish Prime Minister (Taoiseach), Eamon de Valera, had a less optimistic view of radio and television and likened them to atomic energy with its incalculable power to do good but which could also do irreparable harm.[96] The arrival of television, in particular, introduced a new symbolic habitus and practice into Irish homes. Before the advent of television, filmgoers were occasionally exposed to alternative conceptions of self. Now, these concepts were broadcast nightly directly into Irish homes. The language, symbols, and lifestyles portrayed in programmes imported from the United States and Britain were incompatible with the way the Catholic Church represented the World. Television and radio and the media in general encouraged self-realization and self-expression, while the message of the Church was essentially of self-abnegation or denial.[97] Since its arrival in Ireland, the mass media, particularly television, has wrested control of the family from the Church. Catholic thought, images, and practices used to dominate schools, hospitals, and other institutions, as well as public

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[95] This was a report given by two Monsignori sent by the Vatican to contribute to the Commission's hearings, see Robert Savage, *Irish Television: The Political and Social Origins* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996), 154.

[96] Quoted in Martin McLoone and John McMahon., eds., *Television and Irish Society* (Dublin: RTE-IFI 1984), 149.

[97] T. Flannery, *The Death of Religious Life*? (Dublin: Columba Press, 1997), 20-1.

life at large. Most of all, the Church dominated imagery, thought and practice within Irish homes. All this began to change irrevocably with the arrival of newspapers, magazines, radio, cinema, television, video, and in more recent decades, computers, iPads, Tablets, and cell phones. To compound the variant message between the Catholic Church and the mass media, the latter constantly broadcasts messages into the heart of the Irish home which are based on self-expression, pleasure, entertainment, consumerism, debate, discussion, and controversy.

Within the public sphere, the media gave publicity to intellectuals who were developing a new language, alternative to that of the Church, which people appropriated to read and interpret their lives. The language of writers, psychologists, educators, and programme-makers were at variance with the language of the Catholic Church. In other words, the very language through which issues were discussed in the public sphere began to change through the media. Moreover, the discourse within the media changed from the imparting of knowledge and information to a greater emphasis on dialogue, debate and discussion. The process of change from the symbolic domination of the Catholic Church in the public arena to the symbolic domination of the media was increasing in its effect.[98] The knowledge produced about social life and the way of reading and interpreting it and debating it shifted from bishops, priests and theologians to journalists, commentators, producers, and spin-doctors. This was effectively shown through the broadcast of the 'Goldenbridge' controversy in 1996, the first of several documentaries portraying the life, treatment, and abuse of children in residential institutions run by Catholic members, in this instance, the Religious Sisters of Mercy. It portrayed life in a Dublin orphanage in the

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[98] Susie Donnelly and Tom Inglis, "The Media and the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland: Reporting child Sexual Abuse," *Journal of Contemporary Religion* (December 2009): 1-19.

1950's and 1960's as brutal and uncaring. It was argued that the authoritarian regime

of discipline and punishment in orphanages was institutionalized in the Mercy

congregation.[99] The power of the media to influence the perception and understanding

of Sisters and the Catholic Church in the field of Irish welfare was evident. The

documentary also indicated how the perception and understanding of Sisters and the

Catholic Church had changed in RTE.[100] It is unlikely that such a programme would

have been broadcast ten years previously, particularly since it took such a negative,

one-sided view. In the changed climate of opinion, it was now permissible to produce

programmes critical of the Church, and the broadcasting of the 'Goldenbridge' story

reflected the media's increased symbolic capital and signaled a new era where

previously untold stories could emerge. The story was part of a process of revealing

that which was once hidden and silent. The documentary was part of a process that

dismantled the myth of the family and the orphanages as places of refuge for children.

Although the state was directly involved in all of such stories – it was state agencies

which referred cases to the institutions involved – the stories were told, not against the

state, but the Church. From this time onwards, the backlog of horror stories had built

up so much that once the climate changed, the lid was suddenly lifted, and what had

remained private and individual quickly became public.[101]

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[99] The *Irish times*, 10 May, 1996.

[100] RTE: Raidio Telefis Eireann (RTE), The national Irish Radio and Television station.

[101] See Mike Millote, *Banished Babies: The Secret of Ireland's Baby Export Business* (Dublin: New Island Books, 1997). Further undermining the symbolic power of the Catholic Church in Ireland was the revelation of stories of the export of babies for adoption, primarily in the Unites States. These babies were mainly born to unmarried mothers. The procedure was operated by religious Sisters and sanctioned by the Archbishop of Dublin and administered by the Department of External Affairs (now, the Department of Foreign Affairs). The story broke out not only within the context of other stories about child sexual abuse, but specifically through a series of contributions to talk radio shows.

In addition, what contributed to the perceptible gap between the Church and the media was the type of person who sought and gained access to the media, received publicity and contributed to debate in the public arena. Media persons tended to be more self-confident, extravert and skilled in speaking in the media's preferred format – keeping their soundbites simple, short, and 'sexy.' On the other hand, the Catholic Church has been, for the most part, not very successful in providing articulate, confident, media-savvy clerical, religious and lay intellectuals to counter the increasingly dominant, symbolic control of the media in Irish society.[102] Arguably, the hierarchical structure of the Church, with its system of designation of authority to those individuals to speak on its behalf, does not help its case in developing its ability to contribute in free, open, and public discussion. Priests, clergy, and members of the laity appear to contribute to public discussion as long as they do not speak on behalf of the Church. The emphasis on hierarchical authority and the inability to use the language of the media has weakened the Church's influence in Irish society. It is no longer a question of which is more symbolically dominant in Irish society at large, including homes. This was particularly highlighted - and repeated several times since through other broadcasts of related matters - in the 'Goldenbridge' controversy of 1997. It seems to be a question of how the Catholic Church can produce messages so that it continues to be heard and get the attention of the public. Even now, there are constant messages about how to live the good life, to be a good person and citizen, in the here and now – without reference to the afterlife. However, as Inglis notes, "it is not the bishops, priests and religious who are giving out these messages; it is not

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[102] Inglis, *Moral Monopoly*, 234.

priests who are listening to the confessions of Irish Catholics. It is the plethora of media gurus."[103]

Decline in the Family

In his analysis of some years ago, T. Fahey pointed out that Ireland became and remained for so long a Catholic country because of religion becoming "a women's business, particularly within the confines of the home and in connection with the socialization of children."[104] This chapter has earlier contended that the mother was the linchpin of the creation, development and maintenance of the Catholic Church's moral monopoly and control in Irish society. She was the crucial link between the institutional structure and the religious devotion of each successive generation of Irish Catholics. Inglis states:

> [T]he decline of the traditional mother, selflessly devoted to her family and the Church, has been directly instrumental in the decline of the Church's moral monopoly. The decline in religious belief and practice, in the commitment to the Church's moral teaching, and in the number of vocations can be directly linked to the Irish mother abandoning the traditional role of mother as constructed by the Church. Irish women are abandoning the notion that their lot in life is to be married, to get pregnant and to beget a large family.[105]

Over the course of several decades, it is also important to note the emergence of some factors which led to the increased empowerment and autonomy of women – and

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[103] Ibid, 238; the *Joe Duffy Show* on the National Irish Radio Station (RTE), broadcast every early afternoon, from Monday to Friday serves as a 'confessional' for those who phone in to the programme to 'air' their problems, complaints and worries.

[104] T. Fahey, "Catholicism and industrial Society in Ireland," in *The Development of Industrial Society in Ireland,* eds. John Goldthorpe and Chris Whelan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 241-263; T. Fahey, "The Church and Culture: Growth and Decline of Churchly Religion," *Studies* 83, (1994): 367-75.

[105] Inglis, 239.

consequently, mothers – in Irish society. Such factors include increased access to educational opportunity including university, the legal prohibition of discrimination in employment on the basis of gender or marital status, increased participation in local, national, and international politics, and the national referendum in November 1995 that provided for divorce and remarriage. Such factors have personally and professionally – notwithstanding roles within the family as mother – changed the traditional manner in which women lived their lives, and further accentuated the dissonance between women/mothers and the precepts and expectations of the authorities and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, whose enforcement, in bygone generations were the responsibility of the mother. The election of Mary Robinson – a renowned legal scholar in Ireland, politician, and social activist – as the first woman President of the Republic of Ireland in 1991 played an enormous influence in the increase of the symbolic power of women in Irish society.

The zenith of the power and influence of the Catholic Church in Ireland was, arguably, the first fifty years after the foundation of the state in 1922 and expanded well beyond the religious field into spheres such as politics, education, health, social welfare, and the media. Its power and influence structured not just the religious life of the Irish people, but just about every aspect of their lives.[106] However, this power and influence has been in decline since the 1960s at least. This trend cannot be separated from the growth in power and influence of the state and the media. The state abandoned the Catholic Church's ideal of a self-sufficient, rural society based on small-scale production in which family, community and religious life took as much precedence as the acquisition of material possessions. From the end of the 1950s, the

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[106] Inglis, 246.

state began to pursue economic growth through increased industrialization, urbanization, international trade, science and technology. As alluded to already, the media brought enormous changes to family and community life. The media and the Catholic Church have changed positions: the Word of God versus the word of the media. And the word of the media has achieved dominance. Therefore, the focus of the Church is not to try to replace it – it can't – but to better represent itself as one voice among many in modern Irish society.

The question arises as to whether the Catholic Church in Ireland will be able to reinvigorate itself and adopt a strategy that will respond to the demands of the age. What shape would that strategy take? Where could the Irish Church look to for an example of 'best practice,' a strategy that has been successful elsewhere? The following is a brief look at divergent views on these questions. Noel Barber, SJ. contends that one would have great difficulty in finding such a strategy;[107] "If one looked to France which has been in the vanguard of liturgical, theological, and scriptural reform since the Second Vatican Council, one would find little encouragement. Similarly, he holds that if one looked to the Protestant churches that have implemented liberal policies with regard to the ordination of women, declericalisation and democratization, one would also receive cold comfort."[108] Sociologists of religion point out that, it is the conservative, orthodox, and traditionalist movements that are on the rise throughout the world.[109] Recent decades have witnessed 'church religion' experiencing significant decline in Europe and

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[107] N. Barber, SJ., "Religion in Ireland: Its State and Prospects," in *Christianity in Ireland*, 296-7.

[108] Ibid, 296.

[109] See Berger, P. ed., *The desecularization of the World – Resurgent Religions and World Politics* (Grand Rapids, MN: Ethics and Policy Center and Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999).

throughout North America and the evident absence of strategies to stem this decline do not augur well for the future, including Ireland, according to this viewpoint. Notwithstanding the continued existence and religious practice of a small core number of denomination-affiliated members, the possibilities of developing a strategy or strategies to evangelize an increasingly mainstream secular culture looks bleak.[110]

On the other hand, a more positive view, and hope for the future may be adopted, but this view is accompanied by what could be considered as a paradigm shift. For the Catholic Church in crisis[111] in Ireland – given its history, and the litany of scandals of child-sexual abuse – to regain even some credibility, to try to remain relevant, and to show Irish society that it has something worthwhile and life-giving to offer, it needs to 'repackage' itself in ways that are meaningful, purposeful, and intelligible.[112] With this mammoth, if not impossible task facing the Catholic Church in Ireland as it seeks to resituate itself in an increasingly multicultural, pluralistic and secular society, J. Littleton, for example, cites the following challenges that need to be addressed: "flourishment in a post-Catholic milieu; exist confidently within the separation of Church and State; eradicate the difficulties caused by clericalism; tackle the 'vocations crisis'; and work effectively with fewer priests; empower an educated and articulate laity; communicate an attractive and appealing faith to young people;

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[110] Inglis, *Catholic Identity in Contemporary Ireland,* 213-217*,* notes that Irish Catholics are far from being an homogeneous group. He holds that there is a considerable variety in the way modern-day Irish Catholics identify themselves: Orthodox; Creative; Cultural; and Individualist. The question arises as to how any strategy or strategies can accommodate them all equally and inclusively to move forward as a Church with hope?

[111] This crisis is well documented. See for example, Eamon Conway and Colm Kilcoyne., eds., *The Splintered Heart: Conversations with a Church in Crisis* (Dublin: Veritas, 1998); Brendan Hoban, *Change or Decay: Irish Catholicism in Crisis* (Kilglass: Banley House, 2005); Brendan Hoban, *Where Do We Go from Here?: The Crisis in Irish Catholicism* (Dublin: Banley House, 2012).

[112] For detailed discussions about the future of Irish Catholicism, see Niall Coll and Paschal Scallon, eds., *A Church with a Future: Challenges In Irish Catholicism Today* (Dublin: Columba Press, 2005); Niall Coll, "Irish Identity and the Future of Catholicism," in *Irish Catholic Identities*, ed. Oliver J. Rafferty (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 362-76.

dialogue transparently with the news media; and, organize a national assembly of the Catholic Church in Ireland."[113]

If religious affiliation and Church practice, changing customs and mores, values and attitudes represent any indication, then there is no doubt that the authority, influence, and role of the Roman Catholic Church is in serious decline across the entire island of Ireland. It has been rocked to its very foundations, with people venting their anger, for example, through no longer participating in the life of the church, and being vocally active on social media platforms. The reality is that, when church authorities have something valid to say, or when grassroots church activities highlight local needs offering some responses, oftentimes they gain little or no attention other than the possibility of public dismissal or derision. While the loss of its traditional, overarching, and ubiquitous power in society is widely accepted as belonging to a bygone era, it still nevertheless has a responsibility to live, share, and teach the Gospel message in its entirety. As a constitutive element of the Gospel, justice to those minors sexually abused by clergy and to their families – notwithstanding family members of the abused, church members, and society at large – belongs to the very core of its efforts to become a credible, Gospel witness, and a legitimate voice among many in Irish society. Failure to do so could witness the terminal decline of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland.

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[113] J. Littleton, "In Periculo Mortis: Can Irish Catholicism be Redeemed?" in *The Catholic Church in Ireland Today*, eds. Carroll Cochran and Waldmeir, 17-33.

Chapter Two

Child Sexual Abuse in the Irish Catholic Church

This chapter, consistent with its effort to examine the phenomenon of clerical child sexual abuse in religious congregations in Ireland, is divided into three sections. In seeking to provide context, the first section will outline the definition of child sexual abuse according to state law in Ireland. In offering somewhat of an overseas, English-language group perspective, allusions will also be made to definitions of child sexual abuse in both the United States and Australia. The second section will look at the phenomenon of child sexual abuse in Ireland, from a statistical and historical perspective. Based on research from what is readily acknowledged to be an increasingly voluminous and complex body of literature on the matter, reference will be made to single-theory and multifactorial theories of child sexual abuse. The former theories are individualistic and psychological in approach, while the latter seek to include what is being said in the human social sciences. The final section will look at the phenomenon of clerical child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. Looking at the individual, lived experiences of a small sample-group of clerical sexual offenders based in Ireland, it will also suggest that distinctive aspects of the Catholic church's pattern of governance and ministry, and its understanding and treatment of human sexuality, require particular attention and study in working toward an aetiology of what is seen as a very complex and multifaceted problem.

Definition of Child Sexual Abuse

It is contended that there is no universally accepted definition of CSA.[1] Published

literature on CSA contains a voluminous variation and inconsistency in descriptions

and definitions used, including molestation, child-rape and sexual victimization.[2] For

example, in the USA, Federal legislation provides guidance to States by identifying a

minimum set of acts or behaviors that define child abuse and neglect. The Federal

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (DAPTA) as amended by the CAPTA

Reauthorisation Act of 2010, defines child abuse and neglect as, at minimum, "any

recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death,

serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation"; or "an act or failure

to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm."[3] This definition of child

abuse and neglect refers to parents and other caregivers. A "child" under this

definition generally means a person who is younger than age 18 or who is not an

emancipated minor. While CAPTA provides definitions for sexual abuse and special

cases of neglect related to withholding or failing to provide medically indicated

treatment, it does not provide specific definitions for other types of maltreatment such

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[1] Helen Goode, Hannah McGee and Ciaran O'Boyle, *Time To Listen: Confronting Child Sexual Abuse by Catholic Clergy in Ireland* (Dublin: The Liffey Press, 2003), 18. Sexual abuse researchers have used different definitions of what constitutes CSA. For example, whereas some researchers have set the age of the victim at 18 years (J. Briere and D.M. Elliott, "Prevalence and psychological sequelae of self-reported childhood physical and sexual abuse in a general population sample of men and women," *Childhood Abuse and Neglect* 27, 1205-1220), others have a cut-off both below and above this age (S.G. Arreola et al., "Higher prevalence of childhood sexual abuse among Latino men who have sex with men than non-Latino men who have sex with men: Data from Urban Men's Health Study," *Child Abuse & Neglect* 29 (2005): 286. Wynkoop et al. have noted that such variability influences the estimates of CSA prevalence in any given sample; Wynkoop et al. "Incidence and prevalence of child sexual abuse: A critical review of the data collection procedures," *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* 4, no. 2 (1995): 49.

[2] D. Muram and M.R. Laufer, "Limitations of the medical evaluation for child sexual abuse," *The Journal of Reproductive Medicine* 44, no. 12 (1999): 993-999.

[3] Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). Can be found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resources/capta2010., Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2010) (Accessed February 20, 2018).

as physical abuse, neglect, or emotional abuse. While federal legislation sets

minimum standards for States that accept CAPTA funding, each State provides its

own definitions of maltreatment within civil and criminal statutes. Thus, the federal

government has established a broad definition of CSA, but leaves it to the individual

State child abuse laws to specify detailed provisions. All States have laws prohibiting

sexual molestation. States also specify the age of consent, or the age at which a person

can consent to sexual activity with an adult – generally between the ages of 16 and 18.

Sexual activity with children below the age of consent is considered statutory rape and

is against the law.[4] Yet another definition of CSA is the one stated by the most recent,

2013 fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,

considered to be the 'bible' of clinicians in the USA and in lands farther afield:

> Child abuse encompasses any sexual act involving a child that is intended to
> provide sexual gratification to a parent, caregiver, or other individual who has
> responsibility for the child. Sexual abuse includes activities such as fondling a
> child's genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, and indecent exposure.
> Sexual abuse also includes noncontact exploitation of a child by a parent or
> caregiver – for example, forcing, tricking, enticing, threatening, or pressuring
> a child to participate in acts for sexual gratification of others, without direct
> physical contact between child and abuser.[5]

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[4] A summary of State laws regulating the age of consent is available at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website, http://hhs.gov/opa/pubs/statutory-rape-state-laws.pdf (Accessed February 20, 2010).

[5] Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association, 2013): 718; Colin Ross, "Commentary: Problems with the Sexual Disorders Sections of DSM-5," *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* 24 (2015); 195-201. This brief article succinctly notes some of the inconsistencies and contradictions for Paraphilic Disorders and for Pedophilic Disorder (which includes CSA) in the DSM-5. Other helpful articles include: R. Blanchford, "A Dissenting opinion on DSM-5 Pedophilic Disorder," *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 42 (2013): 675-678; J.P. Federoff et al. "Problems with the Paraphilias in DSM-5," *Current Psychiatry Reports* 15 (2013): 363; N.N. Potter, "Philosophical Issues in the Paraphilias," *Current Opinion in Psychiatry* 26 (2013): 586-592.

In the 1997 edition of *Australia's Welfare*, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) detailed how child abuse is defined:

> The term 'child abuse and neglect' can mean very different things to different people, depending on the context in which it is used…'child abuse and neglect' can generally be defined as occurring when a child has been, is being, or likely to be subjected to physical, emotional or sexual actions or inactions which have resulted in, or are likely to result in significant harm or injury to the child. In the main, it refers to situations where there are protective issues for the child because the person believed to be responsible for the abuse or neglect is a parent, family member or some other person with responsibility for the care of the child; or where the person responsible for the child is unable or unwilling to protect the child from abuse or neglect.[6]

As in the case of the USA, State laws in Australia differ in terms of the legal definition of CSA. For example, in Victoria State criminal law, incest is separated out from persistent sexual abuse or indecent sexual abuse, and child sexual abuse can only be perpetrated against individuals under the age of 16 years. Australia's other States and Territories also have different laws pertaining to the sexual abuse of children, and the age of the victim when the sexual abuse took place, and some may refer to child abuse as incest or as sexual abuse.[7] From an international perspective, Quadara et al. note that the World Health Organization's (WHO) broader definition of CSA is commonly used. It states:

> The involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violates the laws

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[6] Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW): *Australia's Welfare* (Canberra, 1997): 190.

[7] Janet Philips, "Child Abuse and Protection in Australia," (March 2009) provides a detailed description of the laws governing the individual States and Territories of Australia. Social Policy Section. http://www.aph.gov.au/about_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/ (Accessed February 20, 2018).

and social taboos of society. Child sexual abuse is evidenced by this activity between a child and an adult or another child who, by age or development, is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. This may include but is not limited to: the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any sexual activity; the exploitative use of a child in prostitution or any unlawful sexual activity; the exploitative use of a child in a pornographic performance and materials.[8]

Though Irish criminal law enabled prosecution for sexual offences against children,[9] there was no legal definition for it until more recent times. To compound matters, it was difficult to achieve a commonly accepted definition of CSA, given that the term has been used in diverse ways. In the Irish context, the definition recommended by the 1990 Law Reform Commission Report on Child Sexual Abuse and subsequently outlined in *Children First* (National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children)[10] is the most common definition used. In more recent times, a raft of legislation and policy-making in the sphere of child protection has been created in Ireland. From a legal perspective, legislation covers a wide range of concerns, including protection for persons reporting child abuse from civil liability and penalization by employers of persons who have communicated child abuse reports 'reasonably and in good faith' to Designated Officers of the Health Service

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[8] Quadara, A., et al., "Conceptualising the prevention of child sexual abuse and neglect: Final Report (Research Report No. 33) Melbourne: *Australian Institute of Family Studies* (2015): A2.3. https://www.aifs.gov.au/publications/conceptualising-prevention-child-sexual-abus (Accessed February 20, 2018).

[9] Those convicted of sexual offences against children are charged under laws such as the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1935, Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment) Act, 1990, Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act, 1993 or the Criminal Law (Incest Proceedings) Act, 1995.

[10] Department of Health and Children (1999). *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children*. Department of Health and Children, Dublin: Government Stationery Office.

Executive (HSE), the Child and Family Agency (TUSLA),[11] and the Irish police; intentional or reckless endangerment of a child by persons who have authority or control of a child; the withholding of information on certain offences – sexual offences, offences causing harm, abduction, manslaughter or murder of children and vulnerable adults – to the Irish police. Legislation was also enacted to put elements of the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011), on a statutory footing, and placed a wide range of responsibilities on the HSE and its funded services.[12] In addition, the HSE's Child Protection and Welfare Policy 2016 is based on Children First National Guidance 2011[13], and Children First Act 2015.

In Irish Law,[14] child abuse is defined by four categories: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse, and sexual abuse. While it is vitally important to acknowledge the profound distress caused by neglect, emotional abuse, and physical abuse – and the interconnectedness throughout any form of abuse – for this dissertation's purposes, focus is placed on CSA. According to Irish law:

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[11] TUSLA, the national Child and Family Agency, was established with effect from January 1, 2104. The agency has a responsibility for a range of services including: child welfare and protection services such as family support services; pre-school inspection; programs to deter domestic, sexual and gender-based violence; and, community-based services related to the psychological welfare of children and families. TUSLA also is the responsible agency for the handling of school-based child-protection concerns.

[12] Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998, Protected Disclosures Act 2014; Reckless Endangerment – Criminal Justice Act 2006; Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) 2012; and Children First Act 2015.

[13] Launched in 2011, this initiative promotes the protection of children from abuse and neglect. It outlines what organizations need to do to keep children safe, and what different bodies, and the general public should do if they are concerned about a child's safety and welfare, and emphasises the importance of multi-disciplinary, inter-agency approaches in the management of concerns about children's safety and welfare. It created a Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook to guide the initiative nationally.

[14] Definitions are taken from Children First Act (2015), section 2, and additional information from the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011), Appendix 1, and the HSE's *Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook* 2011.

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others. Examples of child sexual abuse include exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the child; intentional touching or molesting of the body of the child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification; masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in an act of masturbation; sexual intercourse with the child, whether oral, vaginal or anal; sexual exploitation of a child, which includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning , requiring or permitting a child for, or to engage in, prostitution or other sexual acts; sexual exploitation also occurs when a child is involved in the exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act(s), including its recording (on film, video tape or other media), or the manipulation for those purposes, of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse; consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person.[15]

It is important here to note that in the case of Irish law, with regard to CSA, the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years. This means, for example, that sexual intercourse between a 16-year-old girl and her 17-year-old boyfriend is illegal, although it may not be regarded as constituting CSA.[16]

Child Sexual Abuse in Ireland: Statistical Context

Irish statistics on CSA come from a wide range of sources, including the annual reports of agencies providing counselling services, and official government statistics

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[15] Children First Act (2015).

[16] Goode et al. 20.

on reports to health districts and general population prevalence surveys.[17] In addition, a substantial proportion of clients using the Irish Rape Crisis Centres (RCC),[18] for example the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre (DRCC),[19] continue to be adults who have experienced sexual abuse as children.[20] To date, the most extensive sexual abuse prevalence study in Ireland is the Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland (SAVI) of 2003.[21] Commissioned by the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre (DRCC) and undertaken by the Health Services Research Centre at the Department of Psychology, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland in 2001, it was the first comprehensive investigation of lifetime experiences of sexual violence and the uptake of related services in the country. It comprised two components. The first was a major survey of over 3,000 members of the general public about their attitudes and beliefs and their own lifetime experiences of sexual violence. This component considered the uptake of services and barriers concerning disclosure to others – including law enforcement, medical and therapeutic services. A parallel component considered the particular challenges of preventing and managing sexual violence in marginalized groups. Six exemplar groups were considered using varying research approaches – homeless women, the Travelling community,[22] prisoners, women involved in prostitution, people with a learning

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[17] Ibid, 21.

[18] A Rape Crisis Centre (RCC) is part of a nationwide agency to provide support services to victims of sexual trauma.

[19] In the Chairperson's report at the annual meeting of the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre (DRCC) it was revealed that during the previous year up to 2016, 41.3% of all phone calls to its helpline concerned CSA.

[20] Goode et al., 22.

[21] McGee et al*., The SAVI Report: Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland: A national study of Irish experiences, beliefs and attitudes concerning sexual violence* (Dublin: The Liffey Press, 2003).

[22] A short introduction to the Irish Travelling community can be found in Kate Phelan, in "Travellers, Ireland's only indigenous minority," *The Culture Trip* (March 16, 2017): Due to a lack of history, the exact origins of the Irish Travelling community, a nomadic people have been difficult to clarify. Although it had been hypothesised that the Irish Travellers may be linked to the Romani People, a genetic study in February, 2017 revealed this connection to be false. It is held that Travellers are of Irish ancestral origin but split off from the general population sometime around the mid-1600s –

disability, and those using psychiatric services. Regarding the prevalence of CSA (understood as sexual abuse of children and adolescents under 17 years) SAVI revealed that "**Girls**: One in five women (20.4%) reported experiencing contact sexual abuse in childhood with a further one in ten (10%) reporting non-contact sexual abuse. In over a quarter of cases of contact abuse (i.e. 5.6% of all girls), the abuse involved penetrative sex – either vaginal, anal or oral sex**. Boys**: one in six men (16.2%) reported experiencing contact sexual abuse in childhood with a further one in fourteen (7.4%) reporting non-contact abuse. In the one of every six cases of contact abuse (i.e. 2.7% of all boys), the abuse involved penetrative sex – either anal or oral sex."[23] More recently, the problem was reiterated by journalist, P. Hosford, who reported that in a three-year span from 2013 to 2016 TUSLA, the Child and Family agency, had received 56,000 reports of child abuse.[24]

much earlier than had been thought previously. The most recent national census of 2016 revealed that there were around 30,000 Irish Travellers in the Irish Republic, comprising 0.6% of the population. The community was found to be unevenly distributed across the country with the highest number living in County Galway in the West of Ireland, and in South Dublin. The census also showed that that a majority now live in private dwellings. In addition, it was also revealed that members of the Travelling community were found to have poorer general mental and physical health, higher rates of disability, and suicide, with significantly lower levels of education as compared to the general population, with seven out of 10 Irish Travellers educated only to elementary level. Throughout Irish history, the Travelling community has been markedly separated from the general Irish population, resulting in widespread stereotyping, discrimination and ostracism. In March 2017, legislation was passed in the parliament of the Republic of Ireland officially designating the Irish Travelling community as an ethnic minority with different national and cultural traditions from the main population.

[23] McGee et al., *The SAVI Report: Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland: Executive Summary*. E-publications, Department of Psychology (January 2002): xxxiv.

[24] Paul Hosford, "There were 56,000 reports of child abuse in three years," thejournal.ie (March 9, 2017). http://www.thejournal.ie/child-abuse-reports-3276951-Mar2017/ (Accessed Mar 1, 2018).

Child Sexual Abuse by Catholic Clergy: Its Prevalence both in Ireland and Overseas

The ongoing reports of CSA clearly indicate that the Catholic Church has a deeply troubling global problem. Such reports of CSA have been revealed on all five continents, though particular attention has been paid to some countries, including the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom, Europe, Canada, the United States, and Australia. Reports of CSA in other religious affiliations[25] and professional, front-line caring bodies[26] throughout the world do not serve as any solace to the existence and scale of the problem in the Catholic Church. On an international level, it is generally very difficult to provide accurate details of the extent of CSA. Reasons include: the distinction between the use of incidence data as opposed to prevalence data, making comparisons difficult;[27] not all cases of CSA are reported and some cases are reported beyond the statutes of limitations and are, therefore, not included in any assessment of incidence; there is no universal agreement of what constitutes a sexual offence in law; and each jurisdiction defines sexual offences in different ways, which is dependent on having a sufficiently

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[25] John Jay College (2011). The Causes and Context of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests in the United States, 1950-2010. A Report Presented to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops by the John Jay College research Team. Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. P.20-22. http://www.uscb.org/mr/causes-and-context.shtml (Accessed Mar 2, 2018).

[26] Ibid, 16-22. Much of the focus of attention by the media has been on the Roman Catholic Church. Without minimizing the problem in any way, though figures are underestimated, research reveals that in the United States for example, child sexual abuse is perpetrated across a wide range of religious and secular institutions including Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boy Scouts of America, Child Care settings, School Athletic organizations, the Episcopal Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Jehovah Witnesses, the Jewish Community, and within the family unit.

[27] Goode et al., 20-21: 'Incidence' refers to the number of new cases of CSA reported over a particular period of time while 'prevalence' refers to the total number of cases that exist in a population.

developed legal framework in which to conceive of the problem of CSA in legal and criminal terms in the first instance.

The difficulties of trying to estimate the extent of CSA in the Catholic Church by clergy is further compounded for a number of reasons including the sometimes unavailability of information in general crime statistics and research reports; historically, it has not always been clear as to how much or what data the Church has compiled on clerical CSA, and oftentimes such data is slowly released.[28] This point was made by the Report of Investigation into the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin (hereafter referred to as the Murphy Report),[29] when, in 2001, following an instruction, entitled *Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela*,[30] all allegations bearing a "semblance of truth" were to be referred to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) in order to ensure a global, co-ordinated and uniform response to allegations of CSA. The Archdiocese subsequently relayed to the Dublin Commission that it had received a modification of requirements from the CDF because "Rome was unable to deal with the vast number of referrals" undermining its intent to gather global data with regard to CSA. Therefore, it can be argued that, on a global level, the data held by the CDF is likely to be incomplete, with the exception of the USA. The U.S. Conference of Catholics Bishops, to date, has commissioned the most comprehensive study on the problem of clerical CSA, with its focus on clergy in the

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[28] J. Berry, *Lead Us Not Into Temptation: Catholic Priests and The Sexual Abuse of Children* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), xi.

[29] Report by the Commission of Investigation into the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin (also known as The Murphy Report), p.64. http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PB09000504 (Accessed February 22, 2018).

[30] John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, *Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela* April 30, 2001 AAS (Acta Apostolica Sedis) 93, pp. 737-751; also found in W. Woestmann, *Ecclesiastical Sanctions and the Penal Process: A Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, 2nd rev. and updated ed., (Ontario: Ottawa: St. Paul University, 2001), 300-309.

U.S. A series of three studies were conducted by the John Jay College.[31] Its 2004

report focused on the nature and scope of the problem; the 2006 report was a

supplementary study, analyzing the descriptive data; and the 2011 report focused on

causes and consequences of the problem. Consequently, the series of studies and

reports produced a wealth of information; however, it too is incomplete, as not all

diocesan priests and religious priests were included. Based on the survey response

from 97% of Catholic dioceses (195 diocese) and 64% of religious communities (83%

of religious priests), it was reported that allegations of clerical CSA amounted to 4%

of the 109,694 priests in active ministry during the period between 1950-2002; that is,

4,392 men. Allegations were made against approximately 4.3% of secular priests and

2.7% of religious priests[32] In Australia, in the public domain, no such data similar to

the John Jay study in the US has been acknowledged to have been initiated and/or

published, though the Australian Bishop's Conference publishes the reports of sexual

abuse cases against clergy, members of religious congregations, and lay staff on an

annual basis. From an analysis of the available international data, it is evident that the

full extent of the problem of clerical CSA, and CSA in general, is incomplete and

requires further prevalence studies.[33]

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[31] John Jay College of Criminal Justice. *The Nature and Scope of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests and Deacons in the United States, 1950-2002*. (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2004) (also referred to by name of primary author, Terry et al., 2004); John Jay College of Criminal Justice. *Supplementary Report. The Nature and Scope of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests and Deacons in* the *United States, 1950-2002*. (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006); John Jay College of Criminal Justice (2011).

[32] John Jay Criminal College of Justice (2004), 6-11.

[33] Marie Keenan, Dr., *Child Sexual Abuse & The Catholic Church: Gender, Power, and Organizational Culture* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), 9.

Clerical Child Sexual Abuse in Ireland

Awareness of serious individual CSA cases came to the attention of the public during the early 1990s with the prominence afforded to the X case[34]among others. Widespread awareness of child sexual abuse by clergy in Ireland began only with the media coverage of the case of Fr. Brendan Smyth in 1994, in particular with the airing of the television documentary, *Suffer Little Children.* While many of the earlier cases demonstrated that CSA took place within the family, the Smyth case awakened Irish society to the phenomenon of CSA by third parties who were in positions of trust, power, and authority. Smyth pleaded guilty to 74 charges of indecent and sexual assault and was sentenced to 12 years in prison. The case was especially significant when it emerged that the State had failed to extradite him from the Republic of Ireland to answer similar charges in Northern Ireland. The consequent controversy led to the resignation of the then-Prime Minister, and the President of the High Court who had

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[34] Sinead Carroll, "Twenty years on: a timeline of the X Case," thejournal.ie (Feb 6, 2012), http://www.thejournal/twenty-years-on-a-timeline-of-the-x-case-347359-Feb2012 In February, 1992 the X case became one of the most controversial and closely-followed legal battles in the history of the Republic of Ireland. At the centre of the case was a 14-years-old girl who was pregnant, a victim of rape by a man known to her and her family, and on the verge of taking her own life. Having informed the Irish police about the rape and their decision to seek the foetus be tested for paternity purposes, the victim and her parents decided to travel to the UK to procure an abortion. The police then sought advice from the *Director of Public Prosecution* (DPP) to determine its admissibility in court. While in London making arrangements for the abortion, the Attorney General obtained an interim injunction stopping the family from leaving Ireland and from terminating the pregnancy. Once informed, the family returned home. The AG's order, having been contacted by the DPP was based on Article 40.3.3 of the Constitution, more specifically on the 1983 amendment that put the right of the unborn child's right to life on an equal footing of the mother's right to life. During a subsequent High Court appeal of the injunction, a psychologist determined that the girl was suicidal. Nevertheless, the judge determined that the girl be restrained from leaving Ireland for a period of nine months, that the risk of suicide was not sufficient to override the right to life of the unborn. On appeal to the Supreme Court this ruling was set aside. She was permitted to travel to the UK but it is understood that she suffered a miscarriage at a hospital in England following the hearing. As a result of the X Case and the judgement of the Supreme Court Appeal, the Government put forward three possible amendments to the Constitution in a referendum: the freedom to travel outside the State for an abortion, and the freedom to obtain or make available information on abortion, both of which were passed. However, the amendment which would have seen the Supreme Court ruling on the X case rolled back was rejected. The risk of suicide was not sufficient grounds to allow an abortion.

been Attorney General at the time.[35] After this period, the floodgates opened with case after case of Clerical CSA. The sordid, Smyth saga came at a time when the Irish Catholic priesthood was being increasingly viewed in a negative light after a string of revelations of sexual impropriety on the part of clergy came to public attention.[36]

To compound matters, a series of television documentaries (*Dear Daughter*, 1996; *States of Fear*, 1999; *Suing the Pope*, 2002; *Cardinal Secrets*, 2002) drew further attention to Clerical CSA and to child abuse (also, as more broadly understood as including neglect, emotional, and physical abuse) in institutions run by male and female religious congregations. Parallel to this was an increasingly voluminous bevy of books, articles, and papers written by victims of CSA, as well as journalists and academics. Consequently, alongside a public apology on behalf of the State to victims and their families, the government introduced a series of initiatives, the Commission to Inquire into child abuse under the *Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse Act* (2000) and the *Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse* (*Amendment*) Act 2005, to investigate the complaints and listen to personal testimonies of those abused; the Residential Institutions Redress Board under the *Residential Institutions Redress Act* (2002) to offer financial compensation to people who had suffered abuse in the residential institutions for minors. In addition, it established a series of Inquiries to investigate the prevalence and handling of allegations of CSA in a number of dioceses – Ferns, Dublin, and Cloyne – which will be dealt with later in the dissertation. As Keenan states, "[T]aken together (the revelations in the television documentaries and the subsequent reporting of the issue of sexual abuse by clergy), an image was created

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[35] P. McGarry, "Reviews of the Week." *Irish Times*, October 22, 1994, 2.

[36] Dr. Marie Keenan, 10-20.

of the Roman Catholic Church as punitive, and the State as opting out of the welfare and protection of children."[37] Increasingly, the issues of clerical celibacy, the power of the Catholic Church in Ireland, and the relationship between the Catholic Church and the State would come under greater scrutiny.[38]

Towards a Theory of Clerical Child Sexual Abuse and Offending from an Individualist, Psychological Perspective

Recent decades have seen an increase in scholarly work on child sexual offending and on attempts to understand and 'treat' the phenomenon. The bulk of the work has predominantly focused on offenders in general, as evidenced by the vast array of research on non-clergy: "The main focus of the psychological and psychiatric literature on child sexual offending is an individual one, with a strong emphasis on understanding the vulnerability and personality factors that contribute towards an individual's sexual offending, though some research acknowledges the social and cultural factors that are implicit in such offending."[39] As to whether or not, an all-encompassing theory for the cause, course and maintenance of sexual offending is possible, Keenan notes that in the meantime:

> There is a rich program of research underway in the discipline of psychology involving different kinds of theories focusing on different factors, all of which have a contribution to make in our understanding of sexual offending. A review of the psychological literature on sexual offending shows biological, behavioural, psychodynamic, systemic, feminist, developmental, and social cognitive theories evolving and being refined, and some are linked to active

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[37] Ibid, 20

[38] Inglis, 204.

[39] Keenan, 73.

research programs. In the main, however, much psychological research tends to show a preference for biological, psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioral explanations. Single-factor theories dominated much of the early etiological research on sexual offending and are still a source of intense research activity, although they are seen to suffer from too narrow a focus. Ultimately, single factor theories are incorporated into more comprehensive theories of sexual offending.[40]

For an individual, psychological theory of child sexual offending, the work of Ward and Hudson is worth visiting. They identify three levels of theory with a meta-theoretical framework in an effort to help guide all ongoing theoretical and empirical research in the pursuit of understanding the cause of sexual offending.[41] Level III theories focus on models of description which specify the cognitive, behavioral, motivational, and social factors associated with the commission of sexual offences.[42] Level II theories focus on attempts to explain single psychological factors and processes thought to be important in the generation of sexual crime, such as empathy deficits or cognitive distortions.[43] Level I theories seek to provide a meta-theoretical framework, a multifactorial attempt to explain offending behavior and to account satisfactorily for offence processes by combining single factor theories with social and situational influences to more general psychosocial theories of sexual offending.[44] The

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[40] Keenan, 74

[41] T. Ward and S.M. Hudson, "The Construction and Development of Theory in the Sexual Offending area: A Meta-Theoretical Framework," *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment* 10 (1998): 47-63.

[42] Ibid, 48.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid, 49.

next section will briefly try to outline the salient elements of both single-factor and

multifactorial theories, which form the foundation of much of the research.

Single-Factor theories of Sexual Offenders

For the purposes of this part of the dissertation, the work of Dr. Marie Keenan is

particularly helpful.[45] She contends that "single factor theories are best conceived as

clusters representing a number of symptoms typically reported in adults who sexually

abuse children. These symptoms can be clustered as problems that relate to

attachment, intimacy, and loneliness; deviant sexual arousal; emotional regulation;

cognitive distortions; and empathy deficits."[46]

Attachment, Intimacy, and Emotional Loneliness

Drawing on the work of John Bowlby, William Marshall was among the first

psychologists to focus on the role of attachment in sexual offending. He studied the

hypothesis that men who sexually offend against children failed to establish secure

attachment relationships in childhood, and that the consequent problems arising from

such inabilities were important considerations in the chain of events leading to sexual

offending.[47] According to Bowlby's theories of attachment, a child who experiences

abusive or neglectful relationships can be skeptical of the emotional availability of

other people, fearful of emotional closeness, and fearful of disclosing personal

feelings. This results in a failure to develop trust in other people and in an impaired

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[45] Keenan, 75-88.

[46] Ibid, 75.

[47] W.L. Marshall, "The Role of attachments, intimacy and loneliness in the Etiology and maintenance of Sexual offending," *Sexual and Marital Therapy* 8, no. 2 (1993): 109-121.

sense of personal security and power.[48] Others, including Ward et al. argue that the interpersonal strategies associated with impaired attachment can make it difficult for an individual to develop the skills necessary to establish intimate relationships.[49] Extreme emotional and sometimes social loneliness can result. Other theorists[50] have empirically tested Marshall's theory and have extended his initial hypothesis to include, not only poor childhood attachments, but also poor adulthood attachments as a key feature of the developmental trajectory of sexual offenders. According to this theory, fear of intimacy and the corresponding loneliness is not solely linked to poor childhood attachments but can also result from poor experiences of intimacy in adulthood. From this perspective, repeated failure on the part of an individual, to develop and sustain intimate relationships in adulthood, can be seen, even by an otherwise well-functioning individual, as a sign of inadequacy and incompetence, or that the individual is unlovable. From a psychological perspective, this is an interesting theory because it allows one to conclude that childhood deprivations in attachment functioning are not the only focus of concern. Rather, the failure to develop and sustain intimate relationships in adulthood can also be a part of the developmental trajectory of child sexual offenders.[51] When it comes to the matter of Clerical CSA, this is a very important point, as it suggests that intimacy and adult attachment are an important area of focus in exploring clerical offending.

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[48] J. Bowlby, *Attachment and Loss*. Vol. 2. (London: Hogarth Press, 1973), 78.

[49] T.W. Ward et al., "Attachment styles and intimacy deficits in sexual offenders: A Developmental Perspective," *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment* 7 (1995): 317.

[50] S.W. Smallbone and M.R. Dadds, "Attachment and coercive sexual behaviour," *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment* 12, no. 1 (2000): 3-15: S.W. Smallbone and M.R. Dadds, "Further evidence of a relationship between attachment insecurity and coercive sexual behaviour in nonoffenders," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 16, no. 1 (2001): 22-35.

[51] G.A. Sawle and J. Kear-Colwell, "Adult attachment style and paedophilia: A Developmental perspective," *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 45, no.1 (2001): 32-50.

Deviant Sexual Preferences

A lot of the early psychological literature on sexual offending emphasized a relationship between deviant sexual preferences and sexual offending.[52] These preferences were seen as resulting from an accidental pairing of deviant sexual stimuli and sexual arousal at an influential time in an individual's development. According to this thinking, the pairing of deviant sexual stimuli with sexual arousal, accompanied by masturbation to fantasies derived from the original circumstances, is a conditioning process that results in a disposition to engage in deviant sexual acts whenever the opportunity arises.[53] Sexual offenders were also thought to have distinctive sexual preferences that matched their actual offending behaviors. Child abusers were thought to have deviant sexual preferences for children and rapists were thought to have deviant sexual preferences involving forced, non-consensual sexual relations. This theory continues to hold considerable sway in the public domain despite reservations about the theory being raised. The theory was based on a number of possible hypotheses: that men who engage in sexually deviant behaviors do so because they prefer them to socially acceptable sexual behaviors; that men engage in sexually deviant behaviors because they are "conditioned" from earlier experiences to do so; or finally that men engage in sexually deviant behaviors because they are suffering from what is described as paraphilia.[54] It is worth noting here that "the prevalence of pedophilic disorder is uncertain. The highest possible prevalence for pedophilic

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[52] G.C.Abel, J.V. Becker, and J. Cunningham-Rathner, "Complications, consent, and cognitions in sex between children and adults," *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry* 7, (1984): 89-103.

[53] Ibid, 98.

[54] Diagnostic And Statistical Manual (DSM-5) defines a paraphilia as "any intense and persistent sexual interest other than sexual interest or genital stimulation or preparatory fondling with phenotypically normal, physically mature, consenting partners," 685.

disorder in the male population is approximately 3%-5%. The population prevalence for pedophilic disorder in females is even more uncertain, but it is likely a small fraction of the prevalence in males."[55]

The concept of deviant sexual preference has been replaced by the concept of deviant sexual script. Drawing on the work of J. Money, [56] Ward and Siegert construe the sexual script as a type of "lovemap" or "mental representation" acquired by individuals during development that enables individuals to interpret intimate or sexual encounters in particular ways. This "lovemap" is said to guide subsequent sexual behaviors. According to this theory, cultural norms, values, rules, and beliefs are interwoven and eventually integrate into the development of an individual's sexual script. The sexual script sets out when, with whom sexual activity is to take place, what to do, and how to interpret the cues associated with different phases in a sexual encounter. In addition, experiences of sexual and/or emotional trauma early in the child's life may create distortions in the developing sexual script. The distorted script can then lead to sexual encounters with inappropriate partners – e.g., age discrepancy and inappropriate behaviors (impersonal sex).[57] However, as not every child who experiences childhood sexual abuse goes on to sexually abuse as an adult, this theory of distorted sexual script provides only a partial explanation for some sexual offending. It is also basically flawed, because it is based on an idea that sexual abuse victims have distorted sexual scripts and can therefore become sexual offenders.

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[55] Ibid.

[56] J. Money, "Development of paraphilia in Childhood and Adolescence," *Sexual and Gender Identities Disorders* 2, no. 3 (1993): 463-475.

[57] T. Ward and R.J. Siegert, "Towards a comprehensive theory of child sexual abuse: A Theory knitting perspective,*" Psychology, Crime and Law* 9 (2002): 335-336.

As with other theories in the sexual offending literature, there is need for further empirical testing. A review of the literature on the relationship between deviant sexual preference/ sexual scripts and subsequent child offending suggests the need for caution in linking these two variables in an automatic causal relationship. In this regard, more recent empirical research suggests that many men who abuse children do not have deviant sexual preferences, but that their offending is related to more situational factors and to opportunity.[58]

Emotional Regulation

In the psychological literature, problems with emotional regulation, and with affective states such as depression and anxiety have been highlighted as serving as facilitators in the chain of events leading to CSA. For example, it has been suggested that the presence of powerful negative emotions in child sexual offenders might lead them to use sexual relations with children as a coping strategy, adding that such negative emotions can make it difficult for an individual to inhibit or control any tendencies he might have toward deviant sexual activities[59] Some others see a strong relationship between negative affective states and the weakening of inhibitors to sexually aggressive behavior such victim empathy, guilt, and anxiety regarding prosecution, arguing that the inability to regulate negative emotions functions to inhibit empathy and concern for the child's welfare.[60] However, though the literature

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[58] John Jay College (2011), 99-102: W. Marshall, D. Anderson, and Y. Fernanadez, *Cognitive Behavioural Treatment of Sexual Offenders*, 2nd ed. (London: Wiley & Sons, 2000), 125.

[59] F. Cortini and W.L. Marshall, " Sex as a coping strategy and its relationship to juvenile sexual history and intimacy in sexual offenders," *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment* 13, no. 1 (2001): 34

[60] G.C.N. Hall and R. Hirschman, "Sexual Aggression against Children: A conceptual perspective of Etiology," *Criminal Justice and Behaviour* 19 (1992): 20.

concerning the link between negative emotional states and CSA is incomplete, it cannot be disregarded.[61]

Cognitive Distortions

In the sexual offender literature, the term *cognitive distortion* is used to refer to maladaptive beliefs and attitudes, as well as problematic thinking patterns that influence in sexual offences.[62] With regard to sex offenders, *cognitive distortions* have been defined as beliefs systems that supported sexual contact with children to rationalize the child molestation.[63] It has been argued that the term, although enshrined in sex offender literature, has suffered from inconsistent usage and problems of definition. Scholars observe a lack of clarity as to whether cognitive distortions are conscious processes employed by offenders to excuse and justify their behavior, or whether they are unconscious processes adopted by offenders to protect from shame and guilt. It is not clear whether the cognitive distortions play a causative role or a maintenance role after the event. It appears that both uses of the term are evident in the literature.[64] Ward and Keenan sought to further develop this theory to try to describe sexual offenders' maladaptive theories of the world and their victims. They hypothesized that "individuals construct theories about aspects of their world in order to understand, explain and control it."[65] Such implicit theories of the world are

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[61] Keenan, 80.

[62] T.W. Ward et al., "Cognitive distortions in sex offenders: An integrative review," *Clinical Psychology Review* 17 (1997): 480.

[63] Abel, Becker, Cunningham-Rathner, 137.

[64] R. Mann and A. Beech, "Cognitive distortions, schemas and implicit theories," in *Sexual Deviance, Issues and Controversies*, eds. T.W. Ward, D. Laws, and S.M. Hudson (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2003), 136.

[65] T. Ward and T. Keenan, "Child molester's implicit theories," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 14 (1999): 824.

used like scientific theories by individuals to explain other people's actions and to make predictions about life. According to this perspective, the implicit theories held by sexual offenders are hypothesized to underlie and generate a range of ideas about themselves, the world, and their victims that are implicit in their sexual offending. Implicit theories include beliefs and assumptions about the nature of people and the world; and more particularly about women and children, and about a particular victim. Arguably, the basic point about cognitive distortions or maladaptive implicit theories is that they can be understood only against the background of culturally normative thinking. Cognitive distortions are therefore seen as deviant from culturally normative thought.

Empathy Deficits

The empathy deficit theory suggests that the sexual offence chain can be influenced by an individual's failure to understand the potentially harmful effects of his behavior on individuals in general or on particular individuals more specifically. The theory rests on the assumption that having empathic competency can help inhibit any tendency toward harmful behavior.[66] Despite its frequent mention in the literature on sexual offenders, there has been little agreement on the essential elements of empathy.[67] The main debates seem to center on whether empathy represents a *trait* or a *state*, and on how sympathy and empathy can be distinguished. *Trait* perspectives rest on the idea that people are consistent in their empathic responses; they are in essence empathic people. Empathy is seen as something that belongs to the character

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[66] W.L. Marshall and A. Maric, "Cognitive and emotional components of generalized empathy deficits in child molesters," *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* 5, no.2 (1996): 108.

[67] Marshall, Anderson, and Fernandez, 73.

of the individual. *State* perspectives suggest that situational factors determine the nature of the empathic responses; this means that individuals can be empathic in many situations and not in others. While the *trait* perspective had prominence in the psychological literature for many years, the *state* perspective is now considered to be at the fore, particularly in relation to sexual offenders. More recent studies suggest that child sex offenders do not lack empathy in general and that many are empathic in a variety of non-sexual-offence situations; only in relation to their specific child victims are the empathy deficits evident.[68] More recent scholarship proposes that victim empathy deficits are not the result of empathy problems at all; in fact, the lack of empathy in sexual offenders toward their victims reflects a normal empathy process which comes from the premise that the victim has not been harmed at all. This would suggest that apparent empathy deficits in sexual offenders are no more than faulty thinking about the harmful consequences of their abuse in the first place.[69] From this research, it follows that some sexual offenders do not see the full extent of the harm they are doing to children, while others clearly do. Men who understand the harm they are doing can display indifference or callousness towards their victims. In trying to understand why some offenders fail to recognize the extent of the harm they are causing to children, a number of researchers point to the role of shame as an important feature of empathic functioning.[70] Here, K.M Bumby's work suggests that offenders are not unaware of the harm they are causing but rather that they manage their

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[68] Ibid, 80.

[69] Ibid, 85: R.K. Hanson, "Empathy deficits of sexual offenders: A conceptual model," *Journal of Sexual Aggression* 9 (2003):13-23.

[70] Bumby, K.M., "Empathy inhibition, intimacy deficits and attachment difficulties in sex offenders," in *Remaking Relapse prevention with Sex Offenders: A Sourcebook*, eds. D.R. Laws, S.M. Hudson, and T. Ward (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000), 151; D.T. Roys, "Empirical and theoretical considerations of empathy in sex offenders," *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 41 (1997): 53-64.

empathic responses to avoid the experiences of shame and guilt. Bumby describes shame as including "painful and global self-scrutiny, self-consciousness, and perceptions of negative evaluation, all of which create self-oriented distress."[71] Shame goes to the core of one's personhood. On the other hand, guilt for wrongdoing, while uncomfortable, does not lead to a collapsed identity or to constant negative self-evaluation. What is of particular importance here is the idea that, if an offender believes his failure to avoid offending is due to internal factors, such as personal defectiveness, the shame he experiences will actually contribute to an even greater sense of ineffectiveness about preventing offending in the future. Scholars contend that therapists need to help offenders develop the inner psychological resources to accept the emotional consequences of their behavior – for example, guilt – without collapsing into self-denigrating shame.[72] In essence, it may be more helpful to talk about enabling offenders to move from shame to guilt, accepting the emotional consequences of their offending while at the same time accepting the integrity of their core self. As with the previous theories of offending alluded to previously, the ones related to empathy deficits, guilt, and shame require empirical testing. Despite this, most treatment programs are preoccupied with victim empathy[73] even though there is no evidence that lack of victim empathy is related to sexual recidivism[74] or that programmes targeting victim empathy reduce the recidivism rate of sexual offenders.

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[71] Bumby, 152.

[72] T. Ward, D.L.L Polaschek, and A.R. Beech, *Theories of Sexual Offending* (Chichester: Wiley & Sons, 2006), 148.

[73] R. McGrath et al*., Current Practices and Emerging trends in Sexual Abuser Management* (The Safer Society 2009 North American Survey, Vermont: The Safer Society Press, 2010). http://www.safersociety.org

[74] R.K. Hanson and K.E. Morton-Bourgon, *Predictors of Sexual Recidivism: An Updated Meta-analysis*. (Research Report, no. 2004-02) (Ottowa, Canada: Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada (2005).

Sexual Offending: Multifactorial Theories

The following theories are among the most current multifactorial psychosocial theories of sexual offending.[75] Reference to such theories here is not to suggest their complete clinical merits in understanding and explaining sexual offending but, rather, to help provide context for discussion toward some understanding of clerical child sexual offending. Multifactorial theories are an attempt to combine the single-factor psychological theories with social and situational influences to elaborate more comprehensive psychosocial theories of sexual offending. For our purposes, three such theories will be mentioned. At this juncture of the dissertation, it is important to note that the focus of attention is on sexual offending by males, particularly since its goal is to suggest some psychospiritual pastoral themes in response to clerical child sexual offending among religious/priests of religious communities in Ireland.

Finkelhor's Precondition Model

Having undertaken a review of the literature, Finkelhor, in an effort to understand what distinguishes abusers from non-abusers, developed a 'precondition model.[76] His model proposes that there are four steps that must be taken before a sexual offence on a child will occur, and these steps must be met in sequence. They involve (1) factors concerning motivation to sexually abuse: Three distinct motives give rise to abuse of a child – emotional congruence, sexual arousal, and blockage. Emotional congruence is concerned with the way the emotional needs of the offender are met by the child. Deviant sexual arousal pertains to sexual contact with a child meeting the emotional

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[75] Keenan, 85.

[76] D. Finkelhor, *Child Sexual Abuse: New Theory and Research* (New York: Free Press, 1984), 53-62.

and sexual needs of the offender. Blockage theories suggest that abnormally functioning men who experience stress or unusual situations cannot meet their sexual and emotional needs in adaptive ways. For abusers, with the perceived lack of sexual and emotional outlets, children and young people form a surrogate partner or sexual outlet. (2) Factors related to overcoming internal inhibitors: to sexually abuse, the adult must overcome any personal inhibitions against engaging in sexual acts with children. Possible factors in enabling such a dynamic include alcohol, impulse disorder, senility, psychosis, failure of the incest mechanism in the family, bereavement, loneliness, lack of intimacy, job loss etc. There is diminution in the adult's ability to self-regulate behavior, allowing for an interpretation of potential sexual situations in self-serving ways. (3) Factors relating to overcoming external inhibitors: this stage can involve elaborate planning or opportunistic behavior. Actions include forming relationships of trust with parents, securing employment that provides access to children, or coaching children in sports or other activities. This stage is based on the precondition of overcoming the external barriers that typically protect children from harm. (4) Factors relating to overcoming the child's resistance: This step is based on the idea that wherever there is a sexual offense there is always a parallel story of resistance. Here, the offender must gain and maintain sexual access to the child, employing strategies to do so, include gifts, playing sex 'games,' establishing emotional dependence, and perhaps, threats of violence, or other forms of blackmail. Children who are emotionally insecure are thought to be particularly at risk. Arguably, the lack of sex education and the social powerlessness of children are sociocultural factors that contribute to sexual offenders gaining sexual access to children. Again, this theory has question marks, including the revelation of research

that many offenders offend while they are engaged in other sexual relationships, therefore raising doubts about the "blocked" argument.

Marshall and Barbaree's Integrated Theory

This theory[77] is based on the interplay between a number of factors: (1) early childhood experiences, including the development of attachment bonds; (2) biological influences, including biological endowment, hormonal changes during adolescence, and the physiology and biochemistry of the brain; (3) sociocultural context, including the social acceptance of interpersonal violence as a way of resolving problems, social acceptance of male dominance, negative attitudes towards women, and the social acceptance of pornography; (4) transitory situational factors including intoxication, strong negative affect (anxiety, depression, boredom, resentment) and the presence of a potential victim. The theorists suggest that advancing an argument for biological capacity to enact certain behaviors does not mean that they should be accepted as inevitable. In their view, biological endowment simply sets the stage for learning, providing limits and possibilities, as opposed to determining outcomes.[78]

According to this theory, the developmental background and primary relationship experiences of the child provide the environment in which he learns how to act in pro-social ways. Children who develop in non-nurturing environments often have repeated failure in establishing intimate relationships, which can affect their self-concept and sense of masculinity, leading to strong feelings of anger and resentment.

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[77] W.L Marshall and H.E. Barbaree, "An integrated theory of sexual offending," in *Handbook of Sexual Assault, Issues, Theories and Treatment of the Offender*, eds. W.L. Marshall, D.R. Laws, and H.E. Barbaree (New York: Plenum Press, 1990), 258-271.

[78] Ibid, 258.

When in a potentially exploitative situation, these men who are chronically vulnerable as a result of their developmental, social, and conditioning histories will recognize these situations as opportunities to offend, and, depending on their momentary vulnerability, the effects of transitory factors, they may or may not seize the chance to act in abusive ways. Resilience, on the other hand, is the capacity to withstand the effects of adversity, and the effects of transitory factors, and provides protection against the temptation to offend. Resilience includes attitudes, beliefs, cognitive and behavioral skills, and emotional dispositions.[79] Marshall and Barbaree argue that the development of vulnerability to sexually offend corresponds directly to the degree to which there is an absence of any or all of the above-mentioned skills, attitudes, emotional experiences and capacities. The main source of vulnerability is acquired in childhood, mainly with parents, and a vulnerable individual is more likely than another to create, recognize, or give in to opportunities to sexually offend. The unifying thread of this theory concerns the central concepts of vulnerability and resilience. Vulnerability and resilience are hypothesized to develop over the lifespan, and both can be reversed by circumstances.[80]

Ward and Beech's Integrated Theory of Sexual Offending

These two theorists suggest that the majority of psychological theories of sexual offending tend to focus on the surface level of symptoms and fail to take into account the fact that human beings are biological creatures. They contend that it is not possible to capture the causes of dysfunctional sexual behavior without including reference to

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[79] Ibid, 262

[80] Ibid, 257.

neuropsychological and biological elements. Their theory,[81] which awaits empirical

evaluation, is based on the idea that human behavior is generated by the interaction of

three sets of factors that are continuously in relationship with each other. These

factors are biological – influenced by genetic inheritance and brain development;

ecological – social, cultural and personal circumstances; and also include

neuropsychological factors. The interaction of these three factors can generate

problems evident in sexual offending.[82]

Opportunity, Rational choice, and Situational Considerations

When an individual has internalized a certain goal and the legitimate means for

achieving it are blocked, the individual may resort to illegitimate means to achieve

it.[83] According to *opportunity theory*, for a crime to be committed, two conditions are

necessary: the legitimate means for achieving the goal must be blocked, and the

illegitimate means for achieving the goal must be open. It is contended that some

individuals will offend in these kinds of circumstances. *Routine activity* approach

makes a distinction between criminal inclinations and criminal events. It is more

interested in criminal events than in criminal inclinations. This approach specifies that

three minimal elements are required for direct contact predatory crime: opportunity; a

likely offender; and the absence of a suitable guardian against the crime. This

approach is not concerned with criminal motivation but with the temporal and spatial

aspects of crime. What is important is not criminal motivation but rather the situation

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[81] T. Ward and A. Beech, "An integrated theory of sexual offending," *Aggression and Violent Behaviour* 11 (2006): 50

[82] Ibid.

[83] J. Braithwaite, *Crime, Shame and Reintegration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 31.

and timing of the criminal events. This theory is also linked with rational choice perspectives and with situational crime prevention. *Situational crime prevention*[84] theorists argue that crime is opportunity-based. According to this approach, offenders have free will and will have weighed up the costs and benefits of the situation before committing the crime.

The changing horizons upon which theories are constructed and research conducted on sexual offenders point toward caution. Psychological literature on sexual offenders points to the limitations of single-factor theories in explaining a phenomenon as complex as child sexual abuse. For example, in a critical review of the literature, M. Kafka suggests that the concept of deviant sexual preference is a limited one when it comes to understanding child sexual offending, [85] noting that many men who abuse do not have deviant sexual preferences. Similarly, M. Kafka suggests that many men who do have such preferences never abuse children.[86] Therefore, while not dismissing consideration of deviant sexual practices, it is not the sole focus of attention on the research of child sexual offending. In this regard, it may be helpful to develop theories and explanations that are "particular, localized and context-specific for particular groups such as Catholic clergy. Localized accounts can in turn influence the design of focused therapeutic programs for specific client groups that will tailor the therapeutic interventions to meet their specific needs."[87] From a

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[84] R.Clark, "Situational Crime Prevention: Theory and Practice," *British Journal of Criminology* 20, no. 2 (1980): 136-147.

[85] W.L. Marshall, "The Relationship between self-esteem and deviant sexual arousal in non-familial child molesters," *Journal of Behavior Modification* 21 (1997), 86-96.

[86] M. Kafka, "Sexual molesters of adolescents, ephebophilia and Catholic clergy: A review and synthesis," in *Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church: Scientific and Legal Perspectives*, eds. R.K. Hanson, F. Pfafflin, and M. Lutz (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004), 54.

[87] Keenan, 93.

psychological perspective, the pertinent literature suggests that childhood deprivations in attachment functioning, for example, are not the only focus of attention with regard to child sexual offending, but might also include the inability to develop and maintain intimate relationships in adulthood. Keenan, with reference to her work among a small group of clerical sexual offenders, notes that, according to their own self-report, this may be significant. The avoidance of intimate relationships, perhaps as a way of protecting their vow of celibacy, resulted in high levels of emotional loneliness and isolation, a factor contended to play a role in the origins of child sexual offending.[88] Nevertheless, psychological or emotional problems feature as one element in trying to theorize and understand what is a complex and evolving field.

Child Sexual Abuse: A Sociocultural Perspective

As opposed to focusing on the individual from a psychological perspective alone, the sociocultural approach raises different issues than those raised by the latter focus of concentration. Experts in the field of the social sciences, including sociologists, social psychologists, and social theorists seek to understand the circumstances within which sexual offences occur, and how some actions become defined as deviant. They also question the role of expert knowledge in the creation of dominant perspectives throughout the disciplines of the human sciences. Referring to what they call a "new age of Scholarship," J. Shotter and K. Gergen[89] call for an examination and new way of understanding by which knowledge claims are made and justified, which would

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[88] Ibid, 94.

[89] J. Shotter and K. Gergen, "Preface and Introduction," in *Texts of Identity* (London: Sage, 1993), x.

include moral concern for the social and political implications of scientific perspectives and findings. In essence, what is sought is a keener appreciation of the communal, social character of the accumulation of knowledge and understanding with a view to keeping the contextual, relational, and linguistic elements of social issues to the fore. This perspective is important for the study of CSA, including that by clerics – considered a social and cultural problem with political implications – because it takes such a study out of the individual arena alone, and ignores the social and cultural context of problems. This part of the chapter will address some of the inherent issues within the social and cultural perspectives.[90]

An Evolution in the Understanding of Child Sexual Abuse

P. Jenkins has traced the history of adult-child sex (today, known as child sexual abuse) and contends that, although the term child sexual abuse has a long history, it was not until the mid-1970s that it acquired its present cultural and ideological significance, "with all its connotations of betrayal of trust, hidden trauma and denial."[91] For some periods during the twentieth century, it was not uncommon for some of the clinical literature to suggest that in many cases of adult-child sex the child was the active seducer rather than the one who was abused.[92] Children were thought to produce such offenses for their own psychological reasons, and, consequently, influenced professional practice.[93] CSA was seen as an infrequent occurrence unlikely to cause significant harm to the vast majority of its subjects. Images of sexual abusers

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[90] Keenan, 95-114.

[91] P Jenkins, *Moral Panic, Changing Concepts of the Child Molester in Modern America*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), xi.

[92] Ibid, 2.

[93] Keenan, 101.

have also changed over time, changing from being seen as a benign, defective individual to the more recent view of being an evil sex fiend and criminal, and with access to the latest form of technology and communications.[94] The perpetrator of CSA, once seen as "harmlessly inadequate"[95] is now referred to as a "dangerous predator." In much of the public discussion on CSA, every abuser is seen as posing a threat to every child, in all situations, and his behavior and personhood is closely associated with that of the worst serial killer and torturer.[96] Such shifting attitudes are reflected in the fundamental changes in the reporting and prosecution of CSA crime in many parts of the world. This is evidenced in the increasing legalistic and bureaucratic approach to child protection. Risks, paradigms, risk management and public notification of the dangers posed are preferred to the more rehabilitative possibilities. CSA has acquired a new moral weight, while at the same time sexual offending has become the worst of all possible vices.[97]

An Evolution in the Understanding of Childhood

In most Western societies today, childhood is seen as an age-related period along the human-life continuum, with a series of accompanying and enforced legal rights and responsibilities to children and to adults in relation to them. Therefore, current conceptions of childhood, different from times past, influence current conceptions of child abuse victims and child sexual abusers or offenders. In *Centuries*

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[94] Jenkins, 18.

[95] Ibid, 2.

[96] Ibid: K. Hudson, *Offending Identities: Sex Offenders' Perspectives on their Treatment and Management* (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2005), 26.

[97] I. Hacking, *The Social Construction of What?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 125.

of Childhood, the French social historian, Philippe Aries, wrote that in medieval times, the idea of childhood as we understand it today did not exist and did not seem to be detrimental to the child.[98] Rather, he argued the opposite to be the case. In the Middle Ages, children mingled with adults as soon as possible and spent much as their time together in work and play.[99] From the 17th century onward, with the advent of a form of education dominated by religion-based morality, children became separated from adults in the way known today. Considering it to be a backward step, Aries held that the concept of childhood was a limiting force for children, placing more restrictions on them in their formative years than had previously been the case. On the other hand, some scholars like L. de Mause,[100] argue that the recognition of childhood as a distinct group from adults led to a distinct recognition of rights for children, based on their particular developmental needs and vulnerabilities, thereby, improving the lot of children. While, arguably, there is no historical, universal experience of childhood, different eras have produced different constructions of what it means to be a child and how children are to be socialized. In addition, children of different classes, race and gender have had, and continue to have, widely different experiences of childhood.[101] In addition, arguably, the same could be said of adolescents, emerging adults, and young adults. As Davin points out, during the period of industrialization in Britain, as greater sensitivity was shown toward children of the middle classes, appalling working conditions for children of the laboring

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[98] P. Aries, *Centuries of Childhood* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1962), 125.

[99] Ibid.

[100] L. De Mause, *The History of Childhood* (London: Souvenir Press, 1976), 1.

[101] B. Corby, *Child Abuse: Towards a Knowledge Base* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 2000), 15.

classes were accepted.[102] Notwithstanding the different views of some scholars

regarding the concept of childhood, one unifying observation seems to be evident: as

societies develop economically, there is a tendency for childhood to be extended and

to gain more attention as a separated category from adulthood, based on the child's

different needs and vulnerabilities.[103] Within this context, the twentieth century has

seen the concept of childhood become the almost-exclusive preserve of psychology,

particularly the field of developmental psychology,[104] with childhood experiences

seen as a crucial determinative of the adult human character.[105] Consequently, for

example, in much of the Western hemisphere, over time this has led to the

development of child welfare and protection policies.[106]

H. Buckley et al. provide a succinct outline of the evolution of the concept of

childhood which underpinned social policy from the time of the foundation of the

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[102] A. Davin, *The Precocity of Poverty, The Proceedings of the Conference on Historical Perspectives on Childhood* (University of Trondheim, 1990), 10.

[103] Corby, 12.

[104] A central feature of psychological understanding of the human condition is that people are not static entities. For example, this can be seen in the psychodynamic and cognitive-structuralist schools of thought. The former school focuses on cognitive, emotional and relational dynamics within the individual, especially mental processes that are unconscious and outside of awareness. In particular, the psychodynamic school focuses on one or more of three types of processes: drives or instinctual processes that motivate behaviour; structures or internal patterns that provide organization for the personality; and relations between the self and the external or internal objects. The exponents of this psychodynamic school of developmental psychology include Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, and Erik Erikson. The latter school, of cognitive-structuralist developmental psychology attempts to understand the human person by trying to identify underlying organized structures or schemas of mental activity. The leading exponents of this school include Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg. For example, Piaget contended that human development proceeded through various equilibrium points, often referred to as stages, marked by increasing scope, complexity, and stability. Each of these points or stages marked a level of adaptation to the environment that balanced assimilation or incorporation of things into existing structures with accommodation and adjustment of structures to the demands of the environment. Piaget also contended that this process of development proceeded in sequential pattern governed by biological maturation rather than culture so that environmental factors could only speed or slow the process, although social interaction was necessary for it to proceed. Succinct summaries of both schools can be found in James M. Nelson, *Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality*. (Valparaiso, IN: Springer, 2009), 143-174, 211-244.

[105] J. Dunne and J. Kelly, *Childhood and Its Discontents: The First Seamus Heaney Lectures* (Dublin: Liffey Press, 2002), 4.

[106] Keenan, 102.

Irish State in 1922 right up to recent times.[107] From the beginnings of the Irish State up to the 1970s, the concept of childhood was characterized as the era of the "depraved child," when children, in particular of the poor, were seen as in need of discipline and socialization. Childcare interventions were viewed as a means of social control, and children of the poor were taken by the state into reformatory and industrial schools for education and control.[108] In contrast, the 1980s witnessed the era of the "deprived child," reflecting the influences of developmental psychology with its emphasis on the emotional and psychological dimensions of childhood, and the welfare of children.[109] Social policy reflected this new perspective, representing a move away from the industrial and reformatory schools and toward smaller school units. It also witnessed the growth of child and adolescent mental health services. The 1990s and 2000s also brought a shifting emphasis on how children are conceptualized, and in line with international trends, this era can be considered as the era of the "abused child" and the "sexually abused child," an era which shows no signs of abating.[110]

Shame and Stigma

As opposed to the previous, more common view of the self as fixed, distinctive, autonomous, and internal to the individual,[111] the self is increasingly viewed as relational, as recreated in relationship with others. The self, even having a core –

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[107] H. Buckley et al., *Childhood Protection Policies in Ireland: A Case Study* (Dublin: Oak Tree Press, 1997), 12.

[108] *Commission Child Abuse Report* (Dublin: Government Publications, the stationary Office, 2009), (also known as the Ryan Report).

[109] Ibid.

[110] Ibid.

[111] V. Burr, *An Introduction to Social Constructionism* (London: Routledge, 1995).

physical and emotional, and spiritual – does not exist in isolation from others and the world in which we live.[112] E. Goffman's work on stigma describes how outside opinion influences an individual's beliefs about himself or herself through a process of internalization leading to the construction of a personal identity.[113] Persons are always in a sense presenting themselves to others; guiding controlled impressions, not necessarily to deceive, but to sustain a sense of self. In this context, there is ample evidence to suggest that individuals who subscribe to negative self-identity are more likely than those who hold a positive sense of self to live unfulfilling lives.[114] Also, abusive behavior is more likely to occur in individuals who hold a negative sense of identity.[115] Therefore, arguably, more attention needs to be paid to the social identity of men who have sexually abused children, especially as it affects their identity conclusions, risks of further offending, and the way in which they are treated by the communities in which they live. It is important to consider the impact of labelling, stigma, and social rejection on the identity formation of sexual offenders if the aim is to prevent and reduce offending. The primary relevance of stigmatization is that it shuns the individual, keeping him as an outcast – a situation some scholars believe can lead to further offending.[116]

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[112] C. Flaskas, *Family Therapy Beyond Postmodernism: Practice Challenges Theory* (Hove and New York: Brunner-Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2002), 87; T. Ward and W.L. Marshall, "Narrative Identity and Offender Rehabilitation," *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 6, no. 51 (2007): 2.

[113] E. Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (New Jersey: Penguin Books, 1963).

[114] M. White, *Narrative Practice and Exotic Lives: Resurrecting diversity in Everyday Life* (Adelaide, South Australia: Dulwich Centre Press, 2004), 121

[115] W. Marshall, D.Anderson, and Y. Fernandez, *Cognitive Behavioural treatment of Sexual Offenders*, 2nd. (London: Wiley and Sons, 2000), 48-50.

[116] K. Soothill and B. Francis, "Poisoned Chalice or Just Deserts: the Sex Offenders Act, 1997," *Journal of Forensic Psychiatry* 9 (1998): 288-289.

Mercer and Simmons contend that sexual abusers, having crossed both legal and moral codes, face a double stigma within society, and with accompanying inherent contradictions.[117] They are both excluded from the public – incarcerations, psychiatric institutions – while continuing to attract widespread public attention through media attention, court reports, etc.; thus, they are both silenced and questioned. If they speak, they are accused of denial and cover-up, and if they don't, they are accused of remaining silent; they are subjected to both private secrecy and public scrutiny. And so the consequent public scrutiny and public vilification because of CSA encourages a culture of secrecy regarding offending. The cumulative effect of these contradictions is that child sexual abusers are regarded as shameful pariahs and at the same time, public personae. Some scholars argue that once an individual has been labelled as a "sexual offender," the label becomes the most pertinent aspect of his identity, as perceived by others.[118] Among the public at large, in the case of CSA, it is not merely the sexual offending that is unacceptable to society, but the offender's identity is construed as evil.[119] T. O'Malley notes that in the Irish context, that as soon as a person is formally or informally judged to be a child sexual abuser, he is socially classified under that heading only: "The attachment of one of these labels has the effect of obliterating the offender's entire social and personal profile."[120] As soon as a man becomes classified as an offender, his earlier achievements and social

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[117] D. Mercer and T. Simmons, "The Mentally-Disordered Offender. Looking-Glass Monsters: Reflections of the Paedophile in Popular Culture," in *Stigma and Social Exclusion in Healthcare*, eds. T. Mason et al., (London: Routledge, 2001), 170-181.

[118] Hudson, 55; involving an interview of 32 male sex offenders in English prisons, 22 of them convicted child sexual abusers, it was revealed that the interviewees expressed concern that the very public identification of themselves as sexual abusers made it difficult to establish any other identity. Hence, for them, concealing their offences and managing their identity became their primary focus.: T. O'Malley, Opening remarks. Conference on Treatment of Sexual Offenders (Irish Penal Reform Trust. Dublin, Nov, 14, 1998), 1.

[119] Hudson, 30.

[120] O'Malley.

contributions are deemed irrelevant, and far from being seen as an individual, he now belongs to a "type."[121] What matters now is the very sexual nature of the offence and the classification that follows.[122]

The Media and Child Sexual Abusers

In some circles of scholarship,[123] emphasis is placed on the role of the mass media in influencing public opinion on sexual offenders and in using techniques and strategies to marginalize and punish. The mass media is said to play a significant role in setting public agendas on a wide variety of issues, and media coverage of a topic can also alter public perception of the main protagonists in the story.[124] While the media can be applauded for helping to support victims of abuse in putting their experiences onto the political and social agenda, it has been, arguably, unhelpful in its representations of sexual abusers: Support for the victims and support for the sexual abusers are mutually exclusive. J. Kitzinger notes the use of media templates in the coverage of child sexual abusers.[125] Templates are used to present stories in a particular context. They have a three-fold effect: they shape narratives around specific issues; they guide public opinion and discussion; and, they set the frame of reference for the future. Even though events might have long since passed, they continue to

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[121] Keenan, 106.

[122] Hudson, 26.

[123] Such scholars include, but not limited to, M. Breen, "Rethinking Power: An Analysis of Media Coverage of Sexual Abuse in Ireland, the UK and the USA," in *Postmodernism: The Global Moment,* ed. M. Kearney (Tokyo: Conference Kogoluin University, March 9-11, (2004a); M. Breen, "Depraved Paedos and Other Beasts: The Media Portrayal of child Sexual Abusers in Ireland and the UK," in *Monsters and the Monstrous: Myths and Metaphors of Enduring Evil*, eds. P. Yoder and P.M. Kreuter (New York: Inter, 2004b); J. Kitzinger, "Media Templates: Patterns of Association and the (Re)construction of Meaning over Time," *Media, Culture and Society* 22, no.1 (2000).

[124] Breen, Rethinking Power, 3.

[125] Kitzinger, 62

carry powerful associations that have long outlived their potential immediate usefulness. Examples of such media templates are "the Wall Street crash of 1929," which serves as a media template for the reporting of financial issues and problems; and "Vietnam" for a failed or protracted war.[126]

The power of media templates lies in its use to explain current events, but especially to highlight general patterns in particular social problems. Consequently, the main result from their use is singular, strong discourse representing "facts" and "truth." However, these "facts" and "truths" are often simplified or distorted with alternative readings minimalized. For example, it has been argued that the image of the sexual abuser portrayed in the press in Britain is that of an "amoral, manipulative, predatory sociopath" who preys preferably on the most vulnerable.[127] Such imagery succeeds in creating a picture of the sex abuser as an intrinsically different person compared to other perceptions. K. Hudson contends that the current trend in the UK of taking increasingly punitive measures against child abusers, both in sentencing and in the community, derives from such created and constructed images.[128] The same could be suggested about what's been happening in Ireland.

In Ireland, the coverage of sexual abuse of children by clergy led to the emergence of a new media template: "Brendan Smyth." A Norbertine priest, Brendan Smyth, was convicted in June 1994 on 17 counts of sexual abuse of children over a period of 30 years. An investigative journalist, Chris Moore, reporting for Ulster Television, showed that the clerical authorities had known for years of Smyth's crimes and had

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[126] Ibid, 61; Breen, 5.

[127] C. Greer, *Sex Crime and the Media: Sex Offending and the Press in a Divided Society* (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2003), 4

[128] Hudson, *Offending Identities*, 1.

dealt with them by simply moving him on to new assignments, covering up his abuses.[129] While reporting this case, a new media category of abuser was invented by the media: "The pedophile priest."[130] In addition, the media relied heavily on a powerful visual image of Smyth. From the outset, the media repeatedly used the same photograph of Smyth's bloated and angry face, staring straight into the camera so that he became "the living embodiment of the greatest demon in modern Ireland."[131] Long after his death, this particular photograph often accompanied media reports of sexual abuse by other clergy.

Moral Panic

H. Goode et al. note that the notion of "moral panic" was introduced by S. Cohen to explain the rapid increase in press reporting of the Mods and Rockers in English seaside towns in the mid-1960s.[132] Contending that the attention devoted to these groups was excessive, Cohen described "moral panic" to occur when the novelty of a "condition, episode, person or group of persons emerge to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests."[133] Some authors have also suggested that much of the research on media reporting on CSA describes the media as taking a moral panic approach.[134] In a moral panic, the nature of the problem is presented in a stereotypical

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[129] Chris Moore, *Betrayal of Trust: the Father Brendan Smyth Affair and the Catholic Church* (Dublin: Marino Press, 1995).

[130] H. Ferguson, "The Paedophile Priest: A Deconstruction," *Studies* 84, no. 335 (1995), 248; Boston Globe Investigative Staff, *Betrayal: The Crisis in the Catholic Church* (Boston: Little Brown, 2002), 7.

[131] Ferguson, 249.

[132] Goode et al., 45.

[133] S. Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2002), 1.

[134] E. Goode and N. Ben-Yehuda, "Moral Panics: Culture, Politics, and Social construction," *Annual Review of Sociology* 20 (1994): 149-171.

fashion by the mass media, and according to Cohen, "the moral barricades are manned by editors, Bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people and goes on to add that the language of morality and rightness is articulated as "socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions." [135] Ultimately, the problem is presented in the form of a significant threat to both accepted moral standards and to vulnerable groups and individuals. Although the theory of "moral panic" has been criticized because of its assumption that "the reaction to the original problem is exaggerated, resulting in ill-placed fears,"[136] the theory still has something to offer with regard to an analysis of CSA particularly when it is not used to suggest that the reaction to CSA is exaggerated.[137] A helpful contribution to such an analysis is the idea that coalitions can be formed between formerly opposing forces on matters of public concern, allowing a consensus to emerge on a given issue and resulting in a single, usually heavily policed, discourse to emerge.[138] It has also been contended that "moral panic" with regard to CSA is fueled by the relentless and detailed descriptions of what happened, by the continuous production of one version of "the truth," by isolating a single culprit, and by suggesting that sex is the reason for so much pathology in the individual and in society.[139] Keenan holds that such strategies serve to divert public attention away from the complexities of the issues involved including power, knowledge and sexuality.[140] P. Jenkins holds the view that a "moral panic" will likely

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[135] Cohen, ibid.

[136] Keenan, 100.

[137] P. Jenkins, "Failure to Launch: Why do some Social Issues fail to Detonate Moral Panics?" *British Journal of Criminology* 49 (2009), 16.

[138] Haug, 64; P. Jenkins, *Moral Panic*, 15.

[139] Haug, ibid.

[140] Keenan, ibid.

evaporate or implode in time through its own internal dynamics[141] but does not think the same will happen in regard to CSA because of what he sees as irreversible social, political, and ideological trends such as the vulnerability of children and their need for protection, as well as political and social equality for women.[142]

Child Sexual Abuse: A Brief look at the research from Feminist and Men's Studies

The study of child sexual abuse would be incomplete without some attention being devoted to the evolving and growing body of literature and research in the field of feminist studies and men's studies. The following is an effort to outline the salient points from these respective bodies of work, with emphases on male power, and control, patriarchy, and gender. Such foci have implications for the occurrence of male sexual violence and child sexual violence including that which is perpetrated by clergy.

Feminism – An Understanding of Child Sexual Abuse

Some feminist scholars contend that to try to understand the phenomenon of CSA is to focus on the exercise of power and control, the role of patriarchy, and gender in society.[143] Feminist scholars hold that CSA is inherently connected to a system of male supremacy and control. It is within this context that early feminists located the problem of sexual violence and sexual abuse within the "normal" patriarchal family

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[141] Jenkins, 221.

[142] ibid, 234.

[143] Such scholars include, M. Cowburn and L. Dominelli, "Masking hegemonic Masculinity: Reconstructing the Paedophile as the Dangerous Stranger," *British Journal of Social Work* 31 (2001), 399-415; L. Kelly, "Weasel Words: Paedophiles and the Cycle of Abuse," *Nota News* (1997): 9-19; and, J.L. Herman, *Father Daughter Incest* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981).

and the community of "normal" men.[144] Furthermore, it is viewed that a distinction cannot always be made between physical and sexual violence against women and children, both of which can be linked to male domination. Violence toward women and children can be seen as an extreme expression of social control, oftentimes due to a sense of proprietary rights to domestic and sexual services, and a sense of male entitlement.[145] Practices of male dominance and female subservience are seen as being reinforced through social structures, which are essentially patriarchal, and through a belief that women and children are inferior to men. At this point, it is appropriate to develop this argument from the feminist perspective.

The social construction of the 'pedophile' creates the already alluded-to 'moral panic,' which, according to feminist theorists, masks hegemonic activity diverting attention from the wide variety of forms of sexual abuse experienced by both women and children which take place in the public and private domains.[146] Feminist theorists further argue that the media has helped perpetuate the myths of 'scientific certainty' by professional discourses in the quest for methods of risk assessment that can accurately predict whether a convicted sex offender will re-offend. Such views of 'exact science' and the ignoring of the larger group of unreported and unconvicted sex offenders who continue to assault and abuse promote the unreliable expectation that the safety of the community at large can be pursued by sophisticated risk assessment methodologies. In addition, with the focus on the public domain, this view with its public-private dichotomy implies that the private domain is safe while 'pedophiles' cause problems in the public domain. Again, feminist theorists contend that this

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[144] Kelly, 10, Herman, 177.

[145] Cowburn and Dominelli, 401; Mercer and Simmons, 171.

[146] Cowburn and Dominelli, 400.

dichotomy precludes the unmasking of masculine dynamics that oppress women and children in both domains.[147] Both medical and legal definitions of sex offenders have had a major influence on both professional and lay public perceptions of sex offenders, because they have been pivotal in shaping the social construction of the 'pedophile' conveyed through the media and the adoption of professional treatments to such offenders. The classification systems in the definition of sex offenders are considered to be essentially descriptive, but have been presented as scientific measurements of an individual's capacity to commit further sex offences.[148] On the one hand, these classification systems have become important in the development of risk assessment tools for work with sex offenders, but on the other hand, are unable to provide for the complexities of offenders' motivation. In addition, "clinical knowledge relies almost on information based on the tip of the iceberg – convicted sex offenders thereby failing to engage with sex offenders who have not been convicted either because they have not been reported or because the evidence against them will not stand up in a court of law."[149] Therefore, the extensive range and complexity of sex offending occurring within both the public and private domains against women and children is, to some significant degree, undermined. At the expense of appropriately addressing the underlying social causes of sex offending and their links to hegemonic masculinity across a range of social relations of domination, power and subordination, medical and legal foci minimize sexual violence by individualizing and pathologizing such behavior.[150]

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[147] Ibid.

[148] Ibid, 401.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Ibid.

Aided and abetted by the media, the social construction of the 'pedophile'

reinforces the notion of 'stranger-danger,' that abuse is perpetrated by a predatory

member of the public at large and necessitates 'risk assessment' as a means of

managing the threat posed without reference to the social conditions that sustain

dominant or hegemonic masculinity at the expense of the voice of women and

children, including in the private domain. Feminist theorists contend that this social

construction of the 'pedophile' is a key feature of hegemonic masculinity and crucial

to the perception of men's role as protector, to men's identity in their relationships

with others, particularly women and children.[151] This protective role of men creates a

binary division between protective men and predatory men, and is central to the

separation of apparently normal men from deviant ones. Within the framework of

hegemonic masculinity this dichotomy is achieved through the process of 'othering,'

that is, casting the sex offender on the basis of his dangerousness, as "non-human,

different from and outside the community of 'normal' men."[152] Again, the media

seems to have played a pivotal role in compounding the complexity and problematic

social construction of sex offenders with its portrayal of the powerlessness and

inability of those professional in our society – legal, medical and psychological – to

protect the public against sex offenders. The apparent failure, according to feminist

theorists, has led to the establishment of vigilante groups, composed mainly of men,

who take it upon themselves to punish those defined by the media as 'pedophiles.'

Consequently, the social construction of the notion of 'stranger-danger' in the public

domain is reinforced, while sexual abuse occurring within the immediate and

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[151] Ibid, 407.

[152] Ibid, 408.

extended family receives less attention.[153] The family and extended family network, despite the lack of demonstrable proof, is construed to be a safe haven for women and children, with men's role as protectors within hegemonic masculinity reinforced. However, the home has been shown to be a place where a significant amount of sexual abuse occurs. It has been suggested, for example, that there are 15 times more unreported sex offenders than reported ones, and that the majority of offenses have not been brought to public notice and remain unacknowledged in the private domain.[154]

Feminist writings on CSA by Catholic clergy generally make the claim that the institution of the Catholic Church is a system founded upon real or symbolic sexual oppression of the powerless, mainly women and children, and that, religious beliefs are used to underpin the system of oppression.[155] Feminist theorists also tend to locate sexual abuse and violence in the patriarchal structure of the whole society, and leaders of the Catholic Church are seen as patriarchal figures who are also participating in gender oppression.[156] Here, the sexual abuse of children by clergy is conceptualized as a misuse of power and a breach of trust.[157] In addition, some feminist writers hold that some of the current discussion on CSA throughout the media, as well as in certain medical and legal discourses, serves only to mask the relevance of gender and power in men's sexual abuse of women and children. For example, L. Kelly contends that once feminists use the term "the pedophile," they move away from recognizing the

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[153] Ibid.

[154] A. Percy and P. Mayhew, "Estimating sexual victimisation in a national crisis survey: a new approach," *Studies on Crime and Crime Prevention* 6, no.2 (1997): 125-150.

[155] M. Condren, *The Serpent and the Goddess*, 2nd ed. (Dublin: New Island Books, 2002).

[156] R. Ammicht-Quinn et al., "Introduction," in *The Structural Betrayal of Trust* (London: Concilium books, 2004).

[157] Ibid, 132.

gender dimension to sexual abuse, and from recognizing men who abuse as "ordinary men," and move towards a view of them as "other," a small group who are basically different from most men.[158] She argues that by conceptualizing men who abuse as pedophiles, attention shifts from the centrality of power to ideas of sexual deviance and pathology. She adds that, in her view, the source of the problem of sexual abuse of children lies in the social construction[159] of masculinity, male sexuality, and the family, and the problem does not reside in the realm of "abnormality."[160]

A Brief Look at Some of the Research from Men's Studies (study of Masculinities)

In the attempt to address some of the issues by feminist theories of patriarchy and related issues over the role of men in bringing about change in society, the phrase of "hegemonic masculinity" was coined in the 1980s.[161] The context was the growing realization that male sex role theory, race bias, and role theory were no longer seen as being able to sufficiently able to account for this task as power was conceptualized solely in terms of sex difference.[162] Around the time of the coining of the phrase "hegemonic masculinity," the concepts of power and difference in the gay liberation

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[158] L.Kelly, 10

[159] Hacking, 125, suggests that when a problem is debated and developed in a social setting with results that have implications for social policy and for the life of a community, this problem is partiality constructed. However, at the same time the problem is real. Child Sexual abuse is one such problem. Child sexual abusers are real, too, and they have carried out very real sexual offenses. However, at the same time child sexual abuse and child sexual offenders are also socially constructed, or are mad and molded into what we believe them to be through discourse. The term *child abuse* emerged from its forerunner, *child battering,* in *1961,* in Denver, Colorado, in the discussion of some authoritative people, politicians, who used the term initially to refer to battered babies, but the usage over time has been extended to other abuse situations, acquiring new meanings and implications, including the current usage of the concept of child sexual abuse. Social constructionism offers ways of seeing social problems as containing both "real" and "socially constructed" dimensions.

[160] Ibid, 11.

[161] T. Carrigan et al., "Toward a new Sociology of Masculinity," *Theory and Society* 14, no. 5 (1985).

[162] R.W. Connell and J.W Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," *Gender and Society* 19, no. 6 (2005): 831.

movement began to feature more prominently an analysis of the oppression of men, as well as oppression by men.[163] This context provided a ripe environment for the theorizing of a new concept of manhood. What emerged in the early version of the theory was the idea of hegemonic masculinity as "the pattern of practices (i.e., things done, not just a set of role expectations of an identity) that allowed men's dominance over women to continue," but also allowed some men's dominance over other men.[164]

For Connell, there is more than one form of masculinity, and when one form takes the hegemonic position, others are subordinated. This is referred to as the gender of masculinities.[165] Although the masculinity in the hegemonic position may not be the most dominant in the statistical sense, it shapes gender practices around men's expectations of how men should behave. However, the problem is that hegemonic masculinities can produce an array of models of admired masculinities that do not correspond closely to the lives of actual men, thereby, creating contradictions.[166] Since the original construction of "hegemonic masculinity", a vast empirical literature[167] has drawn on its framework to understand men in various aspects of their lives. The concept has also been used by sociologists and criminologists in their

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[163] D. Altman, *Homosexual: Oppression and Liberation* (Sydney, Australia: Angus and Robertson, 1972).

[164] Connell and Messerschmidt, 832.

[165] R.W. Connell, "Growing up Masculine: Rethinking the significance of Adolescence in the making of Masculinities, in *Masculinities,* ed. A. Cleary. *Irish Journal of Sociology (Special Issue),* 14, no. 2 (2005): 11-28.

[166] Connell and Messerschmidt, 838.

[167] See for example A. Skelton, "On becoming a male physical education teacher: the informal culture of students and the construction of hegemonic masculinity," *Gender and Education* 5, no.3 (1993), 289-303, who used the term to understand teacher strategies and identities among physical education teachers; F.J. Barrett, "The Organizational Structure of Hegemonic Masculinity: the Case of the U.S. Navy," *Gender, Work and Organization* 3, no. 3 (1996): 129-142, who used the term in his research on the military;

attempts to understand and explain sexual crime.[168] There is also a growing

recognition of the fact that masculinity cannot be studied as a singular gendered

identity category.[169] Not only do race, class, sexual orientation, religion, age, physical

appearance, fitness, and mental ability influence the diversity of men's experiences

and their attitudes and beliefs, but for Messerschmidt they also influence a man's way

of "doing" masculinity. He argues that men use the resources available to them to

assert their gender bias and to show they are "manly," and if the desired masculine

outlets are unavailable, crime may become the means for such men to opt for the

"gender alternative."[170] "Crime by men is a form of social practice invoked as a

resource when other resources are unavailable for accomplishing masculinity."[171]

While the theory of hegemonic masculinity has endured for almost 30 years, more

recent times have witnessed a reformulation of some of its features in the light of

scholarly criticism. Backed by evidence from research data,[172] reformulated ideas of

hegemonic masculinity include the following: the plurality and hierarchy of

masculinities; the idea that the hierarchy of masculinities is a pattern of hegemony,

not a pattern of simple domination based on force; and that hegemonic masculinity

need not be the most common pattern in the lives of men and boys, but rather that

hegemony works through the production of examples of masculinity – for example,

sports stars – that act as symbols of the ideal, despite the fact that most men or boys

do not live up to them.

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[168] J.W. Messerschmidt, *Masculinity and Crime: Critique and Reconceptualization of theory* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Inc, 1993), 64.

[169] Ibid; H. Brod and M. Kaufman, "Introduction," in *Theorizing Masculinities*, ed. H. Brod and M. Kaufman (London: Sage, 1994), 4, 5.

[170] J.W. Messerschmidt, 64.

[171] Ibid, 85.

[172] Connell and Messerschmidt, 842.

Similarly, what has been discarded from the original concept of hegemonic masculinity is the idea that all masculinities and femininities can be seen in a single pattern of power that involves the global dominance over women.[173] Rather, what is advocated is a more holistic understanding of the gender hierarchy, recognizing the agency of subordinated groups as much as the power of the dominant groups, and the relationship between them. It also recognizes recent social changes and reconfigurations that are evident in women's identity and practices, especially younger women, which are being acknowledged by younger men. In more recent times, the focus is placed on the mutual conditioning of gender dynamics and on the place of other social dynamics such as race, class, physical ability, and sexual orientation in configuring the gender hierarchy rather than on men's practices in themselves. What is emerging is a more complex and elaborate understanding of power than the earlier conceptualization of power as domination, residing in an individual by virtue of gender. Similar to developments in feminist theory, a second form of power, a relational perspective, is being taken into account in understanding gender and power. S. Lukes offers a tri-dimensional typology of power,[174] which is worthy of discourse when it comes to a subject as complex as CSA. Luke's typology suggests a more elaborate understanding of power than the simple unilateral conceptualization of power that is so prevalent. In its first representation, power takes the form of an overt act of coercion and domination and is seen to be an attribute of an individual or group who acts coercively by virtue of their status in the social structure.[175] In this view, power resides in an individual and the focus is on behavior.

[173] Ibid, 846.

[174] S. Lukes, *Power: A Radical View* (London: Palgrave McMillan, 2005).

[175] Ibid, 16.

In its second representation, power lies in relationships and in the dynamic interaction between individuals and situations. In a relational view of power, the focus is on the functioning "agency" of both parties. In a relational perspective, the one who appears to be in the power position by virtue of social structural arrangements may actually be in the oppressed position.[176] The third view situates power neither in individuals nor in relationships, but in the prevailing discourses, and many times, intimately connected with the way a society is organized and run.[177] This view of power, based on the tyranny of the norm, obscures vested interests and the power relations that are involved in bringing about or "forcing" a consensus view. This third view of power leads to an interest in the strategies involved in marginalizing and alienating those whose views are seen as incongruous with the dominant agenda, often by means of shaming, undermining, and excluding.

For the purposes of studying clerical CSA (with reference to Ireland for the purposes of this project), the relevance of Lukes' typology is that it may not be a simple case of clergy always and everywhere being in the power position, even if they are undoubtedly so in relation to the young people they abuse. D. Ferriter outlined in his *Occasions of Sin: Sex and Society in Modern Ireland,* that the Irish people were partly complicit in their own history of "domination" by the Catholic Church. It was not just a case of a dominant Catholic Church always imposing its will: at times, a combination of social and economic factors converged with the newly emerging and more powerful Catholic Church in twentieth-century Ireland. Power is complex, and its complexity is lived out in clerical child-sexual abusers' lives, particularly in

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[176] Ibid, 20.

[177] Ibid, 25.

relation to the oppressor/oppressed dynamic. Keenan contends that clerical perpetrators "are both powerful and powerless."[178] This dynamic will be addressed in more detail in the following chapter.

The Catholic Church: Clerics, Sexuality and Clerical Masculinity

While CSA is not limited to the Catholic Church, to any faith community, or to any profession, some features do, however, distinguish CSA in the Catholic Church: clergy are male; similarly educated; subject to one authority; profess one belief; vow obedience to one supreme head (the pontiff); they also pledge celibacy, and service to others. Thus, the occurrence of CSA is incongruous to everything the Catholic Church as institution stands for in the public domain. To compound matters, the handling of CSA problems on an international level by church leaders appears to make a difficult problem worse both nationally and globally. Within this context, it is important to note the pastoral letter of the Australian Catholic bishops when it said that a study is required "of any factors peculiar to the Catholic Church which might lead to sexual abuse by priests, members of religious congregations, or other Church workers."[179] This suggestion recognizes the fact that while valuable insights can be gleaned from studies involving child sexual abusers in general, and from organizations and faith communities who have experienced these problems, the distinctive aspects of the Catholic Church's pattern of ministry, governance, and sexuality distinguishes it from other organizations, requiring its own analysis. Similarly, "any organization that has been plagued by enduring abuses of power, including multiple incidents of sexual

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[178] Keenan, 123.

[179] Australian Catholic Conference, *Towards healing: Principles and Procedures in Responding to Complaints of Sexual Abuse against Personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia* (Hectorville, Australia, 1996), point 7.

abuse and other violations of children and of workers, must investigate the specific

organizational factors that may be contributing to the problem."[180] In what seems to

be applicable to the Catholic Church with its particular structural organization –

arguably, a closed system – M. White notes a closed organization that does not

actively engage with or listen to those it purports to serve is likely to be at high risk in

terms of sexual and other physical or mental exploitation. It seems the risk is even

higher if and when the leadership is centralized and not accountable, and when there

are insufficient checks and balances.[181]

Sexual Abuse in Childhood

Notwithstanding the valuable contribution of victims in efforts to increase

understanding of CSA, much can also be learned from perpetrators, particularly

clerical sexual abusers. In this regard, the work of M. Keenan is most helpful for our

focus on the Irish Catholic clerical landscape. [182] Therefore, in this context, the final

part of this chapter will look at some of the salient themes with regard to clergy and

sexuality, and then look at the concept of clerical masculinity based on Keenan's

interviews with a group of clerical perpetrators.[183]

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[180] Keenan, xxv.

[181] M. White, 191.

[182] M. Keenan's work, *Child Sexual Abuse and the Catholic Church*, pp. 129-153, based on first-person narratives with a group of nine clerical child sexual abusers continues to embellish the volume of literature in this area of study; her other works of interest include, M. Keenan, "Narrative Therapy with men who have sexually Abused Children," *Irish Journal of Psychology, Special Issue* 1 (1998): 136-151; M. Keenan, "The Institution and the Individual – child sexual Abuse by Clergy," *The Furrow: A Journal for the Contemporary* Church 57, no. 1 (2006): 3-8; and, M. Keenan, ""Them and Us": The Clerical child Abuse as "Other"," in *Responding to the Ryan Report*, ed. T. Flannery (Dublin: Columba Press, 2009), 181-231.

[183] Keenan, Child Sexual Abuse & the Catholic Church, *Appendix*. The group in the study consisted of seven clerics and two religious brothers. Two of the priests were secular clergy and the other five were members of religious congregations. At the time of the study, all participants, with the exception of one man, were in their late-50s, the remaining man was in his 40s. The data collected in the study

Those members of the group who were, themselves, abused in childhood report being drawn into secrets by their abusers and being led to believe that they – the children – were complicit in what was happening to them and therefore responsible and culpable for what happened. It emerged that none of the men reported their being abused prior to participating in this particular therapeutic group for child sexual abusers, a fact borne out by the previously alluded to in the *Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland Report* (SAVI).[184] The men of the group being studied by Keenan did not disclose childhood sexual abuse, not because they had a conflicting understanding of what was happening to them, but because of their feelings of shame. These feelings of shame can promote identity as a child sexual abuser and not as a person in their own right.[185] This implication of dichotomies and absolutes, such as good victim/bad perpetrator, innocent victim/devious perpetrator thus allows little room for the complexities of such men's live to emerge. Dichotomous thinking in public discourse, that an individual can be both good and bad, victim and perpetrator, is typically met with rejection and abhorrence. Such polarized and split thinking does not provide for an acknowledgement of the complexities of peoples' lives. Several studies, at least, have reported that clergy who have sexually abused children have experienced sexual abuse themselves in childhood, sometimes by another priest or

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was gathered from the participants themselves, and details were verified against data contained in the men's case files and in Books of Evidence, prepared in the course of criminal proceedings. The study was designed to provide for a number of ethical concerns: the safeguarding of participants' welfare; respect for, and dignity of participants; observation of the principle of informed consent; the transition from therapy client to research participant; and, potential of compromise of confidentiality in reporting client narratives. Ultimately, the overall aim of the study, based on helping participants tell their own stories, was to deepen understanding of the phenomenon of CSA, and to works toward the prevention of further CSA by Catholic clergy.

[184] McGee et al., 122, the authors indicate that 60% of young men in Ireland who had experienced sexual abuse were particularly unlikely to have disclosed their experience prior to taking part in the SAVI research.

[185] Keenan, 131.

members of religious congregations.[186] While the varying figures for clerical child abusers who were abused in their own childhood is never a defense to abuse children, it is important to note that many clergy who were in treatment for sexual abuse had never discussed these experiences until they were in treatment for abusing. Contrary to the public myth that clergy who were themselves abused would automatically go on to abuse children, these individuals entered seminaries and houses of formation with feelings of shame that rendered them emotionally unable to allow others access to the intimate aspects of their lives. Several of the group members also believed that the sexual abuse had not caused them harm, but that it reflected negatively on them because of their participation, and in some cases their experiences of sexual pleasure. Consequently, the corrosive nature of the men's views on sexual abuse and the accompanying shame contributes to the emotional isolation and, if not addressed, could present problems for them in their priestly and religious lives, when their pastoral appointments provide them with access into the lives of the young and vulnerable.[187]

Prior to entering studies for the priesthood or for religious life, each group member had constructed a vision for their future lives based on ideas of sexual purity and service to God, heavily influenced by traditional Catholic family values, and the surrounding, dominant Catholic landscape with its accompanying sexual repression. As young men, they had little understanding of sexuality, except that it had something to do with purity. The men's narratives suggest that information or knowledge about

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[186] For examples, E.A. Robinson, S. Montana, and G. Thompson. *A Descriptive Study of Sexually Troubled Clergy.* Paper presented at the Annual Research and Treatment conference of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers, Boston, November, 1993, cites the figure of 30% - 35%; A.W.R. Sipe, *Sex, Priests and Power: Anatomy of a Crisis* (London: Cassells, 1995) cites the figure of 80%-85%.

[187] Keenan, 133.

purity was vague and connected with sex and private bodily parts. In mid-twentieth-century Ireland, the era within which the group members were born and raised, Catholic education in Ireland taught that except in the case of marriage, "bad thoughts" and "bad actions" were sinful, with very serious consequences, and with implications of condemnation to hell for all eternity.[188] The avoidance of the committal of mortal sin, focused on refraining from sexual thoughts, feelings, desires, and actions, or suffer the consequences, brought with it a lot of anxiety for adolescents and young men who at the time of entering the seminary or religious houses of formation likely stifled thoughts and feelings about girls and relationships in general. It is worth noting that in Keenan's study group, six of the men cited the lack of interpersonal and institutional support with regard to their homosexual orientation. Therefore, they added that part of their strategy for surviving such a landscape was the denial of their sexual orientation. Their desire and efforts to develop their sexual identity was a furtive, lonely, and isolated journey. Living a life of purity and avoiding focus on one's sexuality brought much fear and shame, particularly when one could not control one's sexual thoughts and feelings. The group members also believed that purity was a key consideration of worthiness for priesthood and religious life. Furthermore, reinforced by staff and mentors, by self-report, the group members noted that they became even more troubled by sexuality during their years in initial formation, particularly concerning sexual purity and sexual sin. The late Sean Fagan, Marist priest and eminent Irish theologian, spoke of Church's teaching of sexuality as being "bad theology" – a theology based on Jansenism, which so many priests and members of religious congregations in Ireland

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[188] S. Fagan, "The Abuse and our bad Theology," in *Responding to the Ryan Report*, ed. T. Flannery (Dublin: Columba Press, 2009), 24.

had been taught for generations. Its negative, unholistic, puritanical emphases did much to accentuate fear, anxiety, and scrupulosity among those in initial formation for priesthood or religious life.[189]

The group members' idea of what it meant to be a "good" priest or religious was nurtured within the walls of seminaries and houses of formation. One aspect of this was sexuality. The model of a good priest or members of religious congregations was to exclude sexuality from his thinking and behavior, become sexless, avoid intimate relationships with women, and avoid "particular friendships" with men in order to live chaste and celibate lives. Described as strict surveillance by the authorities and other seminarians, the members spoke of how they were seen to "perform" as future priests and religious with strict emphasis on such things as dress, daily behavior, attention to academics and religious rituals. Conformity to the institution superseded everything else. There were no opportunities provided for, or to encourage discussion of matters such as sexuality, intimacy, relationships, tactility, closeness, or personal fulfilment. Such an environment does not foster a spirit of open disclosure regarding one's sexuality or any other struggle.[190] According to their own self-report ,the members of the group developed a distorted view of sexuality as something dark, dirty, and unclean, to be feared, and denied as opposed to being embraced and celebrated, albeit celibately. Not only did it perpetuate a deep-seated distrust of women, but also close relationships in general, including with men. In addition, it contributed to a distrust of the body which has marred Christian sexual ethics for many decades. The gap in men's lives between their lived experiences and the ideal theoretical world of moral

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[189] Ibid, 23.

[190] D. Ranson, "The climate of Sexual Abuse," *The Furrow* 53, no. 4 (2002): 394.

theology, begun in their younger and adolescent years, and became more pronounced in their years of initial formation and afterwards in their pastoral ministry. As such, "This gap became a fertile place for the growth of shame-based identities. It was in this institutional environment that men perfected their education in denial, concealment of sexual thought, emotion, and desire."[191]

Another common theme which emerged in the group was the intellectualization of the sexual and emotional aspects of their lives, a process perfected in the seminary or in their houses of formation.[192] More often than not, the input they received was presented in an academic manner and internalized as such. How sexuality, intimacy, and feelings impacted their lives did not feature in discussion with staff and fellow students, and was not untypical for the times. The problem was compounded by the absence of any attempt to integrate their sexual and intimate selves with the commitment to celibacy through which they would later share their lives with others, including children and vulnerable adults. By extension, the members of the group acknowledged that, while they freely undertook the commitment of celibacy, they did so with little understanding about their own emotional lives at the time. Again, the seminaries and houses of formation did little or nothing to provide for some sense of personal and human development within which a freer choice of celibacy could be undertaken. All the members, by their own self-report, acknowledged that they struggled with sexuality in their lives and with physical and emotional intimacy in the context of their celibate way of life. They did not feel equipped to deal with their sexual feelings and the need for intimacy, and did not know how to negotiate

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[191] Keenan, 139.

[192] Loftus, J.A. "Sexuality in Priesthood: Noli Me Tangere, (Do not Touch me)," in *Bless me Father for I Have Sinned*, ed. T.G. Plante (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999): 7-19; A.W.R. Sipe, *Celibacy in Crisis: A Secret World Revisited* (New York: Brunner Routledge, 2003).

professional and personal boundaries within a celibate commitment. With little or no opportunity to share with others their struggles with sexual feelings and those of intimacy, all the members of the group spoke of feeling unusual or unnatural, and believed themselves to be alone and isolated, further compounded by the clerical culture of denial and silence. Invariably, their sense of shame was accentuated and became more painful. Keenan writes that "in attempting to "make sense" of their sexual abusing, some of the men felt they were looking for "something" that they could not fully identify because of the business of trying to conceal, even to themselves, the fact that they had sexual, physical, and emotional needs. One man believed that after years of depression and loneliness the first moment someone showed interest in him, he latched onto them the wrong way."[193]

Clerical Identity and Masculinity: An Irish Perspective

In light of the narratives of this group of nine Ireland-based clerics who abused children, a number of observations may be made about sexuality and masculinity and its relationship to their subsequent offending.[194] Masculinity in Ireland was profoundly rural, heavily based around the family, marriage, and celibacy at the time the members of the group were developing physically and sexually, transitioning from boyhood to adulthood, and from home into the clerical and religious life. The Catholic bishops expected strict adherence to compulsory celibacy, and the Irish form of hegemonic masculinity revolved around celibacy. The celibate priest or male member of a religious congregation was the role model for Irish masculinity. Sexual activity

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[193] Keenan, 146.

[194] Ibid, 148-152.

was solely for the purposes of procreation. Sexual pleasure did not feature.[195] Irish Catholic masculinity was expressed in terms of sexual purity and chastity.[196] With the Church-influenced social expectations of men becoming hard-working fathers providing for their wives and children, or becoming priests or members of a religious congregation, the members of the group were heavily influenced by the religious, social, and cultural ethos of their time.[197] Similarly, with the influence of home and school, Irish children were considerably influenced by a Catholic habitus, a deeply ingrained, virtually automatic way of looking at life through the prism of Catholicism.[198] For those wishing to become priests or members of religious congregations, the Catholic way of understanding oneself, others, and the world would become even more pronounced.

The effects of the totalizing institution of the seminaries and houses of formation reinforced what was already an Irish Catholic habitus. Shame and guilt regarding bodily and sexual matters were coterminous with such a habitus. This necessitated increased vigilance among clerics and members of male religious congregations themselves for sins against purity, as celibacy had to be imposed on their own bodies and that of others.[199] This core objective was achieved through the adherence to the teachings and practices of the Catholic Church. For those intending to become priests or a member of a male religious congregation, the teachings and practices were more rigorously enforced. The denial of sexual desire, enjoyment, and pleasure involved a

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[195] H. Ferguson, "Men and Masculinities in Late-Modern Ireland," in *A Man's World. Changing Men and Practices in a Globalized World*, eds. B. Pease and K. Pringle (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 120.

[196] Ibid, 122.

[197] Ibid.

[198] Bourdieu, 82; Inglis, Moral Monopoly, 57-61.

[199] T. Inglis, "Origins and Legacies of Irish Prudery: Sexuality and Social control in Modern Ireland," *Eire-Ireland* 40, nos. 3 & 4 (2005): 9-37.

rigorous regime of sexual censorship under the supervisory, gimlet eye of priest and/or male member of a religious congregation – the celibate elites – and parents. Harsh penalties, particularly for women, were imposed on those who transgressed the dominant moral code sexual conduct expected by priests, and members of male religious congregations, and of society as a whole. Women who had transgressed the code - those who had given birth outside of marriage were consigned to often State-approved, religious-run mental asylums and Magdalene homes for "fallen women."[200] Sadly, some were to remain in them for the rest of their lives.

Male masculinity in Ireland has been undergoing enormous change in more recent decades with sexuality being understood and expressed differently, though not always meeting with agreement from several quarters, including the LGBT community. Within this changing landscape, it is important to note that, while an assumption of compulsory heterosexuality is now at the core of how Irish hegemonic masculinity is constructed , and Irish men have been "sexualized," arguably, it is celibate masculinity that has been left to carry the weight of social disapproval and interrogation.[201] Nowadays, celibate masculinity is regarded more and more as being a marginalized masculinity. H. Ferguson noted that, when it comes to CSA, on the one hand, sexual offending is not discussed by the law or the State as a problem of maleness, masculinity, or male sexuality, while, on the other hand, CSA by clergy and religious has involved the exact opposite: priests, religious brothers, and the Catholic Church have undergone a dramatic process of sexualization.[202] Ferguson sees this to be a result of the hegemonic gender order in which the construction of the "pedophile

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[200] Ibid, 29.

[201] Ferguson, 123.

[202] H. Ferguson, "The Paedophile Priest," 250.

priest" serves to deflect attention away from the fundamental issue that men from all socioeconomic backgrounds commit such crimes of violence and that these crimes are policed by a range of organizations that are male-dominated. His argument suggests that, by deflecting attention away from sexual abuse by heterosexual men, the normative structures of the patriarchal society are left unchallenged and clerical celibacy as an authentic form of masculinity is marginalized.[203] He goes on to argue that debates in relation to CSA by Catholic clergy and members of religious congregations must be seen in the context of conversations on men, masculinities, and the study of dynamics of sexuality, organization, power in society in general, and not just in the Catholic Church.

It is worth noting that H. Ferguson disagrees with any discussion that associates a possible role of clerical celibacy with CSA, arguing that child abuse and clerical celibacy are unrelated.[204] Otherwise, one subscribes to the male sexual-drive discourse, which rests on the assumption that men must have sex and, if they do not, they will visit their urges on those people in a less powerful position, including children. His argument may also indicate a bias in conversations about clerical CSA if constructed in terms of clerical celibacy. Others, including M. Keenan, are reluctant to exclude clerical celibacy from research and discussion on the matter, as she considers clerical celibacy as a form of masculinity that is full of contradictions which need further research and study.[205] Keenan goes on to add that the clerical masculinity that is in the dominant, or hegemonic position, is particularly problematic for the Catholic Church because of the failure to live up to its idealized form. Dominant, or

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[203] Ibid, 250-254.

[204] Ferguson, *Men and Masculinities in Late-Modern Ireland*, 123.

[205] Keenan, 151.

hegemonic, masculinities can produce an array of models of admired clerical masculine conduct that do not correspond closely to the lives of actual men, thereby, creating contradictions.[206]

In conclusion, with reference to the study group of clerical perpetrators, members acknowledged their struggle with sexuality before, during and after they began the initial process of religious and ministerial formation. Based on a deeply embedded, negative and unhealthy sexual ethic with its accompanying sense of shame of their bodies, the members of the group represent a longstanding fear of, and denial of sexuality that prohibited them of the opportunities for sexual and emotional honesty, and poorly equipped them for the task of living healthy, integrated sexual lives with inevitable personal, interpersonal, psychological, spiritual and pastoral consequences for themselves and for those among whom they would be assigned to serve in future years. With the fear of being unmasked, and likely resulting in expulsion, the state of psychosexual and spiritual disequilibrium was accentuated for those who were homosexual in orientation. Historically, the absence of opportunities within the institutional Catholic Church to talk about something so deeply integral to living a normal, adjusted human life as sexuality, together with its traditional focus on power and control, the institutional Catholic church's understanding and insistence on a particular form of clerical masculinity (what it means to be a male cleric in the Catholic Church), sexuality was viewed and experienced, not as a personal and pastoral strength or resource, but rather as a vulnerability and weakness to be denied and repressed.

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[206] Connell and Messerschmidt, "*Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept*," 838.

Chapter Three

Abuse Complaints: Church Response in Ireland

This chapter, in an incremental fashion, will attempt to outline the response of the Catholic Church in Ireland to clerical child sexual abuse (with an emphasis on clergy). With this in mind, the focus will initially dwell on the steps taken by the Irish Episcopal Conference (IEC). Subsequently, reference will be made to the series of formal Inquiries based on the Government's *Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse Act* (2000): the Ferns Report (1962-2002), the Ryan Report (addressing the abuse of children in institutions run by religious congregations on behalf of the state, the Murphy Report (addressing the abuse of children in the archdiocese of Dublin (between 1975-2004), and the Cloyne Report (January 1, 1996 – February 1, 2009). The following two sections will direct attention to some of the repercussions from the various commissions of investigations, with some explanations for the Irish Church's response to clerical child sexual abuse. A section on canon law and child sexual abuse will precede references to how Popes St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis have dealt with the problem. The concluding section of the chapter will allude to how the relationship between the Vatican and local bishops tempered responses to allegations and incidences of clerical child sexual abuse. Through a variety of themes, the hope is to stress that clerical child abuse does not occur in an isolated, individual, and clerical vacuum. This section of the chapter will refer to some systemic themes which, arguably, impede the psychosexual and social development of clerics during and after initial formation. In this regard, reference to Keenan's small workgroup of clerical child sexual abusers will help further the argument. Such themes will include

Catholic Church's highly systemic, stratified and organized, gender-based locus of power and control.

Much attention has focused on the Church's handling of abuse complaints and its response to those abused in Ireland, the United States, Canada, Australia, and more recently in Europe. Among those subjected to investigation, there appears to be a consistency in the patterns of Church response to abuse complaints. Scant research exists currently to follow the bishops' and religious leaders' change of thought on the matter of dealing with CSA. Undoubtedly, the media played a considerable role in challenging church leaders to be more accountable in addressing the issue; notwithstanding the role of the legal profession, the court systems, and victims support groups, and family members of those abused.

However, it is more apt to suggest that the voices and stories of victims and survivors – sometimes through the media – were more influential in calling attention to the historical lack of acknowledgement and redress of CSA. This appears to be a trend that extends beyond local, national, and international boundaries. In the absence of primary research by the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church, public opinion has been significantly influenced by the revelations of the official investigations into the handling of clerical sexual abuse complaints in a number of countries, including the United States [1] and Ireland, the "conventional explanation…to the problem of

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[1] Following a story brought to light by the *Boston Globe* newspaper with allegations of sexual abuse against semi-retired priest, Father John Geoghan whose penchant, it was revealed, to abuse minors have been known to several of his superiors, including the Archbishop of the time, Bernard Law. Over a number of years, having received 'treatments,' Geoghan repented and was reassigned to new parishes and allowed to continue ministry. Victims had been compensated and made to sign confidentiality agreements to receive their financial compensations. The case against Geoghan escalated nationally. Consequently, the District Attorney for the State of Massachusetts impanelled a Grand Jury to examine the ways religious superiors dealt with clerical sexual abusers. It looked into the effectiveness of Church administration. It issued numerous subpoenas, and deposed the Archbishop, Bernard Law and 32 members of his staff about allegations, treatments, and settlements of past cases. It also examined over 500 formerly secret files, reviewed 30,000 pages of documents.

child abuse in the Catholic church has become a theory of 'cover-up.'"[2] With apparent

partial records of what occurred, missing data, conversations between victims and

church leaders poorly recorded, problems with recall and memory by many whose

work is under scrutiny including church leaders, medical and legal personnel, it is

important to note that the final word on the church's handling of CSA is still a long

way into the future. Nevertheless, though it is very painful for all involved, the

address and redress of clerical child sexual abuse is gaining momentum both in

Ireland and overseas, as witnessed with the recent release in August 14, 2018 of the

Grand Jury report in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.[3] The Pennsylvania Grand Jury's

damning report has prompted a chain of similar investigations in the United States.[4]

To provide a historical context to how the Catholic Church in Ireland dealt with CSA,

this chapter will look at a number of Irish reports and sources, such as government-

commissioned reports into the handling of CSA by the Church hierarchy in Ireland. It

will also allude to a number of official reports from the United States.

The Attorney General concluded that there was institutional abuse along with widespread failure of leadership for at least six decades within the administration of the archdiocese. See Jo Renee Formicola, "The Politics of Clerical Sexual Abuse," *Religions* 16, no. 9 (2016): 1-13.

[2] Keenan, 181.

[3] The report is the result of a two-year grand jury investigation into widespread sexual abuse of children within six dioceses of the Roman Catholic Church in Pennsylvania. The report, covering a period of 70 years, again revealed a horrifying pattern in the concealment of child sexual abuse by more than 300 clergy by Roman Catholic bishops in Pennsylvania. It also revealed that there were more than 1,000 identifiable victims with the likelihood of more victims whose records were lost or who were too afraid to come forward. The report emerged at a time representing a new stage in the investigation of child sexual abuse with increasingly more numerous and vocal calls for bishops to be held accountable for their cover up for abusive clergy. The entire report, issued under the aegis of the attorney general, Josh Shapiro is a searing condemnation of the historical cover up and ineptitude by church officials of child sexual abuse by clergy. It can be accessed at https://attorneygeneral.gov/ (Accessed November 14, 2018).

[4] A. Couloumbis and L. Navratil, "In Wake of PA. Grand Jury Report on Catholic Clergy Abuse, Multiple States Launch Investigations," *The Inquirer Daily News Philly.Com* (September 6, 2108), https://www2.philly.com/philly/news/pennsylvania/clergy-abuse-pennsylvania-new-jersey-shapiro-grewal-20180906.html (Accessed November 14, 2018).

Response of the Catholic Church in Ireland to Child Sexual Abuse

The Island of Ireland is politically divided into two jurisdictions: the Republic of Ireland, which comprises of 26 counties, and Northern Ireland, which comprises of six counties under British rule. However, the entire Island with its separate political jurisdictions forms the Irish Catholic Church with its 26 dioceses under the aegis of the Irish Episcopal Conference. In addition to the typical diocesan structure with an arch(bishop) as its pastoral leader, religious congregations, orders and societies come under the auspices of the Association of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland (AMRI), a recent amalgamation of the former Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI) and the Irish Missionary Union (IMU). Notwithstanding the evidence of clerical CSA of minors beforehand, the 1990s in Ireland represented a watershed in the Catholic Church's more concerted response to the problem than they had previously done. In the early 1990s, the Irish Episcopal Conference established a committee to offer advice on formulating guidelines for the protection of minors within each of the Island's 26 dioceses. The consequent deliberations resulted in the publication of *Child Sexual Abuse: Framework for a Church Response*.[5] Subsequently, this document became known as the *Framework Document*, and a committee was established with an Episcopal chairperson in 1996 to consider any issues relevant to its implementation. The aim was that the document would guide the practices of the Irish bishops and religious leaders in all matters relating to victims of abuse, child protection, and clerical offenders. The Framework document included the

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[5] Irish Bishop's Advisory Committee on Child Sexual Abuse by Priests and Religious, *Child Sexual Abuse: Framework for a Church Response* (Dublin: Veritas, 1996).

recommendation that all sexual abuse allegations regarding Catholic clergy would be referred to the civil authorities.[6]

However, problems soon arose with the document when it was sent to the Vatican for approval. According to the chancellor of the Archdiocese of Dublin at the time, the Vatican expressed reservations: "a policy of reporting to the civil authorities…put the reputation and good name of a cleric at risk"[7]; a second cleric who was also once a Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Dublin stated that "the Congregation for the clergy in Rome had studied the document and emphasized to the Irish bishops that it must conform to the canonical norms in force."[8] The same cleric added that the Congregation found that "the text contains procedures and dispositions which are contrary to canonical discipline. In particular, 'mandatory reporting' gives rise to

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[6] Four years previously on 21 September 1992, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, in a 20-page booklet titled, *Clerical Sexual Misconduct with Minors: Policies for education, prevention, assistance to victims and procedures for determination of fitness for ministry,* proposed a policy for dealing with priests accused of sexually abusing children and minors and for caring for their victims. In what was believed to the most advanced policy of its kind at the time, the proposal involved the establishment of a nine-member review board responsible for handling the cases of priests accused of sexual abuse. The policy also mandated prompt reporting to civil authorities of any allegations of sexual abuse – apparently a departure from previous practice. It provided for a new "victim assistance minister" to help those believed to have been abused by priests. In addition, it sought to establish a 24-hour 800 number to allow callers to lodge confidential complaints about sexual abuse of children and minors. The role of the new board - consisting of nine members qualified in professional fields, and a victim of sexual abuse – would be to carry out a program of review and treatment, and if deemed necessary, prevent priests from being returned to ministry. Within 48 hours after having received a complaint, the board would conduct a "first-stage" review; a second review would be held within 30 to 120 days with supplementary reviews as needed in order to determine whether the priest would be allowed minister again. In the event of a priest returning to ministry, he would have no access to children and minors, and after having undergone stringent treatment of no less than two years, followed by a supervised aftercare program. A report of the charge of sexual misconduct by a priest would be made to the archdiocesan vicar for priests who, in turn, would report to the administrator of the review board. An inquiry would begin immediately and involve the priest, victim and board. Consequently, the administrator would make prompt reports to the Illinois Department of children and Family Services and help the victim to do the same with all the public authorities. Subsequently, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) did not follow up on Bernardin's proposals. A brief resume of Bernardin's proposals can be found on R. McClory, "Bernardin Issues Rigorous Pedophile Policy," *National Catholic Reporter* (October 2, 1992): 3.

[7] *Commission of Investigation Report into the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin* (hereafter, Murphy Report) (Dublin: The Stationary Office, 2009), 122.

[8] Ibid.

serious reservations of both a moral and a canonical nature."[9] The same cleric further

added that the document was regarded by the Congregation in Rome "as merely a

study document."[10]

In 1999, the implementation committee was replaced by a new one on child abuse

and headed by a different Episcopal chairperson, Bishop Eamon Walsh. Its principle

aim was to liaise with the Government's Commission to Inquire into child abuse in

the Religious-run Institutions which had been forecast by the government at the time.

The committee was also instrumental in establishing a Child Protection Office for the

Irish Bishop's Conference in July 2001, which would serve all dioceses in the

Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland. In 2003, because of its large

demographics, the Archdiocese of Dublin established its own Child Protection Office

independent of the Child Protection Service of the Episcopal Conference. In 2001,

Bishop Walsh's committee on child abuse commissioned an independent study to

examine the psychological, social, and faith impact of clerical CSA in Ireland, the

experiences of disclosure, and the Church's response, and to make recommendations

for its future management. The results of the study were published in *Time to Listen.*[11]

While progress was being made at some levels in attending to clerical CSA, and

the Church's main activity focused on the responses to abuse disclosures and the

management of the problem, the deluge of complaints continued, and many contained

accounts of the inadequate handling of CSA complaints by the Church in previous

years. With the accompanying public outcry, the Catholic hierarchy was propelled

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] H.Goode, H. McGee, and C. O'Brien, *Time to Listen: Confronting Child Sexual Abuse by Catholic Clergy In Ireland* (Dublin: Liffey Press, 2003).

into action. In times past, the hierarchy had been accused of continuing to deny the extent of the problem and of responding to the problem only because of media pressure – which is widely seen as having some validity. In 2002, in a proactive move, the hierarchy announced a nationwide independent audit into the handling of all complaints of CSA by diocesan priests or religious in diocesan appointments dating back to 1940. However, the work of this committee by eminent judge Gillian Hussey was terminated before its completion. Judge Hussey took the view that the establishment, at this same time period, of a "new mechanism to investigate matters of significant and urgent public importance"[12] by the then-minster for Justice, Equality and Law Reform including the handling of clerical CSA, would duplicate her committee's audit. In hindsight, it has been widely accepted that the decision to terminate the committee's work had impeded the collection of historical data on the extent of the problem of clerical CSA in Ireland.

In 2005, the hierarchy, CORI and the IMU joined together and commissioned another study into CSA and the handling of complaints. This time, the aim was to provide a comprehensive and unified approach to child protection across the Catholic Church in Ireland, including the dioceses, religious congregations and the Irish Missionary Union. It was realized that a unified, one-Church approach to dealing with CSA was required, as the Church leadership knew it would continually be judged by the behavior of its weakest member. Known as the Lynott Committee, the findings were reported in *Our Children, Our Church.*[13] This document would replace *Child*

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[12] Keenan, 184.

[13] The Irish Bishops' Conference, The Conference of Religious of Ireland, and The Irish Missionary Union. *Our Children, Our Church: Child Protection Policies and Procedures for the Catholic Church in Ireland* (Dublin: Veritas, 2005).

Sexual Abuse (1996) as the guiding document on child protection for the Catholic

Church in Ireland. In 2006, the Bishops' conference, CORI and the IMU appointed a

Board of Child Protection, headed by a retired judge, to oversee the implementation of

child protection services across the Catholic Church in Ireland. It would be known as

the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland

(NBSCCI).[14] Its establishment resulted in the closure of the two pre-existing national

child protection offices – one for the Episcopal conference, and the other for CORI. In

2009, another new set of guidelines and protocols for the handling of abuse

complaints were introduced by the NBSCCI,[15] replacing those of *Our Children, Our*

Church (2005). All church authorities who wished to be part of this child

safeguarding policy had to sign a commitment that they would implement the policy.

Representing a new departure for the Catholic Church in Ireland, the names of those

Church authorities who failed to sign the commitment would be made public, as

would any failure of any Church authority to comply with the policies that might be

uncovered in periodic audits. Curiously, as of November 2018, there is no national

policy in the Catholic Church in Ireland concerning vulnerable adults or what

constitutes a 'vulnerable adult.' However, some religious congregations who work

with vulnerable adults have safeguarding and protection policies.[16] Interestingly, the

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[14] Established as a company, COIMIRCE (which means *protection* in the native Irish language) incorporated in 2008. The directors of the company, appointed by its founding members, automatically comprised the memberiship of the NBSCCCI (the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland).

[15] The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland, *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidelines for the Catholic Church in Ireland* (2009).

[16] In the Brothers of St. john of God West European Province, a 'vulnerable adult' is defined as a person over 18 years and (a) who – (i) suffering from a disorder of the mind, whether as a result of mental illness or dementia, or (ii) has an intellectual disability, which is of such a nature or degree as to severely restrict the capacity of the person to guard himself or herself against serious exploitation or abuse, whether physical or sexual, by another person or (b) who is suffering from an enduring physical impairment or injury which is of such a nature or degree as to severely restrict the capacity of the person to guard himself or herself against serious exploitation or abuse, whether physical or sexual, by another person, or to report such exploitation or abuse to the Garda Siochana (Irish national Police force) or both. Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Children: Hospitaller Order of

national health administration authority, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), does have such a definition of 'vulnerable' and associated policies of safeguarding and protection.[17]

It is also important to note that in 1997, the religious congregations established a free Helpline and face-to-face counselling service for survivors of abuse, with some funding from some bishops, which was known as *Faoiseamh* (Gaelic word meaning 'relief'). In 2011, this service was replaced by a new *Towards Healing* service, which was established following consultation between the Episcopal conference, CORI and the IMU, Faoiseamh and Survivor Groups. The goal of the new service was to try to ensure that survivors of clerical CSA would receive counselling and other support services in a more holistic, coordinated manner than had previously been the case. The provision of support services to those abused by members of other organizations were not within the remit of the new service, however.

St. John of God – West European Province (October 2105), 14. https://www.sjog.ie/images/Documents?CongregationPolicyProcedures-SafeguardingChidlren2015.pdf (Accessed November 26, 2108); The Irish Province of the Religious Sisters of Charity, (according to the National Vetting bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012-2016 defines 'vulnerable person' as a person, other than a child, who – (a) is suffering from a disorder of the mind, whether as a result of mental illness or dementia, (b) has an intellectual disability, (c) is suffering from a physical impairment, whether as a result of injury, illness or age or (d) has a physical disability, that is such of such a nature or degree – as to restrict the capacity of the person to guard himself or herself against harm by another person, or (i) that results in the person requiring assistance with the activities of daily living including dressing, eating, walking, washing and bathing… Religious Sisters of Charity Irish Province Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy (May 2015)., 4-6. https://religioussistersofcharity.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/ireland-safeguarding-vulnerable-adults-policy.pdf (Accessed November 26, 2018).

[17] Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse National Policies and Procedures: Incorporating Services for elder Abuse and for Persons with a Disability. Social Care Division, *Health and Safety Executive* (HSE) (2014). The HSE, Social Care Division states that "for the purposes of this policy and procedures document, considers a vulnerable person as an adult who may be restricted in capacity to guard himself/herself against harm or exploitation or to report such harm or exploitation," (2014), 3. http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/corporate/personsatriskofabuse.pdf (Accessed November 26, 2018).

Response of the Irish State to the Handling of Child Sexual Abuse by the Catholic Church

In 2000, the Irish Government established the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse to investigate the abuse of children in institutions run by religious congregations on behalf of the State. Its powers were based on two pieces of legislation: the *Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse Act* (2000) and the *Commission to Inquire Child Abuse (Amendment) Act* (2005). In addition, the Government introduced a "redress scheme" under *the Residential Institutions Redress Act* (2002) to financially compensate the victims of the residential institutions. In 2002, following public outcry about sexual abuse in the diocese of Ferns, an inquiry was established to investigate the handling of abuse complaints by the Irish bishops and the statutory authorities in the diocese of Ferns. In 2006, a state commission was established to investigate the handling of abuse complaints in the Archdiocese of Dublin. The Commission's work was framed by the *Commissions of Investigation Act* (2004), a new piece of legislation designed to find an efficient and cost-effective means of conducting public inquiries in Ireland. The report was published in 2009, and was previously referred to as the Murphy Report. Another commission of inquiry into the handling of sexual abuse in the diocese of Cloyne was reported in 2011. At this time, there was also discussion about establishing commissions of inquiry for all Catholic dioceses in Ireland.

The Ferns Inquiry

The Ferns Inquiry identified approximately 100 complaints against 21 priests operating under the aegis of the diocese of Ferns, in a period of about 40 years up to

2002.[18] The Inquiry investigated the work of three bishops during this time span. It found that prior to 1980, one bishop removed two priests against whom allegations of abuse had been made, "without taking steps to protect other children from the dangers which the priests presented."[19] The men were sent to a diocese in England without the authorities there being told of the men's history. It also found that the bishop regarded the priests who abused children as guilty of moral misconduct but did not appear to have recognized the wrongdoing as a serious criminal offence.[20] This matter - 'sin' versus criminal offence - will be dealt with later in the dissertation in the discussion of the relationship between local bishops and the Vatican. In addition, the Inquiry found that the bishop's decision to restore the two offending priests to their former positions after a two-year period of "penance" to be ill-advised: "To do so without supervision or monitoring was neither appropriate nor adequate."[21] Both priests went on to further abuse children. The Inquiry also noted that when allegations were made against two seminarians, the men were approved for ordination. When these two men abused children after ordination, the bishop sent them for assessment but failed to act on the recommendations of their respective reports. The Inquiry concluded that, incredibly, the bishop felt bound to appoint any priest ordained for his diocese to a parish ministry, regardless of his suitability.[22]

The report noted and concluded that the successor to the first bishop, sent offending clergy, or those who had aroused suspicion about their proclivity to abuse

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[18] *Commission of Investigation Report into the Diocese of Ferns* (The Ferns Report) (Dublin: The Stationary Office, 2005), 2.

[19] Ibid, 250.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid, 251.

children, to a psychologist or psychiatrist for assessment and treatment if necessary.[23] However, the report also noted that the bishop was "unable or unwilling to implement the medical advice which he received" when it came to the priests' fitness to practice.[24] Arguably, compounding the impact of sexual abuse for the victims, the Inquiry uncovered evidence to suggest that the bishop had not given the medical experts the full history of priests against whom previous allegations had been made.[25] By the late 1980s, the bishop was also of the view that the appropriate response to an allegation of CSA was to have the accused priest step aside from ministry, pending a determination of the allegation made against him. However, the report suggests that the bishop was consistently unable to achieve this objective.[26] The report also acknowledged that the bishop dealt with some very difficult clergy who were unwilling to follow his requests to step aside; in the majority of cases, the inquiry found that the bishop failed to remove these men, due to his conviction that "it would be unjust to remove a priest on the basis of an allegation that was not corroborated or substantiated by what he considered to be convincing evidence."[27] The report goes on to add that the bishop believed "that he could not and should not take an action which would necessarily damage the reputation of one of his priests without convincing evidence of their guilt."[28] While the bishop was "rightly conscious of the need to protect the good name and reputation of his clergy…he failed to recognise the paramount need to protect children, as a matter of urgency, from potential abusers."[29]

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[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid, 254-255.

[29] Ibid, 251.

In addition, it was noted that "using Canon Law to force a priest to step aside from active ministry was difficult in circumstances where that law was unclear and untried."[30] Despite the context and the difficulties involved, the bishop was seen to have failed and to have put children at risk. He resigned in 2002, prior to the publication of the Ferns Report, following a television documentary regarding the handling of sexual abuse complaints in the Diocese of Ferns.

In 2002, an Apostolic Administrator was appointed after the resignation of the second bishop. The inquiry found that the administrator, Eamon Walsh, an auxiliary bishop from the Archdiocese of Dublin, was prepared to ask a priest to stand aside from active ministry where he had a "reasonable suspicion" that a child had been abused.[31] The Inquiry found that seven of the eight priests whom the bishop asked to stand aside did so. The priest, who refused, following an application by the bishop to Rome, was the subject of a dismissal. It noted that the bishop's actions here as not having involved his powers to stand down the priest under canon law, but added that the bishop did seek to use his powers under canon law to apply for the priest's dismissal. This action by the bishop represented something of a landmark on the Vatican policy of dismissal. When previously the only route to censure was the cumbersome canonical trial, other swifter routes to censure were now being authorized by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), which took over the management of CSA cases in 2001.

Overall, the Inquiry noted a number of positive points since the appointment of the Apostolic Administrator to the Diocese of Ferns. There was more efficient

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[30] Ibid, 254.

[31] Ibid, 252.

management of the diocese at large, which was reflected by the clergy's approach to CSA. It also noted a clearer understanding on the part of clergy of the need to respond promptly and efficiently to allegations of CSA. It affirmed that the newly-created record-keeping system with regard to allegations of CSA provided for easier management of, and access to important information about priests. In addition, it affirmed the establishment of a more transparent complaints procedure for members of the public wishing to express child protection concerns regarding priests of the diocese. The Inquiry contended that a culture of secrecy, fear of scandal, and a lack of understanding of the dynamics of CSA within the Catholic Church had prevented clergy in the past from identifying and passing on information about CSA to the relevant Church and civil authorities. It went on to add that these issues were now being corrected in the diocese of Ferns.[32] Furthermore, the Inquiry noted that the Church and State response to allegations or suspicions of CSA "developed over the period of time considered by this Inquiry."[33]

The Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse in Ireland

The Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse[34] was established in 2000 to investigate the abuse of children in institutions run by religious congregations on behalf of the Irish State. In part, the role of the commission was to determine whether abuse had occurred, and if so, its nature and scale. Since its foundation, a feature of the Irish State has been the involvement of the religious congregations in developing

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[32] Ibid, 256.

[33] Ibid, 254.

[34] *Commission on Child Abuse Report* (Dublin: Government Publications, 2009) (Also referred to as the Ryan Report).

and running social and welfare services for the Irish people, some on behalf of the State. These include schools, hospitals, child-care facilities, and facilities for the physically and mentally challenged. Mr. Sean Ryan, SC (legal Senior Counsel), took over as chairperson following the resignation of its first chairperson, thus the report subsequently became known as the Ryan Report which was published in 2009. The commission examined an extensive raft of documents, consulted with experts, held oral sessions in which witnesses gave testimony in private to a confidential committee or publically to an investigation committee. Witnesses who gave evidence included many of the former residents of the institutions as well as some of the staff or former staff, and the current leadership of the named 16 religious congregations which previously ran the institutions on behalf of the Irish State. While the Inquiry also investigated claims of emotional and physical abuse and neglect in these institutions, given the parameters of this dissertation, focus will remain on the findings related to CSA primarily.

The confidential committee heard 1,090 witness reports relating to the period between 1914 and 2000, of which 23 referred to abuse experienced prior to the 1930s or after the 1990s.[35] Witnesses who attended hearings with the confidential committee chose to give their evidence in confidence, and their evidence was uncontested. Approximately, half of all the confidential committee witnesses reported experiences of sexual abuse.[36] In some instances it occurred only once, but in other cases the abuse was more prolonged and chronic. The secretive nature of the abuse was continually emphasized by the witnesses, who described contact and non-contact abuse by

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[35] Ryan Report, Vol. 3, 12-13.

[36] Ibid, 13.

religious and lay staff, by other boys and co-residents, and by professionals and others, both within and external to the institutions. The "others" included volunteer workers, visitors, work placement employees, foster parents, and others who had unsupervised access to the children. Some witnesses reported experiencing additional abuse when they revealed the abuse to those responsible for their care. In addition, female witnesses described being told that they were responsible for the sexual abuse they experienced, both by their abuser and by those to whom they disclosed the abuse.[37] The Ryan Report, from the information gleaned from the confidential committee and the investigation committee, arrived at a number of conclusions.[38] It noted that physical and emotional abuse and neglect were features of the institutions. Sexual abuse occurred in many of them, particularly those relating to boys. Schools were run in a severe and regimental manner that imposed unreasonable demands and oppressive discipline on the children and staff. The large-scale institutionalization that was a response to a 19-century way of looking at certain problems was outdated and incapable of meeting the needs of children. The defects of the system were exacerbated by the way in which the congregations managed them. The report also noted a culture of deference in Ireland during the period, which manifested itself in the deferential and submissive attitude of the Department of Education towards the congregations which it entrusted to run the institutions. In effect, this deferential attitude compromised the Department's statutory duty to inspect and monitor the schools and how they were being managed.

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[37] Ibid.

[38] Ryan Report, Vol. 4, 19.

The Ryan Report concluded that sexual abuse was endemic in boys' institutions.[39] The situation in girls' institutions was different, and although girls were sexually abused by male employees or outside visitors, sexual abuse was not systemic in girls' institutions. However, in those institutions for boys, perpetrators were able to operate undetected for long periods of time, sometimes at the core of the institution. The Report contended that cases of sexual abuse were managed with a view to the risk of public disclosure and consequent damage to the reputation of the institution and the religious congregation. It was argued that this policy perpetuated abuse, and protected the perpetrator. The Report noted that lay people and members of religious congregations who sexually abused children were dealt with differently. The former were reported to the police, while the latter were dealt with internally by the religious congregation. The report held that in one congregation, the congregational leaders were aware of the seriousness of the offence of CSA and of its criminal import, yet were reluctant to confront the abusers, both lay and religious.[40] It was also noted that when the Department of Education was informed, it colluded in the silence.[41]

The religious congregations contended that during the period of the Inquiry, knowledge of sexual abuse was not as available in society as it is today, and that sexual abuse, and the priest's or brother's sexual acts with children, were seen as a moral failure. The Inquiry rejected this, contending that the religious congregations were more concerned about their reputations and the consequent negative publicity. From the files of one congregation alone, for example, it was revealed that long-term, repeat sexual abusers were transferred to other locations, where, in many instances,

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[39] Ryan Report, Vol. 3, 21.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid, 23.

they re-offended. It was also stated that, although sexual abuse was known to be a

persistent problem in male religious congregations throughout the relevant period,

"every instance was treated in isolation and in secrecy by the authorities, and there

was no attempt to address the underlying systemic nature of the problem.[42]

Furthermore, disclosure of sexual abuse by staff was considerably undermined by the

predominant, prevalent authoritarian management system in operation, particularly in

male institutions during the period of the Inquiry. Sexual abuse of girls was generally

taken seriously by the religious sisters. Lay staff members who sexually abused girls

were dismissed when the abuses were discovered. *The Commission to Inquire into*

Child Abuse in Ireland mentions no difference between male and female religious

congregations in the reporting, or not, of child sexual abuse. Girls who experienced

sexual abuse were more likely to be abused when they visited host families for

holidays or visits. Like many victims of CSA during this time period, the children did

not feel able to report the abuses for fear of disbelief and punishment.

Commission of Investigation into the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin

The Archdiocese of Dublin Commission of Investigation was established in 2006

to report on the handling by the Irish Church and State of a representative sample of

allegations and suspicions of CSA against clerics operating under the aegis of the

Archdiocese of Dublin during the period between 1975 and 2004. The commission

was chaired by Judge Yvonne Murphy, a judge of the Circuit Court. It differed from

the Ryan commission in that while the Ryan commission was concerned with

establishing whether abuse had occurred and the nature and scale of that abuse, the

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[42] Ibid, 22.

Murphy commission had no such remit. Notwithstanding this fact, the report states that "it is abundantly clear, from the commission's investigations as revealed in the cases of the 46 priests in the representative sample, that child sexual abuse by clerics was widespread."[43] The commission received information about complaints, suspicion, or knowledge of CSA pertaining to 172 named priests and 11 unnamed priests during this period. Of these priests, 102 came under the commission's remit. It sampled 46 cases and did an in-depth investigation into approximately 320 complaints against these priests. During the period of time under investigation, there were four archbishops and six auxiliary bishops, all of whose work came under the remit of the commission. The commission suggested that in 1981, the then-Archbishop of Dublin had "clear understanding of both the recidivist nature of child sexual abusers and the effects of such on children"[44] when he referred a priest to a treatment facility in the United Kingdom. It suggested that all the archbishops and auxiliary bishops in Dublin during the period involved were aware of some complaints of CSA against clerics. The commission found that when priests knew of instances of abuse that had occurred, "the vast majority simply chose to turn a blind eye,"[45] a finding with which many priests disagree. The commission heavily criticized the archbishops and auxiliary bishops of the archdiocese, apart from the current office holder who was appointed in 2004. The commission found that it was only in 1995 that officials in the archdiocese began to first notify the civil authorities and the police of complaints of

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[43] *Commission of Investigation into the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin* (Hereafter, the Murphy Report) (Dublin: Government Publications, 2009), 2.

[44] Ibid, 6.

[45] Ibid, 7.

CSA against its priests, despite the fact that some of the archbishops and auxiliary bishops held civil and canonical legal qualifications.

Notwithstanding this fact, what compounded the problem was the lack of clarity with regard to reporting procedures concerning allegations of sexual abuse according to canon law alone, even among canonists. Both documents, *Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela* and *De Delictis Gravioribus* – alluded to later – reminded bishops of their duties to uphold secrecy and confidentiality, which Vatican sources insist applied only to the Church's internal disciplinary procedures and did not prevent any bishop from reporting cases of child sexual abuse to the civil authorities.[46] While the former document did not prohibit bishops from reporting to the civil authorities – it didn't mention the civil authorities at all – it did not encourage them to engage in the public arena about the problem of child sexual abuse by clergy. The latter document did not refer to the broader public or society at large whatsoever. In addition, arguably, loyalty to, and fear of retribution from the Vatican, and protecting the Church as institution took precedence over reporting allegations of sexual abuse according to civil laws.

With regard to canon law, the commission reported that there were varying interpretations and conflicting opinions on aspects of canon law in relation to CSA within the archdiocese, and in effect canon law appeared to have fallen into disuse and disrespect during the mid-twentieth century.[47] However, the commission found that those aspects of canon law that were of concern to many of the officials were the

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[46] J.Allen, Jr., "Keeping the Record Straight on Benedict and the Crisis," *National Catholic Reporter*, (March 26, 2010), http://ncronline.org (Accessed November 8, 2018).

[47] The Murphy Report, 7-8.

provisions that dealt with "secrecy."[48] One example of this was the refusal of the

officials of the archdiocese to acknowledge or recognize an allegation of CSA unless

it was made in strong and explicit terms. The commission suggested that in one case

where a bishop heard of suspicions regarding a priest's behavior, the bishop did not

take the steps of asking the complainant precisely what was involved, nor did he go to

the priest for information.[49] The commission also highlighted that the moving around

of priests who had sexually abused with little or no disclosure of their offence

reflected a poor management of the problem by the archbishop and the auxiliary

bishops, and this was an issue, arguably not discussed until the 1990s at the earliest.

The commission concluded that all the archbishops and many auxiliary bishops in

the archdiocese of Dublin handled complaints of CSA badly in the period covered by

the commission's work.[50] It found that at least until the mid-1990s, the archdiocese

was preoccupied with "the maintenance of secrecy, the avoidance of scandal, the

protection of the reputation of the Church, and the preservation of its assets. All other

considerations, including the welfare of children and justice for victims, were

subordinated to these priorities."[51] It went on to state that "complainants were often

met with denial, arrogance, and cover-up and with incompetence and

incomprehension in some cases."[52] To compound matters, the commission noted a

poor management structure and system of communication between the archbishop and

the auxiliary bishops with an equally poor delineation of responsibilities between the

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[48] Ibid, 8.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid, 10.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

former and the latter.[53] Like the Diocese of Ferns, the commission found evidence

that the Archdiocese of Dublin improved its practices in responding to CSA from the

start of the implementation of the Church's Framework document in 1996.

In the aftermath of the publication of the report by the commission, four of the

auxiliary bishops named in the report offered their resignation, and one retired bishop

who had some pastoral duties within the archdiocese was stood down by the current

Archbishop of Dublin. One former auxiliary bishop, now a bishop in another diocese,

refused to offer his resignation, and one retired cardinal, who was an archbishop in the

Archdiocese of Dublin during the period covered by the investigation, had no change

to his status. In the meantime, the Pope accepted the resignations of two of the

auxiliary bishops and refused that of the other two. The decision was not well

received by the public at large, or by the Irish media. The Pope's decision was viewed

as sending contradictory messages undermining the authority of the current

archbishop, who had been very vocal in voicing his anger over how CSA had been

handled in the past by his episcopal colleagues.

Commission of Investigation into the Catholic Diocese of Cloyne

The background context to this commission[54] which made its report in 2010,

differs significantly from that of the Murphy Report (Dublin archdiocese). The

Cloyne Report deals with allegations in the period after 1996, the year in which the

Catholic Church in Ireland put in place detailed procedures – commonly called the

Framework Document – for dealing with child abuse and two years after the Irish

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[53] Ibid, 15.

[54] Commission of Investigation into the Catholic Diocese of Cloyne (hereafter, the Cloyne Report)
    (Dublin: Government Publications, December, 2010), 1-2.

Catholic Church and State was profoundly shocked by the already-mentioned Fr. Brendan Smyth case. This meant that the so-called 'learning curve' that excused very poor handling of complaints in other dioceses in the past could not have been applicable to the Diocese of Cloyne with regard to clerical child sexual abuse.[55] The commission received information about complaints, suspicions, concerns or knowledge of clerical CSA in respect of 32 named clerics, and one unnamed cleric. The then-bishop Magee wrote to all the priests working in the Diocese of Cloyne in early 1996, informing them that he had adopted the procedures contained in the *Framework Document*. He stated, "it is hoped that the enclosed report will serve the purpose of assisting Diocesan and Religious authorities in dealing appropriately with allegations of child sexual abuse which involve priests or religious."[56]

Despite Bishop Magee's stated position on the implementation of the *Framework Document,* the Cloyne Report notes that "the guidelines set out in the document were not fully or consistently implemented in the Diocese of Cloyne in the period 1996 to 2008."[57] The primary responsibility for the failure to implement the procedures lies with Bishop Magee. What is most bewildering is that Bishop Magee took little or no active interest in the management of clerical CSA cases until 2008. By default, the main person involved was Monsignor O'Callaghan who did not approve of the Framework Document procedures in the first place because he did not approve of the requirement to report to the civil authorities.[58] Among the issues of concern noted by the commission were: reservations of the Papal Nuncio regarding the Framework

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[55] Keenan, 206-208.

[56] Quoted in *Cloyne Report*, 5.

[57] Cloyne Report, 5.

[58] Ibid,5, 71.

Document; the conflict of interest that existed for some members of the diocesan case management advisory committee – a lawyer and a psychologist; and failure to adhere to guidelines for pastoral care (e.g. counsellors implementing dual roles).[59] More significantly, the report held that the provision of pastoral care was not a sufficient response to a complaint of sexual abuse. It stated that pastoral care "may provide some healing for the complainants, but it cannot ensure that their need for validation is met. It does not provide for a genuine investigation of the complaint. In addition, it cannot provide for the protection of other children. The protection of children requires reporting to the civil authorities and ensuring that the alleged offender does not have access to children."[60] The report adds that a 'rule-led' system does not preclude the Church exercising its ministry of pastoral care wherever and whenever required. The commission also contended that the diocese of Cloyne put far too much emphasis on the concerns of the alleged offenders…"[61] The commission acknowledged that Bishop Magee made a very progressive effort in employing *Mentor[62]* in 2009 to assess the risk to children from a number of priests about whom he had concerns.[63] Under a cloud of prolonged controversy, Bishop Magee retired soon after publication of the Cloyne Report.

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[59] Ibid, 72.

[60] Ibid, 73.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Mentor Associates facilitates training for priests and parish representatives to become accredited trainers in child safeguarding according to the guidelines of the NBSCCCI, the national child safeguarding board of the Catholic Church in Ireland, 128-130.

[63] Ibid, 72.

Some Repercussions from the Various Commissions of Investigations in Ireland

The scale of the sexual abuse uncovered by the various commissions of Investigation into child sexual abuse, in depth and detail, revealed a sorry, sordid, sad and tragic trail of suffering, particularly for the children subjected to such treatment. More often than not, neither parents nor victims experienced a sensitive, pastoral response. Since the publication of the various reports by the commissions of investigation, the entire Island, from among people Catholic and not, believers and not, has witnessed an outpouring of public rage and anger. Indeed, the topic of sexual abuse seems never far away from the public and political agenda. Following the publication of the Ryan Report in 2009, and the public outcry that followed, all of the 18 named religious congregations previously involved in the running of State-owned welfare and reformatory institutions entered into negotiations with the Government to increase their share of the contribution towards monetary redress for former residents of the institutions run by the congregations. Under a 2002 indemnity agreement, the congregations had contributed 128 million Euros towards the Government's redress scheme, but in the outcry that followed the publication of the Ryan Report and the further negotiations, the amount so far offered by the congregations has amounted to almost 350 million Euros, in addition to their initial contribution.[64] The amounts of financial compensation to victims of abuse in former congregation-run institutions continue to feature in Church-State and political debate.

The findings of the Murphy Report (2009) created tensions within the leadership of the Archdiocese of Dublin and within the Irish Episcopal Conference itself. The

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[64] Ibid, 193.

position taken by the Archbishop of Dublin in accepting unequivocally the findings of the Murphy Report, a stance applauded by the Irish media and large sections of the Irish public, was not seen in the same light by many of his Episcopal colleagues. For example, it was suggested by a retired auxiliary bishop of Dublin that the Archbishop of Dublin was unfair in his criticisms of the bishops. The same bishop is quoted to have said, "[Y]ou were out of the diocese for 31 years and had no idea how traumatic it was for those of us who had to deal with allegations without protocols or guidelines or experience in the matter of child sexual abuse." [65] Such comments, however, do not negate the frightening lapse of comprehension of the pervasive instances of clerical child sexual and the consequent pattern of denial, cover up, and systemic handling of the problem. While it is true that the current Archbishop of Dublin has been particularly outspoken in his commentary on the wrongs of the past, and in his support and compassion for victims and survivors, it is important to note that beyond singling out individuals in particular for blame, the problem of CSA clearly resides within the systemic institution of the Catholic Church as a whole and needs to be addressed.

Some Explanations for the Irish Catholic Church's Response to Child Sexual Abuse

Goode et al.[66] conducted first-person research into the handling of abuse complaints and spoke to a number of bishops in this regard. On the basis of their work, they report that the bishops initially viewed the problem of sexual abuse by clerics as one of private and moral failing and a breach of discipline that called for

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[65] M. O'Sullivan, "Dublin Divided," *The Irish Catholic*, (Jan 28, 2010, 1.

[66] Goode et al., 123.

spiritual solutions, such as prayer, penance and/or a retreat. Seen through this lens, the bishops focused on confidentiality and secrecy, the basis of the seal of confession in dealing with allegations, and offences of wrongdoing. The Murphy Report found that the code of canon law places a very high value on the secrecy of the canonical process,[67] which will be discussed later in the chapter. The obligation to confidentiality and secrecy on the part of the bishops in the canonical process could have constituted an inhibition on the reporting of CSA to the civil authorities.[68] In the effort to explain their handling of abuse complaints, some bishops contended that they misunderstood confidentiality and secrecy and that they treated allegations of clerical CSA with the utmost confidentiality, believing this to be the right way to deal with the problem.[69] For example, it was viewed as typical that bishops developed what they thought was a trusting relationship with their priests and treated priests alleged to have abused children with the same level of confidentiality as they would any other priest who approached with a personal problem. Again, this seems to suggest that in so many instances of reporting of clerical child sexual abuse, the matter was seen as moral failure, a sin as opposed to the committing of a crime against a minor whose plight was ignored for the most part.

Some bishops saw their first obligation as the preservation of the institution of the Catholic Church, seeing any exposure of weakness as an assault on the Institutional Church. However, such a stance quickly created enormous anger among the public at large to the extent that, even now, it is never far from the surface of public discussion

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[67] Murphy Report, 77.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Goode et al., 176-178

and ire. The alternative could be perceived as a sign of infidelity.[70] The bishops

handled the disclosure of the Clerical CSA in the way they did, because they had a

personal resonance with the priesthood and all that it meant; they could not easily

dislodge abusive priests from their priesthoods, regardless of the power they had in

canon law. The idea of salvaging priesthood was seen as very important for Church

leaders.[71] Not wishing to undermine the cleric's priestly life, and maybe their sense of

personal identity wrapped up in their ministry, bishops, even in the wake of

complaints and allegations, moved priests around from place to place, given the

proviso, and the promise, of priests not to offend again. This restorative, as opposed to

punitive, stance taken by bishops did not take into account the harm being done to

children. In addition, it seemed to spare little thought for recidivism.

Nearly all of the survivors who gave evidence to the Murphy Report stated that

when they first complained to the church authorities, they wanted the abuser priest

removed from ministry so that they could no longer pose a threat to children, or use

his status to gain access to and 'groom' children.[72] The passing of time revealed that

Church leadership did not foresee the return of abusing priests to ministry after

'rehabilitation' as posing a problem for victims and the public at large.[73] According to

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[70] Goode et al., 167.

[71] Ibid, 177.

[72] Murphy Report, 57.

[73] The treatment of child sexual abusers operates along an unfolding continuum based on the current up-to-date research and evidence-based data. For example, as stated on its website, I refer to The St. Luke Institute, "an independent, international Catholic education and treatment center dedicated to healthy life and ministry for priest, deacons and religious" and "provides candidate assessment, consultation, evaluation, residential treatment, a post-residential program and a five-year continuing care program, as well as workshops on outpatient therapy." https://sli.org/about/ (Accessed November 30, 2018). The St. Luke Institute is accredited by the Joint Commission, an independent, not-for-profit organization which certifies and accredits over 21,000 healthcare organizations and programs (mainly in the United States of America). Its Mission Statement is "[T]o continuously improve healthcare for the public, in collaboration with other stakeholders, by evaluating healthcare organizations and inspiring them to excel in providing safe and effective care of the quality and value." Https://www.jointcomission.org/about_us/about_the_joint_commission_main.aspx (Accessed

the Murphy Report, the failure of diocesan authorities to deal with concerns regarding continued ministry of perpetrators caused profound distress to many parents of sexual abuse victims who spoke to the authorities of the archdiocese of Dublin.[74] In hindsight, it is clear that the suffering and stress of survivors was often related to the fact that their abuser was still functioning as a cleric, and in addition, might pose a threat to other children. The accompanying stress for bishops in permanently removing a cleric from ministry – which became Vatican policy in 2006 – illustrated that acute differences existed between survivors and their parents and Church leaders concerning what was wanted and needed.

Preventing scandal was also put forward as an explanation for many of the decisions taken by church leaders in relation to sexual abuse allegations against clergy.[75] Preventing scandal was an important function of Church leaders as they saw it, because giving scandal was seen as serious sin. The approach implied that giving scandal would undermine the faith of the people and the credibility of the Church. Church leaders believed that they must protect the people from being scandalized by

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November 30, 2018). The St. Luke Institute follows the most current, established clinical guidelines for diagnosis and treatment. Diagnoses, including for paedophilia are aligned with objective clinical definitions from the historically current *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,* and from the Joint Commission. When a presenting problem does not meet the established criteria for a diagnosis, yet clinical concerns exist, the St. Luke Institute identifies and recommends in writing restrictions on behavior or ministry, and designed to prevent potential harm in the future. The St. Luke Institute clinicians also actively contribute to research in the areas of diagnosis and treatment. An example is found in Stephen Montana et al., "Predicting Relapse for Catholic Clergy Sex Offenders: The Use of the Static-99," *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment* 24, no. 6 (2012): 575-590. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1079063212445570?journalCode=saxb (Accessed November 30, 2018). With regard to the research and treatment of child sexual abusers, the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abuse (ASTA) is helpful. ASTA uses "research-based and evidence-informed treatment known to reduce the likelihood of someone sexually offending. ASTA encourages those involved in addressing the problem of sexual abuse to adopt practices consistent with the best available evidence, and to adopt their approaches as new research data emerge." (https://www.asta.com/practice (Accessed November 30, 2018).

[74] Ibid.

[75] Goode et al., 166.

the fact of the abuse of children by clerics. They contended that it was better for everyone if this information did not reach the public arena.[76] Some Church leaders believed that giving scandal was theologically equivalent to leading other people into sin.[77]

Church leaders have often argued that the mistake made in the handling of abuse complaints by them were due to ignorance on their part and a lack of awareness about the extent of CSA by clerics.[78] They argued that they were on a steep learning curve. This contention was rejected by the Murphy Report based on evidence that the Archbishop of Dublin took out insurance in 1987 to ensure against the cost of any liability that might arise from clerical CSA[79] at a time when the archbishop and his predecessors had information on abuse by at least 17 priests under the aegis of the archdiocese of Dublin. This led the commission (the Murphy Report) to state that the Church authorities "were lacking in an appreciation in the phenomenon of clerical child sexual abuse."[80]

The Murphy Report (2009) also presented evidence that the Irish authorities, such as the office of the *Director Of Public Prosecution*,[81] the Gardai (Irish Police),[82] and the social workers charged with child protection,[83] were developing and refining their practices in relation to child sexual abuse during the period that the commission

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[76] Ibid, 92.

[77] Ibid, 167.

[78] Ibid, 170.

[79] *Murphy Report*, 6.

[80] Ibid. 6.

[81] Ibid, 93-98.

[82] Ibid, 82-84.

[83] Ibid, 86-87.

investigated. The Ferns Report (2005) also presented evidence that led the inquiry team to conclude that neither the medical and health care community nor the bishop appreciated the damage that CSA can cause to its victims.[84] Therefore, arguably, based on evidence from the Murphy and Ferns Reports, the conclusion of the Murphy Report[85] that the bishops of Ireland were not on a similar learning curve to other medical, social work, and criminal justice professionals does not hold up. Within the context of the Murphy Report and its timeline of investigation, advances in the Western world with regard to CSA were influencing developments in areas such as social policy and legislation. The expansion of research in the social sciences and psychiatry was leading to better ways of understanding and responding to victims, and perpetrators of child sexual abuse. The available facts and empirical evidence does not bear out the contention that the priests and bishops, including of the archdiocese of Dublin, were out of step with the evolving development of knowledge occurring at an international level. If Church leaders were 'out of the loop,' why would they have taken out insurance policies to cover the cost of liability with regard to instances of Clerical CSA? This also weakens the claim that some Church leaders did not fully understand the extent of the problem clerical CSA.

Canon Law and Clerical Child Sexual Abuse

The 1917 Code of Canon Law recognized the existence of a number of canonical crimes, or "delicts," which were reserved for handling by the Sacred Congregation of the Sacred Office, the name of which was changed in 1965 to the Congregation for the Doctrine and Faith (CDF). Reference will be made later to the 1983 code of

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[84] *Ferns Report*, 250.

[85] *Murphy Report*, 6.

Canon Law. In 1922, local dioceses and tribunals were issued with instructions to be

followed when dealing with the canonical crime of solicitation. This set of

instructions was called *Crimen Solicitationes (On the Manner of Proceeding in*

Causes involving the Crime of Solicitation)[86] whose main purpose was to provide a

procedure that responded to the crime of solicitation during the celebration of the

sacrament of confession. This crime, considered to be most serious, and involving the

sin of adultery, concerned the abuse of the sacrament of penance by priests who solicit

the penitent to sin against the sixth commandment. The instruction also included a

short section on same-sex clerical misconduct, *Crimen Pessimum (Worst*

*Crimes).*This short section determined the procedures for solicitation in *Crimen*

Pessimum cases with whatever adaptations necessary in individual situations. Cases

concerning the crime of solicitation remained the responsibility of the CDF in

accordance with the new Code of Canon Law promulgated by Pope John Paul II in

1983. This revised Code made some updates in the areas of clerical misconduct.

Canon Law 1395 states that " a cleric who in another way has committed an offense

against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue (the Ten commandments)… with a

minor below the age of 16 years, is to be punished with just penalties, not excluding

dismissal from the clerical state if the case so warrants."[87] In addition, the 1983 Code

also provided for procedures for investigating allegations of sexual wrongdoing.[88] The

canonical norm states that bishops are obliged to investigate reports of clerical

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[86] "Addressed To All Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops, And Other Local Ordinaries "Also Of The Oriental Rite" On The Manner Of Proceeding In Causes Of Solicitation," Supreme Congregation of the Holy Office (Vatican City: Poliglot Press, 1962) http://www.vatican.va/resources/resources_crimen-solicitationes-1962_en.html (Accessed November 9, 2018).

[87] *Code of Canon Law* (English translation) (London: Collins, 1983), 2.

[88] Ibid, Canons, 1717-1719.

misconduct by means of a "preliminary investigation."[89] Canons 1341 and 1342 gave

discretion to the bishop or the religious superior to determine whether there should be

a penal procedure after a preliminary investigation (Canon 1717), and whether to

follow an administrative or a judicial procedure (Canon 1718). Canon 1342, I; 221, 3

preferentially opts for a judicial procedure to protect the right of defense.[90] Prior to

making a decision concerning an administrative or judicial approach, the bishop,

whether considered expedient or not, with the parties' consent, makes a decision

about the question of harm. The purpose may have been to avoid unnecessary trials;

the provisions of canon law, nevertheless, gave bishops and religious superiors

discretion in how they responded to cases of misconduct. It also gave them the

possibility of issuing a pastoral admonition, recognized in canon law as a warning as

opposed to a punishment. Such warning preceded actual punishment as a result of an

administrative disciplinary process or from a full canonical trial. The former pathway

could result in a temporary suspension, but not permanent dismissal from the clerical

state. The latter pathway had the powers to dismiss from the clerical state, sometimes

referred to as laicization. The decision of both pathways could be appealed. While it is

unclear what an admonition means, according to the Code of Canon Law (1983), it

seems that it is one of the ways many bishops chose when dealing with abusive

clerics. Oftentimes, it took the form of bishops encouraging them to repent, go on

retreats, and in some cases, receive psychological assessment and therapy. In

hindsight, it is clear that some offending clerics, having been temporarily removed

from ministry – or not – following allegations of abuse, were reassigned to new

ministries or new parishes without the receiving ministry or parish community made

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[89] Ibid.

[90] J. Beal, J. Coriden, and T. Green. eds., *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law* (New York: Paulist Press, 2000), 1559.

aware of the priests' history. However, Keenan notes that from the mid-1990s, offending clerics were not reassigned without legal, psychological and medical opinion.[91] Though aware of the allegations, the options chosen by bishops and leaders of religious congregations for dealing with CSA clerics are now considered to have been wrong, especially in relation to repeat offenders.

In 2001, Pope John Paul II issued a new list of canonical delicts which would be dealt with by the CDF. Sexual abuse of minors (under the age of 18 years) by clergy was included among them. At this time, the instruction *Crimen Sollicitationes* (1962) was replaced with a new instruction called *Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela* (2001)[92] (On safeguarding the Sanctity of the Sacraments). Nine years later, the then-Prefect of the CDF, Cardinal Ratzinger, (later to become Pope Benedict XVI), signed off on a letter, *De Delictis Gravioribus* (2010),[93] informing all bishops of the new law and the new procedures. The gravest crimes, reserved for the CDF, were specified in this letter: crimes against the sacrament of the Eucharist; crimes against the sacrament of Penance; and crimes against morality, including the sexual abuse of minors. The procedural norms to be followed were clearly outlined and all cases were to be reported to the CDF which would deal with them directly or instruct the local bishops on the course of action to be taken. In 2010, nine years after the promulgation of the *Sacramentorum Sanctitas Tutela,* in the light of the momentum of controversies and criticisms of canon law in relation to CSA, the CDF issued changes to these norms,

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[91] Keenan, 210.

[92] The Norms of the Motu Proprio, "Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela," 2001, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith http://www.vatican.va/resources/resources_norme_en.html (Accessed November 9, 2018).

[93] "Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church and to the Ordinaries and Hierarchs, regarding the modifications introduced in the *normae de gravioribus delicta*," Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) http://www.vatican.va/resources/resources-lettera-modifiche_en.html (Accessed November 9, 2018).

which currently are still in force. Tom Doyle, a canon lawyer, and with a somewhat controversial reputation, argued that the 1983 code of Canon Law contained the legal means to deal effectively with clerical CSA. He argues that the failure to deal with the problem was not with canon law but rather, the failure of bishops and Vatican officials to implement Canon law.[94] Citing specific canons from the Code to the general context of clerical child sexual abuse, Doyle argues that the sexual abuse of children and minors was always specifically forbidden,[95] which also provides clear and detailed procedures for investigating allegations of wrongdoings.[96]

From the evidence available, it can be noted here that during the pontificate of John Paul II, with Ratzinger at the helm of the CDF, "there was extraordinary absence of guidance…for the bishops at the time on matters relating to child sexual abuse, notwithstanding the secrecy with which canonical trials were conducted. In addition, there is also the noticeable absence of any reference to the civil authorities while at the same time, an emphasis on the rights of the accused prevailed in Rome."[97] Therefore, arguably, at the heart of the current malaise of clerical sexual abuse, which Benedict in some ways embodied in his role as head of the CDF, lies the longstanding practice of secrecy in the handling of sexual abuse cases and the lack of direction for bishops in dealing with the problem.

However, while Doyle suggests the case for canon law dealing with cases of clerical CSA as being relatively straightforward, laying the blame at the feet of the

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[94] T.D. Doyle, "Canon Law and the clergy Sex Abuse Crisis: The Failure from Above," in *Sin against the Innocents, Sexual abuse by Priests, and the role of the Catholic Church*, ed. T.G. Plante (Westport, CT: Praeger), 28.

[95] Code of Canon Law (1983), Canon 1395.

[96] Ibid, Canons 1717-1719.

[97] Keenan, 220.

bishops for its lack of enforcement, there is evidence to suggest from both the Ferns Report (2005) and the Murphy Report (2009) that things were not so operationally and pastorally clear-cut. The Ferns Inquiry found evidence that, on at least three occasions, the bishop had sought canon law advice in an intention to remove priests who had allegations of CSA made against them from the ministry, but that canon law did not help him in achieving this goal.[98] The Report notes that "having regard to the emphasis placed by Canon Law on the duty to protect the good name of the alleged abusers," it was not surprising that the bishop adopted a view in keeping with this principle.[99] The Murphy Report found that it was not easy to provide a coherent description of the relevant parts of canon law that related to CSA.[100] While canon law was the prime instrument of governance for many centuries in the Catholic Church, the Murphy Report noted evidence to the effect that the system suffered an enormous loss of confidence in the 1960s and seems to have fallen into neglect, especially after Vatican II;[101] "Even the best attempts by competent people to discover the norms, which, according to Canon Law, should be applied to cases of sexual abuse, were in vain."[102] When the new and revised code was promulgated in 1983, following years of work on the revisions to the 1917 code, the Murphy Report noted that it was not clear, even to canonists. What its effects were on older decrees or sources of law, including the procedural rules that were issued in the document *Crimen Sollicitationes* (1922), remained poorly defined.[103] Nor was it clear to what extent *Crimen Sollicitationes*

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[98] Ferns Report (2005), 254.

[99] Ibid, 45.

[100] *Murphy Report* (2009), 58.

[101] Ibid, 59-60.

[102] Ibid, 78.

[103] Ibid, 61.

(1962) related to CSA that took place outside the sacrament of Penance, and was therefore not dealt with under the delict of solicitation.

Irish canonist Rev. Dr. Michael Mullaney insisted that *Crimen Sollicitationes* (1922/1962) concerned abuses within the sacrament of Penance and the manner in which such abuses were to be treated.[104] However, notwithstanding the seal of confession – the confessional priest and those dealing with the complaint in a confessional manner – according to Mullaney, this did not preclude the complainant from bringing the complaint to the civil authorities if a crime had been committed. The Murphy Report contended that the main problem here was that the procedures involved were virtually unknown, including those who were supposed to know them.[105] Prior to 2001, the CDF concerned itself with only those cases of alleged sexual abuse in the context of the sacrament of Penance, since a canonical tribunal within that congregation handled all cases involving abuse within the sacrament of Penance.[106] Previously, it seems that it was never very clear who in Rome dealt with cases involving clerical CSA. In addition, canonical trials were very slow and cumbersome, and in some instances bishops had cases returned to them where priests had successfully appealed the bishop's decisions on canonical grounds.[107] To compound matters regarding the (ir)responsibility of bishops' in dealing with allegations of CSA, bishops were likely watchful of Rome and the CDF who had an interest in preserving the good name of priests. Therefore, arguably, when it came to

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[104] D. Ferriter, *Occasions of Sin: Sex and Society in Modern Ireland* (London: Profile Books, 2009), 402.

[105] *Murphy Report,* 61.

[106] J. Allen. Jr. "Keeping the record straight on Benedict and the crisis*," National Catholic Reporter* (March 26, 2010), http://www.ncronline.org/ (Accessed May 9, 20018).

[107] *Ferns Report* (2005), 45.

taking action, no bishop wanted to bring the wrath of Rome down on himself or to appear incompetent, or have their credibility undermined among their own priests, personal and pastorally, with a poor outcome from Rome. [108] There is no reason to conclude that the leadership of both male and female religious congregations were any less worried about being treated any differently. In addition, with reference to the previously alluded-to document *Our Children: Our Church* (2005), both the Irish Episcopal Conference and Religious Congregation leaders adopted a unified approach to child protection across the Catholic Church in Ireland.

The new instruction, *Sacramentorum Sanctitatus Tutela,* signaled a change in policy from Rome. It provided that all allegations of CSA that had an appearance of truth should be directly referred to the CDF, which would either choose to deal with the matter itself or advise the bishop on the appropriate action to take.[109] The adoption of this policy was to seek to ensure a unified approach in dealing with allegations and complaints of clerical CSA throughout the Catholic Church as a whole. This new instruction, together with the letter from the CDF, *De Delicto Gravioribus* (On More Serious Crimes) were reminders to the bishops of their duties in relation to secrecy and confidentiality, which Rome would insist applied only to the Church's internal disciplinary procedures and did not preclude any bishop from reporting cases of CSA to the civil authorities. However, Keenan noted that this new instruction, and the letter from Rome did not encourage bishops to openly discuss matters in the public domain including with the civil authorities, therefore, making it more confusing for bishops to act on allegations of clerical CSA.[110] She goes on to add that, notwithstanding the

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[108] Ibid.

[109] Historical Introduction, *Murphy Report* (2009), 64.

[110] Keenan, 213.

reasons, for the bishops failing to report clerical colleagues to the civil authorities -
including clericalism, putting the interests of the ordained above the non-ordained, or
lack of appreciation of the criminal parameters of the issues involved with clerical
CSA – "the failure to act represents a systems failure of significant proportions, over
and above the responsibilities of individual bishops…a failure of leadership and of the
relational governance that went right to the top…the 'bishops' failures' lay not in
their noncompliance with the institutional norms but rather in the opposite: the
bishops' failures lay in their conformity with the institutional culture."[111]

Child Sexual Abuse: Popes John Paul II, Benedict XVI, Francis

During his pontificate, it is acknowledged that Pope John Paul II's handling of
clerical CSA was ill-adept.[112] Berry and Renner contended that he remained silent for
too long when the instruction *Crimen Sollicitiones* and the judicial processes
according to canon law were proving to be increasingly ill-equipped to deal with more
modern circumstances and conditions. Reference has already been made of "Rome"
overruling decisions of some Irish bishops on appeal by some clergy in Ireland –
occurring during the pontificate of John Paul II.[113] It is also contended that John Paul
II was distrustful of empiricism, thus undermining the contribution of the physical,
psychological, theological, and sociological sciences in understanding the continuum
of human development.[114] While he is still revered by many people throughout the

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[111] Ibid, 214.

[112] J. Berry and G. Renner, *Vows of Silence: The Abuse of Power in the Papacy of John Paul II* (New York: Free Press, 2004).

[113] J. Allen, Jr, "Keeping the record straight on Benedict and the crisis."

[114] S.Green, "Psychology and the quest for the spiritual," *Doctrine and Life* 47, no. 4 (1997): 219; M.G. Frawley-O'Dea, "Psychosocial anatomy of the Catholic Sexual Abuse Scandal," *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*," 5, no. 2 (2004): 126.; J. Dominion, "Journey of love, not law," *The Tablet* (April 4, 2007): 12.

global Church community, he is often criticized for his failure to take firm action in matters pertaining to clerical CSA. This is most telling in his handling of two cases of clerical CSA: Cardinal Hans Hermann Groer of Vienna, and the founder of the Legionaries of Christ, Marcial Maciel Degollado.[115] Some commentators suggest that Hans Hermann Groer was appointed Archbishop of Vienna in 1986, and subsequently Cardinal in 1988 against the backdrops of allegations of sexual abuse made by a number of seminarians. With further allegations made in 1995, though Hermann Groer initially denied the allegations of sexual abuse, he later resigned following mounting pressure and much public frustration for the Church in Austria. Groer died in exile in 2003. John Paul II is viewed as having been silent and indecisive, and of failing to give adequate direction even in the midst of increasing tensions within the church in Austria during this time frame.[116] It has been contended that John Paul II's handling of Hermann's case indicates a policy that failed to acknowledge or address the gravity of the issues involved in clerical CSA in Rome.[117] Similarly, with regard to the latter, Marcial Maciel Degollado, allegations of sexual abuse within his own congregation had been rife for years. Again, John Paul II is considered to have done very little, if anything at all.[118] Efforts of victims to have him investigated continued to be unsuccessful. However, in 1998, Maciel was accused, not only of sexual abuse, but also of absolving his victims in the sacrament of Penance. The matter was raised with the CDF, since its disciplinary section at the time handled serious offenses under canon law, including abuse of the sacrament of Penance. The complaint remained

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[115] Berry and Renner, 227-232; L. Podles, *Sacrilege, Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church* (Crossland Press, 2008), 234-237.

[116] Berry and Renner, 230, 230; Podles, 235, 237.

[117] Berry and Renner, 232; Podles, 237.

[118] Ibid, 209-221.

dormant until 2001 when the sexual abuse crisis in the United States placed more pressure on Rome to act on sexual abuses at large. Notwithstanding an investigation, no action was taken against Maciel for another four years when Cardinal Ratzinger, now elected as pope took action. Maciel was barred from public ministry and instructed to live a life of prayer and penance. He died in 2008.

J. Allen Jr suggests that there is no evidence to suggest that the then-Cardinal Ratzinger did anything other than adopt the typical attitude in Rome for quite a few years after his arrival in 1981 with regard to clerical CSA.[119] He goes on to add that the turning point for Ratzinger was around the time, 2003-2004, when the CDF became pivotally involved in the management of sexual abuse cases under the direction of *Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela* (2001) which for the first time assigned juridical responsibilities for certain grave crimes under canon law, including CSA, to the CDF, headed by the then-Cardinal Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI. There is some evidence to suggest, however, that Ratzinger tried to place some pressure on John Paul II to deal with Maciel, even furnishing relevant documentation outlining Maciel's litany of sexual abuse of minors, and young men and women, but to no avail.[120] As previously mentioned, prior to that time the CDF managed cases concerning solicitation in the sacrament of Penance.[121] In his time as Pope, Benedict appears to have continued with decisive action – including his swift action against Maciel – by meeting victims, meeting bishops, and in his pastoral letter to Irish Catholics – which will be referred to later – encouraging the Irish bishops and church

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[119] J. Allen, Jr., "Will Ratzinger's past trump Benedict's present?," National Catholic Reporter. (March 17, 2010). http://ncronline.org/, (Accessed May 10, 2018).

[120] J. Berry, "Francis Must fix cover-Up That John Paul II Enabled." National Catholic Reporter (February 21, 2019). https://www.ncronline.org/news (Accessed August 29, 2019).

[121] Ibid.

leaders to cooperate with the civil authorities with regard to clerical CSA. His decisive action is also seen in his ordering apostolic investigations and visitations such as those of the Legionaries of Christ, as well as certain dioceses in Ireland. Nevertheless, from time to time, his suitability to lead the Catholic Church has been called into question. In 2010, an editorial in the National Catholic Reporter, a leading Catholic newspaper in the United States, posed some questions for Pope Benedict to answer concerning his own role in managing some CSA cases as Archbishop of Munich, as prefect of the congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and as Pope.[122] In a similar vein, in pursuit of papal and clerical accountability concerning clerical CSA, Hans Kung, a former colleague of Pope Benedict XVI, wrote:

> There is no denying the fact that the worldwide system of covering up cases of sexual crimes committed by clerics was engineered by the Roman Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith under Cardinal Ratzinger (1981-2005). During the reign of Pope John Paul II, that Congregation had already taken charge of all such cases under the oath of strictest silence. Ratzinger himself, on May 18, 2001, sent a solemn document to all the bishops dealing with severe crimes ('*epistula de delictus gravioribus*'), in which cases of abuse were sealed under the '*secretum pontificium*,' the violation of which could entail grave ecclesiastical penalties.[123]

There are still some issues of significance which need to be addressed with regard to Pope Benedict's handling of clerical CSA, notwithstanding the fact that from the time he was elected in 2005 until his resignation in 2013, he tried to address

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[122] "Credibility Gap: Pope needs to answer some questions." *National Catholic Reporter*, Editorial. (March 26, 2010). http://ncronline.org/ (Accessed May 10, 2018; N. KUlish and R. Donado. "abuse Scandal in Germany Edges Closer to Pope," *The New York Times* (March 12, 2010), https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/13world.europe/13pope.html (accessed, March 17, 2020).

[123] H. Kung, "Church in worst credibility crisis since the Reformation, theologian tells Bishops," *The Irish Times*. (April 16, 2010), 15.

the problem.[124] In the eyes of some of his critics,[125] Pope Benedict XVI has only

tackled part of the problem, that is, dealing with abusive clerics but not adopting any

measures of accountability for bishops who did not act with decisiveness, and in not

having asked bishops involved to resign.[126] Allen goes on to state that, "as long as the

perception is that the Catholic Church has fixed its priest problem but not its bishops'

problem, many people will see the job half done."[127] Currently, in Ireland, it can be

argued that in the field of CSA politics and in an increasingly secular society, an anti-

Catholic Church society, there is little respite even for Catholic Church leaders who

have painfully learned valuable lessons about child safeguarding and protection, and

in dealing with clerics who commit child sexual abuse. While Pope Benedict XVI had

made inroads during his pontificate with regard to clerical CSA, in particular in

meeting with bishops and encouraging bishops to cooperate with civil authorities, a

return to orthodoxy might well have considerably undermined efforts to seek to

establish the factors, Church-specific, systemic factors which might facilitate CSA by

clergy.[128]

At the heart of the current crisis concerning this problem, throughout the Catholic

Church – globally, not just in Ireland – is the suggestion of secrecy in the instructions

provided to deal with abuse complaints, and the longstanding lack of encouragement

to bishops to report abuse complaints to the civil authorities in those jurisdictions in

which such reporting was required. Throughout his tenure as head of the CDF, in

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[124] J. Allen, "Will Ratzinger's past trump Benedict's present?"

[125] J. Berry, "Papal Princes immune to censure," *The Irish Times*. (December 4, 2009), 13.

[126] J. Allen, "Will Ratzinger's past trump Benedict's present?"

[127] Ibid.

[128] Keenan, 221.

accordance with the Code of Canon Law, the then-Cardinal Ratzinger would have stood over the secrecy involved in canonical cases involving clergy, including those alleged to have sexually abused children. Not unusually, given his role as prefect of the CDF, Ratzinger was immersed in and fulfilled his ministerial and administrative duties within a culture of enforced secrecy, papal secrecy and sometimes referred to as the 'pontifical secret' which will be referred to later in the dissertation with regard to the handling of clerical child sexual abuse by Pope Francis. The 'pontifical secret' is the code of confidentiality, in accordance with the Code of Canon Law[129] that applies in matters that require greater than ordinary confidentiality. The papal instruction, *Secreta continere* states that "[B]usiness of the Roman Curia at the service of the universal church is officially covered by ordinary secrecy, the moral obligation of which is to be gauged in accordance with the instructions given by a superior or the nature and importance of the question. But some matters of major importance require a particular secrecy, called 'pontifical secrecy,' and must be observed as a grave obligation."[130] In De Delictis Gravioribus (2010), which replaced *Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela* (2001), the former Cardinal Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, stated that "cases of this nature (*those cases concerning clerical child sexual abuse in the Sacrament of Confession*) are subject to the pontifical secret,"[131] and adds that violations of the secret be punished with an appropriate penalty.[132] This

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[129] *Code of Canon Law* (English translation), canon 1387.

[130] Secreta continere, in *Acta Apostolica Sedis*, 1974, 89-92: Historically, in 1922, Pope Pius XI in his Instruction (later reissued by Pope St. John XXIII in 1962) Crimen Sollicitationes imposed the "secret of the Holy Office," a permanent silence on all information obtained through its canonical investigations of clerical child sexual abuse. There were no exceptions provided for reporting of such crimes to the civil authorities. In 1974, Pope Paul VI renamed the "secret of the Holy Office," as the "pontifical secret," in his Instruction *Secreta continere* which, according to the new 1983 Code of Canon Law, continued to apply to cases of clerical sexual abuse of children during the pontificate of Pope St. John Paul II.

[131] *De Delictis Gravioribus*, article 31, 1.

[132] Ibid, article 31, 2.

policy may not have been so disastrous for children had canon law's internal

disciplinary procedures been adequate to dismiss abusing clergy where the focus had

been on their reform. For example, the Murphy report (investigation into abuse in the

Archdiocese of Dublin) found that the structures and rules of the Catholic Church

enabled "the cover up of sexual abuse in the archdiocese of Dublin, and severely

criticized the secrecy imposed by canon law and its capacity to discipline priests."[133]

Spokespersons for Rome say the secrecy or confidentiality aspect of the instructions

related only to the canonical process. In addition, Rome has typically not admitted to

failure in its handling of CSA by clerics. This was tellingly revealed in Pope

Benedict's pastoral letter to the Catholic people of Ireland in 2010. His omission or

acknowledgement of the role of the Vatican in the mishandling of abuse complaints in

Ireland was a missed opportunity to broach the problem in a more comprehensive

manner including the Church's centralized structure of governance,[134] and the

pervasive culture of clericalism. It may have been more meaningful and soothing for

the people of Ireland to have heard an abject apology from the Vatican for its poor

leadership in the matter. The letter contained tough words for the Irish bishops. He

stated:

> It cannot be denied that some of you and your predecessors failed, at times
> grievously, to apply the long-established norms of Canon law to the crime of
> child abuse. Serious mistakes were made in responding to allegations. I
> recognize how difficult it was to grasp the extent and complexity of the
> problem, to obtain reliable information and to make the right decisions in the

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[133] Quoted in K. Tapsell, "Secreta continere: the secret of the Holy Office" "the pontifical secret," (June 9, 2014), http://www.theherald.com.au/story/2340393/opinion-pontifical-secret-allows-abuse-to-go-unpunished/ (Accessed May 19, 2018).

[134] T.P. Doyle, "Canon Law and the Clergy Sex Abuse Crisis: The Failure from Above," in *Sin Against the Innocents: Sexual Abuse by Priests and the Role of the Catholic Church*, ed. T.G. Plante (Westport, CT, London: Praeger, 2004), 25-38.

light of conflicting expert advice. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that grave

errors of judgement were made and failures of leadership occurred.[135]

Overall, however, Benedict's letter, "as Pastor of the universal Church" to the

Catholic community in Ireland, was one of deep pastoral and spiritual concern and

sorrow, particularly for those abused and their families. He viewed his letter as a

means to "propose a path of healing, renewal and reparation," adding that the "painful

situation would not be resolved quickly." He acknowledged the betrayal of trust and

the violation of dignity of those abused, notwithstanding the families involved. He

stated "that nothing could undo the wrong endured." With reference to the priests and

members of religious congregations who abused children, he stated they "would

answer for it before Almighty God and before properly constituted tribunals." Having

"forfeited the esteem of the people of Ireland" and having "brought dishonour and

shame" on confreres, he also mentioned "the violation of the sanctity of the sacrament

of Holy Orders in which Christ makes himself present in us and in our actions."

Benedict called on them to "take responsibility," to "humbly express sorrow," and

open the door to "God's forgiveness and the grace of amendment." Nevertheless, he

also stated that "God's justice summons us to give an account of our actions and to

conceal nothing." He also reminded them to "acknowledge their guilt," and to submit

themselves "to the demands of justice, but not to despair of God's mercy." Benedict

affirmed the Catholic community of the importance of "great trust in the healing

power of God's grace." Directly addressing victims of abuse and their families,

Benedict as "a pastor concerned for the good of all God's children," encouraged them

to take stock of "Christ's own wounds," "the healing power of his self-sacrificing

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[135] Pastoral letter of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Catholics of Ireland. (March 19, 2010), http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/letters/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_let_20100319_church-ireland_en.html, (Accessed May 10, 2018).

love…to bring liberation and the promise of a new beginning." He added that by "participating in the life of his (*Christ*) Church – a Church purified by penance and renewed in pastoral charity", victims and their families "will come to rediscover Christ's infinite love." He called on the priests and members of religious congregations of Ireland to "cooperate closely with those in authority and help ensure that the measures adopted to respond to the crisis will be truly evangelical, just and effective." He urged them to "become even more closely men and women of prayer, courageously following the path of conversion, purification and reconciliation." On a pragmatic and pastoral level toward the renewal of the Catholic Church in Ireland, Benedict announced in the letter his intention to hold an Apostolic Visitation of certain dioceses in Ireland, as well as seminaries and religious congregations to be made in cooperation with the Roman Curia and the Irish Episcopal Conference.

Notwithstanding Benedict's proposal for the renewal of the Catholic Church in Ireland, and its response to the child sexual abuse crisis, it is safe to say that it needs to involve more than what was outlined in his Letter to the Catholics of Ireland. With respect to it, the Letter was primarily spiritual in focus with no substantial practical proposals to deal with the sexual abuse crisis and renewal among the laity, bishops, priests and members of religious congregations, including those in formation for the priesthood and for religious life. In this regard, as one form of response, Jim Corkery, an Irish Jesuit and academic, speaks about three steps to be taken in the effort to renew the Catholic Church in Ireland.[136]

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[136] J. Corkery, SJ., "The Catholic Church in Ireland," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 100, no. 398 (Summer 2011): 193-205.

First, he alludes to systemic, structural reform, as opposed to the Church dwelling

almost exclusively on personal faults and failings of individuals, including of those

who sexually abuse children. Corkery refers to an article by his Jesuit confrere,

Brendan O'Callaghan, who commented on how systemic issues such as

authoritarianism, defensiveness, and the demand for unquestioning obedience might

affect the behavior, including potential sexual behavior, of a person placed in power

over other people, including vulnerable adults and children.[137] Second, Corkery

mentioned the Church's relationship with the world at large and the contribution of

the secular world's manifold insights with its collective wisdoms, practices and voices

to the life of the Church. He laments a common attitude of those in the Church who

contend that there is nothing to be learned from what lies beyond its own confines. He

states, for example, that "[A]ny ecclesiology that is out of touch with wisdom about

how social bodies work generally is an ostrich-ecclesiology, doomed – to the full

extent that the Church, humanly operates as a social institution like other human

institutions – to fall foul of the *isms* and blind spots and ideological ways of seeing

things that can bedevil organizations anywhere."[138] Third, emphasizing the

importance for a more synodal approach in the life of the Catholic Church, he calls for

the recovery of the tension between papal primacy and collegiality, a matter which the

then-Cardinal Ratzinger wrote about in his *Theological Highlights of Vatican II*[139] A

renewed Church would reflect more the plurality of voices in a synodal structure at

many levels including parochial, diocesan, national and international. With its

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[137] B. O'Callaghan, SJ., "On Scandal and Scandals: the Psychology of Clerical Paedophilia," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 99, no. 395 (Autumn 2010): 343-356.

[138] Corkery, 198.

[139] Joseph Ratzinger, *Theological Highlights of Vatican II* (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2009), 25-26, 34-35, 79-84, 91-93,135-139, 161-191 and 199-206.

inclusion of the voices of individuals and groups – secular and religious, the human sciences, minority ethnic groups, women – the Church would be enormously enriched. Together with moving from an individual-personal view of looking at life and concerns in the Church, it would emphasize, again, what has been missing in a more centralized church structure of recent decades, the consultative and dialogical element in the present day Church. Corkery notes that this transition "maybe even tackles that which may have enabled clericalism and authoritarianism to be more prevalent – with all their attendant woes – than might have been the case if a culture of listening, dialogue and inclusion had been able to develop more robustly following the Second Vatican Council."[140]

While, like his predecessor Benedict XVI, Francis has shown promise to forcefully address clerical child sexual abuse, his actions remain confusing and problematic since his election as Pope in March, 2013. In Philadelphia, on the last day of his trip to the United States in September, 2014, Pope Francis having privately met with group of clerical sexual abuse victims, pledged that "all responsible will be held accountable."[141] He went on to say, "I commit to the careful oversight to ensure that youth are protected."[142] His comment was viewed as an effort to soothe the disquiet he had caused on the first day of the trip when he praised the US Conference of Catholic Bishops for their handling of the sexual abuse scandal and when he told priests that he felt their pain. Therefore, his remarks in Philadelphia were met with

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[140] Corkery, 201.

[141] L. Goldstein, "After Criticism, Pope Francis Confronts Priestly Sexual Abuse," The New York Times (September, 26, 2014). https://dbproxy.lasalle.edu:6033/docview/1718092661?pq-origsite=summon (Accessed May 23, 2018).

[142] Ibid.

varying degrees of skepticism by victims of abuse who had by now seen two popes on US trips meet with victims and make sweeping promises to protect youth.

Prior to becoming Pope, Francis had been viewed as having been reluctant to meet with clerical sexual abuse victims and their families, despite pleas for a meeting with him, notwithstanding his reputation for empathy for the marginalized in society. In the same newspaper article, reference was made to his predecessor, Benedict XVI, as having met with clerical sexual abuse victims more frequently than Francis, during his foreign trips. However, against this backdrop, in March 2014, Pope Francis named an 8-member panel, including Irish woman and clerical sexual abuse victim, Marie Collins,[143] to help combat clerical child sexual abuse. The formation of the group occurred a month after the United Nations accused the Vatican of putting the Church's reputation before the well-being of children and imposing a 'code of silence' among clerics on the issue of sexual abuse. [144] On April 21, 2015, Francis was the first Pope to establish a commission on examining clerical child sexual abuse,[145] composed of victims, lay experts, clerics, and bishops. Its conclusions recommended the setting up of a mechanism for holding accountable those bishops who covered up clerical child sexual abuse. The same 17-member commission,

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[143] S. Pitrelli and S Pulliam Bailey, "Pope Francis acknowledges Catholic Church's bad practices during sex abuse Crisis," *The Washington Post*, (September 21, 2017). http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A505737201/OVIC?u=phil31439&sid=OVIC&xid=d84a5f1e. (Accessed May 24, 2018); This article stated that Marie Collins quit the commission in March of 2017. She contended that few of the changes recommended were being implemented by the Vatican.

[144] S. Scherer, "Eight people named to new panel tasked with helping Catholic Church combat sexual abuse of minors by clerics." *The Washington Post*. (March 23, 2014). https://dbproxy.lasalle.edu:6033/docview/1509257548?pq-origsite=summon (Accessed May 23, 2018).

[145] Chirograph Of His Holiness Pope Francis for The Institution Of A Pontifical Commission For The Protection of Minors. (April 21, 2015) Http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/letters/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20140322_chirografo-pontificia-commissione-tutela-minori.html (Accessed May 24, 2018).

headed by Cardinal Sean O'Malley of Boston, also later announced the creation of a Vatican tribunal for judging bishops accused of negligence.[146] Collins, a founding trustee of the Irish abuse victims support group One In Four, had been urging the Vatican to punish bishops who failed to implement Church rules on tracing pedophile priests and protecting children. The United States-based Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) welcomed the appointment but said that the Pope still had to "take strong steps…to protect kids, expose predators, discipline enablers and expose cover-ups."[147] On June 4, 2016, Pope Francis issued an edict on the protection of minors and vulnerable adults, in which he stated that negligence on the part of a bishop can constitute removal from office.[148] Investigations into the conduct of bishops reside within the aegis of four Congregations: the Congregations for Bishops, the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, and the Congregation for Oriental Churches.

In September 2017, Francis acknowledged that the Catholic Church was slow to address the sexual abuse crisis, including its criticized practice of moving priests who had abused children to other parishes and ministries. He also announced the abolition of the Vatican appeals trials for cases where evidence of abuse against minors is proven.[149] A degree of confusion and uncertainty in some quarters of both Church

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[146] E. Povoledo and L. Goldstein, "Pope Creates Tribunal for Bishops in Child Sexual Abuse Cases," *The New York Times*, (June 10, 2015). https://dbproxy.lasalle.edu:6033/docview/171367788/B40C6A5116564859PQ/23?accountid=11999 (Accessed May 23, 2018).

[147] Quoted in S. Scherer, "Eight people named to new panel."

[148] *As A Loving Mother*. (June 4, 2016) https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco_lettera-ap_20160604_come-una-madre-amorevole.html (Accessed May 24, 2018).

[149] S. Pitrelli and S Pulliam Bailey, "Pope Francis acknowledges Catholic Church's bad practices."

and society at large about Francis' tackling clerical CSA again surfaced in early 2018

about the scale and cover-up concerning child sexual abuse by clergy in Chile which

led to the offer of mass resignation of all the Chilean Catholic bishops.[150] The scandal

centered on Rev. Fernando Karadima. In 2011, a Vatican investigation found Kadima

guilty of a series of child sexual abuse that took place throughout the 1970s and '80s.

(The case was never prosecuted under criminal law, and Karadima, 87 years of age,

lives in a nursing home in Chile). A number of critics accused Karadima's protégé,

Bishop Juan Barros, of being complicit in the abuse by covering up for Karadima and

allowing his behavior to go unpunished. The mass resignation appears to be an

acknowledgement that the Chilean Church authorities, that had consistently defended

Barros and maintained his innocence, was accepting responsibility for his

wrongdoing. The collective letter of resignation, which includes Barros, is, arguably,

a volte face for the Vatican. Prior to this time, Francis appeared to dismiss the

accusations against Barros, garnering worldwide criticism for discounting them as

"slander." Francis strongly defended Barros during his January 2018 trip to Chile,

calling the accusations against Barros "calumny." He claimed to have never heard

from victims about Barros, even though he had received a letter in 2015 from one of

Karadima's victims detailing Barros' wrongdoing. Calling the Chilean bishops to

Rome in early May 2018, Francis accused the bishops of downplaying the gravity of

Karadima's crimes, transferring him to other parishes in order to minimize the

scandal. Francis said that the Church had an obligation to "help find the light to

adequately treat an open wound, one which hurts and is complex, and which for a

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[150] T. I. Burton, "Every bishop in Chile just resigned over the child sex abuse scandal," *Vox* (May 18, 2018) https://www.vox.com2018/5/18/17369244/pope-francis-chile-bishops-sex-abuse-resign (Accessed May 27, 2018.

long time hasn't stopped bleeding in the lives of so many people, and as such, in the life of the People of God."[151]

On August 25, 2018, Francis paid a schedule-packed 36-hour pastoral visit to Ireland, to a Catholic community increasingly worn down by rejection and indifference, and to the larger society where child sexual abuse, particularly clerical child sexual abuse, has never been far from the topic of conversation in more recent decades. At the beginning of the Papal Mass at the Phoenix Park in Dublin on Sunday, August 26, Francis quickly addressed the history of abuse within the Catholic Church in Ireland. At various times in his address, he sought forgiveness, having met eight survivors the previous day.[152] He stated, "[W]e ask for forgiveness for the abuses in Ireland, abuses of power, of conscience, of sexual abuse perpetrated by members with roles of responsibility in the Church. In a special way, we ask pardon for all the abuses committed in various types of institutions run by male or female members of religious congregations and by other members of the Church…forgiveness for the times that we as a Church did not show compassion for all kinds of abuse and the search for justice and truth through concrete actions."[153] He went on to stress the "Church's need to acknowledge and remedy, with evangelical honesty and courage, past failures – grave sins – with regard to the protection of children and vulnerable adults."[154]

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[151] Quoted in T.I. Burton, Ibid.

[152] "Some Key Statements of Pope Francis," in *Intercom,* ed. C. Hayden (A Catholic pastoral and liturgical resource of the Irish Catholic Bishop's Conference) (Dublin: Veritas, October 2018), 30

[153] Ibid.

[154] Ibid.

Pope Francis will be evaluated by how much he follows through, because he has again set the bar himself. Pope Francis publically stated that the Church has to "keep moving forward" and committed himself to zero tolerance. People everywhere, most of all victims of abuse, will be watching to see if the pope's deeds match his stirring words."[155] Criticisms that Francis is not doing enough or quickly enough is countered by his defenders, arguing that, for example, he has made strides in holding priests and bishops accountable as witnessed with his removing of bishops from their respective dioceses. Perceived as having a checkered and inconsistent history with regard to clerical CSA perhaps the summoning of the entire Chilean Episcopal Conference to Rome for a meeting in May, 2018, his meeting with the victims of Karadima at the Vatican, and his public acknowledgement of his personal error of judgement represents a corrective pastoral strategy in which Francis has galvanized his determination to address the problem of clerical CSA throughout the Catholic Church.[156] It is also important to note the Global Summit of bishops convened by Pope Francis beginning on February 21, 2019 to consider "concrete and effective measures" to confront what he termed the "evil" of abuse.[157]

Michael Kelly, a respected journalist and editor of *The Irish Catholic,* wrote that the Bishop Barros and Karadima saga represented a "low point in Francis' efforts on the issue of safeguarding," adding that it "wasted huge capital that the Church had built up on demonstrating that it was decisively committed to rooting out the scourge

[155] J. Allen, Jr., *The Francis Miracle: Inside the Transformation of the Pope and the Church* (New York, NY: Time Books, 2015). 184.

[156] M.W. Higgins, "Letter from America: Pope 'bravely' admitting failure responding to Chile sex abuse accusations," *The Irish Catholic* (May 31, 2018), 14; A. Ivereigh, "The Wounded Reformer," The Tablet (November 16, 2019), 6-8

[157] J.J. McElwee, "Francis Opens Vatican Summit with call for 'concrete measures' to fight abuse." (Feb 21, 2019) https://www.ncronline.org/news/accountability/francis-opens-vatican-summit-call-concrete-measures-fight-abuse (Accessed August 28, 2019).

of abuse and cover-up from the Church."[158] In the same editorial, Kelly said that

Francis and the eradication of child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church is currently

an unfinished business, with two central issues needing to be addressed Firstly, child

safeguarding measures are not globally harmonized throughout the Catholic Church.

While "acknowledged to be top notch"[159] in countries like Ireland, Great Britain, and

the United States, policies and procedures, "particularly in developing countries

where there is not the heightened awareness of abuse that is there in Ireland"[160] need

to be established and implemented. Secondly, is the establishment of a "tribunal or

other mechanism to judge bishops who have failed in regard to safeguarding.[161]

However, on May 9th, 2019, Pope Francis promulgated his *Vos estis lux mundi* ('You

are the light of the world').[162] This latest apostolic letter establishes and clarifies

norms and procedures for holding bishops and religious superiors accountable in

matters of the safeguarding of minors as well as abuses carried out against adults with

violence, threats or an abuse of authority. In addition, the sexual abuse of vulnerable

adults, the possession of or distribution of child pornography, and intimidation to

engage in sexual acts and the cover up of such conduct are within the remit of

reporting requirements.[163] This now universal law of mandating all clerics as well as

men and women members of religious congregations, to report to competent

ecclesiastical authorities the abuses of which they become aware, according to

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[158] M. Kelly, "Waiting for Decisive Action On Abuse," *The Irish Catholic* (August 23, 2018), 30.

[159] Ibid.

[160] Ibid.

[161] Ibid.

[162] Apostolic letter (Motu Proprio) by the Supreme Pontiff Francis *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* (You are the light of the world). (May 5, 2019). https://m.vatican/content/francescomobile/en/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio-20190507_vos-estis-lux-mundi.html (Accessed June 6, 2019).

[163] K. Martens, "Pope Francis' new sex abuse rules area revolution for the Catholic Church." *America* (May 10, 2019). https://www.americamagazine.org (Accessed June 6, 2109).

Archbishop Chares Scicluna, adjunct secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine and Faith (CDF) makes "disclosure the main policy of the Church."[164] Procedures had already had been in place with regard to reporting accusations of abuse of minors by clergy, however, a number of features are worthy of mention. First, the new norms address what to do when the accused is a bishop, a cardinal, patriarch or religious superior.[165] It also outlines how accusations against leadership of abuse or conduct must be reported. The new apostolic letter, for the first time, places "compliance with state laws"[166] concerning the abuse of minors in the realm of the Church's universal law. Universal Church law now mandates local churches to respect local civil law requirements. Secondly, the Apostolic letter requires that every diocese create a stable mechanism or system through which people may submit reports of abuse or its cover up. The exact form of the system will be left to the discretion of the individual diocese, but must be established by June, 2020. Thirdly, the new norms establishes the so-called "metropolitan model" for which the investigation of accusations against bishops and their equivalents. Accordingly, the metropolitan archbishop will conduct investigations into suffrage bishops with a mandate from the Holy See. The metropolitan will be required to send reports to the Holy See on the progress of the investigation every 30 days and to complete the investigation within 90 days unless

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[164] C. Glatz, "The days of covering up abuse claims are over, says investigator: Archbishop Charles Scicluna, the Vatican's top abuse investigator, explained the Pope's new norms on child protection and accountability." *The Catholic Times.* (May 9, 2019).

[165] On September 10, 2019, Bishop Michael Hoeppner, of the Diocese of Crookston, Minnesota became the first bishop in the United States to be investigated for allegations that he thwarted police or canonical investigations of clerical sexual misconduct in the diocese of Crookston. The allegations were reported under the procedures set out in Pope Francis' Motu Proprio, *Vos Estis Lux Mundi*. Other U.S bishops face charges of misconduct in office, including Bishop Richard Malone of the diocese of Buffalo, and retired bishop of Wyoming, Joseph Hart. "Vatican Authorizes Vos Estis investigation into Minnesota bishop Hoeppner." *Catholic News Agency* (CNA) (September 10, 2019). https://catholicnewsagency.com/news/vatican-authorizes-vos-estis-investigation-into-minnseota-bishop-hoeppner-58244 (Accessed October 10, 2019).

[166] Quoted in abid.

granted an extension. At the conclusion of the investigation, the results are sent to the competent Vatican dicastery, which will then apply the applicable penalty according to existing canon law. Fourthly, the metropolitan archbishop may use the assistance of qualified lay people in carrying out the investigations. [167] However, any such investigation is ultimately the responsibility of the metropolitan archbishop. At this juncture, it is important to note that Pope Francis' handling of clerical sexual abusers, arguably, gained some further gravitas, when, on 17 December 2019, in a new Instruction titled *Sulla riservatezza della cause* ("On the confidentiality of Legal Proceedings"), and to take effect from I January 2020, abolished the 'pontifical secret,' therefore abolishing the Catholic church's Practice of imposing strict rules of confidentiality in the Vatican's legal proceedings in cases concerning allegations of clerical child sexual abuse. Anyone who files a report, alleges abuse, or who serves as a witness to abuse will no longer be bound by the obligation of silence with regard to such cases. The instruction specifies that information regarding clerical child sexual abuse will be treated with a lower level of confidentiality established by Canon Law, it will not impede due process according to civil laws which may include the obligation to report, or to respond to enforced requests of civil judicial authorities.[168] It remains to be seen what impact it will have. However, already, Anne Barret Doyle, the co-director of the U.S. based clergy abuse watchdog group BishopAccountability.org referred to the dropping of the pontifical secret as "an overdue and desperately needed step," and adds that, hopefully, the change is a "first

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[167] T. Busch, "New Papal sex abuse policy will restore trust." National Catholic Reporter (May 30, 2019). https://www.ncronline.org/news.accountability/new-papal-sex-abuse-policy-will-help-restore-trust (Accessed June 6, 2019).

[168] J. J. McElwee, "Francis abolishes pontifical secret in clergy abuse cases, in long sought reform," National Catholic Reporter (17 December, 2019), https://www.ncronline.org/news/accountability/francis-abolishes-pontifical-secret-clergy-abuse-cases-long-sought-reform. (Accessed January 2020).

step toward decreasing the anti-victim bias of canon law – a system skewed towards protecting the abuser and saving his priesthood."[169]

Arguably, Rome's traditional pattern of resistance to acknowledge any responsibility for the mishandling of clerical CSA cases might be based on possible legal reasons. Winding their way through the United States' Court system are two cases in particular, O'Bryan v. Holy See[170] and Doe v. Holy See[171], both of which challenged for the first time 172 Rome and its leadership's claim of sovereign immunity in cases of clerical child sexual abuse. [173] At the core of the legal challenge is to determine whether an exception to immunity can be established if it is instituted that a particular priest who is abusive is seen as an agent of the Vatican.[174] Doe raises questions about the Vatican's financial liability in clerical abuse cases, and its monetary obligations as the employer of clerics who sexually abuse children. O'Bryan brought a legal suit for financial damages against the Holy See and also petitioned the

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[169] Vatican News, "The Pope abolishes the pontifical secret in cases of sexual abuse," (19 December 2019), https://vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2019-12/pope-abolishes-pontifical-secret-sexual-abuse-clergy.html (Accessed January 2, 2020).

[170] O'Bryan v. Holy See, No. 07-5263 (US Ct. App. 6th Cir. Nov. 24, 2008).

[171] Doe v. Holy See, No. 06-35563 and 06-35587 (US Ct. App. 9th Cir. 2009).

[172] An earlier case had been brought in 2005 by a plaintiff, *Doe*, in the US District Court for the Southern District of Texas. In *Doe v. Roman Catholic Diocese of Galveston-Houston*, however, the judge ruled that the Pope enjoys "head of state immunity" and dismissed the case.

[173] For a fuller discussion of the clash between civil and canon law in the United States, see Jo Renee Formicola, "The Vatican, the American Bishops, and the Church-State Ramifications of Clerical Sexual Abuse," *Journal of Church and State* 46 (Summer 2004): 479-503; similarly, in an article by the previously-mentioned author, the argument is made that, considered in aggregate, CSA by clerics has led to broader legal and civil challenges – consequences that have essentially damaged Catholic Church-State relations almost beyond repair. It contends that in the US. Church-State context, civil authorities have effectively recalibrated their relationship with the Catholic Church. It attempts to show how civil power has trumped religious authority and autonomy by analysing the results of challenges to civil law; the management and punishment of perpetrator priests found guilty of CSA; and, in the disposition of Catholic diocesan assets in financial settlements with clerical sexual abuse victims. See Jo Renee Formicola, "Recalibrating U.S. Catholic Church-State Relations: The Effects of Clerical Sexual Abuse," *Journal of Church and State* 58, no.2 (January, 2015): 307-330.

[174] D. Smyth, "Vatican's right to immunity being tested." *Irish Times*. (December 19, 2009).

court for the right to dispose (interview under oath) leading church personnel, including the Pope, about the handling of clerical sex abuse cases.[175] However, this does not to detract from the habitually poor handling of clerical child sexual abuse throughout the system of church governance as a whole.

The Vatican and Local Bishops

The relationship between the Vatican and local bishops alludes to the distinction between the Vatican as Church and the Holy See as a sovereign state. The Vatican has pleaded sovereign immunity with respect to being sued in the courts in different parts of the World, of which mention has already been made. However, some of the current legal challenges in the United States, for example, are based on attempts to establish the authority of the Vatican over national churches and to prove that priests and bishops, whom it appoints, are actually agents in a legal sense.[176] T.P. Doyle contends that the mishandling of abuse cases goes to the very heart of the governmental system of the Catholic Church.[177] He goes on to state that the response of the hierarchy has been one of "fear, secrecy and arrogance."[178] According to Doyle, clericalism in the Roman Catholic Church as a whole, an increasing focus of attention in the secular and religious media throughout the world, is part of the inadequate response of the hierarchy to clerical CSA, in which the clergy see themselves not only as set apart but also as set above.[179] At the same time, evidence seems to suggest that the bishops

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[175] Jo Renee Formicola, "Catholic Clerical Sexual Abuse: Effects on Vatican Sovereignty and Papal Power," *Journal of Church and State* 53, no. 4 (June 10, 2011).

[176] Ibid.

[177] Doyle, "Canon law and the clergy sex abuse crisis," 30.

[178] Ibid.

[179] Ibid, 34.

operated in one of the worst crises facing the Catholic Church within a highly

centralized system without leadership on one of the important and damaging moral

issues to face the Catholic Church for many years. The question remains as to why

bishops, in just about all cases, did not speak out about clerical CSA, given their

propensity to do so in other pastoral matters pertinent to their individual dioceses.

Gene Robinson, an Australian bishop who himself has faced the wrath of the Vatican

in speaking out on the issue, and other concerns in the Church, has stated, "[T]his is

not an easy question to answer. I can only say that it is a combination of loyalty, love

and fear."[180] Robinson himself personifies the ethical and moral issues in the event of

individual and systemic differences in the Catholic Church. Here, concerning the

relationship of local bishops and the Vatican, it is worth noting that, compounding the

complexity of the problem of dealing with clerical child sexual abuse has been the

distinction made between it being seen as a 'sin' and or a crime. For example, the then

Pope John II viewed clerical child sexual abuse through the religious lens of sin, a

delicta graviora. He saw it as the Church's responsibility to stress solidarity and

assistance to victims, to defend celibacy, to promote moral teaching about sexual

abuse, to recognize the "power of conversion," and the ability of the sinner to turn

back to God.[181] Consequently, on the basis of the meeting of the US Cardinals with

him in 2002 the bishops of the USCCB found themselves in a quandary of sorts: to

accede primarily to the pope's theological views and policies with regard to sexual

abuse; to work within the civil law in the United States; or to try to create a

compromise position that could reconcile their responsibilities to both Church and the

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[180] G. Robinson, *Confronting Power and Sex in the Church: Reclaiming the Spirit of Jesus* (Australia, John Garratt Publishing, 2007), 126.

[181] "Final Communique of the Meeting between the Cardinals of the United States and the Pope." (14 April, 2002). http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/cardinal_20020414.final_communique.en.html (Accessed on 27 August 2019).

State. Their confusion was aptly summed up by the then-Chair of the USCCB, Bishop Gregory Wilton, who left Rome upbeat, but still confused, when he told the press, "the Pope gets it" but that the Church "doesn't do crime. It does sin."[182]

With regard to clericalism, in which priests, and male members of religious congregations are set apart and set above, and recognized to have been featured in many reports concerning child sexual abuse, Eamon Conway, an Irish theologian, holds that one's interpretation of the theology of priesthood can support or resist the privileged of the priest over the laity.[183] He contends that when priests and bishops adopt a model of priesthood as *repraesentatio Christi* (representative of Christ), which originated with the Council of Trent, the differences between priests and laity are amplified. In contrast, when priests and bishops adopt a model of priesthood as *repraesentatio ecclesiae* (representative of the Church as People of God), which developed during the Second Vatican Council, the communion of the priest and the people is what takes precedence. In this latter model of priesthood, the priest and bishop are in the service of the people and not of the institution. However, with the traditionally accepted means of salvation for Catholics administered and controlled by clerics, the priest has been seen by many as being set apart and above from the laity, thus, intentionally or not, reinforcing the problem of clericalism.[184] The difference between the two already-mentioned theologies of the priesthood not only emphasize a different ecclesiology, an understanding of what it means 'to be church,' but it also reflects how power, past and present, is exercised at the service of the clergy or at the

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[182] P. Rice, "Gregory Hails Pope's Response to US Scandal. 'He gets it' " *St. Louis Post-Despatch* (28 April, 2002): B1.

[183] Eamon Conway, "Operative theologies of Priesthood: Have they contributed to child sexual abuse," in *The Structural Betrayal of Trust*, eds. R. Ammicht-Quinn, H. Haker, and M. Junker-Kenny (London: Concilium, 2004), 75.

[184] Keenan, 223.

service of the laity. I would suggest that, whichever the response, there are implications for the handling of clerical CSA – the contribution of the laity in the matter, the contribution of the human sciences, the locus of decision-making from among the Church of the People of God or the Church as bishops and clergy, to name but a few.

Joan Chittester, a Benedictine nun, has contended that a central issue which needs to be faced in the handling of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church, and the Catholic bishops' handling of sexual abuse is the culture of obedience. Notwithstanding the problems of sexual repression and the institutional face-saving in regards to the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church, she states that "the dilemma that really threatens the future of the Church is a distorted notion of the vow of obedience and the tension it creates between loyalty to the Gospel and loyalty to the institution."[185] The reluctance to report incidences of clerical CSA by priests and bishops alike, for Chittester, is due to a 'blind obedience,' theologized as the ultimate goal to holiness, which is blind itself. It blinds a person to the "insights and foresight and moral obedience of anyone other than an authority figure."[186] It makes priests, members of religious congregations, and bishops beholden to laws of the manmade human institution and the individuals who occupy positions of power, rather than to the law of God. For the Catholic community at large, to be able to presume that Church leaders are imbued with a strong conscience and a commitment to public welfare, the Catholic Church needs to address its theology of obedience, so that "those of a good

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[185] J. Chittester, "Divided loyalties: an incredible situation," National Catholic Reporter (March 17, 2010) http://ncronline/ (Accessed May 12, 2018).

[186] Ibid.

heart can become real moral leaders rather than simply agents of the institution."[187]
With divided loyalties between canon law, civil law and moral law concerning the
handling of clerical CSA, ironically Church leaders may well become a threat to the
Church community itself.

Clerical Child Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church: Toward an Understanding

Prior to attempting an outline of some possible factors involved in the committal of
clerical CSA offenses, it is perhaps helpful to note the suggestion that clerical CSA
"is not the unusual behavior of a few 'odd' individuals or an expression of
overwhelming biological urge; rather it is the product of the social world and the
organizational structure in which these men (*clerics* - my italics) live and work."[188]
Most of those individuals who sexually harm others are male, yet it seems that many
therapeutic programs for sexual offenders provide for relatively little attention to
issues of gender.[189] It is contended that, in a highly gendered human organization like
the Catholic church, gender, power and organizational structure are critical when
considering the phenomenon of clerical CSA.[190] As alluded to earlier, more recent
years have witnessed an expansion of studies on men and masculinities, which has
given rise to a number of developments in our understanding of men. For example,
there is a move away, from a notion of singular masculinity that is fixed and
biologically and psychologically determined, to a more differentiated concept of

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[187] Ibid.

[188] M. Cowburn, C.Wilson, and P. Loewenstein, *Changing Men: A Practice Guide in Working with Adult Male Sex Offenders* (Nottingham: Nottingham Probation Service, 1992), 281-282.

[189] M. Cowburn, "Invisible men: Social reactions to male sexual coercion – bringing men and masculinities into community safety and public policy," *Critical Social Policy* 30, no. 2 (2010), 229.

[190] Keenan, 232.

masculinities in the plural.[191] By thinking that there is not just one model of manhood in any society, that there are multiple masculinities,[192] there is more opportunity to consider, not only men's ways of relating to women, but also in men's relationships with other men and men's connectedness through gender with other social considerations including age, class, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, and sexual orientation. By thinking in terms of multiple masculinities, we may then think about power relations, not only between men and women, but between men. The problem is that, with multiple masculinities, there is one form which is hegemonic, and others become subordinated. Hegemonic masculinity shapes gender practices around men's expectations of how men should behave.[193] In addition, the possibility of models of admired masculinities that do not correspond closely to the lives of actual men, creating contradictions, exists.[194] The theory suggests that hegemonic masculinity is the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic type in a given pattern of gender relations.[195] Therefore, it can be suggested that not all masculinities are equal and that there are hierarchies of social power among men. Arguably, this has implications in trying to work toward an understanding of Clerical CSA. The following factors are based on the work of Irish academic[196] Dr. Marie Keenan in her work with clergy who perpetrated child sexual abuse.

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[191] J. Hearn, "Reflecting on men and social policy: Contemporary critical debates and implications for social policy," *Critical Social Policy* 30, no. 2 (2010), 165-188.

[192] R.W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 76-78.

[193] Ibid, 77.

[194] R.W. Connell and J.W. Messerschmidt, 838.

[195] R.W. Connell, 76.

[196] Keenan, 234-243.

The Theology of Clerical Sexuality

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church, every sexual thought, word, desire, and action outside of marriage is morally sinful.[197] Not only is homosexuality regarded as dysfunctional[198] but chastity and purity encourage an "apprenticeship in self-mastery."[199] Arguably, the outcome - the control of sexual desire and sexual activity to the detriment of some clergy – has led to bifurcated, unhealthy, and unhappy lives where moral superiority of consecrated, vowed celibate life is seen as the ultimate testimony of devotion to God. For some men, the loss of the opportunity to engage in sexual relations and have a family many times has shown itself to be problematic, a heavy burden, taking its toll on the individual's mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical health. Non-optional celibacy is spiritualized as "gift" or "sacrifice", with no allusion to the need or importance of the integration of a sense of "loss" or "grief." Frawley-O'Dea contends that clerical men and/or vowed male members of religious congregations may not have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to mourn the

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[197] *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Dublin: Veritas Publications, 1994), 2331-2364; Here, a brief description of the history and structure of the *Catechism* (hereafter, CCC) is appropriate. Its origin find its roots in the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) convened by Pope (later, Saint) John XXIII. The purpose of the Council was to highlight, and represent the Church's apostolic and pastoral mission for the modern era. In this regard, its principal focus was to protect and better present its deposit of Christian doctrine in a more meaningful manner to "the Christian faithful and to all people of good will." *CCC*, 2. In celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the close of the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul II convened an extraordinary assembly of the Synod of Bishops on 25 January, 1985. Consequently, many of the Synod Fathers sought a catechism or compendium of all Catholic doctrines concerning faith and morals to serve as a 'reference' text, and "suited to the present life of Christians," a point alluded to in the Final Report of the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops, 7 December, 1985. *Enchiridion Vaticanum*, vol. 9, II B a, n. 4: p. 1758, n. 1797. In 1986, a commission consisting of twelve Cardinals and Bishops chaired by the then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (Later to become Pope Benedict XVI), and aided by an editorial committee of 7 Bishops, was established to prepare a draft of the catechism requested by the Synod Fathers. Nine drafts later over a six-year period, the Catechism of the Catholic Church was approved on 25 June, 1992 by Pope John Paul II. A synthesis of this Catechism was approved by Pope Benedict XVI on 28 June, 2005. And published, C*ompendium: Catechism of the Catholic Church,* English Translation (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticano, 2006).

[198] Ibid, 2357-2359.

[199] 2337-2356.

loss of sexual intimacy and of a potential family and to adapt and redirect their generativity into productive, healthy lives.[200] "A theology of sacrifice eclipses all human considerations."[201] The inability to live the celibate life is often understood as personal failure and unworthiness, including by those who become child sexual abusers. For some and not others, in the world of celibate clergy and/or vowed male members of religious congregations, the means to, and the relational support to work toward psychosexual and emotional maturity were neither offered nor provided in order to live emotionally healthy personal and sexual lives. Keenan states, "[T]he clerical perpetrators who participated in…research could not openly acknowledge the reality of their sexual lives and losses, even long before they had begun to abuse minors. Nor could they deal appropriately with the losses clerical life would bring."[202] Typically, celibate clerical culture has involved a tacitly accepted silence on sexuality, intimacy, loss and grief. For some, compensation has been sought in unhealthy behaviors such as alcohol abuse, substance addiction, other forms of addiction, and illicit sexual relationships with other adults.

Arguably, the fundamental issue needing address including for clerics who have committed child sexual abuse is the theology of priesthood that emphasizes consecrated celibacy and purity with a consequent negative view of the body, and sexual and erotic desires. Such a theology contributes to self-rejection, shame, guilt and personal failure. In addition, theologies of self-mortification and sacrifice compounded the imposed and developed longstanding, historical split between matter

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[200] M.G. Frawley-O'Dea, "Psychosocial anatomy of the Catholic sexual abuse scandal," *Studies in Gender and Sexuality* 5, no. 2 (2004): 132.

[201] Keenan, 234.

[202] Ibid, 235.

and spirit. Here, the body is disavowed and the spirit is idealized in celibate clerical culture. This split is oftentimes viewed as the model of perfection of clerical male sanctity.[203] The disregard for the embodied experiences of both ordained and/or non-ordained male members of religious congregations became, in time, institutionalized at the expense of the health of so many consecrated celibates, past and present.

Power and Powerlessness

The dichotomy between the Church structures that kept ordained clergy ordained male members of religious congregations in their allocated place of inherent powerlessness in the church as a system at the same time ensured that they were still set apart from the laity. Given the theology of priesthood, ordination set clerics apart as elite, and superior to others, that is clericalism.[204] With ordination, the cleric is vested with powers for the priest alone – the administration of the sacraments, to change people's lives for the better.[205] What is considered the sacred role of the ordained cleric and the consecrated, vowed celibate, ordained members of religious

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[203] D. Ranson, "The climate of sexual abuse," The Furrow 53, no. 7 (2002), 391; Much has been written in the history of the Christian tradition concerning the split, the dualism of "matter" and "spirit." Among the more succinct articles I discovered on this topic was H. Zandman, "Historical tension between the holistic and dualistic view of man in the church*," In Die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi* 46, no. 1 (July 2012); http://dx.doi/10.4102/ids.v46i1.40 (Accessed May 20, 2018). Zandman contends that throughout the history of the Christian church, there has been a struggle in its efforts to maintain a holistic view of humankind. The main antagonist, he argues, has been and continues to be, a dichotomous, dualistic view of humankind, the view that the body is inferior, and the soul or mind is superior, but temporarily in the body. Such a view had been thoroughly developed by the Greek philosophers, notably Plato, and has affected the Church's understanding of what it means to be an human in an holistic way going right back to scriptural times up to the present. For example, St. Paul remonstrated with the Christians gathered at Corinth (1Cor 15) as they had been influenced by Greek philosophy and had become convinced of the inferiority of the body. The article concludes that the Church can only be the conscience of the nations, of humankind (salt of the earth, light on a lampstand – Mt 5: 13-14) with the right view of humankind, as an holistic and image bearer of God

[204] The topic of clericalism and the pastoral problems it poses is treated very well, from the perspectives of Church structure, power, the laity, and ministry in C. Gibson, *Relational Ministry: Integrating Ministry and Psychotherapy* (Bern, Germany: Peter Lang, 2016), 32-33, 135-151.

[205] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1544-1568.

conregations , as people set apart and called by God for their role, has been fostered

and sustained by the Catholic tradition and clericalism for many centuries, not least

because of their celibate commitment.[206] On the one hand, clerics occupy positions of

stratified power(lessness) in the church as system, while they occupy considerable

power and influence among the laity. They are caught in a very unhealthy and

confusing place. The traditional theology of the priesthood in the Catholic Church

represents not just a change of job description with more responsibilities but also an

ontological change in the person being ordained. The priest is not only an instrument

of God, not only a minister of the sacraments; he is essentially changed at the level of

his very being. He acts in *Persona Christi*, not as a mere instrument of Christ's work

but rather as Christ's real image and representative. The priest is ontologically

changed. This change was summed up on an Australian radio program by Bishop

Porteous when reading an extract from a book he wrote on priesthood. On the show,

he said:

> A man once ordained is ontologically changed. He is a priest. Something
> mysterious happens. It is an action of grace, and something quite real…The
> priesthood is not just the deputing of an individual to take on a particular role.
> It is more than a function; it is a radical reorienting of the whole reality of the
> person. He is changed at the level of his being…Ordination is not just the
> power to exercise the priestly office in the Church; it is such a transformation
> of the person that a distinctly priestly character can be identified in him.[207]

Therefore, by virtue of ordination, both clerics and lay alike, with the former set

apart and above the latter, a mutually reinforced model of Church existed. Ordination

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[206] T.P. Doyle, "Roman Catholic clericalism, religious duress and clergy abuse," *Pastoral Psychology* 51 (2003), 209.

[207] ABC National Radio, Australia. *Background Briefing*. Broadcast on March 7, 2010. http://abc.net.au/rn/backgroundbriefing/

to the priesthood also reinforced, in confusing and conflictual fashion, the sense of powerlessness among clerics in the hierarchical arrangement of Church structures and at the same time, reinforced the power among lay people they automatically received upon ordination.[208] This ontological understanding of priesthood is based on a theology of Church that is dualistic: the church of the ordained which is considered superior and more 'holy' than the church of the laity. It affirms a model of Church that is autocratic and clericalist as opposed to the Church as the People of God bestowing equality on all members by virtue of baptism. Again, the cleric is 'caught between a rock and a hard place.' In the public domain, traditionally, the priest – and members of religious congregations in Ireland – was given automatic respect. By virtue of ordination, he occupied a role of sacramental, public and social power. At the same time, the trappings of dominant power in the public domain were sometimes accompanied by personal powerlessness, lack of autonomy, loneliness and frustration in their private lives. Facilitated by the traditional theology of obedience, the space between their public and private lives, arguably, gave rise to the very conditions that enabled clerical CSA to occur. Research suggests that clerics who sexually abused children tended to display submissiveness particularly towards superiors, which helped diminish their own sense of personal authority and autonomy, overshadowing much of their conscious awareness of their power, both as adult men and in their pastoral ministry.[209] Within a stratified, hierarchical systemic structure, and the emphasis on obedience to superiors, power was seen as operating in an upward trajectory without much cognizance being given to the power clerics exercised among

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[208] M.G. Frawley-O'Dea, 130.

[209] Keenan, 237.

the laity, notwithstanding the obligations and boundaries of such power.[210] Strange as it may seem for the vast majority of adults to comprehend, clerical perpetrators did not countenance enough the power imbalances that were involved in their "relationships" and "friendships" with children and young people. The narratives of clerical perpetrators of child sexual abuse indicate that; children and young people were seen as "friends" and "equals." The use of power *over* the victims in order to feel "human" or masculine or powerful does not seem to be the case; in the personal sphere, the clerics saw the victims as equal to them, capable of saying "yes" or "no" to their advances; it was their inappropriate understanding of "equality," their blindness to power in the sexual and emotional sphere - their emotional and sexual immaturity – and their lack of understanding of childhood vulnerability and sexuality that was part of their problem.[211] It is suggested that the principle preoccupation was one of personal and individualized inner conflict and distress, mainly related to celibacy, sexuality and inner emotional turmoil. In addition, oftentimes, according to research, clerics who have abused children do not feel powerful despite the power positions ascribed to them by virtue of their ordination and pastoral roles.[212] Therefore, at the heart of clerical CSA in the Catholic Church is a striking paradox. Feelings of private powerlessness eclipsed an awareness of the context of power from within which they operated, both as adult males and as pastoral ministers fomenting a painful series of circumstances that resulted in clerical CSA. Somewhere within the continuum between powerlessness and power, rather than power *per se,* there seems to be contributing factors to clerical sexual offending of children.

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[210] E. Hill, ""Obedience, authority and responsibility," *Doctrine and Life* 47, no. 3 (1997): 155-159.

[211] Keenan, 238.

[212] Ibid.

While no excuses can be made for their sexual offending, in attempting to explain their actions at the level of power…their experiences of powerlessness in the private sphere combined with their idea of power as accountability upwards, were devoid of facilitated introspection, as they were left unsupervised, unsupported and unchallenged to minister in a site of unregulated power. It is in this dynamic of power/powerlessness that is implicated in their sexual offending.[213]

The Clerical Role and Personal Identity

Keenan suggests that the participating clerical sexual offenders in her research conducted in the context of the Irish Catholic Church describe their lives as having no boundaries between their clerical, pastoral identity and their own lives as human beings.[214] There was no actual or functional difference between their ministry and their personal lives. Such over-identification with the clerical role at the expense of living a mentally, emotionally and physically healthy lifestyle with appropriate boundaries was indicative of problems to come. Oftentimes, clerics, in hindsight, viewed themselves as having identified themselves primarily as priest or ordained male member of a religious congregation. Ministry took precedence over everything, including their health. In their daily life, with its unregulated routine, attempting to be good clerics, they felt compelled, or perhaps conditioned, to put aside their own emotional, sexual and physical needs. Ultimately, poor boundaries helped pave the way for very serious and deleterious consequences in their own lives and of others. For many priests, not only those who sexually abuse children, over-identification with their pastoral role poses a big problem. For some it has eventually led to compromise

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[213] Ibid.

[214] Ibid, 239.

integrity and a split between the public persona and their private reality. It can also

give rise to institutional hypocrisy in which one set of behaviors is proclaimed in

public while another is practiced in private – living a double life. As Keenan notes,

"[T]he space between the twin tracks of such double lives holds the potential for

alcoholism, alienation, depression, despair, and inappropriate sexual acting out."[215]

Good Moral Judgement

H. Arendt noted that the precondition for the kind of judgement that is necessary to

prevent wrongdoing is not a highly developed intellect or sophistication in matters of

morality, but rather a disposition to live with others and explicitly with oneself, in

which one can engage in an ongoing dialogue with oneself, particularly with regard to

the consequences of one's action on others.[216] Good judgement requires perspective

on how one's actions impact the other person.[217] Such judgement is based on personal

awareness, real and honest dialogue with others and creating those spaces to face

one's own life with openness and honesty, as opposed to making judgments solely on

law and orthodoxy (in the case of clerics, members of religious congregations, and

laity). Given its relative absence in Ireland, research among clerical child sexual

abusers has shown that in matters of morality, including sexual morality, moral

judgements were made according to a legalistic-orthodox approach,[218] one that is

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[215] Ibid, 240.

[216] H. Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgement* (New York: Schocken Books, 2003), 44.

[217] Ibid, 189. Good judgement is about being specific and personal, that is, examining and reflecting upon whatever comes to pass; "thinking in specifics" regarding the particulars of life situations; and, the practice of thinking of others "in whose place" one must think and anticipate.

[218] T. Inglis Moral Monopoly, 22; legalistic-orthodox behavior is based on adherence to stable, systematic, consistent doctrines as outlined by the Church. Presented in the form of abstract principles, such doctrines are generally translated into specific rules and regulations. Obedience to the law is seen as the way to win God's favor, and any infraction of the Church's doctrine constitutes a sin. Sin is about rule-breaking as opposed to how it intrudes upon and undermines being in

externally determined based on rules and regulations rather than internally constituted, based on an individually principled ethic. Such a legalistic understanding of morality was devoid of a relational ethic. Breaches of Church law constituted sin. For participants in the research, the focus was on the sex "act" and not on the child, the person.[219] Absent from the participants' clerical formation was an approach to morality, conscience, and ethics in which moral judgement could be based on reasoned debate, insight from the psychological sciences, personal reflection, emotional expression, empathy and a relational capacity that would encourage the capacity to put oneself in another person's shoes. The participants had learned a morality – and learned well – that was based on moral absolutes and a theoretical understanding of morality. Morality was rule-led and rule-determined. The research suggests that while the participants were well acquainted with Church rules and regulations, including issues relating to sexuality, they did not have the required emotional and relational ability or skills to enable them to make good judgements when knowledge of the moral absolutes of Catholic moral thought did not provide them with answers to the complexities of everyday human life when ordained. Knowledge of moral absolutes was insufficient in itself to enable good moral judgement. Moral rule-bending was commonplace in the participants' agenda to pursue their own purposes. Moral theology was more concerned with possessing a set of learned rules applied to all situations as opposed to learning, living, and acting according to one's conscience.

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relationship with others and God. This approach to behavior is associated with an absolute conviction that the rules and regulations of the Church are divinely ordained and universally binding.

[219] Keenan, 240-242.

Arguably, a formation structure devoid of personal awareness, personal reflection, an individual principled ethic and a critical moral theology was inadequate in preparing clerical child sexual abusers – clerics in general – for the level of interpersonal and human engagement that life after ordination would demand and for the complex moral judgements that they ultimately would be called upon to make in the course of their ministry.

Loneliness and Isolation

Past and present, and perhaps compounded in more recent decades with the enormous decline in entrants to seminaries and houses of formation, particularly in the Western Hemisphere, loneliness and isolation are phenomena increasingly experienced by clerics. The fraternal spirit among clergy often spoken about in times past and present is not always, in fact, a reality. On the one hand, there is social loneliness which sometimes is a result of being moved from place to place with the accompanying dynamics of moving away from friendships made, and the task of creating new ones. This task can be difficult depending on one's personality – for example, being an introvert or an extrovert. Social loneliness can also be influenced by the cleric's relationship with those among whom he ministers. However, on the other hand, emotional loneliness and isolation is more searing. Typically, seminaries and formation houses, particularly in times past, focused more on academics and the performative elements of priesthood and religious life at the expense of encouraging open, honest relationships, and self-care. Consequently, generations of clerics and ordained members of religious congregations were left devoid of the skills to develop appropriate sexual and emotional health within a celibate vocation. Upon ordination and/or religious profession, generations of clerics and non-ordained male members of

religious congregations found themselves in pastoral appointments, with little or no support structures and without the necessary pastoral, sexual, or psychological maturity required for working with people, including the young and the vulnerable. For some clerics and members of religious congregations at least, not just those who have sexually abused children, it would have been only a matter of time when the need for intimacy, touch, acknowledgement, love, and emotional balm would emerge and be acted upon. While such activity, particularly with children, is inappropriate and unacceptable, with clerics' sexual and relational desires and needs unrecognized, unarticulated, and ignored for so long, for some clerics it was only a matter of time before they crossed boundaries with children and young people.

Clerical Child Sexual Abuse and Celibate Masculinity

As alluded to earlier, R.W. Connell contends that there is more than one form of masculinity and when one form takes the hegemonic or dominant position, others become subordinated. This is referred to as the gender of masculinities.[220] In the gender order he suggested, today, clerical masculinity or celibate masculinity could be suggested to occupy the marginalized position relative to other masculinities in the dominant hierarchy of masculinities. In his gender order, heterosexual and sexually active masculinity occupies the hegemonic or dominant position followed by the subordinate heterosexual and sexually inactive homosexual masculinity, and celibate masculinity. This gender order may be used to make some inferences about the subgroup, clerical masculinity, of embodying and of "doing" clerical life, about conceptualizing a hierarchy of clerical masculinities. It is not meant to be viewed as a

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[220] R.W. Connell, "Growing up masculine," 76-78.

schema consisting of absolute types but rather a means to illustrate a broad range of features that help to conceptualize very complex phenomena. Based on research, Keenan contends that "one form of clerical masculinity is more likely than others in the hierarchy of clerical masculinities to give rise to the sexual abuse of minors. This form of clerical masculinity, 'Perfect Celibate Clerical Masculinity,' is in the idealized and hegemonic position and is supported in clerical culture and seminary training."[221]

In the hegemonic position and promoted by the Catholic Church as the "ideal" type is Perfect Clerical Masculinity. This version of clerical masculinity views perfection as the goal and perfect consecrated celibacy as the norm. Human transgressions and failure to achieve perfection are seen as personal failures or sinful weakness. Keenan names other versions of clerical masculinity:[222] Here, Compassionate Celibate Clerical Masculinity and Incongruous Celibate Clerical Masculinity are less inclined to hold perfection as the norm and are therefore less condemnatory and more understanding of individuals involved. In Keenan's view, based on her conceptualization, these latter models of clerical life and religious brotherhood do not lead to criminal behavior, even if the practices in the intimate and sexual sphere often cross code boundaries of clerical and religious life. She argues that models of clerical life and clerical identity based on Perfect Celibate Clerical Masculinity produce the pool of clergy out of which the clerical child sexual abusers emerge.

Compassionate Celibate Clerical Masculinity describes those clerics who experience themselves as emotional and sexual, as well as spiritual, beings. They view

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[221] Keenan, 243-247.

[222] Ibid, 244.

the emotional, sexual and spiritual elements of their lives as integral to their maleness, notwithstanding the issues they experience in the face of problems with living a celibate commitment. In seeking out emotional and sometimes sexual relationships with other adults, women or men, and although they experience guilt and conflict, they are able to forgive themselves for their transgressions in breach of Church discipline without shame or severe detriment to their self-esteem and self-respect. Incongruous Celibate Clerical Masculinity describes those clerics who experience no guilt at all or shame in their pursuit of sexual relationships. These men are overtly compliant but covertly resistant to Church discipline. They live their lives in silent transgression.

Perfect Celibate Clerical Masculinity

With this form of clerical masculinity,[223] the cleric or religious brother identifies primarily with their role as priest or male member of a religious congregation. The

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[223] I refer here to the work of D. M. Schnarch, *Constructing the Sexual Crucible: An Integration of Sexual and Marital Therapy*. (New York: Norton, 1991): 549-595. Arguably, the dichotomy between role identity and personal identity as an enfleshed sexual human being is based on a centuries-long schism between spirituality and human sexuality much to the spiritual and psychosexual detriment and development of some believing Christians including, at least, some Catholic priests and religious men and women. Historically, this can be traced back to St. Augustine in the fourth century, who could be considered the architect of an unbalanced and unhealthy sexual-sexual credo. Within ancient Judaism, sexual asceticism was never seen as a religious value. Sexual intercourse was seen as a religious duty and a blessing, valued for the joy and pleasure of it even when procreation was impossible. For the sake of contrast, abstinence was superior even when procreation in marriage was possible in later Christian theology. Schnarch, for example, notes that "Christian medieval moralists argued that the Lord absents himself during copulation" (p. 563). He goes on to add that the "distortion of Hebraic sexual ethics and an institutionalization of a pathogenic dualism (between sexuality and spirituality) has existed until the present time" shaping the course of Western civilization (p. 454). With the spread of Christianity, the Hebraic positive attitude about human sexuality and sexual activity was rejected in favor of a negative attitude, influenced by the Greek philosophies of stoicism and Gnosticism which renounced sexual passion and erotic pleasure. With the exception of procreation, sex was considered a sin; joy and pleasure in sex, even within marriage, were seen as antithetical to God's will. The puritanical elements in Christian thought – the focus on the proper relationship between the mind/soul and body - featured prominently in St. Augustine. He perceived humans, and human sexuality to be base and primitive in nature; it was only the unique capacity of the "will" that made men and women superior to "unnatural" animals. Thus, "to be fully human and spiritual was to be at war with oneself (one's sexual impulses)" (p.568). There existed no understanding or appreciation of a holistic integration of spirituality and sexuality. Both were

individual is first and foremost a priest or brother, and secondly, a man. At this level

of the hierarchy of clerical masculinities, masculinity is based on purity and chastity.

Sex and sexual expression are viewed as "acts" and the list of sexual sins is based on

lists of rules and regulations regarding the sex "acts." Sex and sexual desire are seen

as less relevant as they are for other individuals. In this category, women and girls are

seen as a threat to the celibate commitment, as is intimacy with men, particularly

because of underlying church policy on homosexuality. While sometimes experienced

as wearying and burdensome, clergy and religious brothers in this category are seen as

set apart and above the non-ordained and the non-professed, the laity at large.

However, it is also seen to confer power and prestige in society. Based on research

among clerical perpetrators in the Irish context who have attempted to live according

to the norms of Perfect Celibate Clerical Masculinity, a number of themes can be

identified.[224] Members who occupy this category generally believe in self-denial and

self-abasement, and the cleric's personal happiness is not seen as important.

Fulfillment is thought to come from solely doing God's work. While the members of

this category know they are doing wrong in abusing children, they believe children

will not be "harmed" by sexual acts, or at least not too much, unless the "acts" are

especially "intrusive." Such men also have lists of behaviors where they draw the line

for sexual intrusions, typically at touching.

The cleric who personifies the Perfect Celibate Clerical Masculinity subgroup

avoids and denies sexuality and sexual desires; tries to become "holy" and detached";

avoids relationships with women and friendships with men. Such men have few close

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considered to be mutually exclusive. In time, Roman Catholicism promoted virginity, sexual
abstinence, and clerical celibacy over and above sexual intercourse, even within marriage (p.569).

[224] Ibid, 245-246.

friendships with other clerics and no close adult friendships. Such clerics appear to overly work, striving for excellence and perfection in the public ministry. They lack supervision and support. Outwardly, he is a rule-keeper, whose rigid adherence to rules and regulations is devoid of internal reflection and emotional engagement.   An outwardly compliant demeanor, particularly with Church leadership, masks an unexpressed underlying and covert unhappy malaise. Life is compartmentalized into two twin tracks. From a psychological perspective, clerics who personify this subgroup of masculinity intellectualize emotions. In addition, they tend to be emotionally disconnected from other clerics and more likely to feel connected with young people as "friends." Other young people are viewed as a means to a sexual end. These clerics tend to internalize shame and personal failure in living a life of internal conflict and struggle. Frequently, they live with depression and a weariness that becomes very deep-seated. A small number of this group seem to center on the self. Their personal happiness and ambitions are seen as important, and they are more likely to commit the more intrusive sexually abusive acts by believing that young people can and do give consent. They seem to act in passive-aggressive ways, becoming gregarious and maybe provocative towards figures in authority, adopting an overtly passive-aggressive way of relating. Clerics who embody this subgroup also abuse vulnerable adults, as well as, or instead of, children. The choice of victim is more likely related to opportunity. As a hegemonic masculinity, Perfect Celibate Clerical Masculinity, with its inherent tensions and paradoxes, failed to provide clerics with the appropriate mentoring, support or supervision in a world of increased complexity - and ill-equipped with the skills to do so - which they faced after ordination and/or profession, with the rulebook of moral theology as their only guide. Unsurprisingly, with the messages of Perfect Celibate Clerical Masculinity interpreted

rigidly and literally, and with the avoidance of human intimacy and its honest

emotional expression and connection, such clerics were doomed to fail in their goal of

achieving perfection.[225] Invariably, further emotional isolation followed, giving rise to

further shame. Keenan adds that, "shame underpins much sexual offending."[226]

Even if humans can live healthy, qualitative and productive lives without sexual

relations, it is contended that humans cannot live without intimacy.[227] Individuals who

feel good about themselves have good self-esteem and are able to engage in healthy,

constructive relationships; [228] they "do not need to engage in destructive behaviors,

including the abuse and hurt of minors." It is contended that children and young

people were chosen by clerics for sexual abuse and emotional expression because

such clerics believed that all routes to adult sexual and emotional relationships were

closed to them due to the expectations, demands, and perceptions about clerical life.

The very stratified, gendered arrangement of their lives did not prepare them for the

power positions they would occupy and the accompanying tensions and paradoxes, as

adult men and as ministers of the Catholic Church. In time, their idealized and

unrealistic expectations they had of themselves and their public commitments would

sharply conflict and give way to the sexual abuse of children. Ultimately, this

subgroup of men become what they think the church institution wants and rigidly

apply the institutional rules, losing contact with self and personal integrity in the goal

of becoming clerics and religious brothers in their efforts to embody a Perfect

Celibate Clerical Masculinity identity. In doing so, they won the approval from

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[225] Ibid, 246-247.

[226] Ibid, 247.

[227] T. Ward and C.A. Stewart, "Good lives and the rehabilitation of sexual offenders," in *Sexual Deviance, Issues and Controversies*, eds. T. Ward, R. Laws, and S.M. Hudson, 24.

[228] Keenan, 247.

superiors and bishops and later the communities they served, but at great personal cost to their psychosocial and sexual health and personal integrity. Keenan contends that these men comprise the group of clerics and male members of religious congregations who are most at risk for becoming perpetrators of child sexual abuse.[229]

Research suggests that the first occasions of Clerical CSA is often not premeditated. However, after the first occasion, while many clerics never sexually abuse again, for those who do, the sexual experience had its own momentum. For the perpetrators in Keenan's study, the cure for loneliness and the new interest that sex and sexual expression provided in their lives took over. For all of them, the task was to then try to cognitively accommodate behaviors - in "conscience" – with what that they knew to be morally, ethically and legally wrong.[230] The research with the subject group of clerical perpetrators reports the adoption of some of the usual defense mechanisms to justify human behavior: denial, minimization, rationalization, and justification.[231] Perfect Celibate Clerical Masculinity as the hegemonic or dominant clerical masculinity underpins how clerics and religious brothers live their lives and how they "do" ministry, and provides a sort of template for the enactment and rationalization of sexual behaviors or intimate relationships, even with some degree of guilt or regret.[232] This, not only includes those who sexually abuse children, but those who turn to "vulnerable" women or men, "consenting" women or men, the Internet, social media platforms , and even to spirituality and God to meet their emotional and sexual needs as adults and as clerics and religious brothers.

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[229] Ibid, 249.

[230] Ibid, 247.

[231] Ibid.

[232] Ibid.

Arguably, the expectation, demands and responsibility placed on men both in the period of initial formation and in ministry as priest and religious brother by the institutional Catholic Church to be the "ideal" or "perfect" cleric or male member of a religious congregation, accompanied by the systematic neglect of their actual lives, was, in a sense, setting up some men, at least for failure. The model of preparation for, and consequent ministry, was one of "business" at the cost of the mental, emotional, psychological, spiritual, and physical health of more than a few, sexual abusers and not. In time, for some, "it must be seen as significant in the sexual abuse crisis."[233] With the intellectualization, learned rationale, and strict adherence to rules and regulations, the development of the inner life did not keep pace with the emphasis placed on the public roles for which clerics and religious brothers were being prepared. In addition, inadequate preparation for clerical power and its inherent personal and moral limits and boundaries, and inadequate vocational supervision and accountability seems to have also contributed to the inner turmoil of some clerics and male members of religious congregations, leading to unhealthy and incongruous lifestyles, including the sexual abuse of children. The phenomenon of clerical CSA is not merely about the individual or pathology, but also needs to be viewed within a complex web of factors, including the Catholic Church as Institution, power and its relational abuses within the hierarchical system and in the public forum, formation programs, and the theology of priesthood and religious brotherhood.

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[233] Ibid, 256.

Chapter Four

Pastoral Care

This chapter will focus on the theme of pastoral care. It is intended to serve as a foundation for the subsequent and final chapter of the dissertation, with its efforts to outline some psychotherapeutic themes for the pastoral care of priest members of religious congregations in Ireland who have sexually abused children. Therefore, in pursuit of this goal, after having briefly outlined a scriptural foundation for pastoral care, the remainder of the chapter will be divided into three sections. These sections concern pastoral care in the twentieth century onwards, the relationship between pastoral care and counselling/psychotherapy, and a suggestion of a rationale for spiritually integrated psychotherapy. Each section, in an incremental fashion, will work toward providing a pastoral context for the work of the final chapter. The chapter will then conclude by looking at a theology of pastoral care as an evolving response to specific needs and situations. It is important to stress that the intention is not to outline in detail the concept of pastoral care – it would be impossible to do so anyway – but rather to highlight the evolving dynamic of pastoral care in response to specific situations and experiences. The hope is to provide for a particular pastoral address to clerical child sexual abusers belonging to members of religious communities in Ireland.

Typically, and historically, the tradition of care has always involved a response to human experience. Over long reaches of time, emphases have emerged in response to

specific human and sociocultural experiences.[1] In my view, pastoral care to clerical

child sexual abusers fits within this evolving dynamic. Currently in Ireland, care for

such priests seems to focus primarily on ensuring that consequent legal restrictions

imposed by the law on those clerics who have abused are enforced accordingly. At the

moment, there is no harmonized approach, insofar as it is possible, in the provision of

pastoral care to clerical child sexual abusers, be they members of religious

communities or ordained to the priesthood for a particular diocese. This is a matter to

which I will return in the next chapter.

Scripture and Pastoral Care

While Christian pastoral care has a lengthy history extending over many centuries

up to the present, its tradition reaches back into the life of the Israelite community, out

of which the Old Testament Scriptures emerged.[2] Our pastoral ancestors are to be

found among the leaders of the ancient people of Israel namely the priests, the

prophets, and the wise men and women who offered counsel concerning issues of

living and good conduct.[3] Gerkin notes that from time to time in the early history of

the people of Israel, competition among these three classes became intense. He states,

"[T]he prophets, among them Amos, Jeremiah, and the authors of the book of Isaiah,

were in their times dominant voices in giving moral guidance to the community. In

later times, prophesy declined and the scribes and rabbis emerged as vocational

groups who carried on the functions of the wise men and women and priests. They

became the dominant force in providing pastoral leadership to the Hebrew

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[1] C. V. Gerkin, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997), 21.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid, 23.

community."[4] Each of the alluded-to classes of leaders was vitally concerned with the care and discipline of the people of ancient Israel, both as a community and as individuals. For the prophets, that meant confronting the people with their deviation from the will of God. For the priests, it meant faithful and reverent observance of worship and cultic practice. For the wise men and women, it meant practical moral guidance in the affairs of living together as a community. Arguably, the traditional practice of pastoral care has overly focused on individual guidance and conduct at the expense of priestly and prophetic roles.[5] To reclaim the priestly and prophetic Hebrew ancestors as equally important to the wise men and women of early Israelite history as root models for pastoral care, involves a rearrangement of the primary images that shape our understanding of pastoral care. It involves placing alongside the image of the wise and caring pastor providing care and concern for individuals and families another image of the pastor as caring leader of a community of worship and nurture – a community of care. The pastor, in addition, as prophetic, is viewed as one who cares for the people and for the tradition that gives the community its identity; "Care for the people of God involves care that confronts issues of justice and moral integrity of the people."[6] Reclaiming all three Old Testament leadership models of pastoral care suggest a tripartite interactive tension, which involves giving attention to the ongoing care for the Christian tradition that grounds the faith and practice of the life of the people; it involves attending to the life of the community of faith with care; and giving careful attention to the needs and problems of individuals and families.

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[4] Ibid, 23-4.

[5] Ibid, 25.

[6] Ibid.

Another, and perhaps better, understood model of pastoral care which can be traced back to the biblical times is that of the shepherd. It was first appropriated within the religious life of the people of ancient Israel as a metaphor with which to speak of the care of God for God's people. It is most clearly captured in the imagery of Psalm 23. Here as Gerkin states, "the Lord God is depicted as the good shepherd who leads the people in paths of righteousness, restores the souls of the people and walks with the people among their enemies, and even into the valley of the shadow of death."[7] However, as Gerkin notes again, "evidence is lacking that the shepherd model ever attained a place of significance equal to those of the prophetic, the priestly, and the wise guide in later Old Testament literature, probably because it lacked an institutionalized role.[8] With the coming of Jesus, who, according to John's Gospel, identifies himself as the "good shepherd," the shepherding image takes its place as a primary grounding image for ministry. The shepherding image applied to the ministry of Jesus incorporates not only the wisdom expressed in certain parables and the Sermon on the Mount, not only his priestly leadership in relation to his followers, but also elements of prophesy such as those found in the story of Jesus' cleansing of the Temple and his confrontations with the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Therefore, from the earliest of Christian times to the present, the image of the pastoral leader as the "shepherd of the flock" has persisted as an image applied to both pastors and leaders of the institutional Christian church. Numerous times throughout the

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[7] Ibid, 27.

[8] Ibid.

writings of the early church fathers, the shepherding image appears as the dominant

metaphor for the work of the pastoral leader.[9]

Pastoral Care in the Twentieth Century and Onwards

Without attempting to offer a detailed history of the tradition of pastoral care, it

remains important to note the influence of particular historical moments. These

moments have shaped current approaches and practice to current problems in the

contemporary Christian community at large.[10]

While pastoral care in the twentieth century onwards remains in continuity with

that of its centuries-old longstanding tradition, the consciousness and perceptions of

human needs alters how pastoral care is understood and shaped. The twentieth century

has witnessed an increased emphasis on the privacy of religion and an increased

emphasis on self-development.[11] It has been said that the main pastoral concern of the

early twentieth-century period was the unlocking of the mysteries of religion and

reality "in ourselves."[12] It was at this time that a man called William James combined

his interests of psychology and religious experience.[13] His interest in psychology and

religious development is also reflected in the works of other psychologists of the

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[9] A selection of texts from such early church fathers as Origen, Ignatius, Cyprian, Chrystostom, and others who made use of the shepherding metaphor are mentioned in T.C. Oden, *Becoming a Minister* (New York: Crossroad Press, 1987), Ch. 2.

[10] A very succinct and informative summary of the salient moments of the history of pastoral care up to the twentieth century is provided in C.V. Gerkin, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care*, 28-52.

[11] Ibid, 53.

[12] E. Brooks Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1983), 198.

[13] W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997).

time.[14] While neither James nor the other turn-of-the-century psychologists were directly concerned with the practices of pastoral care – their interests being more directed toward the psychology of religious development – their works had a considerable influence in further pointing pastoral care in a psychological direction, as embodied, for example, in the work of Anton Boison, whose work will be referred to later.

With the growing involvement of the psychological sciences in pastoral care came a renewed interest in pastoral healing. Psychology, particularly psychology seen as therapy, offered the possibility of enhancing the ability of pastoral care to minister to troubled individuals. This new and developing focus of pastoral care is best illustrated in the Emmanuel movement founded by the Rev. Elwood Worcester, an Episcopalian priest, in Emmanuel Church in Boston in 1904.[15] The movement, a joint activity between religion and medicine, represented the efforts to combine the expertise of pastoral caregivers (pastors) and psychologically-oriented physicians in response to people with all manner of functional problems, from hysteria and hypochondria to alcoholism and moral and spiritual concerns. While the movement had waned considerably by 1940, its model of theoretical and practical collaboration in the art of healing the sick became an important influence for pastoral care practice in future decades.[16]

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[14] J. Leuba, *A Psychological Study of Religion* (New York: McMillan, 1912); E.D. Starduck, *The Psychology of Religion* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899); G.E. Coe, *The Psychology of Religion* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1916.

[15] C.V. Gerkin, Op. Cit, 55.

[16] A more detailed description of the Emmanuel movement is outlined in A. Stokes, *Ministry after Freud* (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1985), 19-26; The emergence and development of the Social Gospel movement paralleled that of the Emmanuel movement. While both movements had their origins in the rise of the social sciences, there was one primary difference between them leading them in different pastoral directions. The Social Gospel movement was prompted by developments in sociology. It sought to transform Christian social ethics into a scientific cure for society's problems.

With the wane of the Emmanuel movement and the Social Gospel movement

beginning in the early decades of the twentieth century,[17] a new development within

the field of pastoral care was emerging. This development was to have a monumental

impact in helping chart the course, scope and methods of pastoral care right up to the

present day. Here, I am referring to Anton Boisen's Clinical Pastoral Education

movement (hereafter referred to as CPE).

Anton Boisen: A Brief Background Context

Contemporary pastoral theology, which forms a key source for pastoral care today,

has been considerably influenced by the painful, soulful, and psychotic experiences of

a Presbyterian minister in the United States close to one hundred years ago. When he

was 44 years of age, Anton Boisen began to obsess over personal, spiritual, and

vocational thoughts which at the time met with an unrequited attraction to a woman

acquaintance in what he described as a "precocious sexual sensitivity."[18] Coupled

with increasingly bizarre behaviors, these obsessions led his family to commit him to

the Boston Psychopathic Hospital in 1920. He was diagnosed, according to his

doctors, with incurable schizophrenia characterized by violent hallucinations and

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In its pastoral efforts, the Emmanuel movement found its primary partnership with individual-based psychology. The proponents of the Social Gospel movement rallied against the injustices of social life – particularly the chasm between the 'haves and have nots,' and perpetuated by capitalism - and advocated the transformation of society. Among its most ardent advocate was a young New York-based pastor, Walter Rauschenbusch whose work focused on undermining those social structures that created poverty and injustice. More details on the emergence of the Social Gospel movement can be found in C.H. Hopkins, *The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism: 1886-1915* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1940).

[17] Gerkin, Op. Cit, 60-61, notes that the optimism of both the Emmanuel Movement and the Social gospel movement was largely undermined by the brutalities of the First World War and political oppression ushered in by the twentieth century.

[18] A.B. Boisen, *The Exploration of the Inner World: A Study of Mental Disorders and Religious Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 2.

delusions.[19] Contrary to medical opinion, he recovered – reoriented to reality after an initial three-week, and shortly thereafter, ten-week period of delirium. Some scholars suggest that he may have been misdiagnosed.[20] From the experience of his initial months of hospitalization, Boisen became convinced that the emotional breakdown suffered by psychiatric patients were often religious in origin and could not be effectively treated without taking into cognizance religious concerns. He contended that his own struggles and those of his fellow patients thus necessitated the presence and skilled intervention of pastoral ministers willing to explore the "little-known territory" of the patient's inner world."[21] He went on to add that, in the light of his own experience, he proposed in his work to examine "the experiences of other persons who have been forced off the beaten path of common sense and have travelled through the little-known wilderness of the inner life."[22] For Boisen, every patient has the potential to become a "*living document*"[23] and worthy of intensive study and as capable of revealing profound new religious insight as the Bible or any theological textbook. His efforts among pastors and seminarians to minister in more clinical settings set the scene for the formation of the clinical pastoral training movement in 1925, the forerunner of CPE today.

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[19] G.H. Asquith, Jr., ed., "Introduction," in *Vision from a Little Known Country: A Boisen Reader* (Decatur, GA: Journal of Pastoral Care Publications, 1992), 5-6.

[20] C. North and W.M. Clements, "The Psychiatric Diagnosis of Anton Boisen: From Schizophrenia to Bipolar Affective Disorder," in *Vision from a Little Known Country*, 213-228.

[21] A.B. Boisen, Op Cit, 8.

[22] Ibid, 11.

[23] Ibid, 10-11.

Boisen's Theory: Its Salient Characteristics and Implications for Pastoral Care

Robert C. Dykstra, an American Pastoral theologian and writer of note, argues that while Boisen is "one of the progenitors of the twentieth-century pastoral counseling movement,"[24] his more basic concern lay elsewhere. In his work, he stressed the fundamental importance of the language of theology maintaining connection with concrete human experience. For him, this connection could only be restored by the careful and systematic study of the lives of persons struggling with issues of spiritual life in the concreteness of their daily experiences. This work involves seeing human beings as "living human documents."[25]

The Living Human Document

Following in the footsteps of earlier psychologists of religion with the study of religious experience, Boisen concerned himself with the task of trying to understand how religious experience functions to give shape to the encounters of individuals with the problems of living. As Dykstra writes, "[H]is research interest was accompanied by a passionate concern for the welfare of troubled souls."[26] For Boisen, "the cure of souls had to do fundamentally with the stuff of religious experience."[27] For this reason, in later years, he was highly critical of psychoanalysis and secular psychotherapy. He viewed the human person as a "document" to be read and interpreted in a manner analogous to the interpretation of an historical text. The depth of experience of persons with mental and spiritual struggles necessitated the same

[24] R.C. Dykstra, *Images of Pastoral Care: Classic Readings* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2005), 33.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid, 34.

[27] Ibid.

respect as do the historic texts from which the Judeo-Christian faith tradition emerged. Each individual living human document has an integrity of his or her own that calls for understanding and interpretation. The human as an individual text deserved a hearing on its own merits within which meaning is sought and helped to emerge as analogously to proof-reading a written text in the search for errors or inconsistencies. He assigned to the living human document[28] the same authority and right to speak on its own merits and terms as hermeneutical scholarship had assigned to historical texts, be they scriptural or any other written record of human experience of any other time and place. Based on his own personal experiences and his work within the field of the psychology of religion, the following quote best sums up Boisen's thesis:

> As I look around me here and then try to analyse my own case, I see two main classes of insanity. In the one case there is some organic trouble, a defect in the brain tissue, some disorder in the nervous system, some disease of the blood. In the other there is no organic difficulty. The body is strong, and the brain in good working order. The difficulty is rather in the disorganization of the patient's world. Something has happened which has upset the foundations upon which his ordinary reason is based. Death or disappointment or sense of failure may have compelled a reconstruction of the patient's worldview from the bottom up, and the mind becomes dominated by the one idea which he has been trying to put in its proper place. That, I think, has been my trouble, and I think it is the trouble with many others also.[29]

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[28] Ibid, 36: The human document is *living* as it continues to disclose itself in new language and behavior that expresses its inner world.

[29] Quoted in Dykstra*, Images of Pastoral Care*, 29.

The troubled person's own reporting of his or her inner world of experience was to be respected and heard as having an authenticity of its own, no matter how peculiar its language. What was needed was an interpreter and guide.

The Interpretative or Hermeneutical Task

Dykstra contends that pastoral counselling, as it has emerged in the late twentieth century onwards, has constructed most of its modes of research and reflection based on the images, concepts, presuppositions and assumptions of the psychological and behavioral sciences, therefore endangering the "life-giving connection between historic Christian faith and pastoral counseling practice."[30] In such a scenario, "the perceptual and conceptual world, the world of meaning becomes a world no longer inhabited by the representations of faith and salvation, sin and redemption" but rather a world populated by individuals "afflicted with neurotic symptoms, identity conflicts and compensatory behavior – all good and useful word images, to be sure, but images largely sterilized of religious meaning."[31] In this regard, language is pivotal. Language has the capacity to help humans make meaning out of their experiences. The meaning of any human experience – simple or not – is influenced by the language we use to describe it. The language used to describe and reflect on the experience of external events reveals something of an individual's inner world. Consequently, the "immediate connection of words to experience"[32] forms the subject matter of the task of interpretation in the dialogue of pastoral counselling. Interpretation and reflection may even create new meanings. To understand the inner world of another, to help the

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[30] Ibid, 35.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

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other find meaning, is a hermeneutical task of interpretation that is itself an interpretation of the myriad events, connections, and relationships that comprise every human life.

Mutual Interpersonal Respect

To hear what the other person has to say necessitates working through the barrier that stands between the language of the hearer and that of the speaker. To try to "know" another, to enter another's world, is to merge mutual experiences. From an interpretative or hermeneutical perspective, in a pastoral counseling setting, to "know" is determined by the extent to which there is the mutual ability to enter the other's language world, the world of the other's meanings. Within the context of Christian pastoral counselling, this dynamic to enter the other's world is facilitated with a language laden with images of Christian faith and theology. Traditionally, in pastoral counselling theory, this process of mutual interpersonal respect has been spoken about in the language of empathy, rapport, and acceptance. For example, though it can be difficult to do, to empathize is to experience the actuality of life as the other experiences it, to put oneself in the position of the other, particularly if the other is troubled about his or her life. Such theory and language closely resembles that of Carl Rogers' non-directive Person-Centered therapy of several decades ago and which still holds gravitas in professional psychotherapeutic circles to this day.[33] With the mutual respect of those involved in pastoral counseling and with an accompanying openness and vulnerability, the possibility for change in the way of being a person for

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[33] C. R. Rogers, On Becoming a Person (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961); C.R. Rogers, "The Condition of Change from a Client-Centered View," in *Sources of Gain in Counseling and Psychotherapy*, eds. B. Berenson and R. Cankhuff (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), 71-86.

oneself and others emerges. As Dykstra says, "[T]he barest outline of an image of merging horizons of two or more persons, each a living human document now opened to interpretation and question by the other, begins to take form as the image of the context in which change is possible."[34]

Making Sense of One's World

As alluded to earlier, Boisen sought to understand the nature of suffering of the mentally ill, including his own suffering. He locates the nature of the problem as some kind of blockage or distortion in the process of interpretation of what has occurred in the person's life. From the time we are born, we are immersed within or are touched by aspects of life and events over which we have little or no control. With the reality of it all, to live with any sense of integrity or with any sense of desire to work toward some sense of emotional, psychological and spiritual integration, it is important for every human person to retain a personal sense of urgency, the ability to do and to be a person with the power to act and to choose. This power exercises our need and our capacity to make meaningful interpretations of who we are, the world around us, and what gives us meaning in life. Behind this sense of urgency, the ability to act and choose lies the threat of chaos and meaninglessness. Boisen holds that it is this threat that poses problems for deeply troubled persons.[35] Here, both ideas and meaning conflict and do not comfortably fit with experience. For Boisen, a "reconstruction from the bottom up" is, therefore, required.[36] In this "reconstruction," the language of myth, metaphor, image, or story helps provide a softer, more malleable conscious

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[34] Dykstra, Op. Cit, 37.

[35] Ibid, 38.

[36] Boisen, Op. Cit, 11.

formulation of the person's understanding of his or her life-situation which has been influenced by both remnants of previous experiences, and those of early and later childhood with their accompanying expectations, thus hindering and complicating the process of meaning-making. The crux of human spiritual suffering occurs at the point of connection between experience and idea, between the occurrence of events and a language of meaning for those events. When that connection becomes blocked or distorted, interpretation through the help of a pastoral counsellor can offer new possibilities of meaning to the troubled person. Dykstra contends that this endeavor to help the troubled person construct language of meaning can be a profoundly religious, if not theological, experience: "At the center of any pursuit of meaning lie the questions of faith and ultimate purpose."[37] He goes on to add that "[T]he age-old function of religion has been that of binding together all of life into some unitary vision that is finally meaningful. It is the authority and role of the principle representative of that function that the pastoral counsellor brings to the task of interpretative guidance."[38]

At this juncture, it might be appropriate to briefly allude to the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) movement. Although Clinical Pastoral Education was started by Boisen in the early 1920s, the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) was established in 1967. It was formed to develop CPE standards; certify CPE supervisors; accredit CPE centers and programs; and develop effective working relationships with theological schools, denomination/faith groups, and other pastoral organizations. From the perspective of supervision alone, CPE seeks to develop and

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[37] Dykstra, Op. Cit, 39.

[38] Ibid.

sharpen skills that will enable students to respond to any emotional state he or she

encounters while providing pastoral/spiritual care; come to a better understanding of

himself or herself as a person, and of his/her role as a care provider; develop a healthy

sensitivity to the emotional needs of others, and practice with pastoral tools to make

them reflective and competent pastoral care-providers.[39] Historically, CPE had its

origins among liberal, white, male Protestant clergy. However, since the 1960s, the

CPE movement underwent considerable change. After the Second Vatican Council,

Roman Catholic priests as well as religious brothers and sisters entered CPE in

substantial numbers. Their entrance was due to several factors, including personal and

vocational issues raised by the new freedom in the church, vocational changes such as

movement from classroom teaching to hospital ministry, and interest in expanding

theological perspectives through meaningful contact with members of other religious

traditions. In addition, Roman Catholic students brought new issues to the movement:

Catholic theology and spirituality, celibacy, hierarchical authority in a new form, and

new questions about the role of sacraments in pastoral care and counselling.

Historically, the 1930s to the mid-1960s represented a period of time during

which the clinical pastoral movement strove to appropriate Freudian[40] and neo-

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[39] "Clinical Pastoral Education: What is Clinical Pastoral Education?," UCDavis Health, http://www.ucdavis.edu/pastoral_services/CPE-Programs/about-cpe.html (accessed August 22, 2018); for Ireland purposes, and helpful websites to learn further information about CPE in Ireland include, Http://acpeireland.com/history-of-acpe-ireland (Accessed August 22, 2018), Http://acpeireland.com/ (Accessed August 22, 2018) and C. W. Hart, "the Clinical Pastoral Movement and the Origins of the Dialogue Between Religion and Psychiatry," *Journal of Religion and Health* 49, no. 4 (2010): 536-546.

[40] Much of Freud's theory of the nature of the unconscious conflict fits, for example with Boisen's focus on the inner life of the individual. One of Freud's greatest discoveries was that individuals have three levels of consciousness: the unconscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious, found in S. Freud, *The Unconscious* vol. 14 (London: Hogarth Press, 1915), 166-204. The iceberg is a metaphor often used to illustrate the different levels of awareness. The unconscious corresponds to the bulk of the iceberg that falls far below the surface of the water. The conscious is represented by the tip of the iceberg – it is visible, but overall a very small and unsubstantial part of the entire substance. The unconscious, similar to the bottom layer of the iceberg, is the most powerful part of the personality, according to Freud. The unconscious contains the instinctual urges that guide and direct most of the

Freudian dynamic psychology[41] and integrate those insights with the non-directive

approach as espoused in the work of Carl Rogers; subsequent decades witnessed the

adoption of a plethora of psychotherapeutic methods in the provision of pastoral care.

According to C.V. Gerkin, the work of Howard Clinebell best represented the efforts

to integrate the resources of the burgeoning psychotherapeutic resources with the

study and ministry of pastoral care.[42] Clinebell contended that though much had been

gained through Rogerian non-directive therapy, it remained too passive to meet the

needs pastors encountered.[43] Drawing from the standard secular techniques of secular

psychotherapeutic modalities of the time, Clinebell offered a variety of approaches to

pastoral care, which he contended to best serve the particularity of problems. The

organizing theme for Clinebell's pastoral approach was *growth*. For him, pastoral care

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conscious life. It contains thoughts and feelings that are often perceived to be too threatening to consciously evaluate. Such thoughts and feelings can be tied to early memories that are too devastating to directly think about. When these painful incidents occur, they are not processed or worked through but are instead quickly banished from the conscious mind and relegated to the unconscious. These contents desire to be processed and understood, so they often surface in dreams and 'slips of the tongue. The preconscious is not nearly as powerful as the unconscious and gains information from both the unconscious and the conscious mind. Sometimes the unconscious will allow information to surface to the preconscious mind that is not too threatening or anxiety provoking. According to Freud, the conscious mind, similar to the tip of the iceberg, is the weakest and most superficial part. It gains information through the senses and sometimes the preconscious mind passes non-threatening information to it.

[41] For example, R. May, *The Art of Counseling* (Nashville, TN: Cokesbury, 1939). In this text, May proposed a method of counselling that embodied certain insights of psychoanalysis blended with some of the transitional emphases of the adjustment psychologies influenced by more dynamic principles; Other writers attempted to locate pastoral care from a more theological foundation, notwithstanding the growing contributions of the psychological sciences. Such attempts are evidenced in the works of P. E. Johnson, *The Psychology of Religion* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1945) and *The Psychology of Pastoral Care* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1953). Later work witnessed Johnson's departure from use of Rogers' nondirective techniques to building a model of pastoral care based on the personalist theology and dynamic interpersonal psychology, and the thought of Martin Buber and seen in his, *Person and Counselor* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1967; Similarly, the work of Seward Hiltner, a student of A.B. Boisen, represents another effort to develop a practical theological grounding for the ministry of pastoral care as seen in *Preface to Pastoral Theology* (Nashville,TN: Abingdon Press, 1958); Carroll A. Wise, another student of Boisen, argued that, notwithstanding the contributions of Freud's psychology and Rogers' client-centred therapies, pastoral care is fundamentally relational and involves the "communication of the inner meaning of the Gospel to persons at their point of need" by means of an accepting, caring relationship, *The Meaning of Pastoral Care* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 8.

[42] C.V. Gerkin, Op. Cit, 70.

[43] H. Clinebell, *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1966).

represents the best efforts to assist people to grow personally, relationally, and spiritually.

By the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, there was a broad range of developments taking place in the provision of pastoral care of individuals with some special need for expert care. The thrust of development produced a growing compendium of literature with practical and methodological suggestions for use in pastoral care. Books abounded on a wide range of needs including grief ministry, ministry to the terminally ill, individuals with AIDS/HIV, victims of domestic violence, substances abusers and their families, to name but a few. The bulk of the material came from the secular helping professions. Focus of attention was based less on the theological basis for pastoral care and more on the practical matters of diagnosis and response, including the provision of psychologically informed care. While not ignoring the increased specialization and particularization of psychotherapy and counselling as pastoral care, more recent decades have seen the emergence of another pastoral phenomenon. I am referring to the movement, from the almost sole focus on the individual in need with its heavy influence on individual psychology and psychopathology, to a renewed concern for the care of the Christian community as a whole. Greater attention is being given to the care of family and groups within local Christian communities. Oftentimes, this is evidenced in 'wrap-around' multidisciplinary approaches in the responses to needs within communities.[44] The

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[44] A prime example of a multidisciplinary "wrap around" service is Children's Cabinet Inc of Reno, Nevada. It was established as a private non-profit organization in 1985. Its mission has been to addresss the needs of children and families in northern Nevada. It offers more than 20 programs for children (birth to 24 years old). Its services include providing food and shelter, crisis intervention and case management, academic support, tutoring, transitional living, mentoring, parenting classes, child care subsidies, child care resource and referral assistance, and free family counselling. It also provides a 24/7 Safe Place service for youth experiencing violence. http://www.childrenscabinet.org/about-us/ (Accessed February 22, 2109).

ministry of pastoral care increasingly recognizes the need for a more holistic approach

toward social integration.[45] There is growing awareness of the powerful, often

insidious, ways in which the social structures of our culture shape and determine

many of the problems confronted in pastoral care. The structures of poverty and

affluence, rampant materialism, race, class, disability, ageism, climate change and

environmental destruction, and exploitation of the materially poor by the materially

wealthy, and abuse of human rights and the effect of such problems on the lives of

individuals, communities and congregations all help provide for an increasingly

complex pastoral matrix in need of attention and care. Similarly, feminist perspectives

have challenged society at large to acknowledge the long history of oppression of

women by a socioculture of patriarchy.[46] Therefore, feminist perspectives on the

meaning of pastoral care need to be correlated with the pre-existing, typically

hierarchical images of care.

   At this juncture in time, and cognizant of what has been alluded to thus far, having

emerged from the twentieth century and now firmly established along the route of the

twenty-first century, the ministry of pastoral care also has the responsibility to pay

attention to the world's many cultures, with their often differing values, ways of

understanding human development, and criteria for measuring quality of pastoral care.

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[45] C.V. Gerkin, Op. Cit, 74.

[46] A voluminous amount of material has been written on the topic of patriarchy, oppression of women, and culture. A very helpful and brief article tom help focus the topic is found in Elaine Neuenfeldt, "Identifying and dismantling patriarchy and other systems of Oppression of Women: Gender analysis, Feminist theology and the Church in Mission," *International Review of Mission* (World Council of Churches, 2015): 18-25. Having defined patriarchy as a "system that operates by creating privileges and oppression," (p.20) the author seeks to identify, name, and challenge these privileges by asking critical questions for example: Who benefits from this system of privileges? What are these privileges? How do they lead to oppression, and who are the ones suffering? And finally, how can we deconstruct this system? What are the tools, processes, strategies, and policies needed to dismantle it? Here, she proposes building roadmaps, paths of transformation to change cultural perception, and embodied not only in attitudinal changes but also in organizational structures that reflect equality and justice for women and for all who are oppressed.

For example, no longer can it be assumed that the white, middle-class sociocultural standards of the West are the measure by which all other societies are to be evaluated. Both greater knowledge of and critical capacity for evaluating differing cultural modes of living are critical in the provision of pastoral care. With it being one of the net effects of the policy of globalization, multiculturalism and its accompanying human, emotional, spiritual, and material problems increasingly call for the attention of ministers of pastoral care. Facing into the future, like all traditions, the tradition and ministry of pastoral care will remain alive, appropriate and relevant as long as it is open and willing to engage in dialogue with new issues as they emerge.[47]

Prior to attempting a brief pastoral theological context for an evolving dynamic of pastoral care which responds to particular human situations and circumstances over time – including for clerical child sexual abusers - this chapter will turn to examining the history and relationship between Christian pastoral care and counselling/psychotherapy. Afterwards, I will work toward providing a rationale for spiritually integrated psychotherapy. It is important to note here, that from an Irish perspective, there is not much current evidence to indicate any significant level of acknowledgement of the humanity and dignity of clerical child sexual abusers of children, minors, and vulnerable adults. Emphasis is placed on the implementation of the rigors of the law, including incarcerations with its subsequent legal demands including after release, as opposed to any effective and affective provision of pastoral care. The effort to provide some form of appropriate pastoral care to such offenders is never to deny the crimes they have committed or to prevent civil law taking its course. Rather, from the Christian perspective of God's mercy and love, for clerical child

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[47] C.V. Gerkin, *Prophetic Pastoral Practice: A Christian Vision of Life Together* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991), 19.

sexual offenders, such efforts strive to provide the personal, pastoral, and professional help needed to work toward personal accountability and responsibility, self-acceptance, self-forgiveness, and hope for the future.

The Relationship between Christian Pastoral Care and Counselling/Psychotherapy.

M.T. Woldemichael et al. note that an increasing number of contemporary scholars argue in favor of the common ground, greater openness and acceptance between the disciplines of pastoral and psychotherapy.[48] With growing convergence between the two disciplines, theoretical and practical distinctions are becoming increasingly blurred and call for greater theoretical clarity in order to avoid unnecessary ambiguities and overlaps.[49] However, it is important to allude both to some of the salient common and distinctive factors which influence the practice of pastoral care and psychotherapy. This effort to do so will involve looking at some of the historical and foundational elements of Christian pastoral care and psychotherapy, and to some of the major anthropological and philosophical concepts that underline, shape, and distinguish pastoral care from psychotherapy.

Historical and Foundational Elements

Pastoral care and psychotherapy have both similarities and differences in their origins and historical evolutions. While pastoral care grounds its foundation fundamentally on religious and ethical convictions, psychotherapy finds its origins

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[48] M.T. Woldemichael, M. Broesterhuizen and A. Liegeois, "Christian Pastoral Care and Psychotherapy: A Need for Theoretical Clarity," *Journal of Pastoral Care & Counselling* 67, no. 4 (2013): 1.

[49] Ibid.

from clinical praxis, such as Psychoanalysis, and from the natural sciences. The object of pastoral care, namely helping the 'people of God', in its broader meaning, locates its origins primarily from the life and teachings of Jesus.[50] As A. Rizzuto noted, Jesus' healing is considered mainly as spiritual healing to bring peace and reconcile the relationship of the human person with God.[51] The advent of formalized psychotherapy, particularly psychoanalysis, although clearly linked with the famous twentieth-century figure Sigmund Freud, like pastoral care, finds its origins in the mists of time. The Greek physician and the pioneer of scientific medicine, Hippocrates (460-375 BCE), differentiated medicine from other disciplines, such as philosophy, religion, and magic. By means of "investigation, observation and clinical experience" Hippocrates "classified the symptoms and the natural history of the disease."[52] He considered healing as a fully natural process. Nature heals; what is necessary in helping the ill person is creating the right conditions to let the healing occur. Similarly, Sigmund Freud revived the discipline of medicine based upon purely natural resources. He used similar methods of research: namely, "observation, experimentation and documentation of the processes of becoming emotionally ill and

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[50] It's important to note that pastoral care - and CPE – is not the preserve of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Under various names in different faith traditions, pastoral care was provided to those who needed it. For example, Nazila Isgandarova, in "The Role of Practice-Based Education in Islamic Spiritual Care: the clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Training," *The Muslim World* 108, no. 2 (April, 2018): 349-362, contends that the term "pastoral care" is not foreign to Islam. She alludes to the "Qur'anic call to take care or be mindful of trusts." She goes on to provide a brief overview of CPE training in Islamic Spiritual Care Education, notwithstanding its advantages and challenges within the tradition of Islam. Similarly, from a Buddhist perspective, Mike Monnett writes of pastoral care as based on a sermon of Buddha which centres on "The Four Noble Truths: that to exist is to suffer; that our suffering is caused by attachment to what is transient; that since suffering has a cause it must have a remedy; and that the remedy is to follow the Eightfold Path of the Buddha," and found in his article, "Developing a Buddhist Approach to Pastoral Care: A peacemaker's View," *Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling* (January 1, 2005): 57-61; This path, if practiced diligently, is a series of disciplines which free individuals from the path of suffering and them to realize their true nature or Buddhahood, a theme developed in Rahula Walpola's *What the Buddha Taught* (New York, NY: Grove Press, 1959), 45.

[51] A. Rizzuto, "Psychoanalytic and Pastoral Guidance," *Journal of Pastoral Care* 52, no. 1 (1998): 69-78.

[52] Ibid, 70.

recovering from it."[53] This model remains a valid and scientific method for modern psychoanalysis. Though it has a relatively short history, it quickly became widely recognized and accepted worldwide. The psychoanalytic school, however, does not undermine or displace other psychotherapeutic modalities currently in practice.

The field of 'psychotherapy', in general, as we know it today, represents a rather recent phenomenon started only within the last century. Christian pastoral care[54] has been practiced among Christians for the last two thousand years. It was used as a primary caregiving service in Christian societies right up to and beyond the arrival of psychology in the nineteenth century. With the dawn of psychology, the foundational differences between pastoral care and modern psychotherapies quickly became pronounced, and embodied in the works of early, influential figures such as Sigmund Freud, Albert Ellis, and Carl Rogers. Besides their prominent contribution to the field of psychotherapy, these leading figures are also known for challenging religions in their theories.[55] Freud regarded religion as a mass delusion and practicing faith as infantilized practice, the result of "the repression of natural, healthy impulse."[56] Likewise, Albert Ellis "viewed religion as cognitive falsehoods, irrationalities to be challenged and jettisoned for healthier psychological perspectives."[57] Similarly, Carl Rogers explicitly abandoned his Christian past. His psychotherapeutic theory has

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[53] Ibid, 71.

[54] For the purposes of this dissertation with its effort to outline a psychospiritual form of pastoral care to priests of religious communities who have sexually abused children, the focus is from a Christian perspective.

[55] D. MacDonald and W. Marcia, "Towards Conceptual Clarity with Psychotherapeutic Theories," *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 25, no. 1 (2006): 4.

[56] Quoted in Ibid, 4.

[57] Ibid.

wide acceptance, particularly in the humanistic approach.[58] The fields of psychology

in general, and of psychotherapy have grown to exclude religions until recent years.[59]

J. Corvelyn holds that the tradition of excluding religion in the healing practice of

psychoanalysis, and in psychotherapy, intended to respect the freedom of what was

considered one of the most hidden and private aspects of an individual's life.[60] For

example, psychoanalysis, through its approach of "benevolent neutrality" or "attitude

of respectful reticence," avoids interference with religious issues. However, when

clients reveal their view, and when it is appropriate to address it, the psychoanalyst or

psychotherapist works accordingly.[61] This point is reinforced in the American

Counseling Association *Code of Ethics* when it states, "Counselors are aware of – and

avoid imposing – their own values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Counselors

respect the diversity of clients…"[62] However, oftentimes, mental health clinicians

lack the guidance and training to help them in adequately addressing spiritual and

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[58] Ibid.

[59] It is important to note, however, the abundance of research and writing in recent decades concerning the contribution of religion and/or spirituality to the field of psychotherapy, and to mental health care as a whole. While it is a relatively recent field, both researchers and therapists have begun to evaluate the impact of spiritually integrated treatment, and results have been promising though much work remains to be done to show it to be effective. Among the helpful references in this regard, to name but a few, include: S-Y Tan, *Counseling and Psychotherapy: A Christian Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001); B.W. Grant, *A Theology for Pastoral Psychotherapy: God's Play in Sacred Spaces* (New York: The Haworth Pastoral Press, 2001); J. Swinton, *Spirituality and Mental Health Care: Rediscovering a 'Forgotten Dimension'* (London/Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2001); V.L. Schermer, *Spirit and Psyche: A New Paradigm for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy* (London/New York: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2003); K.I. Pargament, *Spiritually integrated Psychotherapy: Understanding the Sacred* (New York: Guilford Press, (2007); H.G. Koenig, M.D., *Medicine, Religion and Health: Where Science and Spirituality Meet* (Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Press, 2008); M.D. Forman, *A Guide to Integral Psychotherapy: Complexity, Integration and Spirituality in Practice* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2010); C.M. Pulchalski, PH.D and Betty Ferrell, PH.D, *Making Healthcare Whole: Integrating Spirituality into Patient Care*, Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Press, 2010; H. Beaumount, PH.D., *Toward a Spiritual Psychotherapy: Soul as a Dimension of Experience* (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2012).

[60] J. Corvelyn, "In Defense of Benevolent Neutrality: Against a 'Spiritual Strategy'", *The Journal of Individual Psychology* 56, no. 3 (2000): 346

[61] Ibid, 346-349.

[62] American Counseling Association, *2014 Code of ACA Code of Ethics*. American Counseling Association, Alexandria, Virginia, 5.

religious issues with students, supervisees and clients. In response, the American

Counseling Association, in conjunction with evidenced-based practice, established

guidelines for addressing spiritual and religious issues in counselling.[63] This initiative

complemented the competencies across six content areas established by the

Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC) in

2009[64] and affirms K.I. Pargament when he noted that:

> Through the spiritual lens, people can see their lives in a broad, transcendent
> perspective; they can discern deeper truths in ordinary and extraordinary
> experience; and can locate timeless values that can offer grounding and
> direction. Through a spiritual lens, problems take on a different character and
> distinctive solutions appear…Spirituality represents a distinctive resource for
> living, one particularly well suited to the struggle with human limitations and
> finitude. By bringing the spiritual dimension into the helping process,
> psychotherapists could tap more fully into this reservoir of hope and source of
> solutions to life's most profound problems.[65]

This contention by Pargament is contrary to what J. Corvelyn and P. Luyten had

previously stated, that: "[P]sychoanalysis and psychotherapies in general do not have

a message of salvation in the religious sense of the word."[66] In the field of

psychoanalysis, since the therapist has only to interpret, every form of guidance

would be seen as counter-transference, whereas in pastoral care, not giving guidance

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[63] C.E. Hull, E.C. Suarez, and D. Hartman, "Developing Spiritual Competencies in Counseling: A Guide for Supervisors," *Counseling and Values* 61 (April 2016): 111-126.

[64] "*Competencies for Addressing Spiritual and Religious Values in Counseling* (2009), http://www.aservic.org/resources/spiritual-competencies/ (Accessed September 5, 2108). The content areas are Culture and Worldview; Counselor Self-Awareness; Human and Spiritual development; Communication; Assessment; and, Diagnosis and Treatment.

[65] K.I. Pargament, Op. Cit, 12.

[66] J. Corvelyn and P. Luyten, "Psychodynamic Psychologies and Religion: Past, Present, and Future," in *Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, eds. R.F. Paloutzian and C.L. Parks (London: Guilford Press, 2005), 93-94.

when that is deemed necessary would be seen as a serious omission.[67] Traditionally, in most psychotherapies, emphasis has been on addressing biological needs and issues of the human person, whereas in pastoral care spiritual and ethical issues are also included. The basis for this lies in the view of the human person who is not perceived as a merely biological being but also a spiritual; not just body but also spirit. Accordingly, pastoral care attempts to treat the person as a whole in a more inclusive, holistic manner, which acknowledges the spiritual dimension of a person's life.[68] To include what is difficult to quantify, to measure – the spiritual – can appear to make pastoral care less scientific though not necessarily less effective. On the other hand, traditionally, psychotherapy has sought to assert its scientific character and competency by seeking to prove its being an evidence-based practice. In this regard, C.R. Elder noted that psychotherapy is a scientific discipline that tends to look at religion and spirituality concepts from a reductive approach.[69]

Some Basic Assumptions: Anthropological and Philosophical

Though the disciplines of both Christian pastoral care and psychotherapy focus on furthering human well-being, they hold different views on human nature. Their different views, in consequence, influence their respective practices of care. As a component of Christian activity as a whole, Christian pastoral care is fundamentally grounded in the Christian faith and theology, which attributes much weight to human values, ethical behavior, and spiritual fulfilment. It functions within a framework of

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[67] M.T. Woldemichael et al., Op. Cit, 3.

[68] Ibid.

[69] C.R. Elder, "The Freudian Critique of Religion: Remarks on its Meaning and Condition," *Journal of Religion* 75, no. 3 (1995): 349-350.

Christian theological concepts that influence and shape the actual practice and theory of pastoral care, namely spirituality, love, anthropology, and salvation. Each of these concepts, for example, also serve as points of departure for pastoral care from the rest of secular psychotherapies and other non-religiously motivated care services.

Christian theology may be viewed as faith seeking understanding in the context of the human experience. M. Woldemichael et al. succinctly state that "[C]hristian theology is a science in that it systematically explains and clarifies notions about God and human experiences and works toward a logical formulation of thought in that regard."[70] Such a definition, brief though it may be, serves as an important theoretical background by which Christian pastoral care is identified and differs from other forms of caregiving services. Theologically fundamental to pastoral care is the belief that God is the prism upon which and through which all other assumptions and practices of religiously-based pastoral care are shaped. The belief in God is the basic theoretical foundation of the ministry of pastoral care. Similarly, the Christological conviction and understanding is an important distinguishing aspect of Christian-based pastoral care in which Jesus Christ is believed to be the one who truly and fully revealed God the Father who is the Creator of everything.[71] Jesus is held and believed to be God incarnate, God revealed in human form among us and lived the fullness of humanity because of God's limitless, unconditional love for humankind. He is, therefore, the model of perfect human life on earth. Consequently, at the core of Christian pastoral care is the love of God for humankind expressed in the life, ministry, death, and

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[70] M.T. Woldemichael et al., Op. Cit, 6.

[71] Ibid.

resurrection of Christ. In the secular psychotherapies, Christology would seem to feature little in any capacity.

Spirituality can be considered one of the most basic aspects of pastoral care. However, it is important to note that in more recent times, spirituality is being embraced as a part of the therapeutic process in the realm of secular psychotherapies. With the virtual explosion of published literature associated with *spirituality* in recent decades, it is not surprising that spiritually integrated psychotherapy is receiving considerable acceptance and recognition within the contemporary psychological and psychotherapeutic domains.[72] However, spirituality is not necessarily understood in the same way as in Christian pastoral care. From a Christian perspective, with implications for an individual's or religious group's character and activity, and which helps gives focus, purpose and meaning to pastoral care, is a very helpful and succinct definition of spirituality in Evan B. Howard's *The Brazos Introduction to Christian Spirituality,* which states that "[W]ithin the Christian tradition, it refers specifically to relationship with God through Jesus Christ."[73] From a secular perspective, *spirituality* extends beyond the traditional concepts of God, the divine, and transcendent reality to

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[72] Ibid, 7; K.I. Paragement, *Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy*, 342-345, offers some cogent arguments for providing a greater voice to spirituality in psychotherapy. He contends that spirituality does not fall outside the realm of human knowledge and comprehension. In this context, it is appropriate to develop a better understanding of spirituality just as we can learn more about other dimensions of life: biological, psychological, and social. Spiritually integrated psychotherapy rests on the premise that the yearning for the sacred is a primary, irreducible aspect of human nature. The sacred speaks of people's deepest dreams and aspirations, the truths we hold timeless, our sense that there is something that lies beyond our everyday experience, and our most fundamental assumptions about why we are here and how we want to live our lives. Pargament adds that spirituality is a therapeutic fact and need not be divorced from the therapeutic process as it is fully interwoven into the human experience. Therapists can encourage clients to draw on their spiritual resources just as they access other resources such as medical help, social support, physical exercise, and self-help books. Therapists can also address a variety of spiritual problems that may interfere with clients' health and wellness, just as they would attend to other problems that pose a barrier to change, development, and growth.

[73] E.B. Howard, *The Brazos Introduction to Christian Spirituality* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2008), 16.

include other aspects of life that take on a character, meaning, purpose, or significance such as the self, relationships, time and place, the environment, and the universe. Ironic as it seems, a 'secular' understanding of spirituality focuses less on the traditional understandings of God, the divine, and the transcendent and more on those experiences, moments and events which reveal something of the Sacred, the Truth.[74]

The Christian understanding of love finds its belief in the triune God: the Father/Creator, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God's love for us is expressed most deeply and irrevocably through the incarnation of the Son of God who, out of love for humankind, became human like us, and died for our sake. This primordial love, enabling the Spirit of God's love among us, is the template, the invitation, and the challenge through which pastoral care is lived and shared with others. According to J. H. Olthuis, love is not just what we Christians will achieve and what we will become, but also who we are as humans; "The Christian Scripture says: "God is love," and the human person is created in the image of God, and therefore in the "image of Love.""[75] Consequently, to be human is measured by loving or not.[76] In the ministry of pastoral care, and in the case of all Christians, we are called to express this kind of love for our 'neighbor' and for the glory of God. In addition, it can be said that Christian love has multidimensional aspects: not only of God and neighbor but of oneself and nature, all of which together make love complete. These dimensions of love have implicit or explicit references from the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. They are all assumed to work together for a harmony and tranquility of individuals and communities. As they

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[74] K.I. Pargament, Op. Cit, 32-48.

[75] C.H. Olthuis, "A Psychotherapy of Love," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 34, no.1 (2006), 67.

[76] Ibid, 68.

are all interconnected, missing one dimension or the other will make this love incomplete. In pastoral care, genuine healing is believed to be attained when these dimensions of love are attended.[77] From a psychological point of view, people ought to love only as long as they have a positive feeling about it.[78] Such a posture is akin to the Rogerian concept of *congruence* where there consistency between one's inner experience and one's outward expression of that experience.[79] Accordingly, a psychotherapist might advise such people to cease loving, to cease the relationship. While the dichotomy might ever be so clear, on the other hand, a minister of pastoral care might also point out that the inner conflict might be a moment of growth or which could inspire such growth.

Continuing the comparison and contrast between pastoral care and psychotherapy with regard to how they seek to maximize their understanding of the person and to increase the effectiveness of their caring and healing practices, the biggest difference between the two disciplines relates to their diverse anthropological views. The primary anthropological view for Christian care is derived from its Christian tradition. Accordingly, each person is understood, first and foremost, as created by God, and in the image of God. The ultimate goal of human life is the glory of God. Christian belief maintains that people were created to do good, yet having the capacity to choose and do evil. While there is no uniform anthropology among the Christian churches and no consensus among the various psychotherapeutic modalities, the core Christian anthropological supposition remains the same and constitutes the essence of

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[77] M.T. Woldemichael, Op. Cit, 8.

[78] Ibid.

[79] G. Corey, *Theory and Practice of Counseling & Psychotherapy* (Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, 2005), 172.

pastoral care: each person is created by God and in the image of God, and treated accordingly. Within the Judeo-Christian understanding of anthropology, humans are created *imago dei* [80] and thus possess a transcendental element; they have the capacities of self-transcendence making connection with the transcendent who believers call God. This image makes the understanding of Christian pastoral care of the human person very different from the secular psychotherapies, which view human person as mainly a biological, psychosocial being. Christian pastoral care eschews such a reductionist thinking by its fundamental focus on the existential-spiritual dimension of humanity. Furthermore, the Judeo-Christian understanding of the human person *imago dei* implies a fundamental and natural equality between individuals. This intrinsic concept of equality has a consequence in the actual practice of pastoral care, as it views both the caregivers and care receivers as equally deserving of dignity.

Christian pastoral care also has an eschatological dimension to it: there is the belief that God is eternal, therefore, the ultimate of human life extends beyond the present. For Christians, earthly life is not the end; we transition to the other side of life. And so, with death, life does not end but changes. This belief shapes Christian pastoral

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[80] With reference to R.T. Lawrence, "Measuring the Image of God: The God Image Inventory and the God Image Scales," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 25 (1997): 214-226., perhaps the God image can be best understood by contrasting it with the God concept. The God concept is the intellectual understanding of God. It is based on what is traditionally taught about God in churches, some Scripture studies, catechism classes, religious education classes, sometimes in homilies etc. The God concept is an objective and abstract understanding of God. Most individuals brought up within the Christian tradition have a God concept that is hopefully characterized by love, strength, and wisdom. Similarly, with reference to G. Moriarty, Psy.D., *Pastoral Care of Depression: Helping Clients heal their Relationship with God* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2013): 42., the God image is the personal, emotional, experiential, and subjective relationship with God. Individuals need a consistent sense of self to feel secure, so they pattern future relationships after what they learned in their relationship with their parents. Moriarty argues that their relationship with God is no different. If a child feels he or she has to be perfect to please its parents, then the child feels that he or she has to be perfect to please God. If a child feels he or she can make mistakes and be accepted by the parents, then the child will more likely accept the possibility of mistakes and allow for the experience of God's acceptance.

care, expanding its scope from the present exclusively to the future when the Christian shares the fullness of life with the Creator.

Clearly, then, many modern models of psychotherapy claim roots from within clinical findings and philosophical thoughts, while most forms of Christian pastoral care can be identified mainly within but not limited to a (religious) theological paradigm or world view. Yet, it is important to acknowledge that many ministerial training and developmental programs designed for pastoral care providers include and use knowledge and experiences from the human, psychological sciences – for example, the already alluded-to Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) programme. Similarly, in recent decades, the psychological and psychotherapeutic sciences are incorporating religious and spiritual insights in their training programs and practices, for example, as outlined in the American Counselling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics, which uses the competencies, including the spiritual, as established by the Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC).

Toward a Rationale for Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy

Under the influence of the positivistic philosophy of the time, the early twentieth century witnessed psychology allying with the natural sciences and distinguishing itself from its close disciplinary kin, philosophy and theology. Within the developing field of psychology, spirituality (and religion) came to be seen as an impediment to the scientific search for enlightenment and a roadblock to rationally-based efforts to improve the human condition.[81] Out of this context emerged models of personality and psychotherapy that depicted spirituality in oversimplified, stereotypical terms.

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[81] D. Wulff, *Psychology of Religion: Classic and Contemporary*, 2nd ed. (New York: Wiley, 1997), 17.

B.F. Skinner, the founder of behaviorism, and the product of a fundamentalist religion which he later rejected, once wrote, "God is the archetype pattern of an explanatory fiction."[82] Skinner contended that religious institutions maintain this "fiction" by attempting to control behavior, primarily through the use of aversive measures, including punitive laws, fear of hell and damnation, and religious practices that discourage sinful behavior. Similarly, and previously alluded to elsewhere in this dissertation, Sigmund Freud, raised in a moderately Jewish household and who eventually rejected traditional Jewish beliefs and practices, held that religion was rooted in a child's sense of helplessness in a world of dangerous forces.[83] Based on a number of surveys – for example, conducted by Edward Shafranske – it could be argued that more than a few clinicians and therapists, typically, have become at odds, in some respects, from the people they serve. Contrasting their religious beliefs and practices with those of the general public, Shafranske found a clear difference. While over 90% of the population reported belief in a personal God, only 24% of therapists did so.[84] Such a statistic suggests that a client who believes in a personal god and who sees spirituality (and religion, perhaps) as a salient feature of life is likely to engage with a therapist who does not believe in a personal God and does not consider spirituality to be personally very important. It's possible that many therapists leave preparatory counselling psychotherapy programs unprepared to address the spiritual issues they will face in their work with clients.[85] Arguably, this is a reflection of an

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[82] B.F. Skinner, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (New York: Knopf, 1971), 201.

[83] S. Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, 63.

[84] S. Shafranske, "The Religious dimension of Patient Care within Rehabilitation Medicine: The Role of Religious Attitudes, Beliefs, and Personal and Professional Practices," in *Faith and Health: Psychological Perspectives*, eds. T.G. Plante and A.C. Sherman (New York: Guilford Press, 2001), 311-338.

[85] D.L. Schule, T.A. Skinner, and C.D. Clairborn, "Religious and Spiritual Issues in Counseling Psychology Programs," *Counseling Psychologist* 30 (2009), 118-134.

assumption that spirituality, at most, is a side-issue, and one that can either be

sidestepped or resolved through an education to reality. However, the following

points suggest that the spiritual dimension is a component to be taken seriously in the

psychotherapeutic process.

Spirituality can be Part of the Solution

Although many in the field of psychotherapy view spirituality as more a cause of

problems than a possible solution,[86] the fact is that many clients and individuals look

to their spirituality for support and guidance in times of distress.[87] A few disparate

examples may be indicative here: the U.S. as a whole sought support and solace from

spirituality and religion following the September 11 attacks of 2001; 90% of a random

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[86] This view is contested in the thought of Carl Jung, the Swiss psychologist who adopted a more positive and conciliatory approach to the role of spirituality in his work with clients. For example, Wallace B. Clift, in his work, *Jung and Christianity: The Challenge of Reconciliation* (New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1982), ix., he alludes to Jung speaking of the great religions of the world, which ministered to the human psyche providing guidelines for the development of the soul, as the "world's greatest psychotherapeutic symbol systems." Jung saw the *cura animarum* (the care of souls) as the basic task of the Christian Church. In his professional work with clients, Jung was concerned with the problems individuals encountered in the course of his or her psychic development, and ultimately with the meaning found in life. For Jung, religion had traditionally supplied the framework for an individual's answer to the question of meaning. However, he contended that, in this regard, the Christian Church had ceased to perform the basic theological task of translating the truths of the tradition into a meaningful and intelligible manner for its adherents. He contended that for religion to be able to meet the needs of its day (to answer the question of meaning) it must be in accord with, and understandable in the language of, the scientific knowledge of the time. Jung lamented that this task was no longer being fulfilled by the Christian Church.

[87] Here, it is important to note the distinction between spirituality and religion. Spirituality does not necessarily refer to religion, yet many individuals exclusively connect one with the other. However, Patricia D. Borman and David M. Nixon suggest that "religion describes a formal institution whereas spirituality describes an inner state of being." in their work, "Spirituality and the 12 Steps of Substance Abuse Recovery," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 26, no. 3 (1998): 287. Although one can enhance spirituality through religious practices, nonreligious methods or exercises may be used to enhance one's spirituality such as relaxation and meditation. Other methods include doing an honest personal inventory and in believing in something greater than oneself as espoused in the 12-step program originally developed in Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A), which has grown and branched into other areas of addiction such as Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Overeaters Anonymous (OA) and Gamblers Anonymous (GA). Spirituality, as used in the 12-step programs are not necessarily connected to formal religion. Spirituality in the 12-step programs pertain to one's relationship with others, with oneself, and with one's higher power, which is defined by the individual and need not be associated with a formal religion.

sample of people drawn from across the country said they coped with their feelings after the attack by turning to spirituality and religion.[88] Similarly, in the same year, in a survey of more than 400 individuals with serious mental illness, over 80% reported that they used some sort of religious belief or practice to help them cope with their problems and symptoms.[89] Studies of individuals with eating disorders have yielded similar results: spiritual resources have oftentimes been described by individuals as critical to their recovery.[90] Such findings and more provide evidence to suggest that more than a few people in our society draw on their spirituality when they encounter significant problems, including those of mental health.[91] There can be deeper dimensions to people's problems. Illnesses, accidents, interpersonal conflicts, separation and divorce, layoffs, and death of a loved one, to name but a few, are more

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[88] M.A, Schuster et al., "A National Survey of Stress Reactions after September 11, 2001, Terrorist Attacks," *New England Journal of Medicine* 345 (2001), 1507-1512.

[89] L. Tepper et al., "The Prevalence of Religious Coping among persons with Persistent mental Illness," *Psychiatric Services* 52 (2001), 660-665.

[90] P.S. Richards, R.K. Hardman, and M.E. Berrett, *Spiritual Approaches in the Treatment of Women with Eating Disorders*. (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2007).

[91] O. Brown, D. Elkonin, and S. Naicker, "The Use of Religion and Spirituality in Psychotherapy: Enablers and Barriers," *Journal of Religion and Health* 52 (2013): 1131-1146. This article discusses whether religion and spirituality serve as enablers or barriers in the psychotherapeutic process. Enablers included the client's need to discuss religion and/or spirituality as part of therapy; some therapies such as narrative therapy and person-centred therapy were acknowledged as approaches which were considered more conducive to discussing such aspects of the client's life; the therapist's similar religious beliefs or similar beliefs can make it easier for religious or spiritual matters to be broached and discussed. Barriers to the psychotherapeutic relationship included ethics, particularly the distinction between scope of practice and competency of practice; conflicting religious belief, values or morals; client resistance; the client using religion or spirituality as justifications for behavior, or inability or reluctance to make decisions; therapist's reluctance to engage the client in matters of religion and spirituality; and the lack of training among therapists in the areas of religion and spirituality; R.M. Ryan and J.D. Aten, "Using Spiritual Self-disclosure in Psychotherapy," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 36 no.4 (2008): 294-302. Issues of discussion included the therapist's use of self-disclosure to communicate personal spiritual data and its potential positive or negative impact; the therapist's self-disclosure to communicate professional opinions to the client which can affect the therapeutic relationship; the therapist's self-disclosure to communicate spiritual experiences. Here, because of the power-differential in the therapeutic relationship caution is encouraged to avoid manipulation of the client's choices, or the imposition of the therapist's views or beliefs on the client. It is important that the therapist's beliefs or views not be perceived as normative or exemplary. Another helpful discussion of this topic of discussion is found in C.T. Wolf and P.Stevens, "Integrating Religion and spirituality in Marriage and Family Counseling," *Counseling and Values* 46 (October 2001): 66-75.

than just significant life-events. They raise disturbing questions about our place and purpose in the world, pointing to human limits of our own power and reminding us of our mortal finitude. Not all problems are spiritual in nature; nevertheless, crises, traumas, and the accumulation of hurt and disappointment impact people spiritually, as well as psychologically, socially, and physically.[92]

Cognitive therapies help clients identify and control irrational and self-defeating thoughts. Yet, there is a limit to how much we, as human beings, can control. Spirituality helps people come to terms with human limitations. It offers solutions to problems that are not merely substitutes for secular solutions. Through their spiritual lens, people can see their lives in a broad, transcendent perspective; they can discern deeper truths in ordinary and extraordinary experiences; and they can locate timeless values that offer grounding and direction in shifting times and circumstances. Through a spiritual lens, problems take on a different character and distinctive solutions may appear; answers to seemingly unanswerable questions come to the surface; support is gained when other sources of support are ineffective; and new sources of value and significance may be gained when old dreams are no longer viable. While many therapists might worry about overstepping their boundaries by raising spiritual issues in the psychotherapeutic process, there is ample evidence to suggest, going back some years now, that a good proportion of clients would welcome spiritually integrated therapy.[93]

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[92] W.L. Hathaway, "Clinically significant religious impairment," *Mental Health, Religion and Culture* 6 (2003), 113-129.

[93] M.E. Koltko, "How Religious Beliefs affect Psychotherapy: The example of Mormonism," *Psychotherapy* 27 (1990): 132-140.

Some Features of Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy

Explicit

Using a culinary analogy that is in itself timeless, Irvin Yalom, psychiatrist and psychotherapist, suggests that in therapy, "ingredients critical to success may be added when one is paying attention."[94] Spirituality is one such critical but hidden ingredient. Spiritual issues often arise in psychotherapy, but without the conscious recognition of the client and therapist. While the explicit content of psychotherapy is focusing on the various causes of, and solutions to emotional distress, problems in the home, physical symptoms, or relational issues, change may be taking place on a spiritual level. Unbeknownst to the therapist and the client, the client may be uncovering and sharing a loss or violation of the sacred, identifying and accessing spiritual resources, raising and resolving questions of ultimate meaning. Yet, although therapists may sense something 'deeper' is taking place in the background, it may be that many psychotherapists do not move spirituality from the background to the foreground. Even Carl Rogers, the founder of Person-Centered therapy, did not raise spiritual issues in the therapeutic encounter.[95] Similarly, the founders of ACT,[96] a therapy that is embedded in a spiritual matrix strongly influenced by Buddhist

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[94] I. Yalom, *Existential Psychotherapy* (New York: Basic Books, 1980), 3.

[95] K.I. Pargament, Op. Cit, 18.

[96] Acceptance and Commitment Therapy; developed by Stephen C. Hayes, K.D. Strosahl, and K.G. Wilson in 1982. It is an empirically-based intervention strategy that uses acceptance and mindfulness with commitment and behavior-change strategies to increase psychological flexibility. The therapeutic goal is not the elimination of difficult feelings; rather, it is to be present with what life brings us and to move toward valued behavior. ACT invites people to open up to unpleasant feelings, and learn not to overreact to them, and not avoid situations where they are invoked. Its therapeutic effect is a positive spiral where feeling better leads to a better understanding of the truth. In ACT, 'truth' is measured through the concept of 'workability', or what works to take another step toward what matters, for example, values, meaning. Further treatment of this modality of psychotherapy can be found in S.C. Hayes, K.D. Strosohl, and K.G. Wilson, *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The Process and Practice of Mindful Change*, 2nd ed. (New York: Guilford Press, 2012).

thought, prefer to keep the spiritual dimension of therapy in the background.[97] Hayes et al. write that "ACT has an inherent and wordless spiritual quality" and caution that "spirituality and religion as such are discussed only if the client brings these issues into the room."[98]

In contrast, spiritually integrated psychotherapy assumes that clients often bring spiritual issues into therapy and encourages them to give voice to what may be difficult to express. Spiritually integrated psychotherapy seeks to make the implicit explicit. Within this form of therapy, therapists and clients speak openly to spirituality as a significant dimension in its own right, one that is not reducible to presumably more basic psychological or social processes. Therapists and clients identify more clearly what the clients hold to be purposeful, meaningful, and therefore sacred. There is explicit conversation about how spirituality may be a part of the client's problems, or indeed, a part of the client's solution.

Psychospiritual

Spiritually integrated psychotherapy clearly has a psychological component. From a psychological perspective, the therapist cannot know in an ontological sense what is true, purposeful, meaningful, and sacred for the client. Nevertheless, paramount is the commitment to help clients live out the truth, the sacred – the purposeful, the meaningful – in their lives as they perceive it and experience it, drawing upon some psychological resources: from a theoretical viewpoint, spiritually integrated psychotherapy rests on a systematic way of thinking about spirituality, devoting

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[97] S.C. Hayes, "Making Sense of Spirituality," *Behaviorism* 12 (1984): 99-110.

[98] S.C Hayes, K.D. Strosahl, and K.G. Wilson, *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy*: *An Experiential Approach in Behavioral Change* (New York: Guilford Press, 1999), 273.

theoretical attention to concrete problems, concrete solutions and everyday struggles, in seeking to discover how spirituality develops and changes over the human lifespan[99] and in trying to define what it means to talk of a life well lived. In addition, this modality of therapy may raise questions that can outnumber the answers available to the therapist, emphasizing the need to adopt a scientific approach to spirituality, notwithstanding all its accompanying, difficult-to-empirically-verify, if not impossible, intangibles.[100]

Pluralistic

It is a fair comment to make that we live in an increasingly diverse, multicultural society within which a plethora of religious traditions and alternative spiritualties exist side-by-side. Therefore, the importance of the therapist becoming multiculturally competent cannot be minimized.[101] It is equally important to note that much of the theory and research on spirituality and psychotherapy has grown out of the context of a Western monotheistic perspective that has shaped our worldview. However, it is important to note that within an increasingly diverse and multicultural society, it is likely that psychotherapists work entirely within their own or familiar religious traditions. In addition, they may find themselves working with clients who have created their own idiosyncratic religion and perhaps choose from the menu of options their traditions provide them or experimenting with beliefs and practices that fall outside of their own particular religious tradition. Therefore, to avoid Western bias, it

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[99] A very helpful work in trying to situate and contextualize spiritual/religious changes across the human lifespan is James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (New York: HarperCollins, 1981).

[100] K.I. Pargament, 19-20.

[101] G. Corey, Op. Cit, 118.

can be interpersonally and therapeutically helpful to reach out to the religious and clinical wisdom from other spiritual and religious cultures and traditions.

Integrative

Spirituality does not reside within, nor is it experienced in a vacuum. It is not divorced from the psychological, social, and physical dimensions of life.[102] Spirituality is fully embedded within the fabric of human life. The connections are not always smooth; at times, it clashes with other aspects of life, forcing the individual to make hard choices between competing interests. More often, though, spiritual growth and decline go hand in hand with growth and decline in other aspects of human life. Facilitating greater spiritual integration can enhance the well-being of the individual not only spiritually, but also psychologically, socially, and physically. Spiritually integrated psychotherapy is, arguably, best not seen as a competitor on the block, a rival to other modalities of psychotherapy. It neither competes with nor replaces, but complements other forms of psychotherapy. Rather, it weaves, integrates greater sensitivity and explicit attention to the spiritual aspect of the psychotherapeutic process.

Value Laden

The various modalities of psychotherapy rest on values. Such values rest on what can be very difficult to prove. For example, discussions which revolve around human nature as basically good or bad says something about a pre-existing value. Similarly, discussions about human free will reveals something about human values. The

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[102] K.I. Pargament, 21.

answers to such questions, and more besides, reveal a fundamental view about life which shapes human activities, pursuits and conclusions including in the field of psychotherapy. For example, in Freud, with his psychoanalytic psychotherapy there is evidence of a "culture of detachment that sees the world as basically hostile and humans as largely self-absorbed creatures…"[103] In the humanistic psychotherapies, there is an implicit "culture of joy that sees the world as basically harmonious and human wants and needs as easily reconciled and coordinated in almost frictionless compatibility."[104] The behavioral modalities talk of a culture of control in which humans are viewed as "primarily controlled and controllable by the manipulative powers of various environments."[105] In this regard, spiritually integrated psychotherapy is no less laden free, though its inherent values may or may not be more evident. It seeks to help individuals and clients to pursue the sacred, to find purpose and meaning, and intelligibility within the context of their own human experience. As Stanton Jones noted, "[O]ne cannot intervene in the fabric of human life without getting involved in moral and religious matters."[106]

A Theology of Pastoral Care: An Evolving Dynamic in Response to specific Needs

In more recent decades, pastoral theology has become increasingly recognized as an integral part of theological study and education. In the not too distant past, pastoral theology was considered a matter of instructing those in preparation for ordained

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[103] Don Browning, *Religious thought and the Modern Psychologies* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1987), 5.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Ibid.

[106] S.L. Jones, "A Constructive Relationship for Religion with Science and the Profession of Psychology: Perhaps the Boldest Model yet." *American Psychologist* 49 no. 197 (1994), 184-199.

ministry in the administration of the sacraments, and the development of skills for everyday spiritual, practical matters in the Christian community, like visiting the sick for example. More recent times have witnessed a more fluid and dynamic understanding, with an accompanying pastoral task of responding to particular human, individual and communal circumstances. In this regard, James Woodward and Stephen Pattison have described pastoral theology "as a prime place where contemporary experience and the resources of the religious tradition meet in a critical dialogue that is mutually and practically transforming."[107] In addition, unlike traditional theology, not only is pastoral theology not restricted to a specific Christian denomination, but it is also not restricted to Christianity.[108] Its methodology tends to be inductive and follows a praxis model by being in touch with experience and relating dialogically with culture in an ongoing learning process, a shared enterprise where all learn from each other.[109] Catherine Gibson, a psychotherapist, in this regard, says of pastoral theology: "its methodology is open and tends to be inductive rather

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[107] J. Woodward and S. Pattison, eds. *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), xiii.

[108] Ibid, 11; here, it is relevant to note the longstanding debate concerning the difference(s) between pastoral and practical theology: In S. Pattison and J. Woodward, "An Introduction to Pastoral and Practical Theology," in *The Blackwell Reader*, eds. J. Woodward and S. Pattison, it is held that [T]he difference between them seem, in the present context, to be more one of emphasis than substance," pp. 2-3. Both terms have historical backgrounds and uses. Pastoral theology was seen as the theology, activity and tradition associated with "shepherding" or pastoring. In the Roman Catholic tradition and reflected in the emphasis on the administration of the sacraments. Practical theology is a term that emerged in the German Protestant tradition as part of the academic theological curriculum in the late eighteenth century. Although pastoral care was viewed as an important concern in practical theology, its concerns extended beyond pastoral care to include interest in worship, preaching, Christian education and church government. Taking a contrary view to the apparent synonymity of pastoral and practical theology is the one espoused by B.J. Miller-McLemore, "Also a Pastoral Theologian: In Pursuit of Dynamic Theology (Or: Meditations from a Recalcitrant Heart)." *Journal of Pastoral Psychology* 59 (2010): 813-828: the author of the article holds that practical encompasses pastoral theology providing it with an overarching method within which to locate thinking, teaching and practice of pastoral theology. It serves an as an attempt to integrate religious knowledge and practice over time.

[109] S. Hiltner, "The meaning and importance of Pastoral Theology," in *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology*, eds. J. Woodward and S. Pattison (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 27-48.

than deductive; it takes reflection on experience into account as a meaningful element in theologising…it draws on many resources, cultural, Christian/non-Christian and personal, and does not favour structures of authority that excludes certain groups."[110]

Both within and outside the church community, a central feature of pastoral theology is to provide a structure to its praxis. The ministry of pastoral care seeks to surround itself and avail of those tools which help individuals in their search for understanding, meaning and purpose in their lived circumstances. The ministry of pastoral care does not exist or is exercised within a vacuum. Arguably, it is best enabled in its task by its study and application of knowledge from the human, physical, psychological, and social sciences. As Woodward and Pattison note, "[T]he new knowledge that is coming from psychology, from psychiatry, from anthropology, and from other sources is not easy to assimilate; but its riches are such that no thoughtful person can set them aside."[111] Knowledge from such varied sources can positively and benevolently bear upon the ministry of care, help, and healing. In this endeavor, random and eclectic use of information and knowledge is best avoided but based on a theology of pastoral care which has at its core, church and minister as shepherd. In this regard, the various human sciences can help the Christian community provide a more integrated, appropriate pastoral care in a manner which does not undermine the individual autonomy and mission of both the human sciences and pastoral theology. For example, it helps undermine the "false bifurcation that many now believe to represent the relation of psychology and theology." [112]

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[110] C. Gibson, *Relational Ministry: Integrating Ministry and Psychotherapy* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2016), 24-25.

[111] J. Woodward and S. Pattison, Op. Cit, 33.

[112] Ibid, 34.

Chapter Five

Towards A Pastoral Care: A Theoretical Consideration Based On Some Fundamental Aspects of Psychotherapy

The entire island of Ireland has witnessed enormous changes to its socio-political and religious landscape, especially over the last four decades. During this period, a number of dynamics have converged to undermine the traditional political influence and moral authority of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland. For example, a series of constitutional and legal changes, though slow, have represented the diminution of the Church's influence in the political sphere, what with the decriminalization of homosexuality in 1993, the success of the Referendum to legalize divorce in 1995, the legalization of same-sex marriage in 2015, and the legalization of abortion in June of 2018. Contemporaneously, the deluge of abuse scandals involving priests, religious brothers, and sisters of the Catholic Church continues to be a profoundly painful, open wound. In recent decades, people have 'spoken with their feet', with church-attendance plummeting and vocations to the priesthood and religious life in continuous free fall. The net effect provides for an increasingly dismal landscape, with depressing consequences for clergy, religious, and laity alike, notwithstanding the drain of moral capital built up in the previous decades, particularly in the areas of education, healthcare, and social welfare.

Within this dour landscape, with both Catholic Church and State more diligently and vigilantly putting in place appropriate and more entrenched safeguards for the

protection of minors and vulnerable adults from sexual abuse, some lonely, isolated

figures live furtively in the background. Clergy and religious child sexual abusers are

treated with just about complete disdain and contempt by most members of Irish

society. Compassion appears not to feature much on their spiritual and emotional

radar. Notwithstanding the legitimate anger and calls for accountability and

responsibility for those who have sexually abused minors and vulnerable adults, there

seems to be little thought given to the provision of pastoral care to such men – for the

most part – who have led dysfunctional and broken lives, often for decades prior to

being apprehended and held accountable by the legal and judicial system in Ireland.

Arguably, in Ireland, the traditional dyadic relationship between the mother and

the church system, built upon by seminaries and houses of formation of religious

congregations, systemically disrupted the development of a healthy God image in

some priests. Particularly in times past, how many mother's self-concept as women –

notwithstanding the role of other adult, or parental/father figures – have had their

incongruous God concept and God image significantly and deleteriously impacted by

the traditionally pervasive and dominant role of the Catholic Church in Ireland? While

it is impossible to quantify, it could be argued that its influence, with accompanying

social expectations, had an emotional and spiritual influence in how the traditional

Irish mother and parental figures related with their children.[1] Again, arguably, how

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[1] In a departure from previous studies, Ian Birky and Samual Ball, in their paper "Parental Trait
Influence on God as an Object Representation," in *The Journal of Psychology* 122, no.2 (1987); 133-
137 noted that on the basis of research they carried out that individuals God image rating was more
closely correlated with a composite parental image rating, that is, viewing the parents as a single unit.
They contended that, based on their research, this was because such a composite image of God
included the salient traits of both the idealized and non-idealized parent. They argued that for the God
image to be more fully understood, the influences of both parents needed to be examined as a
composite and not only as singular representations themselves. Consistent with the developmental
hypothesis of Object Relations theory, which includes the use of representation acquired within the
context of significant relationships, previous researchers, including W.C Roof and J. Roof, "Review
of the Polls: Images of God among Americans," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 23
(1984), 201-204., H. Nelson, N.H. Cheeck, Jr, Pau. "Gender Differences in Images of God," *Journal*

many priests and male members of religious congregations lived an unhealthy, unwholesome, unhappy, emotionally insecure, bifurcated life? This dissertation does not seek to establish or prove a correlation between Church and mothers or parental figures, in their parental role and future child sexual abuse. Rather, it is suggesting that the traditional, enmeshed relationship between the Church as system and the traditional role of the mother, or parental figures such as 'composite' parenting patterns have likely negatively affected the God image of an unquantifiable number of priests and male members of religious congregations, some of whom have sexually abused children and minors. It is within this context that this chapter hopes to address the provision of pastoral care based on some basic theoretical concepts of psychotherapy in an attempt to heal the God Image of such individuals. It will focus on psychoanalytic and cognitive therapies notwithstanding the benefit of integrative psychotherapy which will be alluded to later.

This chapter hopes to outline some spiritual and psychotherapeutic themes which may be of help in the pastoral care of priest-members of religious congregations in Ireland who have sexually abused minors and vulnerable adults in the course of their previous, active ministry. At this juncture, it's important to briefly reiterate that the historical, overarching reach of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland extended into the realms of parental relationships and family life[2], and the already alluded-to realms

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for the Scientific Study of Religion 24 (1985), 396-402, attempted to determine the comparative extent to which parent representations give rise to an individual's God image. Birky and Ball however, illustrated that an individual's composite God image rating was significantly closer to the God rating than were the singular representations.

[2] F.J. Stalfa, in "Vocation as autobiography: Family of origin influences on the caregiving role in Ministry," *Journal of Pastoral Care* 48, no. 4 (1994): 374, makes the argument that the "parentification" of children, that is, children prematurely occupying parental roles is a childhood feature of many priests and religious. Such children are absorbed into such roles in order to support the real or perceived needs in the functioning of the parents. A characteristic of the future priest or religious is feeling over-responsible for others and the lack of care for self. Similarly, C.R. Benyei, in *Understanding Clergy Misconduct in Religious Systems: Scapegoating, Family Secrets and the Abuse of Power* (New York: The Heyworth Press, 1998), 37, holds that with the neglect of personal needs

of politics and society at large, particularly in education and healthcare. Therefore, the provision of an appropriate format of pastoral care needs to be sensitive to the longstanding, deeply-rooted influence of the Catholic Church in Ireland, beginning within the family of origin and the process of education and socialization, which was heavily influenced by the customs and mores, the laws and regulations of the Catholic Church. Arguably, compounded with the model of Church presented and insisted upon, a sad and tragic permeating thread of continuity remained in the life of many adherents, both lay and ordained alike: a damaged God image. In addition, with the absence of attention to the human sciences, and notwithstanding its inter/ personal effect, the Roman Catholic Church's traditional emphasis on rules and regulations, on conformity, and its dysfunctional understanding of human sexuality, have invariably led to an unhealthy, unfocused experiential relationship with God for both lay and ordained. This posture became systemically entrenched and more acute for those who entered seminaries and religious houses of formation. However, this is not to suggest that such centers automatically facilitated and encouraged clerical child sexual abuse. Here, it is important to note that the vast majority of candidates in religious houses of formation and seminaries did not go on to sexually abuse children, minors or vulnerable adults. Further studies in the future might shed some light on why some candidates abused while others did not do so, having gone through the same formational and informational system.[3] In addition – and as was shared with me

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and care, such clergy are "other-directed," that is, they minimize their own need for care and attention and overly-focus the needs of others; M. Keenan in *Child Sexual Abuse & the Catholic Church*, 155-156, also notes that in her work with a small group of clerical child sexual abusers in Ireland, more than half of the participants described their childhoods as characterized by parental disapproval and shame, some experienced the fear of not meeting parental expectations, others, keeping emotional distance to avoid parental disapproval, still others, spoke of relating in a submissive and self-effacing manner.

[3] Keenan, 70.

anecdotally by a priest of a religious community in Dublin – most pedophiles do not accept that what they did was wrong and harmful to their victims. He went on to add that most abusers would not typically seek help. Also, in times past, many victims of abuse did not get the help they needed from religious leaders whose concern, in hindsight, was the preservation of the reputation of the Church. It is also clear that priests, and members of religious congregations, who sexually abused children and minors were reassigned to different locations or ministries. Such practice has helped to considerably undermine the confidence and trust of many churchgoers – notwithstanding the larger community – in the ministry of pastoral care in the Roman Catholic Church.

Currently in Ireland, there is no known uniform or harmonized pastoral plan for clergy and male members of religious congregations who have sexually abused minors and vulnerable adults. Emphasis seems to be placed on the legal requirements of restrictive measures and supervision. In the politics of (clerical) child sexual abuse in the Roman Catholic Church, and in Western society at large, with its emphasis on legal and personal accountability and punishment, there seems to be little or no provision for hope in the life of the clerical child sexual offender. In the absence of hope, with its increased likelihood of despair, the web of personal and interpersonal pain and suffering may become more pronounced. Without undermining the gravity of pain and suffering for the sexually abused victim, compassion toward the clerical child sexual offender is a Christian imperative. This is not a denial of sexual crimes committed or a diminution of the legal expectations of accountability and responsibility but rather, helps provide opportunities for clerical child sexual offenders to rebuild, redirect, and refocus their lives with some degree of hope for the future as individuals loved by God. Clerical child sexual abuse represents a very small

but seriously dysfunctional group who pose an equally serious threat to children and minors. Such offenders warrant interventions that include significant monitoring and constraints and need to be prohibited from being in contact with children and minors. Therefore, a plan of psychospiritual pastoral care can never be separated from accountability by the law. Legal compliance by the abuser and pastoral care are not mutually exclusive. It also helps provide the foundation of an appropriate pastoral plan which will also be cognizant of the multifaceted, complex phenomenon of clerical child sexual offending[4] of which, arguably, the elements, both individually and collectively contribute toward a distortion of the image of God in the life of the clerical child sexual offender. In the formulation of a pastoral plan, this distorted God image will be the object of an appropriate spiritual and psychotherapeutic response. From a spiritual perspective, the plan of pastoral care will begin with a brief review of the pastoral literature of Hope (with reference to Howard John Clinebell, Charles V. Gerkin, and Donald Capps), and will be followed with a reference to Jurgen Moltmann's theology of Hope and C.S Snyder's psychology of Hope. In order to further the pastoral importance of hope, the dissertation will allude to the concepts of

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[4] M. Keenan, 90-94; here Marie Keenan points to the limitations of single factor psychological theories in the explanation of child sexual abuse and calls for the inclusion of more social and context specific factors. She notes that, historically, the literature in the psychiatric sciences mainly focuses on classifying child sexual abusers according to the major diagnostic classifications for sexual disorders as delineated in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the American Psychiatric Association*. She adds that the absence of precise definitions for presenting behaviors may tend to make diagnosis more subjective, though outlined within a context of objective and scientific certainty within the field of psychiatric literature. In this regard, she advocates for increased attention on the development of an understanding, an explanation of child sexual abuse that is 'particular, localized, and context-specific' in order to provide therapeutic interventions to meet specific needs. For the purposes of clerical child sexual abusers in Ireland, this would include not only on a singular emphasis on psychotherapeutic approaches alone but in the examination of, and the influences of longstanding and powerful life-forming influences such as parental and composite parental God image in traditional family life, the predominant spiritual and religious role of the Roman Catholic Church in Irish society, and the process of formation and information in seminaries and in religious houses of formation. The latter category of focus would include attention given to the stratification of power, the abuse of power, the pre-eminence of rules and regulations, emotional and psychospiritual development, clerical identity, celibacy and celibate lifestyle, and masculinity from a clerical celibate perspective.

forgiveness, self-forgiveness, and God's forgiveness, with reference to their benefits for mental and physical health. The final spiritual section will look at the concept of the God image. From a psychotherapeutic perspective, it will focus on Psychodynamic and Cognitive psychotherapeutic modalities. This part of the dissertation will begin with looking at the healing of the God image of offender priests of religious congregations.

A Brief Review on the Pastoral Literature of Hope

Simon S. M. Kwan suggests that pastoral theologians "began systemically constructing a pastoral theology of hope" towards the end of the 1970s,[5] noting the publication of Howard John Clinebell's *Growth Counseling: Hope-Centered Methods of Actualizing Wholeness*.[6] Some years later, emphasizing his belief that individuals have within themselves the ability to achieve their fullest potential and "strive toward a beautiful future,"[7] Clinebell underlined the human and pastoral significance he attributed to hope. He stated that "[G]rowth counselling is much more than a set of techniques. It is at its heart, a basic orientation toward people – a growth and hope-centered way of perceiving, experiencing, and relating to them. The growth-hope perspective is more essential than any particular technique."[8] He saw hope as the power that drives people to escape from the net of despair and provides people with the strength to cope when their confidence fades. He viewed counselling as fanning

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[5] S.M.M. Kwan, "Interrogating "Hope" – The Pastoral Theology of Hope and Positive Psychology," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 14, no. 1 (2010), 49.

[6] H.W. Clinebell, *Growth Counseling: Hope-Centred methods of Actualizing Wholeness* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1979).

[7] H.W. Clinebell, *Counseling for Spiritually Empowered Wholeness: A Hope-Centered Approach* (New York: The Haworth Press, 1995), 10.

[8] Ibid, 54.

the "spark of hope into a flame of energy for change by using a variety of methods such as believing that people have the power to change, coaching them to use their own desire to change, encouraging those in despair to imagine that they are launching their goals, affirming those actions that make things better (including minor progress), and relating with care and confidence."[9] Charles Gerkin, a pastoral theologian of note, is another figure of importance in the evolution of a theology of hope in the 1980s with the publication of his book, *The Living Human Document: Re-Visioning Pastoral Counseling in a Hermeneutical Mode.* Gerkin viewed life as a pilgrimage through which an individual experiences life through a series of stories.[10] Through counselling, Gerkin contends that clients can retell their own stories and attach them to the eschatological story of the Christian faith, helping them restore their eschatological identity.[11] In doing so, those confused, disoriented, or 'lost' may be better helped to reconnect with their past and future, with the community within which they live, and regain "the hope of life and re-open themselves to an active and positive possibility" within God's eschatological purpose.[12] Therefore, with individuals viewing themselves, their past, present and future as part of the unbroken, integrative wholeness of God's purpose, hope is future-oriented and life-changing. Hope can sustain life in despair and adversity. S. Kwan notes that, since the 1990s, and strongly influenced by positive psychology,[13] the pastoral literature of hope has

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[9] Ibid, 30-31.

[10] C.V. Gerkin, *The Living Human Document: Re-Visioning Pastoral Counseling in a Hermeneutical Mode* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984), 61.

[11] Ibid, 69-70, 103-117.

[12] Ibid, 110-112.

[13] According to Martin Seligman, in "*Building Human Strength: Psychology's Forgotten Mission*," (APA online 29, no.1 (1998), psychology had three distinct missions prior to world War II: curing mental illness, making the lives of all people more productive and fulfilling, and identifying and nurturing talents. He contends that after the war ended, psychology became increasingly focused on mental disorders with emphasis on victimology, and mental health problems, http://www.apa.org/monitor/jan98/pres.html (Accessed, May 10, 2019). Consequently, accordingly,

increased dramatically.[14] C.S. Snyder conceptualizes hope as the summation of two

kinds of thinking involved in the achievement of goals: willpower and waypower.

Here, hope is a kind of perception, perceiving that the things desired eventually will

happen. If it is discovered later that the things desired do not happen or the pathway

followed is not effective, the individual will set another relevant goal or try another

pathway. In addition, because hope is to make people full of positive emotions and

advance them toward the goals that have been set, it is the power that brings positive

changes and achievements.[15] Hope is future-oriented, virtue-rooted, and goal-

focused.[16]

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as outlined by James E. Maddux, in "Stopping the Madness,": Positive Psychology and the Deconstruction of Illness Idealogy and the DSM," in *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, eds. C. Snyder and S.J. Lopez (New York: Oxford Press, 2002), 14, clinical psychology operated on a foundation of four assumptions: psychopathology, clinical problems, and clinical populations differing in kind, not just in degree, from normal problems in living, nonclinical problems and nonclinical populations; psychological disorders are analogous to biological or medical diseases and reside within the individual; the clinical task is to identify (diagnose) the disorder (disease) within the person (patient) and prescribe an intervention (treatment) that will eradicate (cure) the internal disorder (disease). Positive psychology challenges this disease model of human functioning and behavior, reversing the focus on pathology and emphasizes that individuals possess inner strengths and have abilities to cope with problems. It regards individuals as inherently good and virtuous. Alongside the previously mentioned Handbook of Positive Psychology, among the most notable works in the field of positive psychology are, C. Peterson and M.F. Seligman, *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook of Classification* (Washington, DC: APA, 2004); A. D. Ong and H.M. Van Dulmen, *Oxford Handbook of Methods in Positive Psychology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); and, C.S. Snyder and S.J. Lopez, *Positive Psychology: The Scientific and Practical Explorations of Human Strengths* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Press, 2007)

[14] Reputed scholars of this era include D. Capps, "The Pastor as Bearer of Hope," *Consensus* 20, no. 1 (1994): 75-89; D. Capps, "The Pastor as Agent of Hope," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 23, no. 5 (1996): 325-335; Andrew D. Lester, *Hope in Pastoral Care and Counseling* (Louisville, KY: Westminister John Knox Press, 1995); Everrett L. Worthington, *Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling: A Guide to Brief Therapy* (Downers Grove, Ill: Intervarsity Press, 1999).

[15] C.R. Snyder, J. Cheavens, and S.T. Michael, "Hoping," in *The Psychology of What Works*, ed. C.R. Snyder (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 205-231.

[16] S.M, Kwan, 61.

Donald Capp's Theology of Hope

Capps proposes that hope is the most basic experience one can have as a human being and suggests that it is cultivated in people's lives at an early age.[17] He contends that hope refers to two similar but not identical concepts: hoping and hopes. He holds that "hoping is the perception that what one wants to happen will happen, a perception that is fueled by desire and in response to felt deprivation."[18] Hoping is a means of seeing the development of things. It is an imaginative projection of the future. It neither declines when things do not happen as one wishes nor disappears when one's imagination is rejected by others, because hoping, which is not fueled by proof, is fundamentally unexplainable.[19] Hopes are "purposeful, giving focus and intentionality to desires by envisioning anticipated outcomes."[20] According to Capps, when we hope, we envision eventualities that are not yet realities. These not-yet realities drag the future into the present moment and project the present self onto the image of the future. Such an image that moves between the present and the future, alongside the discrepancies between the two, forms a force that can enable a person to make decisions to change the present.[21] Hopes are one's envisioning of what is realizable. Such a "possibility" is not a calculation based on reality, but on "seeing" an openness of the future, the recognition of the role of the self in forming the future, and the belief that hopes are realizable.[22] In addition, hopes involve risks because when hopes are

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[17] D. Capps, *Agents of Hope: A Pastoral Psychology* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1995), 28-51.

[18] Ibid, 53.

[19] Ibid, 54-58.

[20] Ibid, 64.

[21] Ibid, 64-70.

[22] Ibid, 71-75.

not ultimately realizable, they can result in shame and hurt. Hope based on erroneous evaluations lead to unrealizable goals while neglecting those which are realizable. Hope can also prevent a person from enjoying and appreciating the present. Sometimes, people will expend great efforts to enable the actualization of hope, irrespective of the costs.[23]

According to Capps, despair is the polar opposite to hope. The reasons he lists for despair – the absence of hope – include setting unrealizable goals for the future, both because they are beyond reach and because they prevent someone from seeing alternative goals which may be more achievable in the short term. Moreover, people may tend to rely on others to realize their goals. When, for whatever reason, those persons or skills cannot actualize those goals, people fall into despair. Capps contends that the goal is to help despairing people reset goals that can be achievable in the short term, to redirect such people to those individuals who can help them realize those goals previously seen as unimportant, and to understand that many hopes are realized fortuitously and providentially, and not through one's own effort.[24] Capps also sees a close relationship between "goal" and "hope."[25] Capps points out three virtues that are allied to hope: trust, patience, and modesty.[26] Trust is a quality of life and a belief in eschatology/God, so that a person can insist that all things are orderly and have ultimate assurance. According to Capps, trust can prevent people from falling into

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[23] Ibid, 75-78.

[24] Ibid, 99-107.

[25] This connection between "goal" and "hope" is based on Capp's appreciation of the work of psychiatrist, Frederick Townes Melges who advocated future-oriented and goal-focused therapy in his book, *Time and the Inner Future* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1982), 42.

[26] These three are traditionally regarded as virtues by Capps in *Agent of Hope*, 161. The Christian tradition has long been understood hope as one of the three theological virtues together with the virtues of faith and charity.

despair.[27] Patience, as opposed to passively waiting, connotes persistence. Rather than abandoning goals, it involves moving forward in the effort to achieve them in the midst of difficulties and setbacks.[28] Modesty involves the elimination of irritability, with the ability to accept restraints and limits, and the acknowledgement of personal limitations. It involves the "letting go of failed hopes and of the self who envisioned them."[29] Therefore, in Capps' understanding, hope is future-oriented, virtue-rooted, and goal-focused. Hopeful people can see and believe that deeply desired things will happen and can, consequently, move forward with patience. In addition, they possess a spirituality that can withstand the failure of their goals and further redirect them to other goals. Hopeful persons are positive, not only having clear goals and who work hard toward their future, but they also trust the finitude of things. Therefore, they can redirect themselves to other possible goals when one goal cannot be achieved. Some psychotherapeutic implications for priests who abuse children and minors will be alluded to later in the chapter.

A Brief Look at Jurgen Moltmann's Theology of Hope and C.R. Snyder's Psychology of Hope – A Possible connection

Hope is a virtue fundamental to Christian faith. It came to prominence with the publication of Jurgen Moltmann's *Theology of Hope*.[30] It was influenced by his experience as a prisoner of war in World War II, where he was both a witness to

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[27] Capps, *Agent of Hope*, 138-147.

[28] Ibid, 148-154.

[29] Ibid, 154-164.

[30] J. Moltmann, *Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology*. Translated by J.W. Leitch (New York, Harper & Row, 1967).

oppression and suffering and experienced a hope for liberation.[31] He observed that those with hope fared the best. A great comfort was the realization that hope becomes possible because God's justice reconciles the suffering of the afflicted. Moltmann's theology of Hope is rooted in eschatology which emphasizes both past and present, death and life, cross and resurrection, and which views the realization of God's promise not as the end but as the beginning.[32] For Christians, living in hope orients oneself to focus simultaneously on the present and the future. This is not to ignore the past but to integrate it in the present with a focus on the future, not only of our here-and-now human existence as we experience it but also of life in its fullest in eternity with the Creator. From a Christian and psychological perspective, such a posture is profoundly important for all of us – as imperfect, incomplete and sinful individuals - who seek to live the Gospel, including for those priests who have sexually abused children. Contrary to the commonly-held perspective of eschatology which emphasizes a theology of the end of times, Moltmann describes it as a forward-thinking, future-oriented theology rooted in hope, particularly that which focuses in the full redemption of creation. It is a theology embedded in the resurrection. "The authentic Christian expectation of the future has nothing at all to do with final solutions…for its focus is not the end: the end of life, the end of history, or the end of the world. Instead, the focus of truly Christian eschatology is the beginning: beginning of true life, the beginning of the Kingdom of God and the beginning of the new creation of all things."[33] He also contends that the doctrine of eschatology guides

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[31] J. Moltmann, "Response," in Hope for the Church: Moltmann in Dialogue with Practical Theology. Translated by T. Runyon (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1979).

[32] S. E. Hoover-Kinsinger, "Hoping Against Hope: An Integration of the Hope Theology of Jurgen Moltmann and C.R. Snyder's Psychology of Hope," *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 37, no. 1 (Winter 2018): 313.

[33] J. Moltmann, "Hope in a Time of Arrogance and Terror," *International Congregational Journal* 3 (2003): 158.

all of Christian life because it is the resurrection which provides meaning in life. The future is more important than anything that has occurred in the past or any events occurring in the present. However, an emphasis on the future promise of fulfilment does not serve as an excuse from participating in the present. If it is, in fact, a theology of hope, eschatology provides an impetus and challenge to engage in the present, including with its current problems and dysfunctions – personal, social and global. In order to live with hope in the present with its myriad of challenges and problems, Moltmann's theology of hope is found in looking to the future "and the promise of reclamation of creation."[34] The Christian "who awaits the Kingdom of God, lives in the present as a disciple of healing and hope, nurturing and engaging in transformative acts of redemption in God's creation."[35] However, this future-orientation does not encourage apathy or inertia in the present; rather, it requires opposition to and the diminution of current injustices "in anticipation of a fully reconciled world."[36] As Moltman says of Christian hope, it is "forward looking and forward moving, and therefore also revolutionizing and transforming the present."[37]

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[34] S. E. Hoover-Kinsinger, 314.

[35] Ibid., Creation and its integrity was an indispensable element of Moltmann's theology of eschatology. The kingdom of God serves as a bridge concept between eschatology and creation in the thought of Moltmann. Through humankind's acts of faithfulness – the pursuit of justice, peace and liberation from oppression - spread across the entirety of creation, the kingdom of God is unfolding, and moving toward its fullest expression. Creation serves as an integral element of the coming of the kingdom of God. Through the power of God, the earth is infused with, contains something of the power of God itself. It is the locus through which God's salvific plan for humankind begins and unfolds. Through the life, death and resurrection of Christ, the earth is eternally reborn. Creation, as with all of humankind is permeated with the life-giving power of God. Because Jesus Christ is God enfleshed, the Cosmos, the earth that God created takes on a new significance as Christ's kingdom has become immersed within the confines of human time and space, not for its ultimate destruction, but for its restoration and recreation, a process which has already begun on this earth. Moltman writes, that faith "sees in the resurrection not the eternity of heaven, but the future of the very earth on which his cross stands," *Theology of Hope*, 21.

[36] Ibid.

[37] J. Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 16.

For Moltmann, everyone who believes and hopes is *vocatus,*[38] offering one's life for service in the work of the kingdom of God.[39] Hope is call-oriented and active. It is engaged in and with the messiness and problems of current reality. Therefore, the Christian Church has a three-fold mission: worldwide mission, thirst for righteousness, and redemption of the broken."[40]

   Psychologist, C.R. Snyder, in a manner which might be helpful in further illustrating an appropriate psychospiritual pastoral care for priests who sexually abuse children, sought to outline and provide an operational, psychological definition of the virtue of hope, complementary to that outlined by Moltmann. Literature in the area of positive psychology describes a virtue "as a psychological process that can have adaptive effects on the thoughts and behaviors of an individual and society."[41] C.R. Snyder contends that psychological hope is one such process which consists of two cognitive traits – agency and pathways – reciprocally aiding one another in service of a desired goal for which one is positively motivated.[42] With having established specific, even challenging, yet realizable goals, certain enduring and measurable components are crucial in defining and sustaining hope: the will, the expectation, and the resolve to meet these goals (sometimes referred to as *agency* or willpower), and the ability to produce and utilize means by which these goals will be reached (sometimes referred to as *pathways* or waypower). *Agency*, or willpower, is the

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[38] S. E. Hoover-Kinsinger, 321: *Vocatus* is a Latin term which refers to being summoned with an urgent call.

[39] J. Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 330.

[40] S.E. Hoover-Kinsinger, 315.

[41] Ibid, and taken from M.E. McCullough & C.R. Snyder, "Classical sources of human strengths: Revisiting an old home and building a new one," *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 19 (2000) 1-10.

[42] C.R. Snyder, "Hope: Goal-blocking thoughts, and test-related anxieties," *Psychological Reports* 84 (1999), 206-208, https://dx.doi.org/2466/pr0.1999.84.1.206 (Accessed January 1, 2019).

cognitive perception that goals *can* be attained through one's efforts, as well as the resolve to do so. It is not enough to initiate a process to achieve goals; one must also possess staying power until the goal is reached, particularly if efforts are impeded or frustrated. *Pathway*s of hope are positively related to a number of coping behaviors including problem-solving, planning, and positive thinking.[43] These skills enhance efforts to develop routes to goal completion and success, especially when attempts are blocked. Setbacks, failures or blocks are construed as feedback in the planning of another way forward to reach the desired goals. Pathways-thinking involves actions, as well as the important thoughts that guide them. It involves a refusal to give up. This mindset with its refusal to give up in adverse situations is not unlike Moltmann's description of the Christian imperative to persist in the face of challenges.[44] Those who put their trust in a crucified and resurrected Christ are instilled with the hope of both a new life here and in the future. Whereas Moltmann's theology of hope stresses primarily a corporate, collective call, Snyder sees hope as a personal process. Goals are self-identified, agency is derived from one's reflection on and beliefs about the self, and pathways are generated through one's own cognitive processing of possibilities, alternatives and actions. Initially, at this stage, any sense of the possibility for the integration of the theological and humanistic, psychological understanding of hope might seem unworkable. However, a reconciliation between these two understandings of hope may be suggested. Moltmann's corporate or collective (Christian Church) hope claims that God's promise of a reconciled future exceeds any human effort to right wrongs or remove present-day suffering. Christian hope is possible not because of human efforts, but because God has offered a vision of

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[43] S.E. Hoover-Kinsinger, 319.

[44] J. Moltmann, *Hope in a Time of Arrogance and Terror*, 158.

a perfect future time. Individual, psychological hope, as proposed by Snyder, recognizes that one's present condition is imperfect, unfinished and in need of restoration. This emphasis on an incomplete task with work to be done offers some prospect of integration between the theological and psychological understandings of hope. Christians live with a resurrection belief: when we falter, we try again. Matters of importance such as engaging with the kingdom of God, with all its accompanying crests and trough experiences, both in the present and in the future, are likely to invite the acquirement or the development of pathway-resources beyond the capacity of any person. Here, it is important, as in the case of the agency of hope, to identify those pathways of hope for believers who are struggling, including those priests who have sexually abused children.   In this regard and contingent to hope, are the experiences of forgiving and healing. Prior to outlining a psychotherapeutic approach in the healing of the God image of priests who have sexually abused, the next sections will look at the spiritual concepts of forgiveness and healing. It will begin with some brief allusions to the literature which suggests connections between physical and mental health and forgiveness.

Forgiveness and Healing

Using four concepts, and with reference to scientific literature, this section suggests a connection between the experience of forgiveness and improved mental and physical health.[45] The scientific study of forgiveness has flourished in the past 20-

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[45] C. vanOyen Witvliet, "Forgiveness and Health: Review and Reflections on a Matter of Faith, Feelings, and Physiology," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 29, no. 3 (2001): 212-224; B.J. Griffin et al., "On Earth as it is in Heaven: Healing Through Forgiveness," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 42, no. 3 (2014): 252-256.

25 years. Most of this research has focused on the victim of an offense.[46] However, little attention has been given to the perspective of the perpetrator. Little is known about the experience of the perpetrator after committing the offense. Here, it's important to note that throughout society as a whole, notwithstanding throughout the Catholic Church, what concern or compassion that might have existed for clerical child sexual abusers would have been profoundly undermined by the disastrous and dangerous ways the problem of clerical child sexual abuse was handled by the Church's religious leadership. Furthermore, however, and alluded to earlier in the dissertation, the provision of pastoral care to clerical child sexual abusers does not discount the importance of justice being served on behalf of those abused and their families, and indeed, to the church community and society as a whole. Justice is a constitutive element of the Gospel. Perhaps, this is because the predominant focus on an understanding of forgiveness is placed on the person doing the forgiving.[47] However, here, from the perspective of the perpetrator, it will allude to the health outcomes with an experience of God's forgiveness; forgiveness from others; forgiveness of the perpetrator; and self-forgiveness, a theme which is particularly pertinent to the theme of this dissertation – priests of religious communities who sexually abuse children.

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[46] David J. Jennings II et al., "The Transgressor's Response to Denied Forgiveness," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 44, no. 1 (2016): 16.

[47] Ibid, 17.

God's Forgiveness

God's redemptive agenda hinges upon divine forgiveness and is embodied in Christ. The centrality of Christ in the gift of God's forgiveness to humankind is aptly summed up by Dietrich Bonhoeffer when he wrote:

> Our concern is with real man [sic], sentenced and made new. The real, sentenced and renewed man exists nowhere else save in the form of Jesus Christ and, therefore, in the likeness of this form, in conformation with him. Only the man who is taken up in Christ is the real man. Only the man who suffers the cross of Christ is the man under sentence. Only the man who shares in the resurrection of Christ is the man who is made new. Since God became man in Christ all thought about man without Christ has been a barren abstraction."[48]

The death of Christ has atoned for all of human sinfulness, committed through its own brokenness. This is particularly evidenced in the parable of the prodigal son (Lk. 15: 11-32). The son was treated as though he never sinned. The forgiveness of human sin through God's initiative is summed by P.S Fiddes when he writes, "[T]he gospel stories of Jesus seem to show his taking an initiative which is characteristic of forgiveness, offering acceptance even before there is a sign of sorrow in the offender, in the hope that repentance will be evoked."[49] In Romans 5:8, this is emphasized by the Apostle Paul by saying that Christ has died for us while we are sinners, and alerts us to the fact that in the suffering of Christ on the cross, it was God who took the responsibility for humankind's offense against him by sharing in the human suffering that results from these offences. The aim of forgiveness is reconciliation, and the cross

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[48] D. Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, translated by N.H. Smith (London: SCM Press, 1964), 110.

[49] P.S. Fiddes, "Salvation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, eds. J. Webster, K. Tanner, and I. Torrance (Milton Keynes: Lightning Source, 2010), 91.

as an event of reconciliation focuses both on the suffering of God and of humankind. The second coming of Christ represents the completion of the reconciliation between God and humankind, and within all of humankind, but "this reconciliation is impossible without the act of forgiveness demonstrated in the here and now."[50]

As God has forgiven us, we are called to do likewise. "An unwillingness to forgive others becomes an impediment for God's recreative work in a person's life."[51] God's forgiveness to us, embodied in Christ, sets an example for humankind to forgive. While forgiveness, given the particular circumstances of pain caused, is not always easy to offer, nevertheless, through the experience of the Holy Spirit, our own personal experience of God's forgiveness calls us to extend forgiveness to others who have hurt us. When one forgives another as God forgives, something of God's life and love is manifest in a very special way. It not only has an ameliorative and healing effect on the person who offers forgiveness but on the person who is forgiven. In this way, a person becomes a co-worker of God, not only in their own individual recreative act, but in the life of another also.

From a Christocentric perspective, the courage and the willingness of the believer to forgive is entrenched in the knowledge of self being accepted and forgiven by Christ. As Hans Kung once wrote, "[A]cceptance is absolute, without inquiry into the past, without special conditions, so that the person liberated can live again, can accept himself (sic) – which is the most difficult thing, not only for the tax collector. This is grace: a new chance in life."[52] In this context, the courage and willingness of the

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[50] F.P. Moller, "Forgiveness: A Christocentric Perspective," *die Skriflig* 49, no. 1 (2015): 4. https://dx.doi.org/10.4102/ids.v49i1.1938 (accessed January 19, 2019).

[51] Ibid.

[52] H. Kung, *On being a Christian*. Translated by E. Quinn (Glasgow: William Collins, 1986), 279.

forgiver is based on the self-awareness of being sinful and broken, and conscious that Christ has taken the sin and brokenness of both the forgiver and forgiven upon Him. Both the willingness to offer forgiveness and the actual giving thereof is accomplished in the name of Christ. This implies to acknowledge what Christ has done in this regard in offering forgiveness. The believer may offer forgiveness only because Christ has died for the transgressions of the offender. Actual forgiveness of sin is performed by God alone and granted in his Name. No human being has the power to absolve sins. The Roman Catholic sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) – based on John 20:23 – is done in the name of Christ. J. Macquirrie states, "[T]hough the priest may use the words, 'I absolve you,' the language makes it quite clear that he does it only in the name of God and by the commandment given to him to announce the forgiveness of sins."[53] This is also confirmed by the Catholic theologian, R. Cantalmessa, when he wrote, "[T]he church only carries out a ministry: it is the Holy Spirit that transforms the sinner and makes the sinner justified."[54]

From a Christian perspective, the First Testament (Old Testament) sacrifices for the forgiveness of sins were, not religious acts standing on their own authority, but were foreshadows of what Christ would have done on the cross. "The blood of a sacrificial animal could not as such take away a person's sins (Heb 10:4). Only God could do that, and he has done it on Golgatha."[55] In the New Testament, it is clear that forgiveness could only take place through Christ who would have died for the sins of the world. "John 1:29 says: 'The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and

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[53] J. Macquirre, *Paths of Spirituality*, 2nd ed. (London: SCM Press, 1992), 139.

[54] R. Cantalmessa, *Come, Creator Spirit: Meditations on the Veni Creator*, translated by D. Barrett and M. Barrett (Pretoria: Protea Book House, 2003), 126.

[55] F.P. Moller, 6.

said: "Look the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."[56] Forgiveness finds its fulfilment and actual meaning in the death of Christ on the cross. In other words, forgiveness offered to another person can only be done on account of what Christ has done in this regard.

Although psychological inquiries that examine feeling forgiven by God are only beginning to gather momentum, centuries of theological sources illustrate that God's redemptive plan begins with divine forgiveness in the lives of individual Christians and within the Christian community as a whole. However, what has been written highlights an immediate and very human, and indeed, spiritual dilemma between the *real* and the *ideal.* Ideally, there are two essential components of genuine self-forgiveness, as opposed to pseudo-forgiveness. Firstly, the acknowledgement of responsibility for one's behavior, in this case, child sexual abuse by the cleric. Secondly, genuine forgiveness involves being ethically, morally, and legally held accountable according to the prescripts of civil law and not only Church law. This does not exclude accountability of religious leaders of religious communities and dioceses, an issue already alluded to in Pope Francis' *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* (You Are The Light Of The World). In reality, from the troves of research, there are clerical child sexual abusers who contend they have done nothing wrong and/or won't admit they have caused egregious damage to the victim, and consequently, to their victims' families. Therefore, the issue arises as to what extent such offenders can be viewed as having experienced genuine self-forgiveness. Genuine or not, the question is whether it can make a difference in the life of the victims. Further studies in this regard may shed some light.

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[56] Ibid.

Forgiveness from Others

Notwithstanding God's forgiveness, with reference to Scripture, the Christian tradition encourages members of the faith who have committed wrongdoing to acknowledge them and to seek forgiveness by the body of believers (Eph. 4.32; James 5:16). Romans 7:14-25 holds that one's conversion to the faith does not immediately exempt one from committing or suffering wrongdoing. Yet, empowered by the Holy Spirit, the Christian community seeks to emulate God's forgiveness by extending interpersonal forgiveness to each other in order to preserve unity within diversity, and in conflict (Eph. 4:1-6). Interpersonal forgiveness between Christians is fundamentally rooted in the forgiving character of God, as manifest in the person of Jesus Christ. Christian philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, maintained that humans are spiritual creatures; the process of becoming a person only genuinely occurs in communion with God and with others. For Kierkegaard, one's relationship with God and others is intimately bound by the Christian ethic of love. "To love God is to love oneself truly; to help another person to love God is to love another person; to be helped by another person to love God is to be loved."[57] Evidence to support the claim that receiving forgiveness from others is associated with improved health outcomes has been emerging in recent years. G.C.B. Lyons and colleagues found that feeling forgiven by others predicted increased positive outcomes, such as purpose and engagement in life, as well as reduced negative outcomes (such as resentment) among

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[57] S. Kierkegaard, *Works of Love*, translated by H.V. Hong and E.H. Hong (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 107.

individuals who were receiving faith-based rehabilitation services, for substance abuse disorders, for example.[58]

Forgiveness to Others

Theological evidence compels Christians to forgive others. For example, God's forgiveness provides a template by which Christians learn to forgive within the Christian community and in society at large. As C.S. Lewis wrote, "[T]o be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you."[59] Emphases on forgiveness and community are essential to the Christian faith. Insofar as people bear the image of God, the goal of personhood is to live in community with one another and with God, as opposed to existing in isolation (1 John 1:13). Among the community of believers, an integral thread in holding the fabric of Christian community together is forgiveness. Christ charged his followers to live according to the principles of love and forgiveness so that all people might recognize the eschatological Kingdom of God by how Christians treat each other (Mt. 5:43-48; John 13: 34-35). The Apostle Paul reiterated this idea when he argued that Christians must imitate Christ in their relationships with one another in anticipation of the Lord's return (Phil. 2:5-11). In addition, Paul also said that Christians possess a ministry to reconcile all people to God's forgiveness available in Christ (2 Cor. 5: 18-19). Therefore, it is a Christian's ministry of forgiveness to all human beings, believers and non-believers alike, that establishes people of faith as instruments of God's forgiving work. Investigations of trait forgiveness, that is one's disposition to forgive,

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[58] G.C.B Lyons et al., "Spirituality and the treatment of substance abuse disorders: An exploration of forgiveness, resentment, and purpose in life," *Journal for Addiction Research and Theory* 19, no. 5 (2011): 459-469.

[59] C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory: And other Addresses* (New York: Harper Collins, 1949/2001), 182.

regardless of circumstantial details, dominate the forgiveness-health literature.[60] Here,

numerous studies link trait forgiveness to lower levels of depression, anxiety, and

hostility.[61]

Self-Forgiveness

Self-forgiveness does not imply the absence of accountability, responsibility and

restraint. Indeed, the theme of E.L. Worthington's book *Moving Forward: Six Steps to*

forgive Yourself is the contention that responsible self-forgiveness entails managing

the spiritual and social consequences of wrongdoing, before turning to the

psychological consequences that might occur as a result of violating one's moral

standards or failing to meet one's self-expectations. Among the benefits associated

with practicing responsible self-forgiveness is the amelioration of debilitating health

outcomes that result from chronic negative emotions such as regret, anger, shame and

self-condemnation.[62] Notwithstanding the burgeoning volume of material available on

interpersonal forgiveness, the same cannot be said of self-forgiveness or intrapersonal

forgiveness. In this regard, Hall and Fincham refer to self-forgiveness as the

"stepchild of the forgiveness literature."[63] In addition, there are different definitions

found in some of the different genres of literature. In the social sciences literature,

self-forgiveness focuses on "self-love and respect in the face of one's own

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[60] J.H. Hall and F.D. Fincham, "Self-forgiveness: The stepchild of forgiveness research," *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 24, no. 5 (2005): 621-637.

[61] Studies include K.A. Lawler-Row and R.L. Piferi, "The forgiving personality: Describing a life well-lived?" *Journal of Personality and Individual Differences* 41, no. 6 (2006): 1009-1020; B. Messey, L.J. Dixon and M.S. Rye, "The Relationship between Quest Religious Orientation, Forgiveness, and Mental Health," *Journal of Mental Health, Religion and Culture* 15, no. 3 (2012): 31-39.

[62] E.L. Worthington et al., "Forgiveness, health and well-being: A Review of evidence for emotional versus decisional forgiveness, dispositional forgiveness, and reduced unforgiveness," *Journal of Behavioral Medicine* 30, no. 3 (2007): 291-302.

[63] Hall and Fincham, 621.

wrongdoing."[64] In the philosophy literature, self-forgiveness focuses on a restoration of self-respect.[65] For example, M.R. Holmgren contends that self-forgiveness consists of three elements: an objective fault or wrongdoing; negative feelings triggered by this offense must be overcome; and an internal acceptance must be achieved.[66] In the psychology literature, self-forgiveness has been viewed as "a willingness to abandon self-resentment in the face of one's own acknowledged objective wrong, while fostering compassion, generosity and love toward oneself."[67]

Conscious of the disparity in the literature regarding forgiveness and self-forgiveness, Hall and Fincham describe "self-forgiveness as a set of motivational changes whereby one becomes decreasingly motivated to avoid stimuli associated with the offense, decreasingly motivated to retaliate against the self (e.g., punish the self, engage in self-destructive behaviors etc.) and increasingly motivated to act benevolently toward the self."[68] They go on to add that "[U]nlike interpersonal forgiveness, in self-forgiveness, avoidance is directed toward the victim and/or toward thoughts, feelings, and situations associated with the transgression. When this type of behavior is achieved, such avoidance is unnecessary because the offender is at peace with his or her behavior and its consequences. Retaliation and benevolence in both self-forgiveness and interpersonal forgiveness are focused toward the offender."[69] This understanding of self-forgiveness as motivational change rests on the assumption

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[64] Ibid.

[65] R.S. Dillon, "Self-forgiveness and self-respect," *Ethics* 112 (2001): 53-83.

[66] M.R. Holmgren, "Self-forgiveness and Responsible Moral Agency," *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 32 (1998): 75-91.

[67] R.D. Enright, "Counseling within the forgiveness triad: On Forgiving, Receiving Forgiveness, and Self-Forgiveness," *Counselling & Values* 40, no. 2 (1996): 115.

[68] Hall and Fincham, 622.

[69] Ibid.

that the offender both acknowledges wrongdoing and accepts responsibility. The realization of wrongdoing and accepting responsibility generally initiates feelings of guilt and regret, which must be fully experienced before one can move toward self-forgiveness. Those efforts to forgive oneself "without cognitively and emotionally processing the offense and its consequences are likely to lead to denial, suppression, or pseudo-forgiveness."[70] Pseudo-forgiveness is the failure to admit wrongdoing and accept responsibility. True self-forgiveness can be an uncomfortable, long and arduous journey requiring much inner strength, self-examination and honesty. In contrast, pseudo-forgiveness involves self-deception and/or rationalization in which the offender does not claim and own their behavior or its consequences. It's important to note here that self-forgiveness does not signify disrespect toward the victim(s), and is only appropriate after the offender is forgiven by the victim(s). Self-forgiveness is only disrespectful to the victims when it takes the form of pseudo-forgiveness, in which case the offender does not appreciate the gravity of their actions and the consequences. When an offender acknowledges and accepts responsibility for wrongdoing and is willing to apologize or make restitution to the victim(s), self-forgiveness is not a sign of disrespect.[71] Therefore, arguably, receiving forgiveness from the victim(s) is not required for genuine self-forgiveness to be appropriate. Nevertheless, this is a very sensitive issue, with no easy answer.

The journey toward self-forgiveness involves motivational changes and is driven by cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes or factors.[72] In the history of psychological literature, there has been scant work done concerning the relationship

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[70] Ibid, 627.

[71] Ibid, 628

[72] Ibid, 629.

between guilt, shame, and self-forgiveness. However, for some decades now, Helen Block Lewis' distinction between guilt and shame has emerged as one of the most dominant conceptualizations, as outlined in her seminal work, *Shame and Guilt in Neurosis*.[73] This is in large part because her work in this area has received strong empirical support from a range of both quantitative and qualitative studies.[74] Hall and Fincham state that "Guilt can be assessed as a state or trait, and it involves tension, remorse, and regret resulting from one's actions. Guilt is 'other-oriented' in that it focuses on one's effect on others. Guilt fosters other-oriented empathic concern and motivates the offender to exhibit conciliatory behaviors toward the victim, such as apologizing, making restitutions, or seeking forgiveness."[75]

As opposed to guilt, which focuses on one's behavior, shame is focused on the self. As Lewis noted, "the experience of shame is directly about the *self*, which is the focus of evaluation. In guilt, the self is not the central object of negative evaluation, but rather the thing done or undone is the focus. In guilt, the self is negatively evaluated in connection with something but is not itself the focus of the experience."[76] As with guilt, there is likely a negative association between shame and self-forgiveness. However, whereas guilt may promote conciliatory behavior toward one's victim(s), shame is more likely to promote the self-destructive intentions associated

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[73] H.B. Lewis, *Shame and Guilt in Neurosis* (New York: International University Press, 1971); Lewis contends that the differentiating factor between shame and guilt is the individual's interpretation of the role of the *self*. With guilt, the *self* pronounces judgement on its activity; with shame, the *self* pronounces a more summary judgement on the inadequacy of the *self* itself; a helpful article in highlighting the difference between guilt and shame and its implications for mental health and psychotherapy is S. Parker and Rebecca Thomas, "Psychological Differences in Shame vs. Guilt: Implications for Mental Counselors," *Journal of Mental Health Counselling* 31, no. 3 (2009): 213-224.

[74] Such works include J. Tracey et al., eds. *The Self-conscious Emotions: Theory and Research* (New York: Guilford Press, 2007).

[75] Hall and Fincham, 630-631.

[76] H.B. Lewis, 30.

with failure to forgive the self because the offender may view the offense as a reflection of their self-worth. Shame may motivate an avoidant response that is consistent with a lack of forgiveness. Therefore, the negative association between shame and self-forgiveness can be stronger than the relation between guilt and self-forgiveness. From a behavioral perspective, seeking forgiveness from the victims of a transgression can play an important role in the offender's self-forgiveness. Apologies and other conciliatory behaviors toward the victims may serve the function of easing the offender's guilt about the offense or transgressions. "An apology (and hence also a confession) is a gesture through which the individual splits himself [sic] into two parts, the part that is guilty of an offense and the part that dissociates itself from the deceit and affirms belief in the offended rule."[77] Witvliet and colleagues contend that when offenders imagined seeking forgiveness from someone they had hurt, their perceptions of self-forgiveness increased, and their basic and moral emotions improved. Here, conciliatory behavior toward one's victim may promote self-forgiveness by absolving an offender of their guilt.[78] There is also some preliminary evidence to suggest that perceived forgiveness from God/Higher power is positively associated with self-forgiveness.[79] Therefore, arguably, perceived forgiveness from both the victim and a Higher Power is positively related with self-forgiveness.

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[77] G.I. Gold and B.Weiner, "Remorse, Confession, Group Identity, and the Expectancies about Repeating Transgressions," *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 22, no. 4 (2000): 292.

[78] C.V. Witvliet et al., "Please forgive me: Transgressor's Emotions and Physiology during Imagery of Seeking Forgiveness and Victim's Responses," *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 2, no. 3 (2002): 219-233.

[79] J.M. McConnell and D.N. Nixon, "Perceived Forgiveness from God and Self-Forgiveness," Journal of Psychology and Christianity 31 no. 1 (Spring, 2012)< 31-39

The God Image

In an effort to work toward an understanding of 'God Image,' perhaps it can be best approached by contrasting it with the 'God concept.' The God concept is the intellectual understanding of God, an understanding helpfully and extensively outlined by R.T. Lawrence.[80] It is based on what is traditionally taught about God in churches, some scripture studies, catechism classes, religious education classes, homilies, and so forth. The God concept is an objective and abstract understanding of God. On the one hand, many individuals brought up within the Christian tradition have a God concept that is characterized by love, strength, and wisdom. On the other hand, the God image is the personal, experiential, emotional, and subjective relationship with God.[81] From a pastoral and theological perspective, the picture of the God concept should be no different from the picture of the God image. However, in almost innumerable instances, among God-believing individuals, the opposite is the case. In times past right up to the present, a pivotal incongruity between the God concept and God image has existed, with seriously negative repercussions for so many individuals of successive generations of God-believers. To understand this incongruity, it might be helpful to briefly review how the God Image evolves.

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[80] R.T. Lawrence, "Measuring the Image of God: The God Image Inventory and the God Image Scales," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 25 (1997): 214-226.

[81] Glendon Moriarty and Louis Hoffman write of the inconsistent use of language in the description of emotional experiences of God with the use of such phrases as, 'God representation,' God 'schema,' 'God concept,' and 'God Image.' They go on to add that the term 'God image' is the one most cited in research, theory, and development of this topic. In addition, they refer to the semantic confusion between the God Image and the image(s) of God which, they argue are related, but distinct constructs. Already alluded to in the body of the text, the former speaks of the way a person emotionally or relationally experiences God. The latter refers to graphical or mental pictures or images of God. Further information on these two related, and distinct constructs can be found in G. Moriarty and L. Hoffman, *God Image Handbook For Spiritual Counselling and Psychotherapy: Research, Theory, and Practice* (Binghampton, NY: The Haworth Press, 2007).

Theoretical Development of the God Image

The God image has a rich psychoanalytical history beginning with the works of
Sigmund Freud. His general theory of religion is well known. He contended that
religion is a collective neurosis in which humans engage, because they are not willing
to accept that the universe is an impersonal and miserable place. Rather than
"rationally" and "maturely" facing this "truth," humans imagine a loving God who is
interested in who they are and concerned with their well-being.[82] For Freud,
Christianity is an immature wish fulfilment. It is the result of a lack of courage to
stand up to the truth that life is a difficult and lonely existence. One of Freud's main
theoretical constructs that is closely associated with the formation of the God image is
the Oedipus complex. As noted by psychologist, Glendon Moriarty, for Freud, this
complex usually begins and ends between the ages of four and six.[83] It is
characterized by an intense longing to have the parent of the opposite sex completely
to oneself. This desire gives rise to wishes of destroying the parent of the same sex.
These primal desires are too overwhelming for the child, and he or she fears that the
parent of the same sex will retaliate and cause them harm. This anxiety is too intense,
so the child represses his or her desires for the parent of the opposite sex. However,
before repressing his desires, a boy feels "a jealous rage against his mother for her
rejection…and this…gives rise to a wish to get rid of her (kill her) and to be loved by
his father in her place."[84] The energy is then focused on the father. The previous
feelings are now felt about the mother, and the boy fears that she will harm him.
Hence, the intense feelings for both parents become repressed. Once this occurs, the

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[82] S. Freud, *The Future of an Illusion* (London: Hogarth Press, 1927), 5-56

[83] G. Moriarty, Psy. D., *Pastoral Care of Depression*, 4.

[84] C. Brenner, *An Elementary Textbook of Psychoanalysis* (New York, NY: Anchor, 1973), 109.

boy realizes he cannot live out his omnipotent fantasies, and the Oedipus complex is resolved. As a result of this resolution, the parental images are introjected into the psyche, which results in the formation of the superego – that is, the mostly unconscious, and moralistic aspect of the personality which internalizes the standards and expectations of parental and caregiving figures. This developmental time is also pivotal for the formation of the God image. It is at this time that the image of the parents and the superego become merged with the cultural idea of God. In the unconscious these representations merge and form the God image throughout the human life cycle. If the Oedipus complex is not resolved and repression does not occur, the children then have residual conflicts. For boys, if the charge for the father is not sublimated, then it resurfaces in his relationship with God. The longing for the father gets transferred onto God and manifests in a highly emotional relationship with God. Such individuals are overly concerned with their God image and are preoccupied with trying to win God's approval.[85] This occurs when a male's relationship with his father is broken or absent. Freud, who focused solely on males regarding this issue, observed that the religious zeal dwindles once the father, or father-surrogate, re-establishes a relationship with the man. Much of the energy that connects the person with his God image is then channeled away from the God image toward the father or father surrogate. As a result, the man's interest in his God image decreases as his emotional relationship with his father, or father surrogate, increases.[86] However, the Oedipus complex is no longer seen as the centrepiece of psychodynamic thought. While the internalization process that it speaks about is still viewed as relevant, the accompanying conjectures of deep longing and intense fears are now largely

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[85] G. Moriarty, 46.

[86] Ibid.

discounted, and the "emphasis is now on the drive to relate rather than on the instinctual urges that Freud originally posited with such certainty."[87]

David Winnicott, psychologist, helped to further evolve our understanding of the God image.[88] Unlike Freud, he focused on the mother-child relationship. He conceptualized infants as dependent, amorphous forms who grow out of the mirroring love of the mother. Mother-child relationships are unique in that the mother is connected to the child in a way that allows her to 'magically' meet her infant's needs before they are expressed. This synchronicity enables infants to believe that they and the mother are one. This omnipotent feeling is necessary to the healthy development of infants. As infants grow, they are gradually able to tolerate increasing amounts of frustration. As the children are weaned, they begin to realize that they are separate from their mother and are able to differentiate between *me* and *not me*. According to Moriarty, it is at this time that the infants move into an intermediate realm of experience.[89] Winnicott refers to this intermediate experience as *transitional space* and defines it as "[A]n area that is not challenged, because no claim is made on its behalf except that it shall exist as a resting-place for the individual engaged in the perpetual human task of keeping inner and outer reality separate yet interrelated."[90] It is the space between the external and internal worlds. This space is neither completely subjective nor completely objective, but instead incorporates aspects of the two. Central to this developmental stage is the discovery of a transitional object which can take on a variety of forms – usually a stuffed animal or blanket. The object

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[87] Ibid.

[88] D.W. Winnicott, Playing and Reality (New York, NY: Tavistock, 1971).

[89] Moriarty, 47.

[90] Winnicott, 2.

symbolizes the mother. It soothes and reduces anxiety and helps infants navigate through the new experience of separating and individuating. This transitional space is the locus within which the God image may be experienced. "This allows the God image to be validated by others because it exists outside the self and to be personally meaningful because it is experienced inside the self."[91] M.H. Spero has suggested that our relationships with our caregivers provided us with a relationship template through which we connect with God. Through this process, a person projects his or her parental images onto his or her God image, which then connects with the real God. The real God, along with the projected images, communicates back with the person. As a result of this communication, he or she internalizes a modified, healthier God image.[92]

The Development of the God Image

 The following is based on the work of Ana-Maria Rizzuto and found in summary form in Moriarty's *Pastoral Care of Depression.[93]* For the most part, parents who are religious engage in a series of rituals before and after the birth of their child beginning with the naming of the child and a subsequent dedication and welcoming ritual. For Christians, this is witnessed in the Sacrament of Baptism. It is accompanied with parent's dreams and plans for the future life of the child. Here, the mother-child relationship will determine whether children think that others, the universe, and God can be trusted. Here, the word *mother* encompasses labels such as father,

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[91] Moriarty, 48.

[92] M.H. Spero, "Parallel Dimensions of Experience in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy of the Religious Patient," *Psychotherapy* 55, no. 2 (1990): 233-247.

[93] Moriarty, 49-53; A-M. Rizzuto, *The Birth of the Living God* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1979).

grandmother, or primary caregiver. It is not restricted to what is traditionally thought

with mention of the word *mother*. Trust is conveyed through the attitude of the mother

for the child. If the mother loves, accepts, and meets the needs of the child, then the

child concludes that others, the universe, and God can be trusted. When trust is

experienced by the child, the child feels safe. This sense of trust facilitates the child's

internal drive toward individuation involving the slow separation from the mother. If

the child does not feel safe, it experiences the need to remain close with the mother. It

will not grow and separate from the mother, but will instead feel that growth is bad

and that if they separate from their mother, bad things will happen to it. This stage is

considered as pivotal with its impact on the God image. Children, later as adults, will

play out this same pattern with God. If they can trust their mother, then as adults they

will experience God as mature and loving. If they cannot trust their mother, they will

later experience God as a needy parent that demands too much. Consciously or not,

their experience will be characterized by great fear that if they grow too much or

become too independent, then God will be unhappy and abandon them. This same fear

marked their early experience of their mother. Children then enter the next transitional

stage, which is marked with the development of the imagination. Here, the world

becomes dotted with a variety of creatures including elves, witches, monsters, and

superheroes. Such imaginary creatures are used in play and fantasy to help children

adapt to their internal and external world. During this magical, fantasy world of the

child, God is introduced. In time, children realize that unlike their imaginary

creatures, God is taken seriously through the conversations parents have with them

about God, attending places of worship among others, listening to the music, the

singing, seeing the presiders in their role. Through all of this information, children

begin to shape their image of God. From the behavior of adults and environmental

cues, children realize that God is apparently in charge of everything, is all-powerful, and is all-knowing. Children know only two people who fit the same category: mom and dad. Out of necessity, children craft their God image in the likeness of their parents. If the parent-child relationship is healthy, then the God image will be healthy. If the parent-child relationship is pathological, then the God image will be pathological.

The next stage, and alluded to previously, is the oedipal phase which also has implications for the development of the God image in children. In a healthy family, children are able to successfully navigate the conflict surrounding their intense feelings for the parent of the opposite sex. The child slowly comes to the conclusion that that they cannot have the parent of the opposite sex all to themselves. With the accompanying sense of loss with this realization, the child unconsciously transfers feelings to the parent of the same sex. Now, the child hopes to gain all the attention of that parent. In time, the child realizes that this will not happen either until later years with an adult relationship with the parents. At this point, the child sees parents from a more objective posture. At this time also, a conscious differentiation between parents and God occurs. The child now knows that its parents cannot hear its internal dialogue but believes that God can. The child who grows up in a dysfunctional family has a much more difficult time with this conflict. With the child's basic needs not having been satisfied, it will not be able to let go of the desire to wholly possess another. Consequently, the child will constantly seek out others in an attempt to complete himself or herself. This feeling of wholeness will never be fully captured, and as the child moves into adolescence, it will lock onto its God image in an attempt to satisfy this deep longing, a longing which will never be fully achieved. Contrary to Rizzuto, however, there are studies to suggest that the self and the God image are not fixed in

childhood but can significantly change through therapy in adulthood.[94] Most

traditional psychanalysts believe that the self and the God image are fixed at age six,

but most psychodynamic theorists now believe, and research has shown, that the self

and the God image can undergo significant change through psychotherapy.[95]

  According to Moriarty, though there doesn't exist a unified agreement as to what

constitutes the 'self,' nevertheless, it is possible to make some observations about it.

He contends that it is the means by which individuals maintain a sense of constancy

with their past, present and their expected future.[96] It serves as a filtering system

which hones in on important information at the expense of other information. It is a

metaphorical pair of lenses that focuses us on information that confirms our self-

understanding and to ignore information that is contrary to our self-identity. Some

decades ago, P.L Benson and B.P. Bilka argued that the 'self' influences the way

individuals experience God.[97] They added that individuals with high self-esteem had a

positive God image, whereas those with low self-esteem had a negative image. If

individuals have a high self-esteem, then it is likely they will feel that God loves

them. If they had a low self-esteem, then "it is likely they will feel that God does not

love them."[98] In addition, individuals' sense of self and how "God feels" about them

exhibits a consistency. When the 'self' changes, the God image will change along

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[94] S.E. Cheston, R.L. Piedmont, B. Eanes, and L.P. Lavin, "Changes in Clients' Image of God over the course of Outpatient therapy," *Counseling and Values* 47 (2003): 96-108. The authors found that short-term psychotherapy, without explicit intervention to change the God image, helped clients experience the God image as significantly more loving and compassionate.

[95] Moriarty, 53.

[96] Ibid, 57.

[97] P.L. Benson and B.P. Bilka, "God image as a function of Self-esteem and locus of Control," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 13 (1973): 297-310.

[98] Moriarty, 58.

with it.[99] Again, going back some time, yet still pertinent, John Bowlby's Attachment

theory also focuses on how development of the 'self' and the God image are impacted

by the way that infants bond with their caregivers.[100] The way in which the mother or

primary caregiver interacts with the child causes it to develop a secure attachment

style. If the caregiver is cold, distant, inconsistent, or abusive, then the child will

develop an insecure attachment style. Such attachment styles are stable and stay with

the child throughout childhood and adolescence, and into adulthood.[101] Within this

context, and with regard to the previously-mentioned pattern of consistency, it is

possible to suggest that individuals with secure attachment styles would have a

positive relationship with God.[102]

The God Image and Depression

It is contended that individuals with depression – with its characteristics of

worthlessness, guilt, fear of rejection, and perfection – experience God in a similar

manner to how they experience(d) parents.[103] Moriarty would argue that some

individuals, at least, with depression come from homes in which their parents were

experienced as cold, distant, neglectful, preoccupied and/or abusive. Children need to

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[99] Ibid.

[100] John Bowlby, *Attachment and Loss*, vol. 1 (New York: Basic Books, 1969)

[101] C. Hazen and P.R. Shaver, "Romantic love conceptualization as an Attachment process," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 52 (1987): 511-524.

[102] However, the universality of this is brought into question by a few writers who contend that some individuals, at least, who have, or have had and insecure relationship with their parents or caregivers exhibit a demonstrable spiritual behavior and report a close relationship with God. For example, L.A. Kirkpatrick and P.R. Shaver in "Attachment Theory and Religion: Childhood Attachments, Religious Beliefs and Conversion," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 29, no. 3 (1990): 315-334 account for this paradox by offering to what they refer to as a compensatory theory. This theory holds that when individuals experience deficits in early relationships, they attempt to compensate for these through a highly personal relationship with God.

[103] Moriarty, *The Pastoral Care of Depression*, 18-21, 60-63.

feel that their parents love and care for them in order to feel safe. When they do not feel this, children turn their anger inwards and begin to believe that they are the "problem." This is an attempt to justify their parent's anger or harmful behavior. In an effort to win parental love, such children seek to become "perfect." As children continue to develop and move through adolescence and into adulthood, these kinds of patterns are recreated in other relationships, including their relationship with God. Such individuals will use their God image as a means of continuing where their parents ended, maintaining the underlying feelings that result in depression and accompanying previously-mentioned feelings. Individuals who are depressed may feel that God sees them as worthless. Consequently, they may also feel worthless and a burden to God. Similarly, the God image of those who are depressed may evoke a lot of guilt. The pathological God image is that of one who keeps a ledger of faults and failings, thus compounding their sense of guilt. The fear of rejection they associate with God has its roots in the rejection they may have felt or experienced from their parents or caregivers. For some children, it might have become apparent that they were to repress their own strivings in order to please their parents. Their parents were so insecure as to realize that they could let their children be independent and still love them. As a result, individuals who are depressed transfer their parents' insecurity onto God and feel that any time they grow or become more autonomous, God is going to abandon or reject them. Such individuals attempt to win God's love, motivated by the same threat used by their parents - that is, if they are not perfect, they will be abandoned and rejected. When they fail in their attempt to be perfect, they feel the intense pain of rejection that they originally experienced from their parents, only perhaps more intensely and frequently with God. In their world, the only way to defend themselves against deep feelings of guilt and rejection is to maintain a state of

perfection. With what has been briefly stated, the question of the possibility of the reconciliation of one's false god(s)[104] with an experience of a loving God emerges. M.R. Jordan notes that there are false gods - not as obvious as those of power, prestige, alcohol, narcotics, and patterns of behavior developed with the purpose of easing emotional pain -which are not as evident and are based on the subjective emotional experience of God that individuals craft from their early experience of their parents. In a desired, healthy situation as humanly as possible, one's God Image and our experience of a loving God, that is, God concept would be one and the same. However, clearly, this is not always the case. There are those with the proclivity to tune into negative messages from our internal critical parents and discern them or believe them to be an experience of God with its accompanying negative and life-sapping attributes. It is within this context that a psychotherapeutic process may be seen as a means by which the God may be changed to a healthier, more accurate reflection of God's love. The emotionally and psychologically maladjusted God image is in need of attention in the pursuit of some degree of psychological and spiritual integration. In this endeavor, an initial God image assessment may be beneficial.

Toward an assessment of the God Image

An assessment of the God image of the religious/priest (hereafter client) is important, because it enables a therapist to develop a sense of the problems with a client's relationship with God. With its focus towards wellness and healing, it provides an opportunity to address the incongruity between the client's concept of

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[104] M.R. Jordan, *Taking on the Gods: The Task of the Pastoral Counselor* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1986), 29-34.

God and God image. Such an assessment is significant for a number of reasons:[105] it

allows a vague problem to be refined more specifically; it provides direction by

showing the therapist where the problem resides; it allows for determination of the

influence of various factors that affect the God image and helps clarify the possible

difficulties for change; it provides for the reinforcement and affirmation of the

positive aspects of the God image, which could be used to stimulate or increase client

growth and development. Client's strengths are an integral part of the client's life and

can influence the types of interventions used to help heal the God image; an

appropriate understanding of the God image helps develop a treatment plan tailored to

the needs of the client; and it allows the therapist and client measure how much the

latter's God image has changed over the course of the psychospiritual therapeutic

process.

The God image assessment interview may be a semi-structured protocol that

focuses on the client's presenting problem, God image, personal history, and spiritual

information. While the interview is not a substitute for a full biopsychosocial

assessment,[106] nevertheless, it can be used in conjunction for a more in-depth clinical

interview. Here, it's important to note that basic to any assessment are the core

conditions outlined by noted clinician, Carl Rogers.[107] He contended that the core

conditions of congruence, unconditional positive regard, and empathy form the

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[105] Moriarty, 103-105.

[106] J. Miller, *The First Interview: Revised for DSM IV* (New York, NY: Guilford Press, 1985): 7-20, provides a very detailed outline of the wide variety of areas covered in a biopsychosocial first interview with a client. The topic of religion features in the assessment as it can reveal very important pieces of information about the client: clues to possible sources of support and comfort and may reveal something of the client's values and system of ethics. It may also suggest to what degree there has been a break with parents and/or family of origin with possible, consequent personal implications for the client.

[107] Alluded to in G. Moriarty, *The Pastoral Care of Depression*, 83-92.

backbone of any clinical interview and assessment. The therapist's role is to provide these core conditions for the client to remove those obstacles that impede growth and development. J. Feist and G. Feist state the analogy that "in order for a bell plant to reach its full productive potential, it must have water, sunlight and nutrient soil. Similarly, our actualization tendency is realized only under certain conditions. Specifically, we must be involved in a relationship with a partner who is genuine, or authentic, and who demonstrates empathy and unconditional positive regard or acceptance toward us."[108]

The essence of congruence is to be oneself, to be genuine. Becoming congruent is the opposite of wearing a mask, or trying to be someone one is not. It is about being authentic. Rogers himself said he was congruent when "whatever feeling or attitude I am experiencing would be matched by my awareness of that attitude. When this is true, then I am a unified or integrated person in that moment and hence I can be whatever I deeply am."[109] Unconditional positive regard, stated simply, means a non-judgmental attitude toward clients. Clients' thoughts, feelings, or behaviors are not evaluated as positive or negative. Again, Feist and Feist define unconditional positive regard as a "close relationship and that the therapist sees the client as an important person: "positive" indicates that the direction of the relationship is toward warm and caring feelings, and "unconditional" suggests that the positive regard is no longer dependent on specific client behaviors and does not have to be continually earned."[110] Empathy occurs when a therapist steps into the client's shoes and views the world through the client's eyes and imagines experiencing what the client experiences. The

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[108] J. Feist and G. Feist, *Theories of Personality* (Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 1998), 480.

[109] C. Rogers, 282.

[110] Feist and Feist, 470.

therapist sees, hears, and feels the client's world. "Empathy exists when therapists accurately sense the feelings of their clients and are able to communicate these perceptions so that the clients know that another person has entered their world of feelings without prejudice, projection, or evaluation."[111]

Congruence, unconditional positive regard and empathy converge to form a therapeutic alliance.[112] This alliance happens when the therapist and client have succeeded in forming a trusting relationship in which the client knows that the therapist is on their side and helps the client focus on pertinent issues. "If clients feel understood, accepted and liked by the therapist, they will more likely be successful."[113] Psychotherapist, Ed Tyler, deals at length with the two major components of the therapeutic alliance: connection and collaboration. In his *Process in Psychotherapy*[114], he emphasizes that through empathic listening and reflection an attachment is formed, a connection between the therapist and client that enables the latter to feel special to the former. This encourages the client to open up, trust, and become vulnerable with the therapist. In addition, it gives clients the ability to invite the therapist into their lives to help solve their problems. Similarly, in order for therapy to be effective, it has to involve active work on the part of both therapist and client. There needs to be a collaborative dynamic between the two of them. G. Egan states, "[H]elpers do not cure their patients (sic)…Helping is a two-person team effort

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[111] Ibid.

[112] D.G. Martin, "Basic Skill," in *Basics of Clinical Practice*, eds. D.G. Martin and A.D. Moore (Prospect Hills, IL: Waveland, 1995), 2-18.

[113] Ibid, 3.

[114] E. Tyler, *Interpersonal Process in Psychotherapy: A Relational Approach*, 3rd ed. (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1997).

in which helpers need to play their part and clients theirs. If either party refuses to play or plays incompetently, the entire enterprise can fail."[115]

Consistent with, and building upon the therapeutic relationship, it is then considered important to focus on the presenting problem(s), that is, the issue(s) prompting the client to seek or to accept help. From a spiritual perspective, some clients seek therapy with the goal of changing their God image, whereas others initially present for help with what seems to be an unrelated topic – loss of a loved one, a life transition of some sort – but shortly afterwards realize that their God image is interwoven with this issue and request help in changing their experience of God, their God image.[116] Regardless of how directly the client's God image is indicated in the presenting problem, a number of questions can be asked to help uncover the details of the client's emotional experience of God. With a view toward the ultimate development of an appropriate treatment plan, attention may be best focused on a number of main areas of the presenting problem: the precipitant, the duration, the frequency, and the severity. With the therapist providing the client with the opportunity to unburden, it may be then appropriate for the therapist to ask more detailed questions about the God image of the client. It is worth noting here that a client's God image does not exist in a vacuum but within an individual's personal and interpersonal history. Therefore, it is helpful to gather and analyze other personal information which may facilitate the therapist and client to draw other relevant inferences about the latter's God image. Aspects of the client's life such as family history, a history of intimate relationships (sexual or not), psychological history, and

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[115] G. Egan, *The Skilled Helper: A Problem Management and Opportunity-Development Approach to Helping* (Pacific Grove, CA: Wadsworth Press, 2002), 43.

[116] Moriarty, 106.

social history may be helpful in this endeavor. In the early stages of the therapeutic

relationship, it may also be very informative and productive to gain as much

information as possible about the family unit, as it yields much primary information

about the client's construction of the God image. It may also be helpful to explore

psychological issues, past or present, discovering whether they were ever resolved. A

variety of other areas may be included in a full clinical interview such as a medical

history, any history of substance history, educational background, and

ministerial/professional development. While some of the information gleaned may be

not so relevant, nevertheless, taken together, it provides a more composite,

understanding profile of the client.

An integral component of a God image assessment interview is the focus on

spiritual information and formation. This may be facilitated by looking at typical

spiritual problem-solving styles, religious supports, faith crises, and spiritual

practices. Some decades ago now, K. Pargament and colleagues identified three

different religious problem-solving styles[117]: *deferring*, in which the person does not

accept personal responsibility for solving problems but instead takes a passive role by

placing the responsibility onto God; *self-directing*, which occurs when the individual

assumes responsibility for and takes an active role in solving problems; and

collaborative, in which the individual assumes co-responsibility with God in the

resolution of problems. Once an assessment determines the client's religious problem-

solving style, tailored interventions can be developed to suit the preferred way of

coping. The area of religious/social supports (community) constitutes another area

worthy of assessment in the life of the client. Notwithstanding the inherent social

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[117] K.I. Pargament et al., "Religion and the Problem-Solving Process: Three Styles of Coping," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 27, no. 1 (1988): 90-104.

support – or not – the effort to facilitate psychospiritual growth and healing, the therapist has the important role to assess the impact of the process of formation and information of the religious community to which the client belongs. The details gleaned may be helpful in determining appropriate spiritual and psychological help and support structures. For example, does the client experience judgement, isolation, and rejection? Does the client experience support and encouragement personally, emotionally and spiritually? Are there any provisions made for focused help and support structures? Similarly, an assessment of the client's practice of a spiritual life – styles of prayer, meditation, use of Scripture, and worship – may be helpful in designing interventions that resonate with the client's preferred and comfortable moments or forms of relating with their God image. What has been gleaned in the initial assessment to gauge the presenting problem(s) helps provide a fuller understanding of the client's experiential relationship with God. Something is revealed of the client's God image.

The next section of the chapter focuses on the use of some Psychodynamic and Cognitive psychotherapeutic interventions in the healing of the God image. I chose these modalities in particular because they both deal with the cognitive, emotional, and relational dynamics, which may and may not be within individuals' awareness – that is, conscious and unconscious. While they view the human person in different ways, they both give valuable insights into the human makeup. Going back to infancy, to the early relationships with mothers or parental figures, molded by social expectations, and refined in seminaries and religious houses of formation, any attempt to heal the distorted, unhealthy and unwholesome incongruity between the God concept and the God image for priests of religious congregations who sexually abuse

children and minors will involve looking at longstanding cognitive, emotional, and relational dynamics, conscious and not.

Toward the Healing of the God Image

The field of psychotherapy can be characterized by the diverse range of modalities, or therapies applied in the treatment and care of clients. Some therapies call for an active and direct approach on the part of the therapist, others are less directive and emphasize the client as the 'locus of control' in the treatment process. Other therapies still variously, focus on identifying cognitive patterns, feelings or behaviors. In this regard a key goal for the therapist is to find ways to integrate these various but connected aspects of human experience including for clerical child abusers who belong to Catholic religious congregations. In fact, since the early 1980s, the field of psychotherapy has been characterized by a developing thrust toward integration.[118] Here, it is important to distinguish briefly between an 'eclectic' and 'integrative' psychotherapeutic orientation.[119] The former category is based on the possession and use of a range of therapies. Its danger lies in the absence of any overall rationale in the application of particular or series of techniques. Known as syncretism, not knowing the underlining knowledge and skills in selecting particular interventions eclectic therapy runs the risk of using any technique that seems to work without evaluating its effectiveness beforehand. Without a sound rationale, availing of various techniques also provides the possibility of ineffective treatment and harm to the client. The trend toward psychotherapeutic integration in practice with clients is aimed at undermining the sometimes rivalry in the past between therapies and to instead,

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[118] G. Corey, *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy*, 463.

[119] Ibid, 463-4.

working with the best of differing therapies, to advance more efficient treatment and care of clients and their particular personal contexts. In addition, there is increasing recognition that no one single theory is comprehensive enough to account for the complexities of human nature and nurture, particularly when the range of client types and their specific problems are taken into consideration. No one single theory has a patent on the truth and no one single set of counselling and psychotherapeutic skills is always effective in working with diverse population groups. However, an integrative approach does not mean that techniques selected from any particular therapy is an endorsement of the theories underlining them. Rather, it is based on a consistent theoretical, rationale and clinical framework or philosophy of human nature upon which to choose particular techniques. Here, crossing boundaries by developing integrative approaches holds promise for counselling and psychotherapeutic practice.

In endeavoring to outline a somewhat integrative psychospiritual pastoral care to clerical child sexual abusers who belong to Catholic religious congregations in Ireland, this dissertation will focus, broadly, on the fields of Psychoanalytic Therapy and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) without undermining the important of the role of feelings as emphasized in Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT). This is not to deny the positive contributions of the various other psychotherapeutic techniques but to focus, rather, on two therapies in particular. With regard to the latter therapy, notwithstanding the important, ground-breaking work of Sigmund Freud in the nascent days of psychoanalysis with his development of a model of personality development and his attention to intrapsychic factors that motivate behavior and the gratification of basic needs, and focusing on the role of the unconscious, emphasis will also be placed on more recent focus on the impact of deep seated, historical, interpersonal, and social roles and relationships going back to the early days of

childhood with parents and the family, and throughout the process of socialization in Irish society and in houses of religious formation and seminaries. This is reflected in the work of *Object Relations Theory* for example. From a philosophical perspective, It affirms the complex, conscious and unconscious dynamics at play in the life of any human being whatever their circumstances. It stresses the capacity of human beings to move toward wholeness and self-realization which involves exploring the conscious and unconscious aspect of one's personality, together with the influences of one's surrounding environment.

CBT is an insight-focused therapy that emphasizes the recognition and changing of negative thoughts and negative beliefs. It views the most direct way to change dysfunctional emotions and behaviors as being the modification of inaccurate and dysfunctional thinking. CBT teaches the client to identify distorted and dysfunctional cognitions through a process of evaluation. In collaboration with the therapist, clients learn the influence that cognition has on their feelings and behaviors. Clients are taught to recognize, observe, and monitor their own thoughts and assumptions, especially their negative automatic thoughts. The Socratic-style dialogue – asking open-ended questions and answers between client and therapist – typical of CBT – affirms a basic philosophical assumption that human beings are capable of realizing the detrimental influence of irrational thinking and its effect on the process of decision-making, and on the quality of their lives. In addition, CBT is a reminder that human beings can be active participants in their own destiny and take responsibility for their lives including through decision made. Notwithstanding the crimes committed by clerical child abusers attached to religious congregations in Ireland, and the need to be personally and legally held accountable, the two chosen therapies mentioned underline the philosophical assumption that there is the opportunity to

embark on a hopeful journey of discovery, a hopeful journey of self-realization and growth.

Some Psychodynamic Interventions

Attention in this section will focus on some psychodynamic interventions which could be useful in the healing of the God image. It will also allude to interventions considered helpful in helping clients identify and let go of maladaptive defense mechanisms. Psychodynamic therapists use basic techniques of *confrontation* and *interpretation* to increase the self-awareness of clients. They pursue this by working with preconscious and unconscious factors which influence conscious functioning. The purpose is to help clients "see" how unconscious thoughts and feelings affect their relationships with others and with God. "Confrontations call attention to something patients (sic) could be talking about, but are not…they go beyond what patients are immediately attending to, but not so far as to introduce possibilities from their unconscious."[120] This technique calls to attention those aspects of clients' statements that are contradictory. Clients may state they are very sad, while at the same time, they are smiling. For example, a therapist might say, "you are saying you are very sad, but you are smiling. That seems incongruent." A confrontation would point out such incongruences.

Psychodynamic therapists use *interpretations* to call attention to thoughts and feelings that are unconscious. People repeat interpersonal patterns in their relationships, but they are often unaware of the pattern they are recreating. Here, an "aha" moment is often a wake-up call or awareness of such a repetitive pattern.

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[120] I.B. Weiner, *Principles of Psychotherapy* (New York, NY: Wiley and Sons, 1998), 115.

Interpretations help clients see such patterns where before, perhaps, they saw only chaos and confusion. Interpretations allow clients to make connections from disparate or confusing experiences. Repetitive patterns such as putting oneself down, denial of one's own self-worth, trying to please others and keeping them happy, being consumed by guilt, and feelings of imperfection throughout one's web of relationships, indicate a thread of continuity within their personality which needs to be addressed. It is likely that the same pattern exists with the client's God image. The healing of the God image could be broached by directing attention to this permeating thread of continuity. However, caution needs to be exercised in the use of interpretations by therapists.[121] Here, the therapeutic alliance needs to be sufficiently strong for the client to consider what is being observed by the therapist. If it is not sufficiently strong, clients will not feel comfortable enough to consider what is being noted; interpretations should be relevant and directly relate to what is being discussed; and interpretations should be stated tentatively. They are not utterances of truth. Rather, they are subjective observations offered by one human being to another; observations should address defense mechanisms prior to addressing the underlying conflict – the repressed, threatening thoughts and feelings.

Psychotherapy provides clients with a new relationship in which they can experience themselves and the therapist differently.[122] As Moriarty notes, "[T]he therapist facilitates this new experience by getting hooked and unhooked. They get hooked by naturally falling into the client's interpersonal pattern and behaving in the same way everyone else does toward the client. They get unhooked by becoming

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[121] Ibid, 115-116.

[122] H. Levenson, *Time-Limited Psychotherapy: A Guide to Clinical Practice* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1995).

aware of this problematic pattern and offering a different, healing response to the client. Therapists keep the cyclical maladaptive pattern in mind and then act in ways that encourage the client to relate differently."[123] The first intervention encourages the client to explore feelings and thoughts about the therapist or the therapeutic relationship.[124] This helps clients articulate their transference. Historically, it is likely that the client would have been unable to express problems, concerns or negative thoughts to others, including parents, family, friends, colleagues, or other clergy for fear of criticism or rejection. The therapist provides the opportunity for acceptance of thoughts and feelings without judgement or dismissal. It also provides the client with the freedom to integrate, and not deny, negative thoughts and feelings. In the second intervention,[125] the therapist encourages the client to discuss how the therapist might feel or think about the client who will, initially anyway, likely project that the therapist feels the same way as others feel. Here, the goal is to provide the client with a new experience in which they feel accepted and cared for regardless of what they feel, think, or say. The third intervention[126] uses self-disclosure counter-transference reactions to help the client see how his behavior affects others. It's important for the therapist to note here, that the client can evoke the same feelings in the therapist that they evoke in others. The therapeutic goal here is for the therapist to become aware of this and then react in a manner that is healing. With the client's effort, therefore, to please the therapist, it's helpful to point out to the client that he is neglecting himself,

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[123] G. Moriarty, 146.

[124] H. Levenson, 241.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

putting himself down. The therapist points this out in a manner that is positive and affirming to the client.

Defense Mechanisms

Defense mechanisms help people manage anxiety by keeping threatening thoughts and feelings out of awareness. People often think and feel in ways that are incongruent with how they consciously perceive themselves. Such unacceptable thoughts and feelings cause intense anxiety. In order to defend against this distress, defense mechanisms are unconsciously triggered to keep the disowned feelings from becoming conscious. All individuals, healthy and unhealthy, use defense mechanisms on a regular basis. They are part of our human personality that helps us cope with stress. Denial, for example, helps individuals manage overwhelming crises by minimizing the gravity of the situation. However, defense mechanisms become unhealthy when they become overly relied upon. Defense mechanisms typically develop early in life to help children cope with situations that are out of their control. While many such mechanisms are helpful in childhood, they can become unhealthy afterwards. They become outdated because adults are no longer under the control of their parents. Instead they are responsible and capable of taking care of themselves. Nevertheless, because defense mechanisms have been repeated so many times throughout childhood, they become a central part of the adult's character and now operate outside of their awareness. For example, when they relate to those who demean them, they will not assert themselves. Instead, the anger they feel toward demeaning individuals will trigger defense mechanisms and cause the anger to be redirected back to the self. They will then feel that they deserve to be treated in this manner and blame themselves for relational problems. At their core, defense

mechanisms are behaviors that are problematic because they cause individuals to avoid functioning in a more adaptive, healthy manner.[127] In this regard, crafting interpretations that address how an individual's defense mechanisms impact their God image are crucial.[128] Many individuals who are depressed, for example, learn that anger is unacceptable. It is not uncommon for these individuals to experience suffering in life and consequently become angry with God. However, because their parents could not tolerate, or handle anger appropriately, they project that God cannot tolerate their anger. Thus, instead of owning their anger and expressing it to God, they repress it. Such clients might feel that God would be angry with them if they vented anger to him, a learned experience because of their early experiences with their parents and within the home. As a result, they unknowingly create a disingenuous and unhealthy relationship with God.

After the therapist and client have worked through a thorough understanding of the defense mechanism, it is important to help the client let go of it. Doing so can be one of the most difficult aspects of therapy, because it has been employed by the client since childhood. A number of steps can be helpful in the process of letting go of defense mechanisms.[129] The first step is to point out the "negative consequences of the defences." Defenses exact a strong toll by limiting a person's ability to emotionally experience life to the fullest. In addition, defences cause the repetition for self-destructive behavior. The second step is to help the client distinguish between the developmental origins of the defense and its current maintenance. Clients can more

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[127] L.M. McCullough-Valliant, Changing Character: Short-Term Anxiety-Regulating Psychotherapy for Restructuring Defences, Affects, and Attachments (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1997), 19.

[128] J.M. Strength, "Expanding Danvanloo's Interpretative Triangles to Explicate the Client's Introjected Image of God," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 26, no. 2 (1998): 172-187.

[129] Ibid, 164-171.

easily let go of their defences if they recognize that it was a valid childhood response that is no longer necessary. Seeing it from a historical perspective helps see that, while it was an essential and adaptive reaction in childhood, the threat has passed. If the client can be helped to understand that they no longer have to please a pathological parent (or in later years systemically inept formative and informative institutions such as a seminary or religious house of formation), then they will be more likely ready to let go of the defense. The third step is to "facilitate the expression of grief over losses caused by the defense pattern." Defenses deprive individuals by limiting their ability to freely relate to themselves, others, and God. Helping clients see how defensive behavior results in emotional and spiritual loss will help motivate them to give it up. The fourth step is to explore what the client gains from the defensive behavior. Defense mechanisms are inherently rewarding as they immediately decrease anxiety and restore the individual to a sense of psychological balance. Convincing clients to give up defences can be challenging for this very reason. However, helping them see that letting go of such mechanisms for more adaptive behavior will result in less anxiety in the long run and in an overall enriched emotional experience.

Consequent to helping the client let go of their defense mechanisms is the task of integrating the associated threatening feelings. Such feelings were initially experienced in childhood without any distress but eventually became paired with anxiety. This usually occurs:

> [W]hen children express a feeling that is unacceptable to their parents or caregivers, who then respond by emotionally distancing, rejecting, or abandoning the child. Children quickly learn that the experience of that emotion results in intolerable pain. When such intense pain is evoked, children

learn to repress or deny expression of that emotion at all costs. Soon this process becomes completely unconscious and the person experiences intense anxiety whenever the precursors of the feeling surface. As a result, the corresponding defense is triggered, which decreases the anxiety and brings the person back to a state of psychological balance.[130]

The intervention to integrate the client's feelings associated with their defences focus on reversing this process, so that they can feel threatening emotion without the corresponding anxiety. According to McCullough-Vaillant, this process has two main goals, "to break the tie between the anxiety and the threatening feeling, and to help the client integrate the threatening feeling back into their life by gradual exposure to increased amounts of the emotion."[131] Typically, this graded exposure helps phobic clients manage anxiety and overcome phobias by gradually exposing them to the feared object. This technique can also be used to help the client change their God image. Individuals who are afraid of owning their emotions with others are likely also afraid of owning their emotions with God. They may often feel that God will respond in the same way others have in the past. The use of the graded exposure technique with their God image may help them integrate their disowned feelings and change their personal experience with God. Moriarty outlines the steps of this technique in the following way:

> First, identify the threatening emotion. Next, ask the client to become aware of the God image. Then, encourage clients to experience the threatening feeling with their God image in mind. At this stage clients may get anxious or fearful. If this occurs, explore why they feel this way. Do they imagine God reacting in a certain manner? After they have explored it and the anxiety subsides, ask them to once again embrace the threatening feeling with their God image in

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[130] G. Moriarty, 156-157.

[131] L.M. McCullough-Vaillant, 209.

mind. Help them differentiate between their God image and the real God. Discuss how their God image and the real God would respond differently. After they have this awareness and the anxiety subsides, ask them to once again embrace the threatening feeling with their God image in mind. The goal is to increase the intensity of the feeling and the amount of time with each trial. Repeat this process over and over again until the client is able to experience the emotion without feeling anxious.[132]

Experiencing a threatening emotion 'with God' will help the client generalize this experience to other experiences. If they learn that God accepts them when they experience a threatening feeling, then they will try feeling this way with others. In this way, their relationship with God gives them the courage to change other relationships.

The Process of Internalization and the Role of Therapist

The Process of internalization involves individuals internalizing the character of others. It is a common feature of those individuals who suffer with depression.[133] It involves the internalization of the voices of parents from childhood in an attempt to win approval and acceptance. These voices gradually become such a strong part of their personality that as adults they are unaware of them and instead just feel depressed. Typically, it is a gradual process most clearly evident in parent-child relationships. However, it also occurs in other relationships including with other adults and arguably with people in positions of authority and influence.

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[132] G. Moriarty, 159.

[133] It can be noted here that, according to the DSM-5, there exists a psychiatric comorbid relationship between Pedophilic Disorder and depression. Comorbidity also includes antisocial personality disorder, substance abuse, bipolar, and anxiety disorders. However, the DSM-5 also notes that comorbidity is found among individuals convicted for sexual offenses involving children, almost all males. It goes on to note that comorbidity "may not be generalized to other individuals with pedophilic disorder (e.g., individuals who have never approached a child sexually but who qualify for the diagnosis of pedophilic on the basis of subjective distress)." *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition*, p.700.

Psychodynamic psychotherapy uses the process of internalization to help clients replace the harsh voice of parents, parent-like individuals, and authority figures with the empathic voice of the therapist. The therapist takes the main place in their mind and enables them to evaluate themselves with acceptance and insight. Central to treatment and to the facilitation of change and healing is the internalization of the core characteristics of *empathy* and *insight*. If the client is treated only with empathy and no insight, they will internalize the caring aspect of the therapist but will not learn how to be aware of and change their dysfunctional behaviors. If they internalize only the interpretative, insightful side of the therapist and no empathy, they may become very self-critical and not treat themselves with the love and acceptance necessary for change to occur. This mode of treatment needs to acknowledge the inherent responsibility on the part of the therapist, as it is vital that the unhealthy process of internalization of parental and authority figures of the past be not facilitated by the therapist. In this regard, self-awareness and one's mental health are pivotal on the part of the therapist to avoid the previous, destructive processes of internalization in the client's life. The process of internalization can help facilitate change in the client's God image. Going back to childhood, painful interactions with, and conformity to parents or parental figures and authority figures - including in traditional clerical and religious centers of formation – nurtured particular behaviors in an effort to gain acceptance and approval. For example, for such individuals, the specter of not being perfect engenders a fear of being rejected and abandoned by God.

The following represents a brief synopsis of how empathic psychodynamic interventions can help change the God image through the *internalization* process.[134]

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[134] This technique is based on the work of N. McWilliams, *Psychoanalytic Diagnosis: Understanding Personality Structure in the Clinical Process* (New York, NY: Guilford Press, 1994).

While each step is not neatly and clinically separate from the others in the technique, it does outline therapeutic change alongside corresponding change in the client's God image with each step. The first step is the *Idealization of the therapist and the devaluation of the self*: Clients can tend to view the therapist as super competent and in possession of all the client's answers. Conversely, they may view themselves as being helpless and worthless. They may also view their God image as extremely powerful and themselves as extremely weak. The second step is the *Projection of anger onto the therapist*: With the establishment of trust between therapist and client, there is the tendency of the latter to project their repressed anger onto the former. The therapist is distorted to resemble the client's parent, parent-like figures. They may re-experience the abandonment originally experienced and attempt to conform to what they perceive as the therapist's desires. Similarly, with regard to their God image, they may be convinced that the only way they can satisfy an angry and demanding God is to conform to what they perceive as their God image's desire. The third step is the *Therapist's Interpretation of client's perfect compliant behavior and the client's expression of anger*: In empathically addressing clients' perfectionist tendencies, therapists point that this learned pattern of behavior going back to childhood is now outmoded and problematic. In this conversation, it may happen that the client becomes angry with the therapist and expects to be rejected. In the absence of retribution from the therapist, the client internalizes the acceptance of the therapist irrespective of what they may have shared. Correspondingly, change in the God image is noticeable. It becomes diffused of its wrath and persecution. The repressed guilt and anger that once empowered it are no longer available because the secrets that have been confessed with the therapist have been integrated into the self. Step four is *Clients' continued Internalization of therapists through transference and*

interpretation: Throughout the therapeutic process, it is hoped that clients will continually internalize the healing aspects of therapists and become increasingly self-aware and self-accepting. With this happening, clients tend to become more confident. Correspondingly, the therapist becomes more de-idealized. Nearing the end of the treatment, the therapist will be perceived as a fellow traveler as opposed to being seen as some kind of superhuman. At this point the goal of treatment is for the client to gain the ability to love and care for themselves, regardless of the feedback they receive from others. As a result, mature interdependence rather than immature dependence will characterize their relationships. Similarly, the client's God image will become drained of its pathological power. The qualities of the therapist will now significantly characterize clients' God images. Consequently, they will experience their God image as accepting rather than rejecting. It provides them with the permission and the freedom to better manage the ambiguities that accompany their relationship with God. Perhaps, for the first time, their relationship with God and their God image will be one that they can critically reflect upon as opposed to compulsively following. With the conclusion of therapy, hopefully, the result is a God image which is consistent with their healthy sense of self. The God image that was once rejecting and abandoning is transformed into a God image that is accepting.

Some Cognitive Interventions

Cognitions are thoughts, beliefs, and internal images that people have about experiences in their lives. Cognitive therapies focus on mental processing and its influence on people's mental health and consequent behaviors. A common premise of

all cognitive therapies[135] is that feelings and behaviors are largely determined by how people think. A variety of interventions may be used to change the way clients think. Typically, at the beginning of treatment, behavioral techniques are used and are, for example, found to be particularly helpful among depressed clients.[136] Cognitive interventions are also used in the beginning of therapy and initially focus on changing automatic thoughts, which Beck and colleagues define as "thoughts or visual images individuals may be unaware of unless attention is purposely focused on them."[137] After this schemas, are targeted, which are deeper, more ingrained thought patterns. In the effort to promote and reinforce change, therapists and clients together choose interventions based on the client's presenting problems. Here, an integral element of cognitive therapy is 'homework,' that is, applying the newly-learned techniques to everyday life. For the optimum effect, the assignments or 'homework' need to be clear, precise, and match the skill level of the client. With the client gaining increasing control over their own therapy and assuming more responsibility in the therapeutic relationship, the therapist, in due course, plays a less directive role.

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[135] The major cognitive psychotherapeutic approaches are Cognitive Therapy, founded by Aaron Beck and elaborated upon in his book, *Cognitive Therapy and the Emotional Disorders* (New York: Penguin Press, 1976); Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy, founded by Albert Ellis and elaborated upon in his book, *Reason, Emotion in Psychotherapy* Revised (New York: Kensington, 1994), and in an article, Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy," in Current Psychotherapies. 6th ed. R.Corsini and D. Wedding (Itasca, IL: F.E. Peacock, 2000); Cognitive Behavior Modification, founded by Donald Meichenbaum and elaborated upon in his book, *Cognitive-Behavior Modification: An Integrative Approach* (New York: Plenum Press, 1977);and, Reality Therapy founded by William Glasser and elaborated upon in his book, *The Basics of Reality Therapy* (Canoga Park, CA: Institute for Reality Therapy, 1990).

[136] A. Beck et al., *Cognitive Therapy of Depression* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1979).

[137] Ibid, 166.

Cognitive Interventions and Healing the God Image of the Client

Cognitive interventions change the way people feel about themselves and God by changing the way they *think* about themselves and God. Within a spiritual context, such interventions can alter the ways in which people emotionally experience God. Given that so many people, including those priests of religious congregations who have sexually abuse children, who might possess a very harsh, rigid, authoritarian, judgmental image of God, the focus of interventions is to help such clients discover and build a relationship with a God who is accepting, understanding, forgiving, loving, and healing. Interventions seek to reconcile clients' incongruity between their previously alluded-to concept of God and their lived, experienced, and relational God image.

Behavioral Interventions

Helping clients change the way they behave can have a powerful effect in the way they see themselves and experience God. For example, many individuals who experience depression think negatively about themselves. Consequently, this can impact and restrict their behavior. Their depressive thinking can suffocate them and cause them to feel incompetent and unable to accomplish what they used to accomplish with relative ease. Therapists use behavioral interventions to help clients to unlearn old, unhelpful behaviors, or relearn healthier, helpful behaviors. For example, "A startling amount of medical and psychological research now exists that supports the beneficial effects of exercise. Exercise releases serotonin and endorphins

in the bloodstream, which results in an increased mood."[138] Physical exercise changes

the way we feel and think about ourselves, others, and God.

Automatic Thought Interventions

Automatic thought interventions are learned in much the same way as learning to

ride a bicycle or to drive a car. As a child, self-critical thoughts are conscious,

awkward, and new. However, with repetition they soon become second nature. Self-

defeating thoughts become automatic and occur without the individual knowing that

they are even happening. Thoughts no longer consciously register, that is, they operate

outside of the person's awareness. As already alluded-to, in the initial stages,

cognitive therapy brings the automatic thoughts and visual images to the attention of

clients. This is done in two ways: education and transformation. The former way,

education, involves teaching the client about the relationship between thoughts and

feelings. It's important to note that educating the client about automatic thoughts is

done in a manner that is meaningful and practical from the lived experience of the

client. The latter way, transformation, involves helping the client identify and then

change their automatic thoughts. Here, people generally, and not just clients, can have

a difficult time in becoming aware of their automatic thoughts. Such thoughts are

most available immediately after they occur; however, most people do not have the

time to stop what they are doing and write them down. Therefore, most cognitive

therapists ask clients to schedule fifteen minutes at the end of each day to review

negative situations and negative emotions they experienced. Clients are then

encouraged to recall what kind of thoughts and emotions they were experiencing at

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[138] G. Moriarty, 169; H.R. Superko and L. Tucker, *Before the heart Attacks: A Revolutionary Approach to Detecting, Preventing, and Even Reversing Heart Attack* (Emmaus, PA: Rodale, 2003)

that time. Daily practice of reviewing negative feelings and negative situations helps clients identify their automatic thoughts. For example, negative feelings about oneself based on a particular experience can promote automatic, negative self-thoughts. Once the client identifies their thoughts, they are ready to change them. This involves the therapist and client working together to evaluate the validity of the client's thoughts. That is, they review the automatic thoughts to see if they are accurate or not. This is accomplished through specific exercises and questions. Again, for example, the use of questions is a key intervention in the transformation process. Once a self-defeating thought is identified, the therapist asks the client a number of questions to help them evaluate the accuracy of their automatic thoughts. The goal is to help the client learn to ask questions to change their automatic thoughts. Such questions might include: "What evidence do you have for this thought?", "Could it be that you are confusing the facts with your perception of the facts?", "Are you thinking in all or nothing terms?", "are you overlooking your strengths?", "As you hear yourself thinking, do you hear yourself using words that are extreme or even exaggerated?". Another helpful intervention might be to invite the client to record at the end of the day their significant experiences along with the accompanying thoughts they found to be undermining, bothersome, intrusive, and upsetting.

This intervention can be modified to change the way a client experiences the God image. Again, the client is instructed to take fifteen minutes at the end of each day and think of the specific events that caused them to feel God's disappointment, abandonment, rejection or harsh judgement. The focus will be on specific situations, feelings, and the accompanying automatic thoughts. Consequently, in order to dispute the irrational God image automatic thought created, the client is encouraged describe an image of God based on their faith, their knowledge of God from Scripture, or from

a helpful, positive experience they witnessed or which was recounted to them. This technique encourages the client to dispute the irrational God image automatic thoughts by questioning whether the thoughts come from the God of Christianity or the God image of their parents, parental figures, or from the church as system insisted upon in seminaries and houses of religious formation with its myriad of emphases on conformity and obedience to rules and regulations. The differentiation made each time in this intervention makes the client more aware and more able to change their thoughts from irrational to rational. It also helps them become more aware of their own thoughts. Instead of seeing thoughts as intrusions from a punitive God, they learn that the thoughts are self-imposed and can be self-controlled.

Cognitive Error Interventions

Cognitive errors are the systematic or habitual ways people misinterpret their experiences and their environment. The person thinks in binary terms of black and white, right or wrong, good or bad with little or no room for a grey area or ambivalence. Some of the more common cognitive errors include filtering, overgeneralization, polarized thinking, catastrophizing, and magnification. Such cognitive errors undermine a more accurate perception of others and of God.[139] The first step is to teach the client about cognitive errors in order to recognize the ways they are distorting their thoughts, and therefore, more readily change these harmful patterns. From a God image perspective, the way the client evaluates themselves is likely also the way they experience God evaluating them. For example, if the client typically minimizes their positive aspects and maximizes their negative aspects, then

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[139] G. Moriarty, 176-180.

they will also experience God as highlighting their negatives and ignoring their positives.

Filtering occurs when a person "filters" out the positive and looks only on the negative. Filtering influences the way clients experience God. It causes them to experience God as emphasizing their weaknesses and failures, and ignoring their strengths. Such a God image is not interested in neutral or positive characteristics; instead, this God image focuses solely on mistakes and failings. One of the ways to challenge a filtering God image is to "shift the focus."[140] If the God image is telling the client that they are worthless by overly focusing on weakness, then, it is important for the client to shift the focus to an experience of strength. Shifting the focus allows the client to get out of their typical mental rut and empowers them to experience the God image differently, focusing on and emphasizing an experience that went well or exceeded expectations. Overgeneralization is another cognitive error which occurs when sweeping conclusions are made based on one piece of evidence or on one experience. This form of cognitive error can also influence the way an individual, a client, can experience the God image. Perceptions of God saying such phrases as "You are a failure," "You can't do anything correctly," "You made a complete mess of it," can be countered by a number of interventions. One such intervention is to help the client to look at their mistakes within the overall perspective of their lives, which would include successes and achievements, feats of courage and emotional or spiritual strength. The client is encouraged to look for positives and successes, notwithstanding the setbacks and problems which are a normal part of the human experience. Catastrophizing is another cognitive error. At its core, is a small, harmless issue,

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[140] M. McKay, M. Davis, and P. Fanning, *Thoughts & Feelings: The Art of Cognitive Stress Intervention* (Richmond, CA: New Harbinger Press, 1998), 38.

which snowballs into a large, threatening one. This error is evident in comments like "I was late for work; I'm going to be fired," I didn't do well on the test, I won't get into college." In short, a small thing can become a catastrophe. This form of cognitive error can also influence an individual's experience of the God image. A client might think that God thinks the individual's life is out of control and is only going to get worse. The God image minimizes the client's sense of efficacy and maximizes self-doubt. A helpful way to counter this type of thinking is to ask such questions as, "Looking over your life experiences, and bringing to your attention all the times you have met with and coped with adversity, does it make sense for you to write yourself off like that when you make mistakes?" Upon reflection, the therapist can help the client trace the presence, the love and the support of God in times past, including in difficult times.

Schema Interventions

Schemas are underlying assumptions that determine the way people interpret their experiences. On a daily basis, people are presented with an overwhelming amount of information. In order to make sense of it all, they need to be able to quickly sort through and analyze it. Typically, they focus attention on information that matches the way they already think about themselves. For example, those with a poor self-image, poor self-esteem, or depression tend to gravitate toward information that affirms their harmful and unhealthy self-perceptions. They will decode, interpret and internalize information that emphasizes their negative sense of self. Healthier people tend to possess a more positive sense of self, think positively about relationships, and life in general. People with poor self-esteem, poor self-image, and who tend to be depressed have ingrained cognitive schemas that cause them to interpret incoming information

in ways that maintain their cognitive and emotional status quo. This process is further enhanced by cognitive errors that systematically distort their experiences. In addition, automatic thoughts increase their difficulties by causing them to reflexively think in negative ways about themselves, their experiences, and the future. Most schemas are vague and are sometimes stated in "if-then propositions: 'If I am not competent, then I'm a failure'"[141]

Schemas also influence the way clients – some people – experience their God image. The core beliefs they hold can be reflected in their God image. For example, the client's God image can reflect the "if-then" proposition that "if I am not perfect then I am a failure." This proposition can translate into the client rejecting themselves and consequently feeling rejected by their God image. Therapists work with clients to change their God image by challenging their underlying assumptions. One of the ways to change a harmful God image is to help clients identify and renegotiate their personal contracts with God. Here, clients will be asked to outline what they must do to win God's approval. Usually their response will be vague, open-ended, and unrealistic. For example, they may say "be perfect." Once the contract is identified, it is helpful to look at it and see if it is valid or even feasible to fulfill. The therapist may then explore when the contract was originally made. Usually the contract was drawn up in childhood and unconsciously entered into with parents, parental figures – and, in the case of priests - and even reinforced during their time of initial clerical studies. As individuals grow into adolescence and adulthood, the original of the contract is forgotten, and it becomes mistakenly translated to God. In this instance, it is beneficial for clients to review the contract that they are compulsively following and

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[141] R.J. DeRubeis, T.Z. Tang, and A.T. Beck. "Cognitive Therapy," in *Handbook of Cognitive Behavioral Therapies*, ed. K.S. Dobson (New York: Guilford Press, 2002), 76.

look at it through the prism of adult eyes. Once it is realized that this contract is unrealistic, unhelpful, unhealthy, and inappropriately attributed to God, the client can pursue another contract that is realistic and based on a more adult understanding of the God image. Such a contract needs to be specific, clear and rational, and include room for failures, setbacks, and continued growth.

Another way to challenge the underlying assumptions of the client in order to challenge and change the God image is through listening for the "shoulds" in clients' conversations about God. "Shoulds" are words which have a tendency to plague those individuals with poor self-image, poor self-esteem, and who may, in addition, suffer from depression. Such words serve as markers for implicit rules which characterize their relationship with God. Such clients set their expectations too high, and inevitably fall short, and then harshly criticize themselves for failing. This same dynamic also unfolds in their relation with their God image. They tend to experience God as expecting too much from them. They strive to meet these unrealistic demands but inevitably fail and feel judged and rejected by God. Here, the first therapeutic task is to challenge the "shoulds" clients attribute to themselves, and then those they attribute to their God image. Examples of the former type would include, "I should make no mistakes," "I should be more successful." Therapy seeks to identify and then change the God image "should." One way to do this is to help clients consciously ignore or disobey their God image. This provides clients with opportunities to experience contrary emotions and to not consequently expect negative judgment and rejection from their God image. For those clients in particular who experience through 'disobedience' of their God image, it is very important to reaffirm the incongruence between their God image and the God of faith revealed in the Scriptures. Yet another way to challenge the God image "should" is to help clients list some exceptions to

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it.[142] For example, the God image 'demand' that the client "should always be perfect" can be countered by a statement such as, "I need not be perfect when I make mistakes," or "it is not possible for me to be perfect all the time." Such exceptions help clients recognize that their God image "shoulds" are not as absolute as they originally thought.

Imagery Techniques

Imagery is a technique that uses the imagination to form healing mental pictures or images. It is commonly used in such fields as sports psychology, for example. In sports psychology, athletes are trained to visualize themselves successfully completing their task – swinging a golf club, taking a penalty kick - to increase their performance. Imagery is most powerful when it stimulates the multiple senses. Effective imagery techniques will build on the strong visual, auditory, and kinesthetic sensory capacities which most people possess by using words that elicit pictures, sounds, and textures. Many Christians are threatened by imagery, because it is sometimes associated with new-age practices. Kataphatic spirituality is a Christian tradition that uses visualization to enhance the spiritual disciplines.[143] People that

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[142] M. McKay, M. Davis, and P. Fanning, 38-39.

[143] Barbara Mujica, while focusing on the Roman Catholic tradition, provides a succinct description of Kataphatic spirituality and in how it is distinguished from Apophatic spirituality in her work, "Beyond Image: The Apophaitc-Kataphatic Dialectic in Teresa de Avila," *Hispania* 84 no. 4 (December, 2001): 741-748. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3657835?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#references_tab_contents   Catholicism has traditionally distinguished between two different, but not mutually exclusive, approaches to spirituality, the kataphatic and the apophatic, both defined by a late fifth-century monastic writer known as the Psuedo-Dionysuis. Kataphatic spirituality finds God in created things and uses images to stimulate spiritual experience. Image-driven activities such as St. Ignatius's Spiritual Exercises reside within the kataphatic tradition. Kataphatic spirituality uses analogies to speak of God; God may described as a friend or a lover, as Life or Beauty, or that God "sees" or "hears," using anthropomorphic language. However, here, the English Jesuit and philosopher, Frederick Copleston, in his work, *A History of Philosophy 2 Part, 1* (Garden City, New York: Image, 1962), 109, noted that God "infinitely transcends" the use of anthropomorphic names we use of God. For example, when we say God "knows" we do not ascribe to Him the "knowing" that is limited by human intelligence, but mean that God knows in a way that infinitely exceeds our experience. Kataphatic spirituality is termed as "affirmative" or "positive"

practice this tradition visualize the scriptures when they read them and picture God responding when they pray. G.A. Boyd puts it well when he states:

> I submit that one of the most fundamental problems is that many of us Western Christians have forgotten to use our imagination in spiritual matters. We have come to equate imagination with fantasy and make-believe…[we] identify imagination as something that takes us away from truth rather than something that can be useful, and indeed necessary, to enable us to experience truth…God gave us each a brain with its remarkably fast, automatic, image-making capacity so we could interact with him, ourselves, others, and the world as personal beings…when our re-presentations of spiritual matters are vivid and correspond with reality, we are able to experience the things of God as real and are transformed by this experience.[144]

Some Christians have concerns about using imagery to change a person's God image, as it might suggest reducing the God image to particular techniques. However, such techniques do not equate with an experience of the God image – a real and living God but use a person's psychological faculties to help them become more open to experiencing the healing aspects of God's love. Imagery is a technique that can be used with most clients, but it is contraindicated for those who are psychologically fragile or psychotic. These techniques could evoke strong emotion that can be overwhelming for individuals who are not stable. It may be a poor choice – or no choice – for those who have been physically or sexually abused. Suggesting images or

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because it asserts what God is, although always assuming that God is this and *more*. In contrast, apophatic spirituality stresses "imageless-ness" and "wordless-ness." The apophatic, or "negative," approach undermines all anthropomorphic notions of God, that is, the idea that God "sees" or "thinks" in human terms, not in order to understand God rationally, which is impossible, but in order to confront the unknowable. Apophatic spirituality emphasizes introspection and stillness. It does not conceive of God as unknowable because of His unintelligibility but because of the finite, imperfect nature of the human mind, *Copleston*, p.110. Similarly, God cannot be described in human language because words are inadequate to the task. Apophatic spirituality relies on "intuitive" rather than acquired knowledge and recognizes the inadequacy of language to express Truth.

[144] G.A. Boyd, *Seeing is Believing: Experience Jesus through Imaginative Prayer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004), 72, 76.

scripts that God touches or hugs can be retraumatizing.[145] Also, therapists should be careful not to refer to God as "Father" with those clients who have had a poor, painful, and abusive relationship with their own father. What follows is a number of imagery-based techniques to help heal the God image.

Developing a New Understanding of God

The focus is to develop a new understanding of God. This new understanding can be based on learning of the experiences of others, scripture, creeds or other aspects of the church or Christian tradition. What's important is that it resonates and comes alive for the client. Imagery can make this information emotionally meaningful and tangible by evoking language that is sensory based. A first exercise might begin by helping the client list a number of God's healing characteristics: perhaps, compassionate, understanding, accepting, caring, forgiving, and loving. Then the therapist invites the client to visualize God behaving in each of these ways toward them. The next step is to invite the clients to describe how God looks and sounds with regard to each characteristic. Checking with how the clients feel, the therapist asks them to integrate all these perceptions into an overall mental picture of God. The therapist then invites the clients to compare the differences between their old God image and their new understanding of God. Questions that might be helpful in this regard include, "How is your new understanding of God different from your old God image?", "In what ways do they look different?", "What are the different things they say?", "How do you feel in the presence of each one?" It might also be helpful for the client to visualize psalms, parables or other parts of scripture they find restorative and

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[145] S-Y Tan, "Religion in Clinical Practice: Implicit and Explicit Integration," in *Religion and Clinical Practice of Psychology*, ed. E. Shafranske (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1996), 365-386.

healing. Some common areas of focus might include Luke 15 (the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son), Psalm 23, and Psalm 139. Visualizing scripture can help open clients to a healthy God image by encouraging them to emotionally experience feeling cared for, cherished, sought out, and loved.

Pairing Positive Emotions with Experiences of God

This imagery technique or intervention helps clients pair positive emotions with their God image. Typically, clients have unconsciously projected negative experiences onto their God image. The task is to reverse this process by helping clients transfer positive experiences onto God. Clients are invited by the therapist to recall times when they felt safe and loved, cared for and accepted. They are encouraged to internalize these memories, to soak in the accompanying feelings. The therapist encourages the clients to take these feelings to their times to prayer, reflection, and quiet time. The hope is that the continued pairing of positive healing emotions with God will, in time, result in the clients being able to feel similarly when they think about or pray with their God Image.

Constructing a Relaxing Script

This intervention[146] helps clients learn to have a healthier experience of God. A number of steps are vital by way of preparation. First, it is important to ensure that the exercise takes place in a quiet environment. Second, posture is important: invite clients to sit in a comfortable position with their feet on the floor and their arms either

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[146] M. Davis, M. Eshelman, and M.McKay, *The Relaxation & Stress Reduction Workbook*, 4th ed. (Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, 1995).

comfortably on their lap or on the arms of the chair. Third, clients are invited to have a passive attitude, which helps them to be led through the relaxation exercise. The therapist may then begin to read a relaxation script in a slow, soothing voice. The script may be recorded by clients if they choose to do so for further use on their own. Among the salient elements of such a script include slowing the breathing dynamic, self-awareness of their body relaxing, tensions leaving the body (tensions leaving different parts of the body may be mentioned). At a moment, as much as possible when the optimum point of relaxation is reached, the therapist invites the client to go to a safe and comfortable place or space where they are encouraged to become aware of its safety and security, its calm and tranquility. Within this secure environment, where the client feels relaxed, attention becomes focused on God approaching – radiating warmth, welcome, and delight. As unobtrusively as possible, the therapist normalizes those conscious thoughts or feelings the client may be experiencing, while at the same time, affirming the work of the unconscious in helping the client feel the presence, understanding, acceptance, love, and forgiveness of the God Image. At an appropriate time, the therapist invites the client back to the here-and-now moment by encouraging them to leave their special place or space, to begin to feel awake again, to adjust their senses to the current moment. It's very important that the therapist alerts the client to a number of issues when using this intervention: First, the exercise takes time, practice, and effort. Second, notwithstanding the activity of the conscious mind to understand or know fully what is unfolding, the unconscious mind, nevertheless, is at work in helping the client experience the presence and love of the God Image even after the exercise is over.

Some Ethical Implications for the Provision of a Psychospiritual Pastoral Care

Prior to the commencement of a psychospiritual pastoral care of the God-image of clerical child abusers who are members of a religious congregation, it is important to mention some pertinent ethical issues. Reference to ethical issues is consistent with the codes of professional ethics observed by many mental health organizations and the work of their clinicians throughout the world.

Informed Consent

Informed consent is a legal concept that has three basic elements: a capacity of competence, information, and voluntariness. Consent must be willingly given by a client – clerical child sexual abuser, and hereafter, client – who can engage in rational thought to a sufficient degree to make decisions about his life. To engage with a therapist in the treatment process, it is vital that the client possesses relevant information about the background, training, and experience of the therapist. Such information needs to be inclusive of the possible variety of treatment strategies involved.[147] Here, the consent of the client is fundamental and subject to an ongoing process of review.[148] In addition, with regard to restoring the dissonance between the client's God concept and God image, further information needs to be furnished.[149] First, such a dissonance or incongruence is not a recognized psychological disorder. Therefore, insurance companies will not pay for therapy that focuses on that issue. If some clients are depressed and their relationship with God is indicated in their

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[147] W. Chappelle, "A Series of Progressive Legal and ethical Decision-Making Steps for Using Christian Spiritual Interventions in Psychotherapy," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 28, no. 1 (2000): 48-49.

[148] Ibid, 48.

[149] Moriarty, 202.

depression, then, perhaps, insurance companies will pay for services as long as the main focus is on the alleviation of depression and not on changing the God Image. Second, research supports that the God Image can change through various psychological techniques and treatment programs. However, a significant amount of focused research still remains to be conducted to quantify its efficacy.[150] Third, psychotherapy with or without an integrated spiritual approach, is not a panacea. It is not a 100 per cent cure-all. On the one hand, therapy consists of healing experiences, on the other hand, it will also evoke painful and uncomfortable emotions and influence the way clients experience God.

Evaluation of the Role of the Therapist in the Provision of Pastoral Care of the Client's God Image

It is important for mental health clinicians to clarify their roles as distinct from that of leaders of religious congregations, faith, religion, or spiritual. It needs to be noted here that it might not be always easy to keep these boundaries clear when there is considerable overlap between the roles that each fulfils.[151] A couple of points are worthy of mention in this regard. First, therapists need to avoid taking on the tasks and functions performed by the client's religious congregation leaders, or spiritual directors. Similarly, the therapist avoids becoming involved in the ongoing administration of justice according to the prescripts of the law. Second, therapists are encouraged to monitor their interactions with clients and explicitly communicate their functions, with the aim of reducing confusion as to roles and responsibilities.

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[150] Ibid.

[151] Chappelle, 45.

Competence

Competence is another of vital ethical importance.[152] It is imperative that therapists practice only in areas in which they have done relevant coursework and/or supervision.[153] The difference between a therapist's scope of competency and scope of practice can determine whether his or her work is ethical and/or legal, let alone helpful.

Medication

S-Y Tan alludes to "applying only religious interventions to problems which may require medication and/or psychological treatment" as an important area of ethical discussion.[154] Clients with certain disorders need medication to help them stabilize. It would be determined unethical, harmful, and risky to rely solely on psychospiritual interventions when it is clear that medication is required. Similarly, focusing on the God Image with someone who is chronically depressed would also be considered unethical.[155]

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[152] American Association of Marriage and Family therapy (AAMFT) (Washington, DC: 2012) *Code of Ethics*, 2.

[153] Ibid, C.2.a., b., c.

[154] S-Y Tan, "Ethical Considerations in Religious Psychotherapy: Potential Pitfalls and Unique Resources," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 22 (1994): 390.

[155] Moriarty, 203.

Conclusion

The Roman Catholic Church in Ireland finds itself in an arguably perilous situation. For almost one hundred and fifty years up to recent decades, it was the central, permeating thread of spiritual, social and political influence, and power in Irish society at large. Currently, it is struggling to relocate itself, and find its pastoral, moral and ethical voice in what is arguably a growing spiritual wilderness devoid of leadership and counsel in so many realms, including the political, financial, and legal realms. In times past, and particularly with the foundation of the new Irish State – the forerunner of the Republic of Ireland established in 1949 – in the early 1920s, it began to play an increasingly dominant role across the length and breadth of the entire island of Ireland. Notwithstanding the dearth of funds, trained personnel, and capacity in the newly nascent State, with its increasingly available supply of vocations to the religious life and to the priesthood, the Roman Catholic Church would occupy a place of 'fear and favor' with successive governments and political leaders for generations to come. In relatively quick time, it would establish a formidable infrastructure in the fields of education, healthcare, and social welfare which would otherwise not have been possible. Arguably, the positive contribution of the Roman Catholic Church in these areas is unquantifiable to this day, consequently accumulating enormous moral and political capital. With the encouragement and approval of Irish political leaders before Independence from Great Britain in 1922 – and political partition between the north and south of the island of Ireland – it enjoyed a place of unrivalled power, privilege, and prestige in Irish society. With its pervasive influence, it might be difficult then to deny that a type of theocracy had existed for many years.

While not undermining the positive contribution of the Roman Catholic Church for so many decades, it cannot be denied – particularly in hindsight – that it contained a longstanding, painful and destructive 'shadow side' within its infrastructure of personnel and institutions. Recent decades have considerably undermined its pastoral gravitas and role with the deluge of allegations, accusations and convictions of child sexual abuse by church personnel - mainly priests, male members of religious congregations, both ordained and non-ordained. Notwithstanding the influence of secularism and multicultural pluralism in all facets of life in Irish society, consequently, the Roman Catholic Church is hemorrhaging, with a continuously sharp decline in church attendance, finances, vocations to the religious life and priesthood. Its struggle to become accepted again as a benevolent influence in society will likely take decades into the future. However, whether it succeeds or not, it will never occupy the pivotal role it played for so many years. The personal, familial, social, political, and spiritual toll that clerical child sexual abuse has taken is almost unfathomable.

Residing within this bleak landscape are those clerics who have been alleged, or accused and convicted of child sexual abuse. Various government-established commissions of inquiry have attempted to determine the historical extent of such abuse throughout the institution of the Roman Catholic Church on the island of Ireland. Like a seeping wound, revelations of such abuse continue to cause much hurt and upset because of the crimes committed by diocesan clerics and those who have belonged to religious congregations. Conscious of the pain they have inflicted on so many individuals and families, not forgetting the impact on their religious congregations, such men, as children of an unconditionally loving God, are in need of pastoral care. Arguably, their care revolves around legal restrictions imposed by the judicial system where little or no emphasis is placed on such values as healing and

hope. Such care does not seek to undermine the gravity of their offences but to provide a space and place of personal support. The provision of pastoral care does not deny the need for personal accountability and responsibility. Rather, it seeks to provide a pastoral care that is appropriate to their specific life-situation. It centers round a pastoral praxis based on their own experiences before, during and after the perpetration of their offences. This dissertation sought to outline the emergence of the Roman Catholic Church as a pervasive force and influence throughout the Irish spiritual, social, and political landscape over many years. It sought to situate the context of clerical child sexual abuse in Ireland, looking at some possible single-factor, and multi-factorial theories for its aetiology, followed by a look at some of the governmental and ecclesial responses. This dissertation also focused on the concept of pastoral care in an attempt to establish a scriptural, spiritual and psychotherapeutic context for an appropriate pastoral response in the healing of the God Image of members of male religious congregations who have sexually abused children. Growing up within a conservative, rigid and stratified church and society, beginning with the maternal and 'composite' parental influence in their families of origin, arguably, such individuals developed an unhealthy God image, with its emphasis on adherence to rules, regulations, and perfection. Such a God image was reinforced, not only throughout society at large, but honed to an acute degree in seminaries and houses of religious formation, with deleterious, spiritual, psychosexual and emotional consequences, for some at least. In the absence of an evident, organized, harmonious, and inter-congregational pastoral approach in Ireland, the dissertation sought to suggest a pastoral care, based on some fundamental concepts of Psychodynamic and Cognitive psychotherapies in the healing of the God Image, making it more consistent

with a God concept that is based on personal acceptance, understanding, forgiveness

and love, healing, and the opportunity for growth and hope.

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Appendix

Toward Some Practical Applications

The ministry of pastoral care of the God image of priest members of religious congregations who have sexually abused children or minors does not take place in isolation. An assessment of the God image is not a substitute for a comprehensive biopsychosocial assessment. Rather, the assessment of the God image can be done in conjunction with a more in-depth clinical interview. Such an interview provides for a holistic evaluation of the abuser's presenting problems, which include the emotional, psychological, physical, and spiritual. It also acknowledges the interconnectedness of the various aspects of human experiences that constitute what it means to be human with its inherent array of demands, challenges, and problems. The abuser's God image does not exist in a vacuum but is heavily influenced in its formation by a constellation of experiences in his personal, interpersonal, and social history going back to the family of origin. It is possible that prior to the assessment the abuser is unaware of the cause, course, and consequences of his dissonant God image. Therefore, such a biopsychosocial assessment provides for an individual, person-centred, inclusive, and comprehensive treatment plan for the abuser. Such an assessment is also an indispensable element in formulating an after-care treatment plan for someone who has previously been admitted to specialized residential care.

Biopsychosocial Assessment

The biopsychosocial assessment constitutes an elaborate and detailed interconnected array of factors that provide the context for working with the abuser in an effort to help him rebuild, restructure, and refocus his life toward hope in his life as a child of God. The following represents the salient elements of a biopsychosocial assessment which serve as very important features of an appropriate pastoral care for abusers. They can be categorized into the areas of personal and social history, and personal, sensitive issues, religious congregation, and spirituality.

Personal and Social History

The evident place to start in the gathering information is the family of origin. Factors to consider include place of birth, siblings or not, if so, what is the birthing order of the abuser? Similarly, attention may be focused on the relationship between siblings. Was

favoratism shown by the parent(s)? Did one of the parents die during the young life of the family? What affect did it have on the family? Was love and affection shared within the family unit between siblings or between parent(s) and siblings? Were there any experiences of emotional rejection or abandonment, or of emotional manipulation by parents? What form did they take? It would be appropriate to focus on the relationship between the parents. Was mutual respect, and affection displayed? What was the style of communication between them? Was there physical or emotional abuse? Did the emotional relationship of the parents affect the climate of the household, for better, or for worse? It is worth pursuing the area of the quality of current interpersonal relationships throughout the family unit. Similarly, gleaning information about mental, and physical health issues would be considered important. For example, depression, anxiety, personality disorders, substance abuse, gambling, and obesity. Here also, the construction of a Genogram might be helpful as it provides a multigenerational, structured, historical and visual representation of the abuser's family tree. Much information can be gleaned from the Genogram regarding patterns of thoughts, beliefs, illnesses, and behaviors. From a social perspective, details about the quality of the abuser's network of social relationships and involvements reveal much about individual proclivities, interests, and behavioral patterns.

Personal, Sensitive Issues

Notwithstanding his history of formal education which can reveal information about possible challenges and problems encountered – as it can indicate to some degree, the abuser's pattern of dealing with responding to such experiences – it would be important to focus on the types of ministries in which the abuser has served, that is, in particular settings. Were such ministries enjoyable or not, energizing or not? Were there problems, including sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult in ministry? Was sexual abuse a pattern of behavior? What were the consequences, personally and legally? Another personal and sensitive area of consideration is substance abuse, be it alcohol, street drugs, or prescribed medication. The effects of such substances are so far-reaching that it is vital to broach this area.

A history of childhood sexual abuse, or sexual abuse as an adult, is distressingly common among mental health patients in general. This dissertation has already mentioned that, from Dr. M. Keenan's work among a small group of clerics and

religious brothers in Ireland, a sizeable percentage acknowledged that they were sexually abused as children, resulting in much inner turmoil. An appropriate pastoral care to priests of religious congregations in Ireland who have sexually abused children and vulnerable would be served by not omitting this crucial experience. However, in the effort to not retraumatize, it is very important that a sufficiently strong, empathic, accepting and congruent rapport be established in the pastoral care relationship before this aspect of the abuser's life is approached. Similarly, it would be appropriate to find out whether the abuser has witnessed or heard of any forms of physical or sexual abuse within the family unit or beyond. During the time-line of pastoral care, at a similarly appropriate time, the importance of broaching the abuser's sexual self-concept and the influence of cultural, parental, familial, and social conditioning is never to be underestimated. Our sense of self, including our sexual sense of self, through a wide variety of influences within and outside the family unit, evolves over a life span.

Religious Congregation, Personal and Spiritual Issues

For the most part, diocesan seminaries, and houses of formation for men - and women - who entered religious congregations in times past in Ireland, represented a totalizing effect on the life of all involved. Throughout the formative process, with their emphases on rules and regulations, and accompanying form of clerical masculine lifestyle, such centers accentuated a strict, rigorous, rule-led pervasive impersonal, particular kind of Catholic habitus. Such centers built upon a form of spirituality that was, for the most part, begun in the family of origin. Here, and unwittingly, the role of the mother was pivotal, and as already-alluded to in the dissertation, was crucial in the growing influence and power of the Catholic Church in Ireland. However, the role of the mother is not to deny the role of the traditional Catholic father or role model in the process. Ultimately, and arguably, down through successive generations, with the emphasis placed on rules and regulations, and an unhealthy attitude toward the human body and sexuality, the neglect of psychosexual, social, and personal spiritual development, invariably caused damage to the development of the God image of many in the Roman Catholic Church – cleric, religious, and laity – resulting in personal, emotional, psychosexual and spiritual issues in need of redress.

Toward an After Care Treatment Plan in the Provision of Pastoral Care

An after-care program would build upon or be analogous to the residence-based 'wrap around' interdisciplinary approach in the provision of pastoral care to the abuser. Again, the goal is to promote health, personal growth, and hope in the life of the abuser. The areas of particular focus would include the abuser himself, the abuser and his family of origin, and the abuser's relationship with his religious congregation.

The Abuser

For the ongoing health and wellness, and for the continued 'sobriety' of the abuser, it is vital that the abuser be accompanied by a 'wrap around' interdisciplinary team. Such a team would have an agreed-upon, evidence-based holistic pastoral plan developed for the specific needs of the individual abuser. The pastoral plan incorporates strategies from the variety of human and psychological sciences, and from a healthy spirituality within the Christian tradition and experience. The inherent element of such a holistic approach would include individual and group psychotherapy, a support group from among other clerical child sexual abuse offenders, and of vulnerable adults, and individual spiritual direction. The areas of attention needing address would include but not limited to self-identity as opposed to clerical identity, sexual identity, the human body, their model of ecclesiology, self-concept as opposed to that determined by culture, customs and mores, and the power-powerlessness continuum along which abusers personally and pastorally occupy. Each of these issues, individually and collectively, cause considerable inner, personal distress, and conflict. Within the context of the other aspects of a holistic pastoral care, spiritual direction would work with the abuser in addressing his incongruent God image by giving attention to its origins, its course, its impact, and on how the abuser may be helped develop a healthier, life-giving, empowering and congruent God image emerging from within the abuser as opposed to what has been created for him over his life span. Another essential component of a pastoral care plan is the development or maintenance of physical health through an appropriate diet and exercise regimen.

The Abuser and His Family of Origin

From birth through his formative years of infancy, childhood and adolescence, the abuser has been profoundly influenced by his family of origin. From his earliest years, the abuser – typically, each of each us – has been molded and fashioned in the values, attitudes and beliefs of parents and significant others. In the Irish context, this role was

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– and arguably still remains the case – fulfilled by the mother, or the 'mother' figure. As alluded-to in the dissertation, the mother in the typical Catholic family of times past was key to preserving the control and influence of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland by instilling a particular set of beliefs, values, and expectations. The accompanying model of church as patriarchy and hierarchy, with its emphasis on rules and regulations, conformity, and uniformity at the expense of the inner life and of a person-centered spirituality led to emotional and psychological dissonance among more than a few believers of the Roman Catholic faith including clergy. Spiritually, the main outcome was the development of a dysfunctional God image which was incongruent with a healthy God concept. Not only did such a dysfunctional God image harm some people's God image but it was accompanied with a variety of tensions causing much inner distress including problems with emotions, guilt and shame, personal and spiritual unworthiness, and the inability to work toward some degree of psychosexual and spiritual integration. For some, the consequent deep wound has been particularly and painfully felt beginning in the family of origin. Depending on the work with those involved with his treatment plan, it might of benefit to some abusers, at least, to also avail of some family therapy, or with those members of the family willing to participate. A major premise of Family Systems Psychotherapy is that for positive psychotherapeutic change to occur only one person in the family system is required to take the initiative. In addition, family therapy might provide the opportunity to address longstanding issues or problems still negatively affecting family dynamics and individual inner residual issues with the mother, or 'mother' figure, living or deceased.

The Abuser and His Religious Congregation

It's important to note that numerous formal State-sponsored investigations, media investigations, and most of all from sexual abuse victims and their family members have illustrated beyond doubt that cover up and denial were part of a long-term strategy used by religious congregations, and Church leaders with regard to clerical sexual of children, and of vulnerable men and women. A raft of civil legislation, and policies established throughout the Irish Catholic Church as a whole ensures that there can never again be any room for noncompliance at the expense of those accepted to be among the most vulnerable in Irish society. On the basis what has just been shared here, notwithstanding the frightening lapse of responsibility on their part in times past, religious congregations have been under almost constant scrutiny and negative

judgement in recent decades. Arguably, the fraternity, trust, and acceptance of those members who have sexually abused children and vulnerable has created a lot of hurt and interpersonal strain in the daily life of the religious congregation. In addition, perhaps, the abusers feel rejected, abandoned, and unsupported by the other members. Here, the role of the leadership team is vital in trying to, not only provide appropriate personal care and accompaniment to the abuser beyond what is required by the civil authorities, but to try to facilitate opportunities for all members to gather, including abusers, to speak freely, honestly, and openly in a manner which does not compound the pain and distress within the congregation. In this regard, an objective, professional facilitator may be beneficial in (re)creating at least some degree of mutual acceptance and forgiveness, healing and hope in the life of the congregation.