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Hugh Lagan

Listening to Hear

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The Catholic Church worldwide is still only in its infancy in understanding the critical role listening and hearing play in the healing and empowerment of sexual abuse survivors by Catholic clergy and religious. While the steep learning curve which many Church leaders in the United States, Canada, Europe and Australia have been obliged to engage with over the past three decades is bearing fruit, there still remains a disturbing disconnect between well-crafted child safeguarding policy documents and their field application as experienced by victims, survivors, their loved ones and advocates. At the heart of this disconnect is the struggle by Church authorities to hear accurately and fully understand the devastating and pervasive impact of sexual abuse on victims and survivors in the absence of defensive posturing, stereotyping, paternalism and the need to control. The ambivalence of Church leadership to build a respectful and trusting working alliance with survivors and their advocates has been and continues to be the single greatest obstacle to continued progress in safeguarding intervention and prevention as well as healing and reconciliation. Best practice reviews of child safeguarding structures clearly demonstrate that healing comes more through opportunities for survivors and Church leaders to encounter one another than eloquent public statements communicating the commitment of the Catholic Church to protect the most vulnerable. Too much reliance has been placed on professionals by Church leadership to provide a window into how survivors see and experience their world, rather than to welcome the voice of survivors to tell their own stories, to articulate their own needs and to share their own wisdom.

Paradoxically, some survivor advocacy groups argue that the Catholic Church has now become so skilled at languaging and managing the 'child abuse crisis' that it has lost the ability to listen to and hear those who have been most harmed. Attempts by some Church authorities to sanitize the abuse perpetuated by clergy; to contextualize the higher prevalence of child sexual abuse within

Hugh Lagan is an SMA Priest and a clinical psychologist currently working with the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference. E-mail: <hughl@sli.org>

society as a distractive ploy; to depict survivors as individuals damaged for life and emotionally unpredictable; to theologize clerical sexual abuse as a source of institutional purification; and to justify the continued resilience of the Catholic Church in spite of abuse disclosures have all worked to silence further the voice of survivors. Furthermore, a common theme in the collective historical narratives of survivors who have disclosed abuse by clerics identifies a pattern in which the immediate urgency by Church authorities has been to become more active in resisting or responding rather than first, to become more present in seeking to understand the very personal pain and injury of abuse. The listening process must pre-empt the intervention process. This subtle distinction is why in many instances, Church leadership and survivors continue to re-enact many of the dysfunctional dynamics which facilitated and perpetuated the initial abuse. The outcome can become a traumatic script in which the survivor as 'perpetual victim' and the Church leader as 'perpetual abuser' lose their unique identities and with it, the ability to listen to and hear one another. The tragedy is that this script entraps the key protagonists and undermines even the most effective safeguarding structures.

LISTENING IS NOT HEARING

In writing about her work with clergy abuse survivors, Diane Knight, former chairperson of the USCCB National Review Board stated that 'Survivors have much to teach us; about deep and lasting pain, justified anger, the capacity to heal, courage and the resiliency of the human spirit. They have taught me that we still have much to learn.'[1] Other commentators have echoed this sentiment and challenged bishops, clergy and congregants to welcome survivors with humility and allow them to teach the Church how to become a better healer. There resides within the resilience and courage of survivors a hard-won wisdom which needs to be welcomed by the Church as an asset rather than viewed as a threat. 'The Healing Voices'[2] initiative is one example of how survivors of clergy abuse are reaching out to the Catholic Church and gifting their experience of suffering, wisdom and resilience as tools of healing, renewal and reconciliation. Uncomfortably, the painful truth and deep hurt which survivors embody challenge the Church to become who they say they are. The beginning of any meaningful dialogue allows the emergence of a safe and respectful listening space within which people can feel heard and in which both the speaker and the listener enter the conversation with a sincere desire to understand one another. While this represents a solid foundation upon which

1 Knight, D (2011). Survivor Stories: Seven lessons from the sex abuse crisis. *US Catholic*, 76(1), 34-26.

2 www.thehealingvoicesnewsletter.wordpress.com

to build, an earnest desire by the listener to hear the other does not guarantee that the speaker will feel heard. A distinction is often made between active and passive listening. Passive listening occurs with or without one's consent while active listening requires intention and reciprocity. At the heart of active listening is a purposeful effort to empower the speaker to feel heard and to validate their experience. This requires cultivating the virtues of vulnerability and solidarity. Sustaining this deep and inclusive listening focus in the presence of highly emotive disclosures of sexual trauma requires an advanced communications skillset. While the Rogerian principles of empathetic presence, congruence and unconditional positive regard are necessary pre-requisites in such a dialogue, a more personal inner conversion and de-centring of self is necessitated in the speaker and in the listener to allow words to open the heart. Archbishop Harry Flynn (St Paul and Minneapolis, USA) alluded to this internal shift in perspective and experience when he wrote:

> It seems to me that the underlying presence a bishop should have in a relationship with anyone who has been victimized is a listening presence. A listening presence is borne out of prayer. It means that we are able to be still in the presence of another and not feel that we must say something out of defense or explanation. It means asking ourselves what this person is saying, and what is being left unsaid …. The bishop must first of all learn to listen. He must learn to be conscious of that moment when he first experiences the pain of the victim and then learn when it is time to speak.[3]

EXPERIENCE OF BEING BELIEVED

The freedom to allow oneself to become vulnerable enough to experience 'the pain of the victim' requires a high level of emotional intelligence as well as advanced capacities for introspection and conversion. This first awareness by the listener of the suffering of the survivor can over time, supported by trust, community and agency, empower the survivor and the Church leader to become partners in healing and reconciliation. Many survivors recall their choice first to disclose their story of abuse to another person as a primary act of recovery. Survivor narratives speak about the liberating feeling of acknowledging and voicing painful realities to a compassionate listener as they commence the journey of reclaiming their own voice, integrity and personhood. The ability

3 Flynn, H (1994). Care for Victims and their Families. *In* Restoring Trust: A Pastoral Response to Sexual Abuse.
National Conference of Catholic Bishops Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse.
Pastoral Response to Sexual Abuse. Bishops Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse.

to mirror back to a survivor the validity of their story at this critical juncture can become life-transforming. A South African survivor of clerical abuse explained her motivation publicly to share her story as 'wanting my pain to mean something in the eyes and heart of at least one other human being.' Marie Fortune reminds us that for clergy abuse survivors 'being heard by the Church, being appreciated and having one's testimony shape the future are vital elements of justice-making.'[4] Resilience studies with survivors identify the experience of being believed in first disclosing a history of childhood sexual abuse to be the singular best predictor of life-long recovery and healing.[5]

Sadly, disclosures of childhood sexual abuse can trigger often unconscious self-preserving reactions in those who hear them; all the more so when the perpetrator is a trusted family member, a respected educator or an esteemed religious figure. Sexual abuse unravels so much of what society takes for granted and as Nietzsche rightly remarked, 'people do not want to hear the truth as they do not want their illusions destroyed.' Professionals caution against defensive behaviours such as 'victim blaming,' 'abuse fatigue' and 'Church bashing' in response to disclosures of abuse. The result – intentional or otherwise – places a distance between the survivor and the listener and functions to protect society from the discomfort and responsibility that the acknowledgement of childhood sexual abuse within their midst would bring. This distance is further exaggerated within an institutional Church which has traditionally been more at home assuming a speaker-oriented perspective than a hearer-oriented perspective. Survivors have shared experiences of meeting with a Church leader who monopolized the conversation and whose primary intention in listening was to reply. Others reported intrusive and at times voyeuristic questioning of the details of their abuse by under-skilled Church personnel carrying our preliminary investigations, or meeting with Church bodies whose sole concern was image management, damage control and monetary compensation. What was initially hoped to be the opening up of a respectful space quickly collapses as the survivor's self-protective mechanisms become activated in the presence of another cleric or Church representative who is perceived to be manipulating, dominating, disengaging and silencing. While one would wish to believe that such instances are now confined to historical cases, anecdotal evidence from various parts of the world provided by survivors, clinicians and advocacy groups would suggest otherwise. Of greatest concern is that many of these

4 Faith Trust Institute, 2004.

5 McGuire, K & London, K (2017). Common Beliefs About Child Sexual Abuse and Disclosure. Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 26(2), 175-194

survivors do not re-engage following such encounters, even when a follow-up is initiated by Church support services. Nor do they pursue civil action. Tragically, they perceive their only choice is to withdraw back into the shadows of silence and isolation.

SINGLE STORYISM

In 2009, the Nigerian writer Chimamanda Adichie gave a provocative TED talk called 'The danger of a single story,'[6] in which she cautioned against reducing the complexity of a single person and their experiences to a simplistic narrative. She gave an example of when Africans are depicted in the international media as starving victims with flies swarming around them. Her point was that each individual life contains a heterogeneous compilation of stories, and when anyone becomes a single person story, they are robbed of the fullness of their humanity. This danger of 'single storyism' is relevant to the unfolding reality of child sexual abuse within the Catholic Church. The growing antagonism evident between Church authorities and some survivors has led to a real danger that survivors and Church leaders relate to one another more as adversaries than persons. Within this tension, people become stereotypes and lose the ability empathically to stand in and with the story of the other. Stereotypes make one story become the only story. The result is that people become one-dimensional and survivors become further dehumanized, with Church leaders depicted as callous bureaucrats protecting the system and survivors as damaged and bitter individuals seeking vengeance rather than healing and justice. The cost of such reductionism is that no-one is able to hear the sincere intentions of the other and the roles of 'abused' and 'abuser' define all engagements. This perpetuation of the dominant abuse narrative can lead to a survivor becoming so enmeshed in feelings of anger and rage that it becomes counter-healing. Additionally, it can contribute to some Church leaders feeling that their best efforts to listen to the survivor are not being reciprocated and so they turn in frustration towards self-preservation. The result is that the advice of lawyers or senior clerics are permitted rigidly to define future communications as well as feed a growing paranoia that the sole motivation of adult survivors in bringing forward allegations at this point in their lives is financial retribution and the public humiliation of the Catholic Church. Furthermore, 'single storyism' can result in Church leaders perceiving victims and survivors myopically based upon meeting with none, one or a very limited group. The inherent risk in such a limited worldview is that Church leaders publicly speak about the experience of survivors with an authority that

6 Adichie, C (2009). The Danger of a Single Story. TED Global.

does honour the fact that survivors are as diverse as their needs. Ultimately, to know one victim of sexual abuse is to know one victim of sexual abuse. Stubborn survivor stereotypes can become self-serving in enabling clergy and congregants to maintain a skewed perception of survivors as threats to the Church's best efforts to restore public credibility; as opportunistic individuals seeking monetary advantage; as pawns in the hands of politically compromised advocacy groups; and as individuals for whom, no matter how many apologies, settlements, or reassurances, enough will never be enough. While what motivates this thinking may take place consciously, much is defensively motivated and so becomes difficult to self-correct.

INTEGRATING THE EXPERIENCE

A proliferation of high-profile government initiated commissions investigating institutional childhood abuse have surfaced in recent years (Commission of Investigation into the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin, Catholic Diocese of Cloyne, Catholic Diocese of Ferns; The Irish Commission to Inquire into Child Sex Abuse; Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; Irish Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation; UK Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse; Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry; Northern Ireland Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry). While the findings of these inquiries have presented and will continue to present devastating outcomes about the pandemic nature of childhood abuse in society and in faith communities, it will also challenge institutions to take pause and ask the question why it takes a major government inquiry for the truth to come out and for these institutions to be shamed into meaningfully engaging with survivors and their advocates. Doing the right thing should not have to take so long. Francis Sullivan (CEO, Australian Catholic Church 'Truth, Justice and Healing Council') explained the historical response of the Australian bishops to clerical child sexual abuse as instinctively resulting from an institutional and self-preserving agenda which 'identifies with certainty and security, and when something like clerical child sexual abuse confronts them it's as a disruptor, and the way institutions deal with disruptors is to get rid of them. They don't integrate the experience.'[7] And there's the rub. The work to 'integrate the experience' calls for a sustained systemic conversation at all levels of church life on: i) the embedded structural causes and institutional context of abuse within the Church and how such enabled clergy offenders and desecrated the most vulnerable; ii) the prolonged tensions between

7 O'Connell, G (31 March, 2017). Victim Advocate: The abuse scandal has broken the heart of the Catholic Church in Australia. America

Church leaders and survivors; iii) the difficulties for leadership and survivors to sustain a listener-oriented perspective; iv) the collusive silence of clergy and parishioners regarding abuse; v) the resistance by clergy to professional accountability and support structures like pastoral supervision, spiritual direction and fraternity groups; vi) the internal Church politics and tensions blocking meaningful structural change in the interest of best safeguarding practices; vii) the challenges experienced by oversight committees to implement a 'one-Church' child protection policy; viii) and the covert cultural opposition within society and within the Church meaningfully to engage with change.

A CHANGE OF CULTURE

Hans Zollner, S.J., President of the Centre for Child Protection (Rome) and a member of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors remarked in an interview with *America* magazine that a primary focus of the Pontifical Commission was to facilitate 'a change of culture, from bottom up.'[8] The work of cultural transformation within the institutional Church requires still greater vulnerability and transparency in an effort to facilitate a deeper listening on the part of leadership to the experience of survivors, and through this to the prioritization of a 'victim first' mind-set in both policy and practice at all levels of Church life. The priority principle of placing victims first has long been promulgated as the keystone upon which all else balances in sound safeguarding policy and practice. In his opening remarks at an educational seminar held at the Gregorian University and attended by the Roman Curia, Cardinal Sean O'Malley reminded delegates that 'all the best programs and practices will be of no avail if we fail to put the victims and survivors of sexual abuse first.'[9] Change is always a slow process and often hard-won. The pace of change within long established institutions can for many feel glacial. In her resignation statement, Marie Collins referenced cultural resistance by Church authorities as a primary reason for her resignation from the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors. This loss of the last remaining survivor serving in an active role on the Pontifical Commission is significant and represents an opportune moment for the Church-at-large to reflect upon how in certain domains, safeguarding policy and practice may unwittingly be building upon sand. The needs of people must always trump the needs of institutions in child safeguarding norms with priority given to the restoration of right relationships

8 O'Connell, G (21 March, 2017). How the Church is Combating Sexual Abuse: An Interview with Jesuit Hans Zollner. *America*.

9 McElwee, J (23 March, 2017). O'Malley Pledge Pope Still Committed to Rooting Out Clergy Sexual Abuse. *National Catholic Reporter*.

with those who have been harmed and the inclusion of survivors' voices at all levels of safeguarding policy and practice. There is nothing revolutionary about these best practices and at first glance they can appear deceptively simplistic within the emotionally and politically charged world of child safeguarding and protection. The point is that they are core foundational principles upon which all else is built. Without them, the centre will not hold.

CONVERSION AND CREDIBILITY

The call by the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors for all Vatican departments to respond directly and compassionately to correspondence from victims and survivors of clerical sexual abuse presents a timely reminder that policy formulation does not guarantee best practice. The struggle by some Vatican officials to understand this response as a 'basic courtesy' belies a much more complex reality than simply bureaucratic inertia or limited human resources. What is often portrayed in the media as an unwillingness to listen by Church leadership may be more accurately understood as a compromised ability to hear. The powerful socializing impact of ecclesial life on clerics can create a rigidified and limiting worldview. Clericalism, patriarchy, hierarchy, authoritarianism and elitism risk distorting an individual's capacity to stand in solidarity with another, empathize with their experience and be moved into action. Hierarchical listening can mistakenly prioritize the answering of the question over the hearing of the speaker. The awareness of the powerful influence of clerical socialization in the life of some clerics has been compared to asking a fish what does it mean to be thirsty. The question exaggerates a point to make a point. It is difficult for people entrenched in a cultural system to view themselves objectively and to recognise the need for change. Any meaningful efforts by Church leadership to build a more respectful relationship with survivors must begin with personal reflection and vulnerability, or what Pope Francis refers to as 'the reform of the heart.'[10] Donald Cozzens described this radically different mode of listening as requiring 'a readiness to suspend one's ecclesial role in the community, to bracket one's convictions and assumptions, and to listen so that one may be both informed and transformed.'[11] For some bishops and congregational leaders, the justified rage and criticism of survivors is experienced as too threatening to engage with; for others, the hurt and pain which resides beneath that anger is overwhelming; and for most, the humiliating truth of the Church's long history of prioritizing the organization's brand over the needs of those harmed is experienced as shameful and

10 Piqué, E (2014). *Pope Francis: Life and Revolution*. Chicago IL, Loyola Press.
11 Cozzens, D (04 November, 2000). 'Facing the Crisis in the Priesthood'. *America*.

inexcusable. These reactions are human reactions. However, as Richard Rohr noted, 'the pain within survivors' stories will not become transformed until the listener risks opening themselves to conversion.'[12] Many Church leaders miss the opportunity to reflect upon their experience of engaging with survivors so as to reach a deeper level of listening to self and others. It may be helpful for the Church leader to consider how their personal histories can become triggered through the experience of sitting in the presence of a survivor's rage as it mirrors the threatening anger of a parent or authority figure earlier in life; how witnessing the pain and hurt of a survivor may evoke broader personal difficulties in managing conflict within relationships; how a survivor's words of criticism may recall past experiences of feeling verbally attacked and even scapegoated; how listening to the explicit details of the victim's abuse may trigger sexual discomfort or memories of the listener's own history of physical, emotional or sexual abuse and the complicity which follows; how the emotional intensity of dealing day-to-day with the reality of clerical sexual abuse can result in an emotional paralysis; and how as a leader, seeking to offend no-one can result in a torturous procrastination. The willingness of the Church leader to risk greater vulnerability and to take ownership of their own intrapersonal and interpersonal barriers to listening and hearing can become an empowering tool in reaching beyond the pain, anger and hurt of the survivor to finding the person.

In his address to delegates at the international symposium entitled 'Towards Healing and Renewal,' Cardinal Reinhold Marx rightly noted that 'credibility arises when appearance and reality resemble each other, when interiority and exteriority align as much as possible, when what one preaches is in accord with what one lives, and when what is being said matches what is being done.'[13] The work to restore credibility in the Catholic Church calls for a collective ownership of the need for conversion. This must include survivors and bishops speaking respectfully to one another as willing partners in effecting change. What is often overlooked is that the first step in change is personal. If the Catholic Church really is to become the field hospital Pope Francis envisages, we are all challenged to open actual and metaphorical doors in our communities, our hearts and our minds. It begins with allowing ourselves to take ownership of our own vulnerability rather than focus solely on the vulnerability of the victim and survivor. Archbishop Anthony Mancini (Halifax) summed up his 30-year experience of dealing with the reality of child sexual abuse in the

12 Rohr, R (2009). 'The Naked Now: Learning to See as the Mystics See'. The Crossroad Publishing Company.

13 Marx, R (2012). Church, Abuse and Pastoral Leadership. Paper presented at the Towards Healing and Renewal Symposium on Sexual Abuse. Vatican, Rome.

Catholic Church as evoking feelings of 'shame and frustration, fear and disappointment, along with a sense of vulnerability and tremendous poverty of spirit.'[14] In practice, this means bishops and congregational leaders publicly communicating their availability to meet with survivors as well as establishing more horizontal avenues of communication and engagement so as to facilitate such meetings. The receptivity of Church leaders to meet with survivors can over time become a reparative relationship enabling the repair of damaged trust as well as the restoration of spiritual integrity. In meeting with survivors, Church representatives need to engage in what Marie Keenan[15] called a 'double listening'; listening to the effects of the trauma as well as listening to the strength of personal agency which remains with the individual and represents a voice which, when ready has much wisdom to share with the Church. In welcoming this voice from the moment of first encounter into an inclusive and respectful dialogue, the survivor's worldview deepens from an objective experience of being a focus of pastoral concern to a subjective experience of being a person of worth, dignity and truth. Keeping doors open also means Church representatives maintaining reciprocal communication with the survivor following the initial disclosure. Simply facilitating a referral for psychological support without any further reaching out and regular updating from Church authorities can be experienced by the survivor as a perpetuation of the clergy abuser's demand for secrecy and collusion, and can elicit strong fears in the survivor that their voice will once again be silenced as Church life is perceived to return to 'business as usual.'

GREATER VULNERABILITY

The call to risk greater vulnerability at all levels of Church life challenges clergy and parishioners to confront personal and community ambivalence through speaking up and challenging negative attitudes towards survivors carelessly voiced by family, friends, work colleagues, media and strangers. Many of these criticizing voices speak more out of fear than understanding. The two most common attitudinal fallacies about survivors are a distorted understanding of Christian forgiveness in relation to abuse and a critical judgement of the delayed disclosure by many survivors of their abuse. It is helpful to remember that forgiveness cannot be demanded and that the disclosure of childhood abuse is not an event, but a complex and painful process which takes many years. Given the fact that more survivors than we know silently

14 Mancini, A (02 October, 2009). Letter to the Roman Catholic Faith of Nova Scotia.
15 Keenan, M (2012). *Child Sex Abuse and the Catholic Church: Gender, power and organizational culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

inhabit our homes, our religious communities, our places of work and worship, a parish community can play a key role in helping break the silence and complicity resulting from abuse and open up a listening space. Some clergy and parishioners have addressed the issue of clergy abuse and the Church's response through services of atonement, healing rituals, sermons, community meetings and safe environment trainings for Church personnel working directly with children. At a Lenten prayer service for survivors of abuse, Bishop Gregory Hartmayer (Savannah) modelled this listening vulnerability in his opening words: 'There is much pain and sorrow that fills the hearts of many in our Church that I do not fully realize. Therefore, I cannot pretend to comprehend the depth of sorrow that so many people have and continue to endure. I do not want anything that I might say in our prayer this evening to suggest that I know more or that I understand more than I do about the pain that fills too many hearts.'[16] The choice by survivors and their families to participate in these healing liturgies and share their stories has helped to create a sacred place of solidarity and understanding within Church communities. The experience of hearing and witnessing to a survivor's story first-hand can be empowering, as much for the speaker as for the listener. In partnership, the vulnerable listening ear of a bishop and the courageous speaking voice of a survivor can transform hearts and minds, starting with the survivor and the bishop themselves.

GLOBAL PHENOMENA

Childhood sexual abuse is tragically timeless and ahistorical. The statement that the 'sexual abuse scandal' within the Catholic Church is now predominantly an historical event is misleading in three ways. First, there is nothing historical for many survivors about the knowledge and consequences of their abuse. Second, over one-third of survivors of childhood sexual abuse will never directly or indirectly disclose their abuse to authorities. And third, the full prevalence of the problem worldwide continues to be elusive. Clerical child sexual abuse in the United States, Canada, Europe and Australia has emerged as the dominant narrative in media and research coverage and as a result much about the fuller reality of sexual abuse within the global Church continues to remain obscured and dormant. The full truth of clerical sexual abuse across all seven continents is still being written and the next chapter of past and present disclosures of abuse within the Global South (Africa, Asia, Latin America and South America) will reveal how well the sons have learnt from 'the sins of their fathers.' The

16 Hartmayer, G (29 March, 2017). Homily at Lenten Prayer Service of Consolation. Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist, Savannah, Georgia.

small western pacific island of Guam is a case in point where more than 75 complainants have come forward over the past 12 months accusing 2 bishops and 9 priests of childhood sexual abuse dating back to the 1950s (as of 31 May 2017). An emerging body of media reports, social policy literature and scientific research examining the nature and context of childhood sexual abuse by Catholic and Protestant clergy in the Global South suggest similar offence patterns, victim typologies and offender risk factors to studies undertaken in Europe, Australia and the United States.[1717] The historical practice of re-assigning priests from the Global North with known allegations of child sexual abuse to the Global South has been well documented by investigative journalists in the United States, Europe and Australia. This so-called 'geographical cure' saw at-risk clergy exposed to vulnerable populations in some of the most remote and impoverished parts of Africa, Asia, Latin America and South America.[18] Prevalence studies examining clerical abuse in the Global South have yet to produce representative clergy samples and so data comparisons with prevalence rates in the Global North are not yet possible.

WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

Early indications show that the steep learning curve which inducted European and American bishops into the reality of child sexual abuse has not been the effective teaching tool it was hoped to become for other Church leaders worldwide. Many Church leaders in the Global South continue to believe that the sole responsibility for investigating clergy sex abuse allegations should reside with Church

17 Ackerman, A & Furman, R (2015). Sexual Crimes: Transnational problems and global perspectives. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
Ambrose, D & Ang, T (2017). Philippines: Sins of the Father. 101 East /Al Jazeera documentary.
Conway, B (2014). Religious Institutions and Sexual Scandals: A comparative study of Catholicism in Ireland,
South Africa and the United States. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 55(4), 318-341.
Figueroa, R & Tombs, D (2016). *Listening to Male Victims of Church Sexual Abuse*. University of Otago, New Zealand.
Kavi, J (2017). Indian Catholics Frustrated Over Clergy Sexual Abuse. *National Catholic Reporter.*
Lagan, H (2014). Clergy Sex Offenders. Paper presented at the Anglophone Conference. Pontifical Irish College. Rome.
Terry, K (2015). Child Sexual Abuse within the Catholic Church: A review of global perspectives. International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice 39(2), 139-154.

18 Boudet, M (2017). *Pédophilie dans l'Eglise: Le poids de silence*. Mediapart and Cash Investigation documentary.
Carless, W; Chalk, J & Harris R (2015). Fugitive Fathers. GlobalPost documentary.
Child Rights International Network (2014). Child Sexual Abuse and the Holy See: A preliminary report.

authorities. The directive by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for all 112 Catholic bishops' conferences to submit basic safeguarding protocols on addressing clerical abuse allegations was an effort to motivate a worldwide response to abuse within the Catholic Church as well as inculcate accountability structures. To date, over 85% of bishops' conferences have responded. While this may look like progress, unless written safeguarding policies and protocols are concurrently supported by awareness building, professional training, victim outreach and a sincere commitment to change, these documents remain ink on paper, risk strengthening complacency and do little to build safer environments. Furthermore, concerns have been voiced that safeguarding protocols from the Global North are being indiscriminately adopted in the Global South with little or no cultural translation regarding their practical application. The outcome sees safeguarding structures prioritized at the expense of safeguarding people. Cultural and social obstacles particular to the Global South such as sexual taboos, poverty, patriarchy, family shame syndrome, collectivist orientation, community passivity, differing ages of consent, inadequate law enforcement and less active social journalism further complicate an already complex reality. It is hoped that bishops worldwide will come to see the implicit value of actively pursuing a commitment to child safeguarding through a national strategy based upon the Gospel values of integrity and restorative justice rather than when public opinion compels them to do so in the face of a growing body of incriminating evidence. The Catholic Church in the Global South has a closing window of opportunity in addressing clerical child sexual abuse to learn from the mistakes and build upon the learnings of their brothers and sisters in the Global North. Good practice models exist which have successfully built positive working alliances between Church leaders and survivors. Victim support services, prevention initiatives, oversight committees, safe environment trainings and mandatory reporting procedures have all benefited from direct engagement with survivors. However, these models will require a skilled cultural adaptation and ownership if local Church leadership in the Global South are to become their guardians. The invitation at this moment for Church leaders in the Global South is to begin by first listening with an open heart to the pain and hurt of victims and survivors and in doing so, to place as paramount in any organizational response the interests of the most vulnerable over the interests of the institution. Without such a firm foundation, child protection protocols and procedures in the Global South will be tolerated, but not embraced. History does not have to repeat itself again and again.

Truth recovery begins when a Church leader chooses personal

vulnerability over group defensiveness and risks internal transformation over institutional loyalty. The restoration of credibility and integrity within the Catholic Church will depend on how well the entire global Church community can work with survivors and their advocates as collaborators rather than antagonists. In walking this healing journey, Church leadership, membership, victims, survivors, their loved ones and advocates are invited to incarnate the words of TS Eliot when he wrote 'And the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started, and know that place for the first time.'[19]

19 Eliot, TS (1943). *The Four Quartets*. New York, NY, Harcourt.

Ireland raised to the power of two. The Reek, unlike so many of the imported practices of the 'devotional revolution', was something peculiarly Irish, taking its inspiration from deep within an age-old pre-Christian tradition. It was religion at a different level. It was also, in my view, something very local, from within Connacht, almost within sight of the mountain. Healy's belief and the sentiment of those around him was that it 'must be seen as the deliberate nurturing of a national spirit, a national life, a national distinctiveness from Britain.' In his introduction to the 1992 edition of J.M. Synge's fascinating little book *The Aran Islands*, Tim Robinson writes, 'If Ireland is intriguing as being an island off the west of Europe, then Aran, as an island off the west of Ireland, is still more so; it is Ireland raised to the power of two'.

– Patrick Claffey, *Atlantic Tabor: The Pilgrims of Croagh Patrick* (Dublin: The Liffey Press) p.113.