

2014

Issue No. 1

MACSAS

Minister & Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors

Freephone
Helpline

0808
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Wednesdays
7.00 - 9.30pm

INSIDE... Church of England betrays survivors... who MACSAS are and what we do... how you can get involved...

Welcome to our new newsletter!

2014 is an exciting time for MACSAS, as we gather momentum to achieve charity status and become a driving force for faith institutions nationwide to tackle child abuse within their settings.

We are excited to be launching this newsletter to stay in touch with our supporters and share news, successes and stories as we break the taboo of faith abuse.

In this first newsletter, we will tell you a bit about ourselves and our work as well as how you can get involved. We hope you enjoy reading!

Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors (MACSAS)

Supports women and men who have been sexually abused as children or adults, by ministers, clergy or others under the guise of the Church

Who are we?

MACSAS was founded by Dr Margaret Kennedy in 1981. Margaret later became a lecturer in training multi-disciplinary professionals in how to protect disabled children from abuse. We are now a community organisation run by a volunteer committee comprising a wide range of professions, including barristers, social workers, teachers, graphic designers, police and solicitors, many of whom are survivors of clergy abuse themselves.

What do we do?

We are a non-religious group dedicated to supporting those who have been abused both as children and adults by clergy. We do this through support letters or our volunteer run helpline, which offers support to callers by our trained volunteers. (see above for number) Macsas also seeks to educate faith institutions on how to develop policies that better support those who have been abused, and crucially reduce the amount of abuse that is able to take place in these settings.

We have held conferences on the subject, and often speak to the media to raise awareness of what is often considered a 'taboo' subject.

Our work helps survivors of abuse realise it was not their fault. It is through this work that many people tell us we have saved lives, by listening to them when it felt like no one else could.

Why do we do what we do?

Despite increased media awareness on the subject, we are still struggling to make the major faith institutions face up to the horror of the abuse their employees have committed and to better support the victims. The sad fact remains that up to 1,776 clergy with abuse allegations against them remain unconvicted, indeed a mere 3% of all reported abuse cases to the police result in conviction. Macsas is acutely aware of the devastating effect any form of abuse has on mental health, causing untold emotional and financial problems, including addictions, self harm and suicide. Macsas seeks to educate people on the effects of abuse, in an effort to better support those who live with the trauma as well as supporting survivors of abuse, but we need your help! We need to let people know about the crucial work we do in order to break the taboo of abuse and to help the thousands of survivors who live with the trauma of abuse by ministers and clergy.

Where do we work?

The Macsas committee live nationwide. Our helpline is open to all residents of the United Kingdom. We also have links with many international survivor organisations.

MACSAS receives no regular income and is run entirely by volunteers. We need your donations of time or money to help us continue our vital work. Please find out how you can get involved overleaf.

Tell your friends about us, tweet about us, facebook us and forward this newsletter with pride!

www.macsas.org.uk • enquiries@macsas.org.uk

Roman Catholic child abuse record under spotlight at United Nations



The UN committee on the rights of the child interrogated the Roman Catholic Church on its record on child protection in January. A MACSAS member was present to assist survivor organisations.

The Roman Catholic Church committed itself to the UN convention on the rights of the child in 1990. The convention requires all participants to promote children's rights by taking action including promoting the rights of freedom from physical and sexual violence, from child labour, and from abduction and detention.

Since 2001 the Roman Catholic Church has been engulfed in child abuse scandals in almost every country worldwide involving not only abuse by priests but also bishops and the Vatican covering up child abuse.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child requires signatories of the Convention to submit reports on child protection measures every five years. The Vatican/Holy See has failed to provide reports to the Committee three times since 1990.

Critics of the Church accuse it of covering up child abuse and fostering an environment in which priests feel able to abuse children without fear of being turned in to the police. Non-governmental organisations such as MACSAS, Survivors Voice-Europe, the UK National Secular Society, and SNAP from the US gave evidence to the committee in June 2013 regarding these issues.

In July the committee asked a series of written questions of the Church.

To date, the Church has responded by failing to answer most of the questions posed by the committee and putting forward an argument that its obligations under the convention are confined only to the small area of land in Rome known as the Vatican City.

The UN committee lambasted the Vatican representatives on Geneva on 16th January.

David Greenwood, MACSAS member who attended the UN committee hearing commented:

"Rules promoted by successive pontiffs require secrecy when dealing with child abuse allegations. This protects abusers from the police. Priests have been moved between dioceses and countries to avoid detection. This has led to a culture in the Church in which priests feel able to abuse children without fear of being reported to the police."

"The Church has taken no practical steps to improve child protection and has ignored its UN obligations. The disingenuous response given to the committee illustrates the Church's lack of respect for the UN Committee and child protection generally."

"The UN Committee has the power to take action and thousands of victims of abuse worldwide are hoping for UN action against the Roman Catholic Church."

The UN committee concluded on the 16th January that the Holy See had breached the convention in a number of ways and had sacrificed the interests of children in favour of protecting sexual abusers within its organisation.

The committee urged the Holy See to take the following steps:

- **To end secret Roman Catholic Courts**
- **To amend Canon Law to ensure compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child**
- **To ensure that reporting of allegations of abuse are reported automatically**
- **To publish the records of secret investigations held at the Vatican and in dioceses**
- **To improve compensation/ reparations to abuse survivors.**

The committee emphasised that the only way to learn and improve the futures for children who come into contact with the church is to study the response of the Holy See in the past.

The Holy See representatives gave evasive answers and it remains to be seen whether the UN will succeed in improving the Holy See's as yet dire record on child safeguarding. The UN is due to publish its report on 5th February 2014.

Diocese of Dysfunction



The Diocese of Chichester of the Church of England has seen four of its priests and one organist jailed since 2008. It has also seen numerous arrests including that of one of its former area bishops, all on sexual abuse charges.

Another priest, with a history of abuse allegations, was murdered and dismembered by an alleged victim his abuse. He still had Permission to officiate despite an appalling disciplinary record and a conviction for the illegal possession of a firearm.

Aside from all the trials and civil court actions against it there have also been three enquiries yet the full extent of the abuse scandal, the total number of those involved and the extent to which the bishops knew what was going on is still not clear.

Hundreds of people have been abused and damaged by these men and by the Diocese's failures over the years. It is estimated that Rev Roy Cotton sexually abused more than one hundred boys himself, despite having a conviction for the sexual assault of a young chorister before he was even ordained as a priest.

It has also become clear from recent investigations that in the cases of Roy Cotton, Colin Pritchard, Canon Gordon Rideout and Robert Coles that there had been previous complaints and even arrests. Concerns had been raised with the local bishop yet this information was not shared with the police and often not even with the Diocese's own Safeguarding Adviser.

It is estimated that in 2010 there were still between 12 and 20 licensed priests working in Sussex with a history of abuse allegations, arrests and serious safeguarding concerns and it transpired in 2012 that

there were more than 100 licenses priests who did not have current CRB checks,

In many of the recent cases, Survivors could have received some justice years before if the Church authorities had fully cooperated with Police and disclosed what they knew. Instead bishops supported the alleged abusers and protected the image of the Church rather than supporting Survivors and protecting children.

Following the abuse scandal at Chichester Prebendal School which saw two men jailed in 2001 and 2003, you would expect an overhaul of policies. Indeed, an independent inquiry, The Carmi Report, was commissioned, which the then Bishop, John Hind, pledged to share with the public. This did not happen and Survivors have never read it or seen it's conclusions.

Despite the new management of the Diocese promising a change in attitude and polices when dealing with abuse in thier institution, the current Bishop, Martin Warner, is still, ten years later, debating whether to make the Carmi report public or not. The fact that they are even considering this simple and obvious step towards healing is solely due to the influence and work of MACSAS. It also raises the urgent question: 'Does the Diocese really intend to learn lessons from past mistakes?'

Charges were brought against the Area Bishop under the Clergy discipline Measure for his alleged failings and cover-up yet after two years of argument all charges were

dropped as it was deemed that there was 'no case to answer'.

There are still ongoing investigations and it is expected that there will be more charges and hopefully more convictions - this seems to be the only way that Survivors can get the truth into the public domain and receive some measure of justice.

MACSAS has worked tirelessly throughout this period, campaigning for better safeguarding, supporting the Survivors, liaising with the Police and the Church in a quest for justice and reconciliation.

Recently a Sussex Police officer said that MACSAS' involvement was 'pivotal' in encouraging Survivors to give evidence and securing convictions.

MACSAS has also campaigned better support of the Survivors and witnesses during and after the legal process with some success. Many are now able to access therapeutic support funded by the Diocese, at least for a limited period.

Progress has been made but there is still much work to do. There can be no reconsolidation or closure for the Survivors until the whole truth is known, however painful that may be for the Church.

Some of the Survivors have received compensation but this is not what motivates them to come forward and does not provide them with closure.

What survivors need is truth and genuine contrition from the Church.

Meaningless apologies and compensation cheques do not buy back childhoods and a life time of pain and betrayal.

Church of England U-turn once again betrays survivors of abuse.

Church of England officials have back-tracked on their promise to back a full independent inquiry into child abuse within their organisation, stating that they are now concentrating working on banking reform and 'other issues'.

This devastating blow for campaigners and survivors of child abuse at the hands of clergy comes less than 6 months after Archbishop Justin Welby personally pledged to back a call for a full independent inquiry.

He also led a debate among all Bishops at the General Synod in July 2013, where Bishops unanimously voted to apologise to, and do everything necessary to help, victims of abuse.

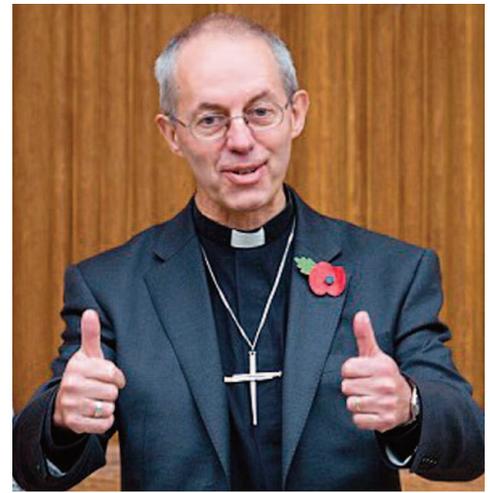
MACSAS, was present at the General Synod, attending along with The Lantern Project and Survivors Voice Europe as part of the SCCA alliance. The party submitted a statement but were not allowed to read it out themselves. However, they were assured that the Church was committed to an inquiry and a meeting with Archbishop Welby would be set up.

6 months later, in a meeting with the Bishop of Durham, Paul Butler, the alliance were told that the Church could no longer commit to backing an inquiry. In an email Bishop Butler shifted the blame from his own church stating:

"we would join in a call for a Public Inquiry into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse in this country naming ourselves as one of the institutions that should be investigated. We would go this route as we believe that like ourselves other institutions also failed in the past and equally need to be brought to account."

An inquiry on such a grand scale could never effectively expose the cover ups and failings of each institution, would incur huge financial and time costs and therefore be unlikely to ever get approved by the government.

Responding to Bishop Butler, David Greenwood, SCCA Chair wrote: Your organisation has missed out on an opportunity to become a torch bearer for the forces of transparency in safeguarding and has yet again chosen to protect its own interest rather than the interests of vulnerable children. This is not the



Archbishop Justin Welby personally pledged to support a call for a public inquiry into C of E child abuse, before his officials retracted the statement less than 6 months later, stating banking reforms and other issues took priority

message your organisation should be sending.

The working party is still waiting for confirmation of a meeting with Archbishop Welby, as well as the next steps the C of E will take towards pursuing a general inquiry.

Find out more about this campaign and how to get involved at www.stopchurchchildabuse.co.uk or the news section of our website which can be found at www.macsas.org.uk

Can you please help us?

Do you know someone who is living with the trauma of clergy abuse and want to give something back?

We are run entirely by volunteers and we desperately need your help to enable our helpline to run longer hours and reach more people. Are you able to fundraise for us?

Are you able to commit to the training and time required to answer calls on our helpline? Or perhaps you can just forward this newsletter to your friends and family, tweet or facebook about us. Do you have some time to help monitor our social networks? Perhaps you can make a financial donation, or a small monthly direct debit?

You can pay directly into our account:

MACSAS Natwest Account.
Account number: 75027542
Sort Code: 60-09-23

On pay with just one click though **PayPal**, finding us on paypal; username: enquiries@macsas.org.uk

It all helps, and we are grateful for any support at all: nothing is too small. We look forward to hearing from you!



Are you a survivor of clergy abuse?

Do you want to talk to someone who understands, to share your story, or simply know you are not alone?

Do you need advice to other services who can help you decide your next steps?

If so, please get in touch.

The quickest way to contact us for support is by email: support@macsas.org.uk

You can call our freephone helpline on

Wednesdays 7.00 - 9.30pm

0808 801 0340

Or you can write to us:
BM MACSAS London WC1N 3XX

You can also find links support and information on our website:

www.macsas.org.uk

Coming up in 2014

- MACSAS seeks charity status through grants and a new look outreach campaign
- MACSAS continues to support calls for a public inquiry into abuse perpetrated by employees of the Catholic Church and the Church of England,
- MACSAS continues to seek a meeting with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, to seek a way forward for victims of abuse, as well as better improving policies to support prevention of the crime
- MACSAS completes a two day sponsored walk in the South East of England, to raise awareness and funds for it's vital work.

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