

Margaret Finn

Subject: Submission to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry
In the handling of criminal abuse of children in religious
And other organisations.

Submitter: Ex Ward of state / Margaret Maureen Finn

D.O.B [REDACTED] 1940

At the age of 10 years old I was made an award of state by the child welfare Department of victoria, who was my then legal guardian. I was incarcerated at St.Vincent's De Paul Girls Orphanage situated at 69 Napier Street South Melbourne, from the year 1950 to 1955. Throughout this period of time I was physically, mentally, and sexually abused.

Sexual Abuse:

I was sexually molested on many occasions over a two year period, between the ages of 13 to 15 years. The priest responsible, conducted mass on a weekly basis. The sexual abuse took place in the sacristy of the orphanage chapel, whilst I was performing sacristy duties. I was extremely frightened and distressed so much so, I reported the incident to Sister [REDACTED]. Sister [REDACTED] then responded with severe aggression, calling me a liar and a wicked wicked child. I was then told that if I were to tell anyone else I would be severely punished.

Physical Assault:

During choir practise I witnessed my youngest sister [REDACTED] being assaulted by Sister [REDACTED] whilst she was having an epileptic seizure. I then went to my sister's defence, which resulted in Sister [REDACTED] assaulting me also.

Psychological:

At the age of eleven and a half was when I first commenced menstruating, which is when I awoke one morning with blood soaked sheets. At that time I was totally unaware of what had happened to me, I was completely ignorant due to no former sexual education. After it occurred Sister [REDACTED] repeatedly told me I was a filthy thing, and I was then made to wash my sheets until my hands bled.

Another example of physiological abuse:

I was discovered looking over the wall from the top of the stairs, trying to sight my brother [REDACTED] at the St. Vincents De Pauls Boys Orphanage playground. Sister [REDACTED] then grabbed my hair from behind and slapped me continuously across the back of my legs until they bled.

Conclusion:

In conclusion to this enquiry the long term impact of these criminal acts committed against me as an innocent child, have left me with detrimental effects which have prohibited me from living a normal life, with the inability to form any lasting relationships throughout. I strongly feel and believe those responsible should be held accountable, due to the failure of duty of care by my then legal custodian being then the Child Welfare Department of Victoria.

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Margaret Finn

Ex Ward of State

1950 - 1955