

My name is Ian Lawther. I am severely vision impaired, with no sight in my left eye and only 4 per cent sight in a restricted peripheral in my right eye. This blindness came about because after my son's Catholic priest abuser was convicted and jailed for the offence, I was looking at my daughter's baptismal certificate and I realised that a short time before the baptism this same priest had sexually abused my son. I got so angry I flew into a murderous rage resulting in a burst blood vessel in my left eye. Later I developed a tumour on my pituitary gland.

The resulting operation to remove it damaged my optic nerve, resulting in the trouble in my right eye. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] These minimisation tactics are typical of the church, are systemic, and once again re-abuse CSA sufferers. When I say CSA I refer to Clergy Sexual Abuse. I use the term CSA sufferers because even after payment of compensation, which is kept to a minimum anyway, a person can be pulled back into the abuse mode by any one of a thousand triggers - going past a church, seeing a hierarch act as though he has a right to lead and, in such a superior manner, proclaiming the church's innocence and screaming like a bully who has been caught out but knows there is worse to come. We hear cases of victims coming forward 80 years after the abuse, i.e. Archbishop Hart's crapology in July 2010.

The other example of minimisation I would like to point out is that our priest appeared in the local paper saying there had only been

two paedophile priests in our parish in 30 years. If this figure were true it would still be two too many. The actual figure was 2 in approximately 10 years, plus his introduction of a self confessed paedophile, and when I tried to explain to him that the people had every right to know who they had been asked to invite into their homes and just who they were paying homage in front of, he decided to shift the mass 20 km down the road to Lilydale. He had a letter read out in the church naming me as the reason for his decision to do this, when I had in fact told him I would not be protesting at the Easter Mass because I felt that people were entitled to a peaceful Easter. He refused to give me a copy of the letter he had the pastoral carer read out, which I only took as a sign of his guilt anyway so it didn't worry me, but I felt this action was misleading to any newcomers in the parish in placing their children in possible danger. But it is typical of the Catholic Church to try and clean up their mess using women; the institution is so misogynist from wall to wall, I saw this as an insult. The way that church service was stacked to shut up anyone that wanted to speak was absolutely gutless and unfair to a person that was trying to speak for the children and shows just another way the church is willing to lower itself to hold onto power.

The same disregard for women has been shown to [REDACTED] who was seriously degraded and slandered just for trying to protect her child from a priest whose suspect ways had been reported by a teacher, another woman, whom the Catholic system would rather get rid of than have saying truths about a priest who in her personal experience was very, very suspect. The children of our parish have been done out of a very, very competent teacher and even though this paedophile priest plead guilty to save his own arse, nobody from the parish has attempted to apologise to this teacher, or [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

In lodging this submission I assume the Inquiry Committee have watched the documentary Brian D'Arcy: A Turbulent Priest where he describes his own abuse and you can see the pain in his face as he regresses to the young boy he was when the abuse took place.

http://z10.invisionfree.com/Ignis_Ardens/index.php?showtopic=10615. This is a link to a story of the papal nuncio transferred recently from Australia. This same nuncio is the man I delivered my "A Fair Dinkum Letter to the Pope" to. that is following the proper protocol lines. He acknowledged it and told me it had been forwarded to the Highly competent Office of the Holy See. A few weeks later I heard he was taken from Ireland without following directions from the Murphy Inquiry to make available documents on C.S.A. cases.

A couple of weeks later I was informed by a friend it had been sent to the 'never to be replied to section' of the complaints office. And it never has, but this submission forms a tiny part of my reply to the ignorance and arrogance that is endemic and systemic within the institutional church.

I have heard within the parish from several people that I am "trying to destroy the church". [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The priest insisted I ask for a pastoral meeting, but why if it was a pastoral meeting was his boss there? I am glad she was because it gave me a chance to ask why they were spreading this absolute lie. There is nothing I can say or do that will destroy the church. It is what the hierarchs have failed to do that will destroy the church. What they have failed to do is protect our children and in

fact what they've succeeded in doing is damaging thousands and thousands of children and families. Choosing carefully only the vulnerable and the young.

Israel was highly insulted that this man was appointed to their country by the Vatican and has voiced its disapproval accordingly.

Nelson. "*Any nation that does not care for and protect all of its children does not deserve to be called a nation.*"

My working life cut short and I was forced into retirement and onto welfare 15yrs+ ahead of my time. As a severely vision impaired person is it fair that my upkeep falls on the shoulders of my children my grandchildren your children your grand children and the great grand children. I have heard many reports of people being told by the church "Give them your Medicare number we'll pay the Gap. Generous bastards eye with our offspring's taxes. And when the final cost to this country is added up it will be billions yet bishops can spirit millions of dollars out of Australia for their hobbies. REF Domus Australia I believe ArchBishops are not answerable to any one over Diocesan funds. If it makes money the moral thing for them to do would be to pay back Medicare some of the money they have leached off the Australian taxpayer.

<http://www.crikey.com.au/2011/10/20/crikey-says-pell-blind-to-the-cost/>.

I was fortunate enough to do a two day social justice workshop at the Jesuits Monastery in Kew and I did it under the impression that their Spiral of Social Justice had been accepted by the Catholic Church and I had to stand up at the end and congratulate the Leader of the group for its content and tell her I was amazed that this sort of stuff was any where within the mick system. I was told it was

designed to bring the aggrieved and the aggressor together for peaceful mediation; that is all I ever wanted. They were never interested in who is fibbing, the Jesuits or the institution when it says it has caring for the Sufferers of Clergy Sexual abuse. Because every time a sufferer hears a bishop or cardinal say it's historic, we fixed it, the sufferer, who to a large extent is locked in yesterday, has the abuse reignited for him.

Cardinal Pell's bleating about Catholic bashing the other day was a typical example. I have done my best to not come across as a Catholic basher because all Catholics are victims of C.S.A., because of the lack of the institution to do any thing fair dinkum about reducing the problem. All my anger has been directed at the hierarchs for treating the God my kids were taught to respect, as an idiot. To go against nature is to go against God and from the start of a priests' life were they are taught any thing to do with sex is a sin, to teaching Catholics that the way to Gods' good books is praying, paying and obeying, your priest, will make you a better class of dead person.

After some mediations some sufferers are asked to sign documents with words with points in it, see below (10, 10.1 and 10.2). I also did a Two Week Reconciliation Course over Brunswick way with a Baptist Church and they taught how important acknowledgement of hurt done is. Some C.S.A. sufferers are in danger of losing their homes because of the inability to work and the inhumanness of the institution to take responsibility for the actions of their priests that they trained. There are some CSA sufferers that will never own a home, but the Catholic Church can probably rest easy, because they know they can get rent assistance from the welfare system which the taxpayers fund once again.

10. No harmful statement or conduct

10.1 The Releasor must not make statements (whether written or oral) about the Claim, the subject matter of this Deed or any other matter which is likely to harm the reputation of the Releasee or the Released Parties.

10.2 The Releasor recognises that a breach of clause 10.1 of this Deed is a breach of this Deed and may result in legal action being taken against the Releasor

This disgusting piece of legalistic strangulation is what C.S.A. sufferers had to sign after mediation. Now if you remember the D'Arcy Clip, if an abused person is still trapped in yesterday as a PTSD sufferer is, he was probably 12 years old at the time of the mediation and in no fit state to be signing his rights away. Australia has a beautiful legal system that tries to be fair to all and here we have not one but thousands of these clauses wrapped around the deepest feelings of people who are still suffering the woeful degradation of CSA. This has been allowed to go on in our country with the church claiming all the time that there is a demarcation line between church and state, but this line only exists with the understanding that the church should not use its influence to sway political matters. In other words, the church should not interfere in political matters whatsoever. Time and time again we hear the church interfering in electoral matters and I feel it should be made known that in the immediate future it will cost them to cross this line.

I have travelled Australia and spoken personally to victims in every state. As well, via Skype, I have spoken to many victims in many countries. The stories are the same. Yet we saw on TV Cardinal Pell claiming it was Catholic bigotry and a Catholic witch-hunt that was fuelling the media frenzy. As I said to Brian Lucas in my first conversation where he asked me what I wanted to see done and I

replied “Surely Brian, truth is not too big an expectation from the one true church”. I still stand by that – truth is the answer to this problem, and by the one true church ducking and weaving, they harm not only the god - whether he be man or myth is inconsequential - they made millions off the back of the myth, and once again the god they taught my children to be afraid of they continue to treat like an idiot.

I am not a naturally aggressive person, nor am I an ignorant person. But the hierarch’s treatment of my family is appalling, they cannot see that a parent is entitled to answers to questions like “why was my son’s abuser even ordained when they knew about his sexual deviancy already?”, “how did it happen?” “why did it happen?”, “will it happen again?”.

With mediation in mind I approached the church. From the very first moment I set foot inside our church, St Brigid’s in Healesville, I got the feeling I was intruding and I should not be asking any questions. I think my circumstances, as set out here, and with enough documentation to back up what I am saying, show another case of systemic abuse which the church so easily wants to deny. The fact that the inquiry committee have been so kind and so pedantic in their information gathering and their attempts to be fair to everybody are a credit to them. The fact that I get the chance to sit in front of the parliamentary inquiry and deliver my thoughts, which I consider an honour and a sign of the greatness of this country, is an opportunity to give back some pride to the people who have had their pride taken away from them by the Catholic church.

I thank this inquiry for tackling the problem and I am delighted in the treatment I have received and the thoroughness to which you have covered the problem in the time you have had.