

News and Current Events :: Thousands Beaten, Raped in Irish Reform Schools

Thousands Beaten, Raped in Irish Reform Schools - posted by HeartSong, on: 2009/5/20 11:26

This is just sick! It is bad enough that the children had to suffer such things, but that it be in the name of God is beyond comprehension. From the things that I have been experiencing lately, it is clear that the same things are continuing to happen within the so called "church" today - the only difference is that now it is on a spiritual level rather than a physical level. God's children being raped and beaten by those in authority. Heartless men seeking their own glory, requiring the blood of the innocent to satisfy their lust.

Thousands Beaten, Raped in Irish Reform Schools

By SHAWN POGATCHNIK, Associated Press Writer

DUBLIN — A fiercely debated, nine-year investigation into Ireland's Roman Catholic-run institutions says priests and nuns terrorized thousands of boys and girls in workhouse-style schools for decades — and government inspectors failed to stop the chronic beatings, rapes and humiliation.

High Court Justice Sean Ryan on Wednesday unveiled the 2,600-page final report of Ireland's Commission to Inquire Into Child Abuse, which is based on testimony from thousands of former students and officials from more than 250 church-run institutions.

More than 30,000 children deemed to be petty thieves, truants or from dysfunctional families — a category that often included unmarried mothers — were sent to Ireland's austere network of industrial schools, reformatories, orphanages and hostels from the 1930s until the last church-run facilities shut in the 1990s.

The report found that molestation and rape were "endemic" in boys' facilities, chiefly run by the Christian Brothers order, and supervisors pursued policies that increased the danger. Girls supervised by orders of nuns, chiefly the Sisters of Mercy, suffered much less sexual abuse but frequent assaults and humiliation designed to make them feel worthless.

"In some schools a high level of ritualized beating was routine. ... Girls were struck with implements designed to maximize pain and were struck on all parts of the body," the report said. "Personal and family denigration was widespread."

Victims of the system have long demanded that the truth of their experiences be documented and made public, so that children in Ireland never endure such suffering again.

But most leaders of religious orders have rejected the allegations as exaggerations and lies, and testified to the commission that any abuses were the responsibility of often long-dead individuals.

Wednesday's five-volume report sides almost completely with the former students' accounts. It concludes that church officials always shielded their orders' pedophiles from arrest amid a culture of self-serving secrecy.

"A climate of fear, created by pervasive, excessive and arbitrary punishment, permeated most of the institutions and all those run for boys. Children lived with the daily terror of not knowing where the next beating was coming from," the report concluded.

The commission said overwhelming, consistent testimony from still-traumatized men and women, now in their 50s to 80s, had demonstrated beyond a doubt that the entire system treated children more like prison inmates and slaves than people with legal rights and human potential.

The report proposed 21 ways the government could recognize past wrongs, including building a permanent memorial, providing counseling and education to victims and improving Ireland's current child protection services.

But its findings will not be used for criminal prosecutions — in part because the Christian Brothers successfully sued the commission in 2004 to keep the identities of all of its members, dead or alive, unnamed in the report. No real names,

whether of victims or perpetrators, appear in the final document.

Irish church leaders and religious orders all declined to comment Wednesday, citing the need to read the massive document first. The Vatican also declined to comment.

The Irish government already has funded a parallel compensation system that has paid 12,000 abuse victims an average of euro65,000 (\$90,000). About 2,000 claims remain outstanding.

Victims receive the payouts only if they waive their rights to sue the state and the church. Hundreds have rejected that condition and taken their abusers and those church employers to court.

Wednesday's report said children had no safe way to tell authorities about the assaults they were suffering, particularly the sexual aggression from church officials and older inmates in boys' institutions.

"The management did not listen to or believe children when they complained of the activities of some of the men who had responsibility for their care," the commission found. "At best, the abusers were moved, but nothing was done about the harm done to the child. At worst, the child was blamed and seen as corrupted by the sexual activity, and was punished severely."

The commission dismissed as implausible a central defense of the religious orders — that, in bygone days, people did not recognize the sexual abuse of a child as a criminal offense, but rather as a sin that required repentance.

In their testimony, religious orders typically cited this opinion as the principal reason why sex-predator priests and brothers were sheltered within the system and moved to new posts where they could still maintain daily contact with children.

But the commission said its fact-finding — which included unearthing decades-old church files, chiefly stored in the Vatican, on scores of unreported abuse cases from Ireland's industrial schools — demonstrated that officials understood exactly what was at stake: their own reputations.

It cited numerous examples where school managers told police about child abusers who were not church officials — but never did this when one of their own had committed the crime.

"Contrary to the congregations' claims that the recidivist nature of sexual offending was not understood, it is clear from the documented cases that they were aware of the propensity for abusers to re-abuse," it said.

Religious orders were chiefly concerned about preventing scandal, not the danger to children, it said.

The commission also condemned Ireland's Education Department for aiding the abusive culture through infrequent, toothless inspections that deferred to church authority.

Inspectors were supposed to restrict the use of corporal punishment and make sure the children were adequately fed, clothed and educated — but the report called those inspections "fundamentally flawed."

It said a lone inspector was responsible for monitoring more than 50 industrial schools, schools were told about the visits in advance and inspectors rarely talked to the children.

Wednesday's report also highlighted the rarity of human kindness in the institutions.

"A word of consideration or encouragement, or an act of sympathy or understanding, had a profound effect. Adults in the ir 60s and 70s recalled seemingly insignificant events that had remained with them all their lives," the report said.

"Often the act of kindness, recalled in such a positive light, arose from the simple fact that the staff member had not given a beating when one was expected."

Source

Re: Thousands Beaten, Raped in Irish Reform Schools, on: 2009/5/20 12:19

Thanks for posting this.

Quote:

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God knows who they are. He won't forget.

Quote:

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Understandable; but a heavy load to add to the existing burden.