

WHY PUNISH ME? A first-hand account of clerical abuse

Monday 6 September, 2021

Michael Moloney tells the story of how, as a vulnerable altar boy, he was psychologically and physically abused by Catholic priests. He traces the origins of clerical abuse all the way back to one of the most influential of Church Fathers, Saint Augustine of Hippo.

Earlier this month the UK Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse published a dossier of sexual abuse in religious institutions, and the church remains mired in safeguarding and clerical abuse scandals. Yet, by law every school in Britain must take part in a daily act of Collective Worship. And every year 20,000 pupils are assigned faith school places against their families' preferences.

The author explores Augustine's teaching and suggests this Saint's ideas might play a more influential role in child abuse and adult mental well-being than has generally been recognised in mainstream social science. This thought-provoking book fills a gap in the shelf, lifting the lid on a story of abuse and religious indoctrination which continues to this day.

The title launches online on 29th September, 2021 at 5:30pm GMT. Register here for the launch event Aimed at parents of school-age children and anyone involved in child-minding or education, the event includes a keynote talk on faith schools by Alastair Lichten, Head of Education at the National Secular Society, followed by an open discussion

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