Chapter 22: Clergy Sexual Abuse, Trauma-Informed Theology, and the Promotion of Resilience

Nuala Kenny

The global prevalence of physical, emotional, sexual, and spiritual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth by family members and persons in positions of trust is staggering. It is even more tragic when perpetrated by clergy who represent a loving God. Jesus shows real anger at this violation of the innocent: "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:6). Protection of children and youth, the most vulnerable among us, and promoting their human flourishing is central to our call to discipleship. This requires recognition of the harms of sexual abuse, addressing the systemic and cultural beliefs and practices that foster abuse and an understanding of vulnerability. Finally, it calls us to the promotion of resilience rooted in scientific insights and Resurrection witness.

Acknowledging the Harms of the Sexual Abuse of Children and Youth

The sexual abuse of minors is an abuse of power, position, and conscience against the most vulnerable among us. It occurs in homes and in safe places at the hands of trusted adults. It is a major social problem, not yet acknowledged in many nations and cultures. We know the profound harms of this violation from the stories of victim-survivors in an abundance of graphic information from criminal and civil court cases. The genre of biography, autobiography, and blog also provide crucial insight

into such harms.[1] Pope Francis ensured that victim voices and stories were central in his unprecedented 2019 Summit on the Protection of Minors.[2]

Research confirms the damaging consequences from sexual abuse in childhood and adolescence by a trusted person including physical, emotional, and spiritual harm.[3] Sexual abuse in this crucial time in human development can cause difficulties with the sense of self, trust in and expectations of others, and cognitive functioning, which can lead to dramatic changes in school performance. Victims can be erratic, from dependent to raging and angry, and can engage in self-destructive behaviors, including suicide. If children and youth can speak of their abuse, counselling near the time of the abuse can help significantly. There is usually a long-time lapse from the experience of the abuse to its revelation. This can result in life-long physical, psychological, and emotional damage for many.[4] Victims can experience guilt, shame, and negative self-image; confusion about sexual norms and identity; difficulties with trust and relationships; a sense of helplessness that interferes with education and employment; depression, anxiety and anger; suicidal tendencies; and a small risk of becoming abusers themselves. Psychological counselling is an essential component of treatment.

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[1] Gary Bergeron, *Don't Call Me a Victim* (Lowell, MA: King Printing Company, 2004); Hank Estrada, *Unholy Communion: Lessons Learned from Life Among Pedophiles, Predators, and Priests* (New Mexico: Red Rabbit Press, 2011); Carmine Galasso, *Crosses: Portraits of Clergy Abuse* (London, UK: Trolley Ltd., 2007); Tony Lembo, *The Hopeville Fire Department: A Boy's Tale of Betrayal by One of New England's Most Notorious Priests* (Doylestown, PA: Prose & Pictures, 2007); Colm O'Gorman, *Beyond Belief* (London, UK: Hodder & Stoughton, 2010); David Price, *Altar Boy, Altered Life: A True Story of Sexual Abuse* (Indianapolis, IN: Dog Ear Publishing, 2008).

[2] "Vatican Summit on the Protection of Minors in the Church," *St. Louis Review*, www.archstl.org/st-louis-review/vatican-summit.

[3] David Finkelhor and Angela Browne, "The Traumatic Impact of Child Sexual Abuse: A Conceptualization," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 55, no. 4 (1985): 530–541.

[4] Julia I. Herzog and Christian Schmahl, "Adverse Childhood Experiences and the Consequences on Neurobiological, Psychosocial, and Somatic Conditions across the Lifespan," *Frontiers in Psychiatry* 9, no. 420 (2018): 1–8, doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2018.00420.

As Stephen Rosetti has shown, the sexual exploitation of children and youth by clergy can cause additional calamitous effects on faith and spirituality. Victims can feel abandoned by God, who did not stop the abuse, even when they begged.[5] This loss of a loving and caring God is the greatest harm of clergy sexual abuse. Thomas Doyle, who has studied "spiritual trauma," shows that many victims lose confidence in their inherent goodness and believe they are unlovable and unhealable. Some experience a sense of futility and constrained agency which can have serious consequences for survivors' moral identity.[6] Often victims were not believed by their parents, and sometimes were even punished for daring to suggest the "holy priest" had sinned.[7] This damage was exacerbated when Church officials failed to believe victims. Beliefs in the Church as a place of holiness and security can be shattered forever, and victims lose the support of the liturgical and prayer life of the community.

Kenneth Pargament and colleagues have observed that many excellent therapists do not recognize the unique spiritual harms when the perpetrator is "another Christ." Pastoral care may compound the abuse because it can trigger PTSD with the smell of incense, the sounds of church bells, and other symbols. Healing and reconciliation cannot be forced. With help, many victims come to some healing. Tragically, many are never reconciled with God or with the Church.[8] A special issue of the *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* consolidated research on the long-term impact of child sexual abuse on adult functioning and well-being.

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[5] Stephen J. Rosetti, *Slayer of the Soul: Child Sexual Abuse and the Catholic Church* (New London, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1991).

[6] Thomas P. Doyle, "The Spiritual Trauma Experienced by Victims of Sexual Abuse by Catholic Clergy," *Pastoral Psychology* 58, no. 3 (2009): 239–260, doi.org/10.1007/s11089-008-0187-1.

[7] Jason Berry, *Lead Us Not into Temptation: Catholic Priests and the Sexual Abuse of Children* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000).

[8] Kenneth I. Pargament, Nichole A. Murray-Swank, and Annette Mahoney, "Problem and Solution: The Spiritual Dimension of Clergy Sexual Abuse and Its Impact on Survivors," *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* 17, nos. 3–4 (2008): 397–420, doi.org/10.1080/10538710802330187.

However, it demonstrated inadequate attention to vulnerability and failed to focus on resilience. [9]

Underlying Dynamics and Systemic Cultural Factors

A culture of safeguarding minors and the vulnerable requires conversion of both minds and hearts and "best practice" policies and protocols.[10] It also requires an understanding of the deeper systemic and cultural forces, including beliefs and practices that allow or promote such harm. In 1986, with the public recognition of the longstanding crisis of the sexual abuse of minors in the West, the initial focus of inquiry was on identifying risk factors in individual victims and in offenders. It soon became apparent that this approach failed to assess adequately the complexity of causation. The American sociologist David Finklehor provided a helpful framework for assessment in his "dynamics or preconditions" for abuse. These include motivation to abuse, overcoming inhibitions, overcoming the child's resistance, and decreased social vigilance.[11] This approach has been modified and expanded over time but is still helpful in focusing on the deeper issues at work. These preconditions can inform a Church-specific analysis in order to identify beliefs, practices, and relationships which have been enablers for the clergy sexual abuse of trusting and dependent children and youth.[12]

In my almost forty years of work in healing the Church from the clergy sexual abuse crisis, I have identified a pathology in the Church that is contrary to the mission, words, and witness of Jesus:

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[9] Heather B. MacIntosh and A. Dana Ménard, "Where Are We Now? A Consolidation of the Research on Long-Term Impact of Child Sexual Abuse," *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* 30, no. 3 (2021): 253–257, doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2021.1914261.

[10] Karlijn Demasure, Katharina Fuchs, and Hans Zollner, *Safeguarding: Reflecting on Child Abuse, Theology and Care* (Leuven: Peeters, 2018).

[11] David. Finkelhor, *Child Sexual Abuse: New Theory and Research* (New York: Free Press, 1984).

[12] Nuala Kenny, "The Clergy Sexual Abuse Crisis: Dynamics and Diagnosis," *ET Studies* 4, no. 2 (2013): 201–219, doi.org/10.2143/ETS.4.2.3007278.

> The pathology includes devastating physical, emotional and spiritual harm to children, youth and vulnerable people; silence, secrecy and denial to avoid scandal; abuse of power, authority and conscience; failure of moral theology to form conscience and foster virtue; leadership failure to learn from empirical and social sciences; the inability or unwillingness to address underlying systemic and cultural factors; and polarizing divisions regarding the nature of the crisis that are fracturing the Body of Christ and impeding healing.[13]

A central issue in all pathology is abuse of power, position, and conscience.[14] While much has been done at all levels of the Church regarding policies and protocols toward protection and prevention, these deeper issues persist.[15]

Vulnerability

Vulnerability is derived from the Latin *vulnus*, a wound; hence vulnerability means being capable of being wounded. It is both a crucial spiritual and moral notion and a vague and complex one. Vulnerable does not mean being or having been wounded, but rather being able to be wounded.[16] Understanding the nature of vulnerability is essential for any effective protection of children, prevention of abuse, and promotion of resilience to adverse events. Researchers have identified the need for precise

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[13] Nuala P. Kenny, *A Post-Pandemic Church: Prophetic Possibilities* (Toronto: Novalis, 2021), 34.

[14] Mary Gail Frawley-O'Dea, *Perversion of Power: Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2007); Stephen Bullivant, Eric Marcelo O. Genilo, Daniel Franklin Pilario, and Agnes M. Brazal, ed., *Theology and Power: International Perspectives* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2016).

[15] Michael W. Higgins and Peter Kavanagh, *Suffer the Children unto Me: An Open Inquiry into the Clerical Sex Abuse Scandal* (Toronto: Novalis, 2010); Marie Keenan, *Child Sexual Abuse and the Catholic Church: Gender, Power, and Organizational Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Nuala P. Kenny and David Deane, *Still Unhealed: Treating the Pathology in the Clergy Sexual Abuse Crisis* (Toronto: Novalis, 2019).

[16] Michael H. Kottow, "The Vulnerable and the Susceptible," *Bioethics* 17, nos. 5–6 (2003): 460–471, doi.org/10.1111/1467-8519.00361.

definitions of vulnerability, the exploration of the interplay of risk and vulnerability in specific policy and life contexts and understanding the importance of vulnerability in our spiritual and moral lives.[17]

Vulnerability is inherent in our embodied and embedded humanity and unique to our personal situation. Mackenzie and colleagues have categorized vulnerability as inherent, contingent or situational, and pathogenic. Inherent vulnerability is our ontological or essential vulnerability. Contingent or situational vulnerability is caused or exacerbated by specific personal acute or chronic conditions, including health status, socioeconomic factors, culture, and the environment. Pathogenic vulnerability is created by unique harmful factors in personal history, such as a history of abuse, brokenness, and marginalization. [18]

Vulnerability generates negative connotations of victimhood, helplessness, and pathology, but it is a central notion in understanding humans.[19] There are concerns regarding a reductively negative view of vulnerability which is the very condition for responsiveness.

> It is assumed that vulnerability is almost exclusively negative, equated with weakness, dependency, powerlessness, deficiency and passivity. This reductively negative view leads to problematic implications, imperiling ethical responsiveness to vulnerability, and so prevents the concept from possessing the normative value many theorists wish it to have. When vulnerability is regarded as weakness and, concomitantly, invulnerability is prized, attentiveness to one's own vulnerability and ethical response to vulnerable others remain out of reach goals.[20]

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[17] Kate Brown, Kathryn Ecclestone, and Nick Emmel, "The Many Faces of Vulnerability," *Social Policy and Society* 16, no. 3 (2017): 497–510, doi.org/10.1017/S1474746416000610.

[18] Catriona Mackenzie, Wendy Rogers, and Susan Dodds, *Vulnerability: New Essays in Ethics and Feminist Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[19] Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues* (Chicago: Open Court, 2006).

[20] Erinn C. Gilson, *The Ethics of Vulnerability: A Feminist Analysis of Social Life and Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2016), i.

The social science literature has concerns regarding attention to vulnerability insofar as it can be paternalistic and oppressive, widen social control, and result in stigma and marginalization rather than people's empowerment and protection.[21] This includes minors and adults who lack capacity to protect themselves, like homeless persons, refugees, and victims of domestic violence. There are strong ethical implications of vulnerability. It can be patronizing and paternalistic or unifying and socially transformative. Acknowledging mutual vulnerability allows us to be aware of others and their dignity and capabilities.

Vulnerability is a condition of the moral life. Ethical responses to vulnerability should be guided by the promotion of autonomy and resilience to counter the sense of powerlessness and the loss of agency.[22] Vulnerability precedes everything about being human. In theological language, the priority of vulnerability is precisely that ground on which the *imago Dei* rests. We are created in the image of God. If God is vulnerable, then we, who are made in God's image, are vulnerable. In the Old Testament, the covenant, which binds us to God, is as vulnerable as the bonds that bind us to one another. Vulnerable to the voice of God, the prophet discovers the capacity to express the sympathy of God.[23]

Irish theologian Enda McDonagh has outlined key elements of a theology of vulnerability. He begins with God's self-revelation as vulnerable in the act of creation itself—"God said: 'Let there be'..." for all elements in creation (Genesis 1)—and proposes that:

> This is the risk of creation for God, introducing into being other reality distinct from Godself ... . God rejoiced in this otherness as gift but...the

[21] Kate Brown, "'Vulnerability': Handle with Care," *Ethics and Social Welfare* 5, no. 3 (2011): 313–321, doi.org/10.1080/17496535.2011.597165.

[22] Mianna Lotz, "Vulnerability and Resilience: A Critical Nexus," *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics* 37, no. 1 (2016): 45–59, doi.org/10.1007/s11017-016-9355-y.

[23] Abraham J. Heschel, *The Prophets* (New York: Harper, 1969).

> gift turned threat, alien to and alienated from God in its climactic creatures, man and woman.[24]

In the Incarnation, the divine Word was made human flesh in Jesus Christ and takes on our embodied vulnerability:

> God ... became human in Jesus Christ. This letting go by God of God in incarnation transcends all human imaging and yet seems transcended in the surrender until death on a cross by the Son of God made man. It is in that dying into resurrection and the sending of the Spirit, which completes the divine letting be of creation and letting go of incarnation by letting God be God in God's Trinitarian sense and in the universe.[25]

In the Good Samaritan parable (Luke 10:29–37), the neighbor takes on personal risk in order to respond to the need of a wounded man.[26] This shifts vulnerability from being in need to the vulnerability of those who respond to need.

The clergy sexual abuse crisis has shown that the Church is vulnerable. Vulnerability is, however, not merely the product of the environment of the church. Vulnerability is part of the essence of the church. The vulnerability of the church is based on a theology and anthropology of vulnerability and is expressed in an ethic and mission of vulnerability.[27] Ecclesial, political, and economic responses are needed because

> vulnerability can be reduced by equal protection to all members of society under a principle of justice. Susceptibility is a determined state of

[24] Enda McDonagh, *Vulnerable to the Holy: In Faith, Morality and Art* (Dublin: Columba Press, 2005), 19.

[25] McDonagh, *Vulnerable to the Holy,* 20.

[26] Vincent Leclerq, *Blessed Are the Vulnerable: Reaching Out to Those with AIDS* (London, UK: Twenty-Third Publications, 2010).

[27] Nico Koopman, "Vulnerable Church in a Vulnerable World? Towards an Ecclesiology of Vulnerability," *Journal of Reformed Theology* 2, no. 3 (2008): 241, doi.org/10.1163/156973108X333731.

> destitution and therefore can only be reduced or neutralised by measures that are a) specifically designed against the situation in question and b) actively applied. The susceptible, like the sick, require targeted treatment to palliate their misery.[28]

Which relates to Linda Hogan's argument that:

> Mutual dependence, shared vulnerability, these are elements of human experience that have rarely featured in the ways in which politics is constructed or ethical theories are framed ... . And yet shared vulnerability and mutual dependence may be precisely the qualities that have a resonance with the individuals and communities world-wide who are struggling to find the grounds for the hope of shared future in a world divided.[29]

Trauma Informed Theology

Experiences of pain, loss, and suffering are essential components of being embodied and socio-culturally embedded and dependent humans. Response to the multiple traumas of our time must be rooted theologically and become a reality in our life, worship, and mission. Trauma presents challenges for pastoral care and for Christian systematic and practical theology. Trauma, which is the impact of violence, has been studied by psychology since the end of the nineteenth century.[30] Studies of World War One "shell-shocked" soldiers noted they did not just recall the violence they experienced but re-lived it. In flashbacks, they could not distinguish between the traumatic event and the present. Shelly Rambo has identified the three crucial lessons of trauma studies: "The past is not

[28] Michael H. Kottow, "The Vulnerable and the Susceptible," *Bioethics* 17, nos. 5-6 (2003): 463, doi.org/10.1111/1467-8519.00361.

[29] Linda Hogan, "Vulnerability: An Ethic for a Divided World," in *Building Bridges in Sarajevo: The Plenary Papers from CTEWC 2018*, ed. Kristin E. Heyer, James F. Keenan, and Andrea Vicini (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2019), 219–20.

[30] Cathy Caruth, ed., *Listening to Trauma: Conversations with Leaders in the Theory and Treatment of Catastrophic Experience* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014).

the past. The body remembers. The wounds do not simply go away."[31] The lessons help us understand the personal trauma of sexual abuse. Obstacles of impaired memory and survivor difficulty talking about traumatic events have been the focus of therapy. This breaking of silence and denial is necessary but not sufficient to heal the moral and spiritual trauma.

Pastoral care is concerned with the spiritual and physical well-being of individuals and communities. Pastoral workers are first responders who experience tragedy fatigue, especially in ministering to those who have lost their faith and are questioning a loving God. This can lead to compassion fatigue, burnout, and traumatic stress. Self-care, self-compassion, and self-acceptance are essential but may be compromised by theological notions of self-sacrifice. Effective protection of children and youth requires the education and support of families. They are the domestic Church and carry the responsibility to educate and form their children in the faith in a time of crisis and unbelief.

In the Old Testament, the call of the prophets in crisis and calamity such as the catastrophe of Babylonian destruction and exile is to restore right relationships with a faithful God, creation, and all others.[32] The life, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the Paschal Mystery, is central to Christian faith. Christian theology has always grappled with suffering and offered words of comfort and explanation through concepts such as "God's rule" and "God's will." Evangelization has focused on accepting a defined set of beliefs and some guilt and coercion. Each Gospel reveals a different account of the Evangelist's response to the trauma of the crucifixion. The Gospel tells us the Emmaus disciples and Mary Magdalene, in their grief and loss of hope and trust, do not recognize the risen Jesus at first. This is a classic response to trauma. Jesus reveals his

[31] Shelly Rambo, "How Christian Theology and Practice Are Being Shaped by Trauma Studies: Talking about God in the Face of Wounds That Won't Go Away," *The Christian Century*, November 1, 2019, www.christiancentury.org/article/critical-essay/how-christian-theology-and-practice-are-being-shaped-trauma-studies.

[32] Walter Brueggemann and Nahum Ward-Lev, *Virus as a Summons to Faith: Biblical Reflections in a Time of Loss, Grief, and Uncertainty* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2020).

wounds that remain even after the Resurrection. He asks Thomas to enter into them: "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe" (John 20:27–28). The Resurrection demonstrates the ultimate resilience after trauma.

These insights open the way to a trauma-informed practical theology.[33] Trauma requires witness and accompaniment.[34] Theologians learning from trauma focus on accompaniment, truth-telling, and wound healing.[35] A trauma-sensitive approach also allows for the contradictions we hold between our belief in a loving and merciful God and the experience of harm and suffering.[36] In responding to trauma, Collin-Vezina and colleagues propose some principles to assist in effective response: trustworthiness and transparency, safety, peer support, collaboration and mutuality, empowerment and choice, and attention to cultural, historical, and gender issues.[37]

Some theologians respond to trauma within existing traditions of liberation, feminist, disability, and queer theologies which focus on power and socio-cultural issues. These are important and echo Pope Francis's call for a new neighborliness: "Building social friendship does not only call for rapprochement between groups who took different sides at some troubled period of history, but also for a renewed encounter with the most impoverished and vulnerable sectors of society" (*Fratelli Tutti*, no. 233).

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[33] Meg Warner, Christopher Southgate, Carla A. Grosch-Miller, and Hilary Ison, ed., *Tragedies and Christian Congregations: The Practical Theology of Trauma* (New York: Routledge, 2019).

[34] Stephanie N. Arel and Shelly Rambo, eds., *Post-Traumatic Public Theology* (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

[35] Rambo, "How Christian Theology and Practice Are Being Shaped by Trauma Studies."

[36] Jennifer Baldwin, *Trauma-Sensitive Theology: Thinking Theologically in the Era of Trauma* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018).

[37] Delphine Collin-Vézina, Denise Brend, and Irene Beeman, "When It Counts the Most: Trauma-Informed Care and the COVID-19 Global Pandemic," *Developmental Child Welfare* 2, no. 3 (2020): 172–79, doi.org/10.1177/2516103220942530.

Promoting Resilience in Children and Youth

The clergy sexual abuse crisis tragically demonstrates failure to keep the child central.[38] The convergence of the sexual abuse crisis and pandemic and trauma studies raise critical questions. Vulnerability is a condition of the moral life. We learn from infancy about trusting others and the fragility of relationships. The promotion of moral agency in children is essential for protection, prevention, and resilience.

The clergy sexual abuse of children and youth has raised questions about the theology of childhood and the curriculum for seminarians about children and child development. Celibate priests in the Latin Rite are called Father but never "Daddy." Many have little experience of childcare. Child studies from developmental psychology and sociology have much to offer. For Christians, the importance of children's value and development of moral agency is crucial.[39] Early empirical studies understood children as passive, incomplete, and lacking the capacity for meaningful relationships and moral agency. Advances in the interdisciplinary field of childhood studies have brought crucial insights that can inform our understanding of the development of children as moral and social agents from birth and the fundamentally relational nature of life.

Allison Gopnik provides vivid accounts of how children in the first six years of life develop the capacity to understand others' communicative intentions, share emotions, establish joint attention, a prelude to language, and joint intentionality which is the ontogenic basis for the recognition of human equality and mutual recognition.[40] This starts with amazing, heightened awareness in the gaze of a newborn in maternal-infant

[38] Hans Zollner, "The Child at the Center: What Can Theology Say in the Face of the Scandals of Abuse?," *Theological Studies* 80, no. 3 (2019): 692–710, doi.org/10.1177/0040563919856867.

[39] James Gerard McEvoy, "Towards a Theology of Childhood: Children's Agency and the Reign of God," *Theological Studies* 80, no. 3 (2019): 673–691, doi.org/10.1177/0040563919856368.

[40] Alison Gopnik, *The Philosophical Baby: What Children's Minds Tell Us about Truth, Love, and the Meaning of Life* (New York: Picador/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010).

bonding. It continues through early infancy. Through smiles, sounds, and touch, parents provide emotional connection. By nine months of age, children share emotions. By eleven months, children's pointing establishes joint attention, a prelude to language. Between three and six years, children develop mutual recognition and joint intentionality which "leads young children to understand others as, in some sense, equivalent or equal to themselves."[41]

Theology has also turned to a formal study of the child. Marcia Bunge and colleagues have presented a masterful review of the child and childhood in the Bible.[42] It portrays diverse and complex relationships of love and care as well as those who are cursed, abandoned, and victims of profound injustice. The Bible often refers to children metaphorically as being sons and daughters of God and reinforces a positive view of believers as needing to become childlike (Matthew 18:3). Jesus's interactions with children are countercultural. Moreover, he associates their vulnerability and powerlessness with the reign of God.

McEvoy also argues persuasively that consideration of children and childhood should be an essential element of Christian anthropology.[43] Karl Rahner turned to the scriptures and traditional theology for insights into the Christian meaning of childhood. He identified the unsurpassable value of childhood: "Childhood itself has a direct relationship with God. It touches on the absolute divinity of God not only as maturity, adulthood . . . but rather in a special way of its own."[44] He critiqued the view that saw childhood as a "subordinate and preparatory function" for future stages of life. The tradition teaches that children and adults are caught up in the

[41] Michael Tomasello, *Becoming Human: A Theory of Ontogeny* (Cambridge, MA: Bellknap Press, 2019), 200.

[42] Marcia J. Bunge, Terence E. Fretheim, and Beverly Roberts Gaventa, eds., *The Child in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2008).

[43] James Gerard McEvoy, "Theology of Childhood: An Essential Element of Christian Anthropology," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 84, no. 2 (2019): 117–136, doi.org/10.1177/0021140019829322.

[44] Karl Rahner SJ, "Ideas for a Theology of Childhood," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 8, trans. David Bourke (London: Darton, Longman &Todd, 1971), 36.

dynamics of grace and sin. Scripture sees childhood realistically (1Corinthians 3:1 and Matthew 11:16–17) and idealistically as when Jesus says, "Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it" (Mark 10:15). In their openness and trust, children show what it is to be open to God. Childhood is a mystery.

The promotion of resilience is crucial in responding to trauma and abuse and healing from it.[45] The word's origins are in the Latin *resilere*, meaning "to recoil or spring back." In psychology it has come to mean the ability to respond effectively to and cope with trauma, adversity, and failure. It is never returning to normal but a positive adaptation resulting in an ongoing protective capability. There are important biological and epigenetic factors under study. Research has also identified resilience-promoting factors including strong social networks, confronting our fears, and an optimistic outlook.[46] How do we obstruct resilience, and even re-traumatize, by bad theology and insensitive, inadequate pastoral care?

Simple "quick fix" answers to our wounded Church will not produce healing, protection, and prevention. All mothers know that bringing forth new life is painful and messy work. How can we respond to clergy abuse in ways that promote the resilience of the Resurrection? There is much to be done, if we are to be true disciples of the Jesus who loves children.

Nuala P. Kenny, a Sister of Charity of Halifax, received an MD from Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, and postgraduate training in pediatrics at Dalhousie and Tufts, Boston, Massachusetts. She completed a Fellowship at the Kennedy Institute of Ethics at Georgetown University. After a distinguished career in Canadian pediatrics, she became the founding Chair of the Department of Bioethics of Dalhousie Faculty of

[45] Lotz, "Vulnerability and Resilience: A Critical Nexus," 45–59.

[46] Michael Ungar, *Multisystemic Resilience Adaptation and Transformation in Contexts of Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021).

Medicine. In 1999, Dr. Kenny was seconded as Deputy Minister of Health for the Province of Nova Scotia. She has served as the Ethics and Health Policy Advisor to the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada and to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops Ad Hoc Committee for the Protection of Minors on issues in abuse of power in the Church. She has received seven honorary doctorates and was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada for her contributions to child health, medical education and health policy.