

## MY STORY

From personal experience I found the Roman Catholic religious instruction I got as a child extremely harmful to me.

I made my first confession in 1978. At the age of seven, I was introduced whether I wanted to be or not into this astounding superstition. Mortal sins have to be confessed on pain of everlasting damnation and even possibly death at the hands of the Catholic God. Children don't understand what a mortal sin is and this can disturb the child greatly.

There comes a time when one has a sin, one finds impossible to tell even to a priestly stranger no matter how weak in the head one is in relation to one's religion. In my case, it was the alleged sacrilege of stealing a communion wafer to have Jesus in my house in 1984. The burden this caused was tremendous and my nights were filled with the terror and dreams of eternal damnation and I developed a complete lack of self-esteem. The sin merited automatic excommunication which worsened things. The self-disgust and the fear and the guilt drove me to contemplate suicide but I wouldn't have done it for I thought then that my everlasting damnation was assured. I had to settle for dragging my jaw on the ground and wishing I had never been born.

Abusive mother Church stole the best years of my life from me. Now, she would tell me that she did not and that I was lying in a bed of thorns of my own making. But the fact that Catholicism is a cult of unsupported and needless faith proves that she would be falsely accusing me because it is not right to harm anyone directly or indirectly for the love of guesses.

I remember the upset I felt when I was about seven years of age at the thought that I or my sinning parents could go to Hell forever and ever. If you really love other people you will be terribly upset at this doctrine.

As a child I felt that the God the Church had forbade me to do anything if I was sexually abused. I felt it would be a sin for I had to sacrifice myself and encourage evil against me by forgiving the perpetrators. This is as harmful as actual physical sexual abuse for it removes the feelings of safety that a child should have. It diminishes trust in adults who are seen to be grudgingly blindly obeyed and whose opinions about God and Jesus are to be absorbed without hesitation without any regard for yourself. You are just a child and the adults know better- God can communicate with them better because they are bigger and smarter and know the ways of the world better.

I was sexually abused by God and the Catholic Church and it is high time that the resources the Church has to do this are cut off. I mean they abused me sexually by making me available. I was made a sex-object. Doctrines that are an accessory to child abuse need to be fought against. When God does not make people realise these things it is clear that the message that is being sent to children is that God wants them to be molested. Even the suspicion that he might - which is very easily picked up by a child - can have devastating effects.