

Sue Cox - Survivors Voice- Europe VERONA 2013.

I am so pleased to be here with you again in Verona.

Ever since we met in 2010 in Rome, when we marched together for the first time, We have had a real heart connection with everyone here.

As a clergy abuse survivor, it is often the isolation that is the hardest thing to bear, thinking for years that you might be the only one to have these sordid secrets.

Finding each other, and connecting, like we did on that day in Rome has been a life changing experience.

But we cannot think about clergy sexual abuse without first looking at the environment in which it occurred.

The catholic environment was (and is) very much part of the problem, and provided (and still provides) a breeding ground for abuse.

Because these abuses are all about POWER, the subjugation of human beings, by a narcissistic organisation, which has abused it's power for centuries.

It is also impossible to talk about abuse without also talking about the catholic indoctrination of children, the distorted view of sexual matters, the deification of clergy, and the narcissism of the church itself.

As individuals, there was a time for all of us when we were isolated in some way, either by our indoctrination, our geography, or our disabilities. We may have been groomed for years, or just weeks, but like the weakest of the wildebeest, opportunistically we were picked off by the predatory pedophile priests.

In some cruel way, we were in the wrong place at the wrong time, and we now have a lifetime legacy, which will definitely manifest in some way.

It is not possible to be abused by a priest, and bear no scars.

How that manifests will depend on many other things, our age, our education, family background.

We were all Products of our own upbringing and deluded by a religion based on fear and retribution.

A Church that relies on it's "flock" to adore it's clergy, and keep their mouths shut. It is their secrets that keep them sick.

The catholic church provides a breeding ground for pedophiles.

It makes demi- gods out of inadequates and makes them untouchable by covering up their crimes.

It is the same story the World over, everywhere where the church has it's tentacles, there are stories of serial abuse,, threats, victim blame, lies, and cover ups.

In every country we hear from survivors who all tell a similar story, so similar in fact that there seems to be a "universal script" it is almost word for word.

So similar that it can only be the party line that comes from one source!

And Power definitely corrupts! It is seductive and addictive and just like Heroin, it is very difficult to give up!

The Church will fight tooth and nail to hold on to that power, disregarding any of us who get in the way, seeing us as collateral damage.

They NEVER voluntarily admit any of their crimes, and only ever will go half way to admitting them when they are cornered -like rats in a trap.

Since we met in 2010 I have been very active in this fight for justice for clergy abuse survivors.

I speak at many rallies and conferences in London, I have been to America, back here to Rome, and will be going to Poland in March.

Everywhere I go, I talk about all of you, my friends in Verona, and others in Italy. You are quite famous in England!! I tell everyone about your fight, your bravery and dignity, and also your humour!

Last week I spoke at the Secular Europe campaign in London, and everyone there sends many good wishes to you and their support and solidarity.

In May I was invited to attend a pre sessional meeting in the United Nations in Geneva, to give evidence against the Vatican to the Committee for the Rights of the Child. I was together with some Americans and The National Secular Society from England.

I made a point of including all of you in my presentation.

We have submitted evidence that accuses the Vatican of serious breaches of several articles of the Convention for the rights of the child, and there was very damning evidence given.

We were overwhelmed by the support we received from the UN, who have now produced an official document detailing the Vatican's breaches.

We are not allowed to report what they said to us, but I can tell you we were VERY VERY excited by their supportive response.

The Holy See will have to attend the UN in January to answer those accusations. **WE WILL BE THERE AGAIN!**

You will be very much on my mind when I am there!

It is not always possible for everyone to travel, but the others from SVE and Gary and Bernie from the US send their love.

I have brought with me a DVD that Gary has produced which although it is all in English, shows a lot of our first meeting in Rome. Perhaps you can all get together and watch it!

It is called **BASTA!!!!**

Thank-you for all being here again, I hope I can be with you again next year.