

1. This is the statement of Bernard Traynor [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] and which I make pursuant to a Notice dated 13th December 2017 pursuant to Section 21(2) of The Inquiries Act 2005.
2. I understand the purpose of the Inquiry before whom my statement may be placed and of course the requirement that I state only the truth.
3. I was born in Sunderland and raised as one of eight children of my parents both of whom are now deceased. All eight siblings are still alive. I have contact with most but not all of them from time to time. My life and its events will be well known to them all. Between the ages of 11 and 16 I was continually abused by one of them and this, coupled with sustained abuse at secondary school was an influencing factor in my desire to leave home at an early age.
4. I was educated at St. Aidan's Grammar School in Sunderland which was essentially run by and under the auspices of The Irish Christian Brothers. I left this school aged 16 years to attend Ushaw College in County Durham, initially to pursue A Level studies and then to commence training for the Priesthood. I resided at the college from September 1969 to June 1977. In 1977 I was ordained a Priest.
5. From 1977 until 1983 I was assistant priest, or curate, in a parish in Darlington and then, also as a curate, in Morpeth, Northumberland between 1983 and 1992. From there I went on to become a parish priest in Gateshead until 1994.
6. In 1994, when my Church became aware I was the subject of allegations, which included those in Appendix 1 (13th December 2017), I was placed at Our Lady of Victories, Brownhill, Stroud, Gloucestershire, until June 1995 when I was sentenced at the Crown Court at Newcastle upon Tyne for the offences outlined in Appendix 1.

The sentence passed upon me in respect of those offences was a Probation Order for 2 years. This was completed without incident or rebuke. I had been suspended as a priest from the moment of being charged. I have not practised as a priest since then and was laicized in 2012.

7. In September 2015 I was sentenced by His Hon Judge Taylor in the Crown Court at Teesside to a term of 18 months imprisonment suspended for 2 years for one offence of Indecent Assault on a male person. The allegation was made against me in 2014 and arose from an incident occurring in 1977 or 1978. The complainant is not named in Appendix 1. The incident however, and which I did not deny, was within the same period of time as those referred to in Appendix 1 and none of which did I deny.
8. At the time of making this statement I would mislead if I gave the least impression that I can recall the details of the offences and which led to my arraignment. I have retained none of the documentation in respect of them and for doubtless obvious reasons. If asked questions about them I would of course endeavour only truthful answers. But as I have no recollection of the these events it would be a fruitless exercise.
9. What I am able to state is as follows. Upon being charged and suspended in 1994 and placed at Stroud I underwent a treatment programme conducted by trained therapists. This was a course of therapy targeted in my case at two elements of my character. First my alcoholism and second my offending behaviour. Each of these involved a searching inventory of my flaws and depended for its success in large measure on self honesty. This last was reached by a painful process of confrontation and admission. It was in essence an introduction to the 12 Steps of Alcoholics

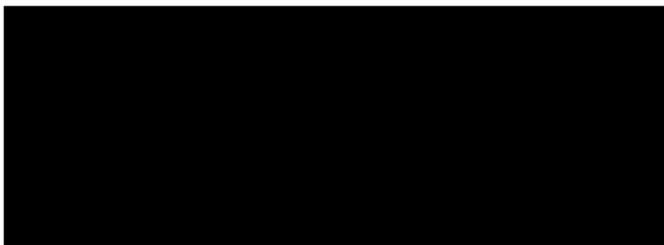
Anonymous by the tenets of which I have since tried to live my life. But it was also a process during which I am sure I would have admitted in therapy the offence for which I was prosecuted in 2015.

10. My primary objective throughout the many years that have elapsed since the period of my offending has been to lead a sober and upright life. Simply staying away from a drink or drug is not enough. Honesty to myself and with others is paramount. If the conscience is clear the burden on me is less. There is nothing to hide and no need to mask pain. But in any event whatever were the proclivities of the man who was Bernard Traynor the Trainee Priest of the 1970's such form no part of the Bernard Traynor who would swear to the truth of this statement.

11. I do not pretend to have any understanding of what psychological or psycho-sexual explanations exist to explain the offending for which I was responsible and I do not have the skill-set to find the answers.

12. I do however increasingly understand the need for those who have suffered at the hands of abusers to be able to come to terms with what happened. But the only assistance I can give in this regard is a repetition of my remorse as demonstrated at the time I pleaded guilty and subsequently. My alcoholism and the chapter of my own abuse may be relevant to those who look for explanations. For me neither was an excuse though both have for years since been the source of my empathy.

Signed



Dated

3. 1. 2018.

