



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

Irish Roman Catholic Priest Jailed for 36 years for child-abuse



James Kelly

Court hears of the cruel secrets of one of Rome's orphanages

James Kelly (74), also known as Brother Ambrose, a member of the Brothers of Charity once based at Lota, Glanmire, Co Cork, was given the longest prison sentence for sex abuse, 36 years, in an Irish court, after pleading guilty to 18 sample counts of indecent assault on three boys in the 1950s and 1960s. The victims wanted to see Kelly punished with a jail sentence. "Their experience at the hands of this man has rendered their lives little short of a permanent crucifixion," said Judge Murphy.

He jailed Kelly for two years on each of the 18 charges, to run consecutively, but will review the sentence in 18 months' time. The 18 sample charges were among 72 charges of indecent assault against Kelly. They covered the years 1956 to 1968 when Kelly was working at the Lota home for orphans and boys with learning difficulties.

Three former residents of the home told Cork Circuit Criminal Court how Kelly abused them regularly throughout their teens.

Mr Alan Carroll (48) told the court, "I was a young boy of 14 when I went to Lota . . . I never thought such devilish things were taking place in Lota School . . . I never expected to be bullied, threatened or whipped down," he said. "All the other lads in the school were probably going through the same thing," said Mr Carroll, adding that Kelly was the worst of six brothers who abused him there.

Mr Joe O'Driscoll (56) said he twice almost took his life as a result of the trauma of being abused. "We went through hell there, and if we told any one about it, we got a clip around the head," he said. "People like him shouldn't be in the world," he said. He would never forget what had happened to him at Kelly's hands.

The third victim, a 47-year-old married man who did not wish to be named, said he had twice almost committed suicide. He had difficulty sleeping for years, though he had gone for counselling which helped. "We suffered hell. and hell should be returned to him," he said when asked if he thought Kelly should be jailed.

Dressed in a navy jacket, Kelly sat with his head bowed as his victims told their stories. Sgt Senan Ryan, who led the six-year investigation, said Kelly denied abuse when first questioned in 1996, but after another Brother of Charity was convicted, further complaints were made about him.

The court heard that Kelly had a number of convictions for child sex abuse in England where he went after leaving Lota. He had received a suspended jail sentence and was put under the supervision of the probation service in England. Kelly had himself been abused as a boy when he was put into an orphanage after his parents' deaths. The judge said all the psychiatric assessments and Kelly's personal circumstances had to be taken into account. "But they do not excuse the offence that took place nor diminish its gravity. These were young children," he noted. He pointed out that Kelly's breach of trust was all the greater because his victims were disadvantaged and vulnerable. Many of those at Lota had



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no parents and in those circumstances when that trust was breached, "the evil is bottomless".

Judge Murphy said he would review the sentence in 18 months and, provided there were no adverse reports on Kelly at that stage, he would release him.

As we have said before, when reporting the numerous incidents of this nature that have come before the courts of the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, the USA and Canada and many other countries, the world has been given indisputable evidence of the vile and wicked nature of Romanism.

Every true Christian ought to pray for the poor children that are in her evil hands. May God deliver Ireland from Popery and Priestcraft.