

Report on Church of England finds failures in abuse case, government inquiry continues

by [Trevor Grundy](#); added sources in the [April 13, 2016](#) issue

The Church of England has promised to make broad changes in dealing with sexual abuse cases after the publication of the first independent review commissioned by the church into its handling of such cases in the past.

The report's conclusions highlight the "deeply disturbing" failure of those in senior clerical positions to pass on information about the cries for help from a survivor known only as "Joe" over a period of almost four decades.

A report March 15 in the *Guardian* identifies the clergy as Tim Thornton, bishop of Truro; Richard Holloway, former bishop of Edinburgh; John Eastaugh, deceased bishop of Hereford; and Stephen Platten, former bishop of Wakefield.

According to the *Guardian*, the victim—who was 15 and an altar boy at the time—was subjected in 1976 to a "sadistic" assault by Garth Moore, then a leading figure in the church. Moore died in 1990.

The report said that for the next four decades, Joe pleaded for help and contacted members of the Anglican hierarchy.

None of the men he contacted was able to fully recall their conversation with the survivor. Last October, the church paid Joe £35,000 (\$49,300) in compensation.

In November the British government announced the launch of an independent five-year inquiry to examine whether private and public institutions, including churches, failed to protect children from sexual abuse. Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby asked Lowell Goddard, the judge heading the inquiry, to investigate the Church of England first.

The inquiry will consist of 12 different investigations, including one of the Roman Catholic Church in England, and is expected to cost nearly \$27 million.

After a preliminary hearing March 16 of the inquiry chaired by Goddard, Paul Butler, bishop of Durham and lead Church of England bishop on safeguarding, made a

statement on behalf of the church.

“We commend those survivors who have come forward . . . knowing how costly it will be to relive their experiences,” he said. “The true cost of child abuse and the abuse of adults at risk is far higher than any of us have ever been prepared to acknowledge.” —Religion News Service

This article was edited on March 29, 2016.