The correlation between church leaders' understanding of the issue of child sexual abuse and preventive steps taken within their churches

Date
2005-05-13

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Subject
Child sexual abuse -- Prevention.
Church and social problems.
Clergy -- Professional ethics.

Description
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Abstract
The research examined the relationship between knowledge of faith-based church leaders regarding the facts of child sexual abuse and the practice of child sexual abuse prevention steps utilized within the church. It examined the historical, theological, biblical, and ethical concerns about child sexual abuse and the church. The biblical accounts of David and Bathsheba along with the story of Tamar and Amnon were reflected upon within the historical and biblical context of sexual abuse. The theological understanding of sin and its results was analyzed in the context of child sexual abuse. A chronological exploration of the history of child abuse in the United States along with statistics for the represented years was included in the study.
A toxic relationship of abuse between spiritual leaders and their flock? The instances are too numerous and obvious to list. If we refuse any neat separation between cult and religion, aren’t we therefore obligated to condemn both? Only ontological metaphysical truth can possibly justify the demands that any religion makes upon its adherents. Our understanding of ourselves – whether we’re cradle Catholics, newly joined-up members of the Hare Krishna, or members of a particularly rabid internet fandom – as people whose actions have cosmic if not metaphysical significance gives us a symbolic framework in which to live our lives, even as it proscribes our options.