



Lisa Kessler

*Heart in the Wound*

February 18 - March 26, 2022

Howard Yezerksi Gallery is pleased to announce *Heart in the Wound*, a solo exhibition of photographs by Lisa Kessler. This year marks the twentieth anniversary of The Boston Globe's Spotlight team releasing their groundbreaking story of clergy abuse. *Heart in the wound* features deeply personal images made before and after the story broke in 2002. Thanks to Kessler's dedication of connecting herself with survivors and her ability to capture such delicate subject matter, we are able to view and hear these stories. The exhibition will also include an 8-minute audio documentary, as well as an interactive website which provides resources for those affected by these events.

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I had been treated professionally and kindly as a freelancer for the Archdiocese of Boston through the 1990's, and I didn't know how to reconcile that with the brutal facts being disclosed in 2002. I used photography to capture this historic conflict as it unfolded, even as I felt conflicted and betrayed. I'm a non-Catholic who empathized deeply with the victims/survivors.

At first I hoped the revelations would bring about a healing led by the church hierarchy. It soon became clear that the hierarchy was the problem, more concerned with avoiding scandal than with the pastoral care of young people.

I showed up consistently at church events and protests where survivors spoke publicly, often at great personal cost to themselves. Over time, I connected with several people who embodied strength and vulnerability in ways I admired. They trusted me with their stories of pain and transformation, excerpts of which are available to listen to in the gallery.

The problem of course isn't limited to Boston or to the Catholic Church. Abuses of power and institutional cover-ups have been revealed in organizations across the world. This collision of vulnerability with power is being met by a growing public sphere of safety that includes parents who believe their children, prosecutors who hold respected citizens accountable, and survivors pursuing forms of emotional justice that have not yet been created.

– Lisa Kessler