

**Donovan, Noelle, 2013, *The Perception of Parents and Students of the Role of the School Chaplain in Three Irish Post-Primary Schools.***

#### **ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION**

This study examines the perceptions of parents and students of the role of the school chaplain in three Irish Post-Primary schools. The Study was completed with students from both Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle, a representative group of parents and three school chaplains.

Three research questions were used as a basis upon which to conduct the study at a time when the attitude of some in society is turning against religion. There is, in some quarters, a demand to remove religious patronage in primary schools and the question of ethos is to the forefront of discussion at Government level.

An introduction outlines the secondary school system in Ireland and examines the quality of pastoral care offered to our students and is followed by a comprehensive literature review. It is important to note at this juncture that there is very little available literature on parents perceptions' of the role of the school chaplain. A consideration of the research methodologies which inform the selection of research instrument and engagement precedes the presentation and analysis of data. The study concludes with the formulation of relevant conclusions, recommendations and the identification of future study opportunities.

Chaplains are valued by parents and students, however while parents and students view the chaplain as a counsellor, this is not something which chaplains agree with. The role of chaplain needs to be defined and clarified without delay.