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## Brothers create powerful first-person story of abuse, betrayal

By Kevin McDonough

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"Frontline" (8 p.m., PBS) presents "Hand of God," a remarkably powerful and personal film about a victim of sexual abuse by a Catholic priest.

Raised in a large and tight-knit Italian-American family in Salem, Mass., filmmaker Joe Cultrera uses home-movie footage and interviews to chronicle his brother Paul's story of abuse, its effect on his personality and psyche, and Paul's efforts to find out more about his abuser and fellow victims.

Given his past, Paul is surprisingly frank and at times even funny about his grim experiences. Both brothers have every reason to be outraged and angry, but this film is not defined by bitterness. In fact, Cultrera puts special emphasis on the important and all-encompassing nature of the Catholic Church in their family and neighborhood and how his elderly parents still cling to their faith. And it is this aspect of the film that makes the Church's betrayal of the Cultreras — and hundreds of families with similar stories — seem all the more brutal, indifferent and truly evil.

• "American Idol" (7 p.m., Fox) returns for a sixth season with a cross-country tour of auditions in cities from Los Angeles to New York. This painful, awkward and irresistible phase will last for a solid month, leading to the live Hollywood Round, beginning Feb. 13.

What can you say about a G-rated show that champions young people, dreams and talent? Put aside the cruel excesses of the sad auditions and the manufactured shenanigans among the judges, and "Idol" is pretty free of pettiness, backbiting and envy.

At the risk of sounding corny, let's look at two basic facts: "Idol" is stupendously popular, and it reflects a generally upbeat side of human nature. Do you think there's a connection there? Last year's "Idol" reached an audience of 31 million viewers. Are programmers paying attention?

### Tonight's other highlights

- Luke and Christopher duke it out on "Gilmore Girls" (7 p.m., CW).
- A clean sweep on "The Unit" (8 p.m., CBS).
- Denny lands on a no-fly list on "Boston Legal" (9 p.m., ABC).
- P.J. casts a skeptical eye on some old myths on the season finale of "My Boys" (9 p.m., TBS ).

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