

HIA REF:

Witness Name: **SND 60**

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 – 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF **SND 60**

1. I, **SND 60** of [REDACTED] will say as follows –
2. I was born on the [REDACTED] but I did not know my mother at all. As a baby I was looked after first at the Nazareth Home in [REDACTED] I then came to Nazareth House in Derry in [REDACTED]
3. I was in the nursery until I was five and then went into the junior section to go to school. I remember I was a [REDACTED] child and was well looked after at that time by **SR 59** I had to get a [REDACTED] and it was **SR 9** who looked after the [REDACTED] I was not a very good eater but I remember being given [REDACTED]
4. At bath time I recall that there were six baths in the room but we were given privacy at that time as there were plastic curtains between the baths. We had clean underwear and pyjamas and clothes.
5. As I grew older I had duties to do in the Home like waxing and polishing floors. This was not a hard job as we always had a laugh and enjoyed doing it. Three girls would stand together in a line and we used to sing a song 'One, two, three, four, **SR 59** at the cottage door. Five, six, seven, eight, eating cherries off a plate.' There was more to this song but I can't remember the rest of it. While we were doing this we had cloths under our feet which we used to polish the floor.
6. **SR 9** was in charge for most of the time that I was in Nazareth and she was really like a mother to us all. She was strict and we had to keep the rules as there were so many of us in the Home. If you broke the rules by carrying on at the wrong time you would get a real telling off and sometimes girls got slapped with a ruler. **SR 9** never, to my knowledge, used the leather belt that all the nuns wore as part of their uniform.
7. My memory of the home was of good times. Apart from school we often got out of the Home to go to the cinema, concerts and parties. I was in the choir and often sang in the feis and I was in the Chapel choir.

8. Every Sunday we were all given money that we could spend in the tuck shop. This was when we were very young. Also we got money at other times. Similarly we had a big party at Christmas in the big hall and **SND 131** came and gave out presents to every child. We had music and got staying up late at those times. We also had films shown in the Home itself.
9. When I came **[REDACTED]** the nuns got me a job in **[REDACTED]** in **[REDACTED]**. I worked as a **[REDACTED]** for a while and then in the canteen. I loved it there. I still lived in Nazareth at that time. The senior girls had individual bedrooms and I remember before I went out to work in the morning **SR 59** always left out breakfast for me under the grill because the nuns got up earlier and had had their breakfast.
10. When I was **[REDACTED]** I went to live with a family outside **[REDACTED]** **SR 59** was very supportive of me then and she went down to the family and arranged that they would bring me back to Nazareth whenever I liked. They were also supposed to bring me to Mass every Sunday. However, they were not good to me and they made me do a lot of work in their house and they did not take me back to Nazareth nor did they take me to Mass. They went to Mass with their own children and I walked down on my own. I was put in a very cold room that had a fridge in it. By walking down to Mass on my own I got friendly with another family in **[REDACTED]** and they were very nice to me.
11. I stayed with the family I had been sent to for about **[REDACTED]** but I was very unhappy so one day I just took a bus back to Nazareth because I really regarded it as my real home. When I got back there I broke down and I told **SR 59** how I was being treated by the family in **[REDACTED]** and she said that I didn't need to stay there and that I should just stay in Nazareth. With the help of the family with whom I had got friendly I arranged to get all my belongings and I then came back to live in Nazareth until I was **[REDACTED]** years of age. The family I had been living with came a number of times to try to get me to go back and work for them but **SR 59** simply refused to send me back to them.
12. I finally left Nazareth when I was **[REDACTED]** but I came back regularly to visit and was always made very welcome.
13. I have loads of cards that **SR 9** wrote to me after she left Nazareth and went to live in **[REDACTED]** I have Christmas cards from her and I have kept them to this day.
14. When I saw the news of the terrible stories about the nuns I was very angry and it was then that I decided that I would give a statement.
15. I should also say that one evening I was in the **[REDACTED]** in Derry with some friends when out of the blue a former resident **HIA 49** came over to me with a woman called **HIA 43** and they started talking to me about how badly the nuns had treated us in Nazareth and they tried to get me to support their stories. I simply refused and I told them that I had been treated very well.

16. Previously I had been approached by a man I know as [REDACTED] when I was coming out of the Housing Executive Office one day and he tried to persuade me to go to a meeting in Belfast saying that there was big money in it for me. Again I just refused because I was not prepared to tell lies.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed [REDACTED] **SND 60** _____

SND 60

Dated 10th February 2014