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20th July 2012

HIA 105

Dear **HIA 105**

I hope you are keeping well since we last spoke on the phone. Evelyn, our Archivist told me you rang to find out some background information. Unfortunately up until the late 70's there was very little recorded about your years in Nazareth House. I have checked the records and found the following information:-

Name:	HIA 105
Date of Birth:	HIA 105
Place of Birth:	Omagh, Co. Tyrone
Place of Baptism:	Cappagh, Co. Tyrone on HIA 105
Mother's Name:	HIA 105
Admitted to:	Nazareth House, Bishop Street, Derry
Date of Admission:	1 st May 1962
Transferred from:	Fahan Nursery, Co. Donegal
First Confession:	7 th June 1968
First Communion:	8 th June 1968
Confirmation:	15 th July 1969
Left Nazareth House:	1 st July 1976

I am sorry to tell you that is the only information I can find about your childhood years,
HIA 105

Yours sincerely

SR 52

SR 52

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HIA REF: 105

Witness Name: HIA 105

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 105

I, HIA 105, say as follows:-

Personal details

1. I was born on [REDACTED] Omagh. I was placed in Fahan Nursery in Donegal when I was a baby. I have [REDACTED] brothers called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and a [REDACTED] brother called [REDACTED]. One of my brothers was placed in Termonbacca and my other brother was adopted by [REDACTED]. I believe I was placed in care because my mother and father were unmarried. I was taken to Nazareth House in Derry on 1st May 1962.

Nazareth House, Derry (01/05/1962 – 01/07/1976)

2. I was placed in Nazareth House on 1st May 1962 when I was nearly [REDACTED] years old. I remained there until 1st July 1976 when I was [REDACTED] years old.
3. I was placed in the nursery in Nazareth House. The nursery was supervised by one nun but I cannot remember her name. Senior girls also helped the nun to supervise the children. I cannot remember their names either.
4. I remember sitting round a huge table to eat our dinner. Food was served in a little dish and all food had to be eaten. There were times when I was sick because I didn't like some of the food. I brought the food back up and I was

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made to eat it again by the nuns. I was slapped across the face by the seniors if I didn't eat it the food and I was slapped again for being sick. I cannot remember their names.

5. There was a regular hygiene inspection every Saturday when we were brought into the nun's room for our nails, hair and ears to be checked. I do not remember her name but she had her own room within the nursery. In it there was a sink and a glass cabinet with medicines. I remember us all having to queue outside the room and we were brought in one at a time and seen by this nun. She was stocky and appeared tall. On one occasion I was brought into her room and I was told to lie on the floor. I did what I was told. The nun lifted her habit and then she straddled me. She came down on my face with her vagina. I cannot remember if she had pants on when she pulled up her habit but there was none on when she put her vagina in my face. Then in a harsh voice she demanded that I lick her vagina. I was absolutely terrified and I did what I was told. It seemed to last for a very long time. I don't remember if she made any noise or said anything while I was doing this. I think I was between three or four when it happened. I don't know how many times it happened. I don't remember the nun's name. [REDACTED] SR 18 arrived a few months before I left the home in 1976. When I left Nazareth House I remained in contact with her and around 2003 or 2004 I told her about that incident. She telephoned [REDACTED] SR 15 who is in Sligo. [REDACTED] SR 15 said the nun's name was either [REDACTED] SR 61 or Sister [REDACTED] SR 60 who I think was a summer relief nursery nun. [REDACTED] SR 15 now has Alzheimer's and is in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] SR 18 is a Mother Superior in [REDACTED]. She has since denied this conversation happened.

6. When I was about five years old I was moved from the nursery to the junior section. There were three nuns responsible for three groups of maybe sixty girls. Each nun was responsible for a different group. There was [REDACTED] SR 15 [REDACTED] SR 9 who has passed away and [REDACTED] SR 52 who is now in [REDACTED].
7. The junior section wasn't pleasant. The senior girls have a lot to answer for because the amount of cruelty to us juniors was dreadful. I cannot remember any of their names. The senior girls were very violent and would have beaten

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us. They would even have been violent when a nun was standing nearby but the nuns never said anything. On Saturday we got our hair washed in metal bath tubs. [REDACTED] SR 15 and [REDACTED] SR 9 watched the seniors wash our hair. There was one tub to wash in and one tub to rinse in. I always prayed that I wouldn't have any nits in my hair but they were hard to avoid as there were so many of us in the home. You could see them floating in the water. If you didn't put your head in tub the way the senior girls wanted they would slap you. After our hair was washed it was rinsed and then dried with a towel. Then it was combed with a fine metal comb. The senior girls dug the comb into my scalp so hard that it bled and sores formed. To this day my scalp is still very sensitive and I usually don't even brush my hair, I just use my fingers. This went on every Saturday. The senior girls were very fond of giving us whacks often with the nuns looking on.

8. We used to get bathed once a week. About twelve to fifteen people used the same water which was black. I developed sores all over my body because the water was so dirty. I remember [REDACTED] SR 15 got a floor scrubber and scrubbed me down and I was bleeding. I was nicknamed 'scabby' for a long time because I was covered in sores.
9. If I or other young ones cried we would be slapped and told to stop crying. There was a lot of crying in the home. As a child I wanted to die. I desperately wanted to die. When I was about five or six I tried to smother myself with a pillow. The home was horrific. I cried most nights. I never stopped crying and asking God to please take me out of here. It was just like being in hell.
10. As a junior when I was about five my first job was cleaning toilets every Saturday. I was down on my knees scrubbing with floor brushes. If it wasn't done to a certain standard I got beaten. Sometimes I was hit once and other times I got quite a few slaps. The face and head were their favourite places to smack you. I worked in the toilets up until the age of sixteen. I do not remember the names of the people who slapped me.

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11. If I finished cleaning the toilets early then I would have had to go up into a dormitory and help other girls my age polish the floors. They used to put us down in a straight row and polish left to right and that's the way they told us to clean. I only remember seeing one or two seniors then and there was one senior called [REDACTED] SND 109 who the nuns idolised. She practically took control of the home. She was strict and was quite wicked but the nuns thought the world of her. The last I heard [REDACTED] SND 109 was living in England.
12. There was one senior called [REDACTED] and she would have been kind to me. I remember one day she was going out to the shop and she brought me with her and bought me a lollipop. That was such a big thing. I think she is living in England now.
13. The seniors seemed to have permission to do what they did to us by the nuns. The nuns were cruel themselves. They mentally abused us. They put us down and they made you feel dirty and worthless. For example, we were only given one pair of pants per week and [REDACTED] SR 9 would hand them out in front of everyone in the dormitory by calling out your name. If the clothing had stains that could not be removed she would chastise you in front of everyone. We would never have dared asked for another clean pair during the week. If we had an accident we would have washed them out and hung them up to dry on the chair beside our beds. We used to dry them on the radiator but [REDACTED] SR 15 threatened to take away any pants that she saw on the radiator. We were constantly told that we were lucky to be there as no one else wanted us. I remember as a child the only place I could take salvage in was the chapel where I knew nobody could touch me. I remember going in and spending hours there sitting crying and looking at statues of the baby Jesus and thinking how could this happen. I used to listen to the nuns praying knowing that as soon as their prayers ended they would come out of the chapel and continue with the cruelty.
14. One time [REDACTED] SR 9 accused me of stealing money from a girl I shared a dormitory with called [REDACTED] SR 9 but me up against a wall. I didn't do it but I got blamed for it. She made me stand and while she hit my legs with a cane until I said yes I did steal the money. My legs were bruised after it. I

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think I was blamed because when I was about six [SND 277] and I stole money from the Mission's tin in [SR 52] classroom.

15. We were also beaten with a huge bunch of keys by [SR 15]. She would come over and bang you on the head with the bunch of keys. It was very sore. Getting beaten with keys was a routine form of punishment. Everyone would have been beaten like this even the little ones at five or six years old. We were also pulled by the ear.
16. We went to primary school in Nazareth House. My school days were quite good. I had some good teachers apart from [SR 15]. One day I lost my spelling book. I think I was about seven or eight. [SR 15] didn't believe me and she took three metal rulers and slapped my hands with them. I wouldn't cry. Instead I bit into my wrist rather than shed a tear. I didn't want her to see me cry. After class she called me back and gave me sweets.
17. In school we knew we were different from the other children who came from families. I have good memories of going swimming and singing. The nuns were very into music and they had us in choirs and bands. But it was a very stressful time as well because the standard they were expecting was so high.
18. I had difficulties sleeping. I still suffer today. I was afraid to go to sleep at night as there was a prowler in the home. I first saw him when I was in the nursery. He came in at weekends. He wore a hat and a raincoat and he was tall. I saw him lift one of the girls who slept opposite me in the nursery out of her bed. He lifted the child up into his arms. I remember trying to close my eyes but at the same time I kept a little bit open just to see him. I could see him looking at me and then I thought I was going to be next. As soon as he went out I screamed loudly. Some of the seniors came down and I said there was a man here just a minute ago and lifted a girl out of bed. I can't remember who the girl was. The senior girl told me to shut up and go back to sleep and that it was my imagination. The prowler was going up before and even after I left Nazareth House in 1976. There was a secret passage in the convent and I think that is how he got in and out. Apparently this man used to work there many years ago.

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as a janitor and he was sacked. I don't know what he did with the girls. When I was about eight or nine the Mother Superior took it seriously. The prowler tried to lift a girl called [REDACTED] who was one of the nuns' pets. She screamed and one of the nuns came running in but he had gone. The military police were called that night but they didn't get him. He was still able to come in to the convent and I never slept at night through fear. We had wooden floors and I used to hear him walking. I was absolutely petrified going to sleep at night. I used to lie there with one eye open.

19. We got up at 7am and had breakfast. Then we had chores to do before we went to school. If you wet your bed you were punished. You were made to stand for your breakfast and at night time you only got a half a cup of tea. You were responsible for washing the sheets. I didn't wet my bed because I was awake all night anyway. However one night two girls called [REDACTED] SND 160 and [REDACTED] SND 51 got me up and brought me to the toilet. While I was at the toilet they changed my sheets and put wet sheets on my bed and I couldn't understand what happened because my pyjamas were dry and the bed was soaking. I found out later on at a reunion what happened as the two culprits owned up. It was embarrassing for anybody that did wet the bed.

20. The girls who wet their pants had to wear the pants on their heads and they had to parade up and down the corridor where the dormitories were. We only ever got one pair of pants to wear a week; one vest, one pair of pants, one dress and one pair of socks. I took my period when I was ten and they would have given you two sanitary towels per day - one for the morning and one for the evening. I had to wash my pants every night and put them on the chair beside my bed to dry but they were always soaking but at least they were clean. You were petrified to ask the nuns for more pants.

21. I always remember being thirsty and having to drink rain water out of the drains. We were afraid to ask for anything between meal times. In the summer we were given sandals and I recall getting sandals that were much too small for me and my toes became so curled up. When I told [REDACTED] SR 9 that my feet were sore she ignored me and told me to wear them. I was in so much pain and hobbling

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so much that I was eventually sent to Altnagelvin Hospital. One of the seniors took me.

22. Whilst at primary school we cleaned the classrooms ourselves every day. When school finished you were given a classroom to dust, sweep and polish. I remember [REDACTED] SND 277 [REDACTED] and I worked together as a team. Our work would have been inspected by a nun.

23. There were many beatings in Nazareth House. I saw terrible things happening to other girls. There was one girl who was hit on her forehead with a brick by [REDACTED] SR 9 [REDACTED] she was called [REDACTED] HIA 169 [REDACTED] do not know why she was hit but I think [REDACTED] HIA 169 [REDACTED] called the soldiers a name or something.

24. From the age of six until I was thirteen I went on holiday with a couple called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They had two children of their own. They were beautiful people. It was just like going to a different world. It was heaven. It was like living a normal life like ordinary children. They took me to Germany, Italy and all over. They were lovely people. When I was eight they asked me if I would like to come and live with them as they wanted to adopt me. I said I would love to however my mother said no. I have good memories of being with them. I thought I was in heaven for two months with them and then I had to adjust and go back into the home. It was horrific. I went back into hell and I just cried and cried. On one occasion I begged them not to let me go back. Before we went out on holidays we were warned by the nuns that we were not to talk about anything that happened in the home to our foster parents so I was afraid to tell [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] the reasons why I didn't want to go back. [REDACTED] has passed away and I am still in touch with [REDACTED] who lives in Windsor.

25. I was friendly with a couple of girls that were in other groups in the home and we went to secondary school together. I got to see them very little even though we lived in the home together. I saw them mainly on a Sunday or if the weather was good I saw them in the playground. The different groups only got together when it was time to go to the chapel. We spent a lot of time going to chapel, maybe three or four times a day. There were masses and benedictions. I did make one

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or two really good friends. There was one friend that was discouraged from seeing me by [REDACTED] SR 9. She thought I was a bad influence. When I was fourteen I was plucking my eyebrows and colouring my hair. That was a big deal then and wasn't liked by the nuns. I was smoking as well. [REDACTED] SR 9 once told me she could have opened a shop with all the tweezers and cigarettes that she got from my drawer. It never stopped me. I used to just sell my dinner ticket to get money.

26. If the Bishop or any other visitors arrived we had to sit and smile. We had to look happy. The nuns brought out all the nice toys so they were on view in the playroom which was not normally used. I do not know what normally happened to the toys.
27. On one occasion I was very sick. I was under an awful lot of stress at Christmas because I used to sing a lot and play the piano in a band. I had to learn two or three songs. I remember I was in bed for a long time and [REDACTED] SR 9 brought me ribena. An elderly doctor attended me. That was the only kindness I ever experienced in the home.
28. No welfare officers came to see me in the home.
29. The only time the nuns were really nice was at Christmas time. We always had a big concert. The nuns would have put a party on for us and they were nice. The nuns could actually be nice, but that lasted only a short time.
30. I never really became a senior. The term 'senior' seemed to die out. The home went through a big change in the early 1970's when I was about eleven or twelve. Dormitories were done away with and they were made into flats. There were roughly about twenty girls in each flat. I was in [REDACTED] SR 9 group. "Seniors" all disappeared and the beatings stopped. Instead of iron beds we got real beds, carpet on the floors, wallpaper and curtains. There was no more floor polishing although I still had to clean the bathrooms but there was vinyl so I could mop instead of scrubbers. The same nuns were there but I don't recall

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any physical abuse after about eleven years old. However I was still made to feel worthless.

31. I remember my mother coming to nursery to visit. I saw her maybe once or twice in all the years I was in the home. I think [REDACTED] SR 9 wrote to her to remind her that she had a daughter. When I turned sixteen I was told by [REDACTED] SR 9 that I was going to live with my mother in [REDACTED] and I was given an hour's notice to get ready. I ran into the toilet and locked the door and I cried my eyes out because I was leaving all my friends and going away to [REDACTED]. What I really wanted to do was go onto college and do something more with my life. After three days at home my mother took me to live with my Aunt in [REDACTED]. It was awful. After a while I went to live with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in [REDACTED].

Life after care

32. I felt that I had a lot of living to do to make up for the time I spent in the home. There was no love and if you were to take on board everything that the nuns said to you you felt stupid and worthless. Even today I don't feel I belong anywhere. I have no identity. I have always felt like an outsider because I didn't grow up in a normal world.
33. Nazareth House destroyed me. It destroyed my relationships. I couldn't have relationships because the abuse goes over and over and over in my head. I have never married. I made a promise to God when I was a little girl that I would never have children. I remember praying to God to please don't let me have children because I couldn't see them going through the pain and the hurt that I suffered. I've a couple of good friends.
34. At the moment I am going through a phase of a mixture of depression and cutting myself. I have made suicide attempts in the past and still do to this day. It started from when I was a child. At the moment I stay in the house a lot and I don't bother with anybody. I have two dogs and they are my life.

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35. I suffer from depression. I ended up with good jobs even though I had no qualifications. I have had some lucky breaks in my life but I never felt that I deserved them. The last thirteen years have been bad. I am surviving on medication and counselling. I have a community psychiatric nurse called [REDACTED] that comes out to see me every three weeks and I have a psychiatrist called [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]. I am trying to claw my way back out again so that I can start living.
36. My mother died [REDACTED] from breast cancer. I never met my father. I have one surviving brother and he lives in [REDACTED] and we keep in contact.
37. I didn't talk about the abuse until my early forties. I suppose I didn't think anybody would believe my story or believe what happened to me.
38. I made a statement to Constable Frances Dunlop at Portadown PSNI on 9th August 2010. I made a further statement to Constable Vincent Gillen (police no. 20855) on 20th October 2011. I was informed that there would be no prosecutions.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed [REDACTED] HIA 105

Dated 27.10.2013

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HIA REF: HIA 105

Witness Name: HIA 105

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

ADDENDUM TO WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 105

I, HIA 105 will say as follows:-

1. This is an addendum to my witness statement dated 27th November 2013.
2. I have recalled at paragraph 5 of my witness statement an incident during which a nun straddled me and made me perform a sex act on her. In my statement, I have said that I thought I was between three or four when this had happened, however, after giving the matter further thought, I now believe that I was between four and five.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed HIA 105Dated 6/02/2014