

HIA REF: 107

Witness Name: HIA107

## THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

## WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA107

I, HIA107, will say as follows:-

Personal details

1. I was born on the [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]
2. My father was English and my mother was from [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] Northern Ireland. My father was a [REDACTED] and he met my mother while stationed in Northern Ireland. I have three brothers, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], and four sisters, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I was the fourth child. My brother [REDACTED] was in a care home [REDACTED] when my mother and father moved me and my other siblings to [REDACTED]. I was [REDACTED] years old when we came over. My brother [REDACTED] was in care in [REDACTED]. He came with us to [REDACTED] and later left to join [REDACTED]. I don't know why my parents moved the family to Northern Ireland.
3. My mother and my siblings were my father's second family. My father was in his sixties when we moved to Northern Ireland and he was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for health reasons. We didn't have much money. We lived in small rented rooms and I went to the secondary school in [REDACTED]
4. I use to play with a girl called GSC16 and a girl called GSC17. We were all the same age. GSC16 use to take us round to different places to see different

men. I remember her saying to me once if you let that man tickle you he will give you six pence. We were young and didn't know any better. On [REDACTED] [REDACTED] GSC16 took me to a man's house. I believe there were two or three men. One of them touched me up. Another man tried to have sexual intercourse with me. I understand GSC16's older sister contacted the police and I remember explaining what happened to a police woman at the time. I think her name was Sergeant Hall. The Police informed my mother and she took me to the GP.

5. Following this incident the Police and Social Services got involved in relation to my welfare. I had only been in secondary school a few weeks prior to this. My friend GSC16 and I were taken to the Good Shepherd Convent in November [REDACTED]. GSC17 had been taken to the Convent a few weeks before us. The Juvenile Court in [REDACTED] made an order on [REDACTED] committing me to the care of the Good Shepherd Convent in Derry until I was eighteen on the basis of care and protection. I was assessed as a child having a parent not exercising proper care and guardianship and exposed to moral danger. I felt like the Court was punishing me for what had happened. I know the names of two of the men who abused me. One was called [REDACTED] and the other was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] I gave evidence at a trial in or around [REDACTED] and they were prosecuted for indecent assault.

#### Good Shepherd Convent Derry [REDACTED]

6. GSC16 and me were taken to the Good Shepherd Convent just before my [REDACTED] birthday. I didn't know where I was going. I remember walking into the Convent and seeing a lot of middle aged women. I thought I was in a psychiatric ward in a hospital. When I arrived a woman gave me a bath and took my clothes. She gave me old clothes to put on and I was told to go into the refectory, a big dining room where lots of women were sitting. They gave us a bit of bread and butter and a cup of tea. I never saw my clothes again. We wore work clothes during the week and I was given an orange dress to wear on a Sunday.

7. I was sent to work straight away. There were different departments such as a sewing room, an ironing room, the laundry, the packing room, a sick room and the kitchen. I started work in the sewing room but I use to float from place to place wherever I was needed. In the sewing room I made priest's vestments and the altar boys' clothes and holy badges that were sold. I also cleaned the toilets, looked after anybody who was sick in the sick room and helped in the kitchen, laundry and packing room. The Convent did the laundry for Derry. My hands were cracked and sore from the washing detergent the nuns used in the laundry and I never received any cream for my hands.
8. GSC16 stayed in the sewing room. She made and mended the women's clothes. GSC17 disappeared. I think her mother came for her and they went to England. I can't remember how long GSC17 was with us. Nobody told us anything and we weren't allowed to ask questions.
9. We never received any schooling. There was no education. We just worked. Everybody worked together no matter what age. We were not allowed to talk to each other while we were working. There must have been about a hundred women in the convent. I was the youngest. Some children came and went but I stayed the longest.
10. There were two dormitories upstairs and downstairs. At the end of the dormitories there was a landing and a nun's cell and then another small dormitory with about seven beds. I slept in one of the smaller dormitories. The women were all different ages. Some had been there a long time and were a bit strange. I saw terrible things the nuns did to them. One woman had no hair and the nuns were very cruel to her for some reason. I also remember another girl in her late twenties and the nuns cut her hair off as punishment. The nuns treated some girls worse than others.
11. The Convent had two sections. We lived in one part of the Convent with a few nuns and there was a separate part where other nuns lived and they had nothing to do with us. I cannot remember all their names. The nun in charge was SR312 Each department had a nun. There were two nuns in

the laundry. I remember GSC18, GSC19 and GSC20 GSC19 supervised the ironing room and GSC18 was in charge of the sewing room. GSC20 was in the packing room. They are all dead now. I do remember a SR49 who was quite young and worked in the laundry. To my knowledge she is still alive.

12. I was so emotionally disturbed. I was very close to my mother and I used to help her out a lot. Good Shepherd Convent was worse than a prison. I remember twice when mother came to visit me I was not allowed to be with her on my own without a nun present. My brother and my sister came to visit me once but I was never allowed visit home. We were kept from the outside world. The nuns took us to the seaside once when I was thirteen but it was a deserted place and no other people were there. I also remember being allowed out to go to a singing competition when I was fourteen. I was in the choir.

13. When I was fourteen I ran away from Good Shepherd Convent. One Sunday morning I ran to the Police Station in Derry to find the police woman who had taken me to the Convent. I told the Police I wanted to go home and they took me back to the Convent. The nuns were very nice to the police men for returning me but I remember, when they had left, SR312 kept thumping me on the back when walking me back into the Convent. The nuns were very severe and they had their own ways of dealing with you and punishing you for breaking their rules. When the Police brought me back nobody was allowed to talk to me for several weeks. They took my chair away in the dining room and I had to eat standing up. The dining room was called the refectory. There was a nun that sat on a throne overlooking the refectory. They had silly rules. I remember another time I was punished and was made to sit at a little table underneath the throne and my food was served on an old cracked plate.

14. I was brain washed by these nuns. There was religion morning, noon and night, seven days a week and confession was every week. We would get up every morning around 6am or 7am, say our morning prayers, make our beds,

get washed and clean our rooms before Mass. After Mass we would have breakfast. We would get lunch and supper too but food was like slop. After work we were allowed in the recreation room for a few hours before bedtime at 9pm. We were allowed to watch TV for two hours on a Saturday night.

15. Every Saturday morning the nuns would gather everyone into the recreation room and the head nun would call different names out of a black book. My name was called out several times for minor things such as talking to somebody when I wasn't allowed. If your name was called out you were told to get on your knees and she would humiliate you in public. Your name would have been called out if you broke one of their rules and they would not allow you to watch television as punishment.

16. I was only hit once when I ran away and I was never sexually abused. It was all emotional abuse. I had to suppress my feelings and it has had such an effect on me. If I was caught crying I would get shouted at. You weren't allowed to talk without permission. I learnt quickly not to ask questions. When I was working all day in the sewing room it was done in silence. At meal times you were allowed to talk if a nun gave you permission. We were not allowed to talk about the outside world or where people had come from. Most of the women's names were changed. My name wasn't changed but I was always called [REDACTED]

17. My mother came to see me when I was about fifteen and I asked her to contact by brother [REDACTED] to get me out of the Convent. He was a [REDACTED] stationed in [REDACTED]

### Life after care

18. I remained in Good Shepherd Convent between [REDACTED] [REDACTED] On the [REDACTED] the Juvenile Court in [REDACTED] granted permission for me to go to [REDACTED] to live with by brother and obtain

work. The Court appointed a Social Worker called [REDACTED] a representative of the Welfare Committee, to supervise the move.

19. After Court, I went back to my mother and father's house for a week or two. They had moved into a council house in [REDACTED]. I had to wait until my brother applied for my passport. My family were strangers to me. I had changed so much. My brother [REDACTED] wasn't reared with me. There was about eight years between us. That first night he took me out and sexually abused me. He tried to have sexual intercourse with me at my mother's house. He was an alcoholic and he had a pregnant wife and a child [REDACTED]. When I went to [REDACTED] I lived with them for a few months and I cleaned all the different [REDACTED] houses. They were very bad to me. They used me as a babysitter and took my wages. I was sent back to Northern Ireland in [REDACTED].

20. I returned to live with my mother and father. I was still under the Order of Care and Protection. [REDACTED] wrote terrible reports about me, my mother and father. She made unprofessional remarks about my skin. I had very bad acne. I never received any treatment from the nuns for my skin. The Social Worker was very unsympathetic and judgmental towards my family.

21. I then went to work in [REDACTED] when I was [REDACTED]. I didn't particularly like [REDACTED]. In [REDACTED] I moved to England and started working for [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] I stayed for a while and obtained a series of live-in jobs with hotels. My life improved when I was in [REDACTED]. I later moved to [REDACTED] and met my husband [REDACTED]. I have got two children, a boy and a girl. I had them when I was 32 and 33. They have both done well. I was a very protective mother and I would never leave them with anybody. I brought my children up with no religion. That was my choice. I haven't fully explained what happened to me to my children. I don't think they would comprehend it.

22. I am still estranged from my family. My two older brothers are dead and two of my sisters are dead. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are living in Northern Ireland but we don't talk. My older sister is in [REDACTED]. She has insinuated before that it was

my fault I went to Good Shepherd Convent which is very upsetting. My brother [REDACTED] who lives in [REDACTED] was put into care in Belfast just after I went to Good Shepherd Convent but he never talked about it and I don't speak to him now. My younger sister [REDACTED] who is eight years younger, was also put into care in Belfast. I understand they both received an education whilst in care. My parents were elderly and couldn't cope. The family bonds were broken.

23. I did visit Northern Ireland a few years ago and I went to Derry to visit the convent but it has been demolished. I also wrote to SR312 several years ago and recently got in touch with GSC16. She gave me a few photographs from our time in the convent.

24. The nun's teachings were about self-denial. At the Convent I felt like I was living the life of a nun. To this day it leaves a mark on you. I feel I was punished and that my life was disrupted because of what happened to me. I feel the Court did me harm. Why did the Court not put me into a proper place where I could go to school and feel normal? I have never felt normal since and I was terrified that I was never going to get out of the convent.

25. When I came out I could not cope and was very vulnerable. I got pregnant twice by two different men. I didn't grow up normally. Life was very tough for a couple of years after I got out because I was not able to cope. All of my teenage years were gone. I was the youngest in the Convent and the nuns treated me like a baby. They always referred to me as [REDACTED]. When I came out I was so innocent. I thought everybody told the truth and I was taken advantage of. I am still angry.

26. I am angrier at the Court for putting me into such a place and I want an answer. There must have been other places. I think they should pay for what they did. I lost all bonds with my family. Whenever I came out at sixteen I was like a stranger. I was so institutionalised.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed **HIA107**

Dated 14.12.15



**HIA 107**

992

Form 10/29.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND), 1950

**FIT PERSON : COMMITTAL TO : CARE OR PROTECTION :**

**Section 63**

J. Whan, Woman/Bergeant of  
Royal Ulster Constabulary,

Complainant;

Petty Sessions District of

Defendant.

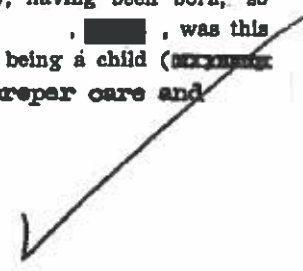
County of

Before the Juvenile Court sitting at

**HIA 107**

, of

who appears to the Court to be a child ~~(or young person)~~ under the age of 17), having been born, so far as has been ascertained, on the ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ day of ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~, ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~, was this day brought before the Court as being in need of care or protection, namely, as being a child ~~(or young person)~~ who ~~(incompetent)~~ having a parent not exercising proper care and guardianship is exposed to moral danger.



And the Court is satisfied that the said child ~~(or young person)~~ being within the description aforesaid is in need of care or protection.

It is hereby ordered that the said child ~~(or young person)~~ [whose religious persuasion appears to the Court to be that of **Roman Catholic**] be committed until he/she attains the age of eighteen years to the care (2) of **THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT, LONDONDERRY,** [being the ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ of the said child (or young person)], who is a fit person and willing to undertake the care of him/her, and [who is of the same religious persuasion as the said child (or young person)], [or who has given an undertaking that the said child (or young person) will be brought up in accordance with the said child's (or young person's) religious persuasion].

And it is further ordered that ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~, residing at ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~, being the parent [or person liable to make contributions in respect] of the said child (or young person) shall pay to the said ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ a weekly sum of ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ shillings and ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ pence [to be applied by him in or towards the maintenance or otherwise for the benefit of the said child (or young person)], for so long as this Order shall remain in force.

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ 19 ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

Dated this ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ day of ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

*[Signature]*  
Resident Magistrate.



[\*Delete where fit person is Welfare Authority].

NOTES :

**HIA 107**

Derry

ID NAME: [REDACTED]  
 Surname: **HIA 107**  
 First Name: [REDACTED]  
 Class Name: **HIA 107**  
 Age on Admission: [REDACTED]  
 DOB: [REDACTED]  
 Recommended by: **brought by Sgt. Wall, policeman - under [REDACTED] Co Welfare**  
 Marital Status:  
 Institution: **4**  
 Institutional Status:  
 Day of Adm: [REDACTED]  
 Month of Adm: [REDACTED]  
 Year of Adm: [REDACTED]  
 Family: **parents living in [REDACTED] brother**  
 Address 1: [REDACTED]

Address 2: [REDACTED]  
 Address 3: **N Ireland**  
 Re-admission:  
 Previous Institutions:  
 Day of Dep or Death: [REDACTED]  
 Month of Dep or Death: [REDACTED]  
 Year of Dep or Death: [REDACTED]  
 Reason: **released by court in c/o brother, [REDACTED]**  
 Destination: [REDACTED]  
 Additional Information: **in and out for Court Hearings; ran away one time, brought back by police; see file for further details**  
 register number: **992**  
 Remarks: **See Derry File**

Good Shepherd Convent  
Waterside, Wex. 3/7/54

My dear HIA107  
A thousand thanks  
for your very welcome letter before  
Easter. I was simply delighted to hear  
from you, and above all to hear you  
& family are so well. This is only a short  
card as I am not to be venting yet  
& got your letter just before Holy Week  
and on Tuesday of Holy Week I added  
envelopes - I was rushed all night in  
hospital with only a few minutes to be  
home & the kind spend me - I was in  
Hospital all over Easter & Easter Week. Since  
I came home you are in my mind, even if  
it's only a short note now - I'll write later  
the day I come home who was here visiting  
only [redacted] - She was very excited when I  
told her I had a letter from you [redacted]  
[redacted] & [redacted] open more of the girls who called  
[redacted] they have no snaps. It's a long story [redacted]

we have no St Mary's now - the place is  
closed & about to be sold. There are 2  
lively Bengalos built for the remainder  
of the girls on the left hand side of the gate  
as you came down from Aetnagelwosp.  
When you come home on holidays, be  
sure to come & see us & we will show  
you every place. GSC20 (now [redacted])  
[redacted] was delighted when I told her [redacted]  
wrote - and [redacted] sends her love - she  
often thinks of you. [redacted] is living in a  
lively flat here in Wexford Rd. & [redacted]  
[redacted] is living just a little bit on the  
way to the hospital & Rose is near the new  
Health centre in a v. nice flat also. Wee Teresa  
died in the holiday house in Rosmalough  
last summer - I was with her on her last  
there are a lot of changes since you  
were here. GSC18 [redacted] died 2 years  
ago. She had been changed to Waterford & died  
there. [redacted] is still alive, [redacted] is  
I am sure you know is married & visits  
us a couple of times a year. [redacted]  
[redacted] is housekeeping for [redacted]  
[redacted] in [redacted] it is still Sigin's -

I will keep trying for the photos for  
 you so do not be disappointed [redacted]  
 [redacted] I am glad you married an  
 Irish man, and that you are  
 happy. You deserve to be happy [redacted]  
 because you were a great girl when  
 you were. GSC20 [redacted] said you  
 were very clever - she was teaching you.  
 Do you remember? We never hear from  
 [redacted]! When you were helping [redacted]  
 in the Infirmary - the sick  
 loved you - you were a great  
 worker - so tidy. I will finish  
 this for now - Be sure you come  
 & see us when you come to  
 Ireland.

With lots of love and  
 prayers. So delighted to hear from  
 our Kitty - love SR312 [redacted]



N-27 Paris  
 Hand in U.S.A.  
 1973 NOTATIONS

- (xi) In paragraph 7 (GSC-039) the Applicant refers to having hands that were "cracked and sore from the washing detergent" and that she never received any cream for her hands. I have no recollection of the Applicant working in any department other than the sewing room.
- (xii) As referred to above, the laundry work was mechanised by that time, so the vast majority of the laundry would have been put in a washing machine. I am sad to hear that the child's hands were sore at any time. It is unusual that she was not brought for treatment if she had sore hands or a rash on her skin. There was a GP practice – the Waterside Practice - that provided medical services to the ladies and Sisters in St. Mary's, where medical attention was required. It is my recollection that SR 312 [REDACTED] would have been very good at taking children to the Doctor promptly if they needed treatment.
- (xiii) In paragraph 7 (GSC-039) the Applicant refers to "a sick room" as among one of the rooms in St Mary's. She is correct, there was a sick room. I recall her tending to the sick and I recall in particular her kindness and gentleness in doing so. She brought the sick up their dinner, and sat with them to keep them company. My recollection is that she would have undertaken non-nursing tasks such as bringing up meals and drinks to the sick. My very clear recollection is that she was very kind in how she undertook this work. She was very gentle with the sick ladies, and we acknowledged that kindness.
- (xiv) In paragraph 9 (GSC-039) the Applicant refers to the ladies working together no matter what their age. I confirm that the ladies and the Sisters all worked together, regardless of their age. However, if anyone was infirm or unable to engage in any task, they were not made to work. In paragraph 9 (GSC-039) the Applicant refers to there being "about a hundred women in the convent". I do recall for a short period there were large numbers, but the average number would have been 50-70 at any one time.
- (xv) In paragraph 9 (GSC-039) the Applicant also refers to not being allowed to talk to her co-workers when she was working. The applicant worked in the sewing room where silence was not the norm.
- (xvi) In paragraph 8 (GSC-039) the Applicant refers to a former resident named [REDACTED]. She says [REDACTED] "disappeared". [REDACTED] was an elderly lady. She developed breast cancer and died some months later in Derry.

- (xvii) in paragraph 10 (GSC-039), the Applicant refers to a number of women who had been resident in the convent for some time. She states "*I saw terrible things the nuns did to them*". I have no idea what is meant by this, but I am upset that the Applicant has unhappy recollections of her time with us. The Applicant refers to one resident who had "no hair". I recall this poor lady, she had lost all her own hair due to a medical condition and the Sisters had bought a wig for her to wear. I realise that as a child of [REDACTED] years old, the Applicant may not have understood this, or that it might have upset or confused the Applicant.
- (xviii) The Applicant also refers to another girl in her late twenties whose hair was cut off as punishment. I do not recall any such incident.
- (xix) in paragraph 11 (GSC-039) the Applicant refers to a number of Sisters including myself. In particular, I would like to highlight that [REDACTED] SR 312 was not Superior of the House, but was the Sister in charge of St. Mary's [REDACTED] at the relevant time. During all my time in St Mary's, I never saw a child being hit or struck. But [REDACTED] SR 312 was quite strict. She was firm. A standard punishment would have been to make someone stand in the dining room during meals, or to be sent to bed without supper. When I arrived in [REDACTED], I did not agree with this sort of punishment. We were keen to move on from the more strict practices of the past, and embrace a more homely attitude to our ministry.
- (xx) [REDACTED] GSC 18 was, as the Applicant states, in charge of the sewing room. She worked with the ladies in the sewing room. They were mostly engaged in sewing vestments, and did a lot of church work. [REDACTED] GSC 18 liked work to be done in a very proper way. She was very exacting and precise.
- (xxi) [REDACTED] GSC 19 did indeed work in the ironing room as stated by the Applicant. I recall [REDACTED] GSC 19 being very kind.
- (xxii) There was no Sister called [REDACTED] GSC 20 but I think the Applicant may be referring to [REDACTED] GSC 20 who worked with the ladies in the packing room. She was a person of great fun and was very laid back.
- (xxiii) The Applicant also refers to [REDACTED] SR 49 who I confirm is myself. I have been in contact with the Applicant over the years and I received a number of cards from her at Christmas time. I would also have sent her Christmas cards each year. She stopped sending me Christmas cards some years ago. It is always a cause of sadness when a former St Mary's lady ceases contact with us.

give them a warm bath to get them clean. We would wash their hair and check for nits. In many cases, we gave the children warm, clean clothes to wear when they arrived. This was the early [REDACTED], and there would not have been a lot of money available for new clothes for each child, but the clothes we gave to the children would have been warm and properly fitted to their age. In performing our ministries, the Good Shepherd Sisters refer to a book of sayings handed down by the congregation's foundress, St. Mary Euphrasia. We call it the book of Conferences. In the Conferences, Sisters are advised: "*They must begin by being very good to their children, they must take care of the sick and they must insist on orderliness and cleanliness.*" And it also says "*See that your children are always clean, and their clothes carefully mended.*" We did our very best for each child, and taking care of their physical needs was an important part of our mission. Some children arrived with no possessions other than the clothes they were standing up in. We saw some terrible cases of neglect arrive in with us.

- (iv) However, it is not the case that there was any "uniform" in St Mary's. If a lady was working in the laundry, she would be given an apron to protect her clothes.
- (v) At paragraph 6 (GSC-038) the Applicant refers to being given an orange dress to wear on Sunday. That would have been our practice – aside from the child's ordinary clothes we gave each child a special dress to wear on Sunday. We called this a "Sunday dress". A Sunday dress was a pretty outfit to wear on Sunday. I imagine that would have been common for many families in the [REDACTED] and that most children would have had a special outfit to wear on a Sunday. We thought of ourselves as "mothers" to the children. Every Sister was referred to as "mother" no matter whether they were young or old. Giving a child a special outfit to wear on a Sunday was a small way of expressing how we were treating each child as special and individual.
- (vi) I was not in charge during the Applicant's time with us therefore I cannot comment regarding the Applicant's schooling but I do recall [REDACTED] **GSC 20** taking some of the younger girls for lessons.
- (vii) At paragraph 6 (GSC-038) the Applicant refers to wearing "*work clothes during the week*". I imagine that she would have worn her school uniform during the week, and ordinary clothes upon her return each afternoon to St Mary's after school.

from [REDACTED] onwards, but the girls would have been expected to go to mass a few times a week. Grace would have been said before meals. I do recall a rosary being said in the laundry, especially by GSC 19 if a machine broke down.

- (xxx) The Applicant refers to the food being like "slop" in GSC-041 paragraph 14. I was sad to read this, because I do not think it is fair. SR 291 worked in the kitchen and she was a good cook. As stated above, SR 291 prepared the meals with care. The food which was cooked was not fancy, but it was nutritious and healthy, and made with good quality products. We would have served fish, stew with plenty of vegetables. The Book of Conferences (referred to above) it contains practical advices on caring for children and preparing food for them with love: *"My dear daughters, you are bound to be mothers to your penitents; you owe them the care that a mother has for her children and, here, all of you are mothers. Cooks and bakers work for them and prepare their food, and should do so with great attention. Let me remind you once again never to give your children cold, badly prepared meals. Use your judgement and don't make one portion of bread do for three people. If a child doesn't fancy her portion, don't serve her a plateful of reproaches!"* We therefore saw it as a core part of our ministry to cook healthy food for the ladies, and prepare meals with love and attention.
- (xxxi) In paragraph 15 (GSC-041) the Applicant refers to the "black book". I understand that when someone misbehaved, their name would be written down in the black book, and called out in public at a later time. The Applicant is correct when she says that if your name was called from the black book, you were not allowed to watch TV. I realise that those who used the black book at the time were caring for a large number at the time, and may have resorted to using a black book to maintain order. Its use was discontinued by the [REDACTED]. In the Book of Conferences referred to above, it says: *"You see how difficult it is to manage a group, but I beg you for the love of God never say anything to your children which could wound them; that would be doing the devil's work. You would discourage these already-wavering souls, and you would not be daughters of the Good Shepherd who takes the lost sheep on his shoulders, and is all tenderness toward it."* I felt that the Black Book may wound a child's feelings, and in my view at that time



we were keen to embrace a more kindly, tender approach which I felt was more in-keeping with the charism of our ministry.

- (xxdi) In paragraph 16 (GSC-041) the Applicant refers to what she terms "*emotional abuse*" and that she felt she had to suppress her feelings. I was so sad to read this. I was so grieved to read that she felt we were not sensitive to her needs and to her feelings. It was my very clear memory that we were trying our utmost to respect each of the ladies, and to treat them with love and kindness.
- (xxiii) In the Conferences, it is said that in relation to the Good Shepherd Sisters: "*For them, the corporal well-being of the persons entrusted to them is second only to a more holy, more precious concern - the care of their minds and understanding. When they receive a poor young person and have made her clean and comfortable and encouraged her, they have scarcely begun. After having dressed her suitably and cheered her up, they set about creating in the soul a new world, by dint of instructions, counselling and so on.*" For this reason, I read with regret and heartbreak of the Applicant's account of how she felt her feelings had been repressed and not acknowledged. For my part, I know that I grew very close to a large number of the ladies, young and old, over the years and I have kept in contact with many of them. Many of the former residents write to update me about weddings, the birth of children, and new jobs etc and speak of their time in St. Mary's with affection. I was desperately sad to read of the Applicant feeling that her feelings were not acknowledged.
- (xxiv) I think it is important to acknowledge the reasons teenagers were admitted to the Good Shepherd Sisters. A substantial number would have been placed with us by the police or by Social Services. In many cases, teenagers would have had a particular Social Workers assigned to each of them. Many of them came from challenging family backgrounds, or had suffered neglect or abuse at the hands of their family and were coming to us for security and refuge. At that time it was the norm not to enquire of anyone why they had come to us, or what had happened to them before they came to us. The Social Worker would have told the Superioress of the Convent, but in most other cases, individual Sisters would not have been told of a person's background or the reason they had come to us. To modern ears, this sounds strange, but it was the practice at that time in the [REDACTED] It was of course open for ladies to