
HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE INQUIRY

being heard before:

SIR ANTHONY HART (Chairman)

MR DAVID LANE

MS GERALDINE DOHERTY

held at

Banbridge Court House

Banbridge

on Monday, 14th March 2016

commencing at 10.00 am

(Day 193)

MS CHRISTINE SMITH, QC and MR JOSEPH AIKEN appeared as
Counsel to the Inquiry.

1 Monday, 14th March 2016

2 (10.00 am)

3 (Proceedings delayed)

4 (10.15 am)

5 WITNESS SR295 (called)

6 CHAIRMAN: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Can I just
7 remind everyone, please, to ensure that if you have
8 a mobile phone, it has been switched off or placed on
9 "Silent"/"Vibrate", and also may I remind you that
10 photography is not permitted either here in the chamber
11 or anywhere on the premises.

12 Good morning, Mr Aiken.

13 MR AIKEN: Good morning, Chairman, Members of the Panel.
14 The first witness this morning is SR295, who is "SR295".
15 I will have to apologise, because at various points
16 during the last few days I have referred to her as
17 "Sister ". So I am very sorry for when I made
18 that error. SR295, Chairman, is aware that you are
19 going to ask her to take the oath.

20 WITNESS SR295 (sworn)

21 CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Sister. Please sit down.

22 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY

23 MR AIKEN: SR295, as I was explaining to you earlier, if you
24 have any difficulty at any stage, you just make me aware
25 of that, and the Panel have dealt this type of situation

1 many times. We can take a break if that's necessary.

2 A. Thank you.

3 Q. Coming up on the screen, SR295, is the first page I hope
4 of your witness statement.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. I just want to ask you to identify that that is the
7 first page of your witness statement --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- which is at GSC566. Then if we go to the last page,
10 please, which is at 569, can you just check for me that
11 that's the last page?

12 A. Yes. That's correct.

13 Q. And you have signed it.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And you want to adopt your statement as part of your
16 evidence to the Inquiry this morning.

17 A. That's right. Thank you.

18 Q. SR295, if you go back to the first page of your witness
19 statement, please, at 566, and you provide this
20 statement, SR295, in relation to your time working in
21 the Adolescent Centre in Belfast.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. I am going to say a little bit about that shortly, but
24 in the first few paragraphs of your statement under
25 "Personal Details" you explain the various educational

1 attainments that you have already obtained.

2 A. That's right.

3 Q. I just want to ask you a little bit about that. For the
4 record for me, if you would, can you tell me your date
5 of birth so that we can record it?

6 A. .

7 Q. So . From paragraph 3 of your statement
8 you went into the Order, if my maths is right, about the
9 age of 29.

10 A. No. I actually went in at 20, aged 20.

11 Q. Did you?

12 A. Yes. It was down South.

13 Q. And from paragraph 4 the Panel can see that at various
14 points along your time in the Order you have gone back
15 to do university degrees, training courses. Was there
16 an emphasis in the Order on training or is this peculiar
17 to you?

18 A. There was a strong emphasis on training for our work
19 with young people in the Order.

20 Q. How were you identified as, "Oh, we will get SR295 to go
21 and do a degree in social work" or that type of
22 training? How were you selected?

23 A. I was consulted and it was a desire within myself to do
24 social work, because I saw it as a way of helping the
25 young people I would be working with.

1 Q. So if it was an area you were interested in, you would
2 be supported to go and do training in that area as part
3 of then your work --

4 A. That's right. That's correct.

5 Q. -- on foot of it.

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. You explain in your statement -- just so we can put the
8 context of this, the Panel has heard me describe the
9 Belfast Adolescent Centre, which was part of the Good
10 Shepherd complex at the top of the Ormeau Road.

11 A. That's right.

12 Q. The Adolescent Centre operated between 1970 and 1982.
13 During that period it was in the Sacred Heart Home
14 building.

15 A. That's right.

16 Q. The Sacred Heart Home had operated until 1962 and then
17 it closed. The Adolescent Centre opens in 1970 in the
18 same building. GSC21 was in charge and helped by Sister

19 **SR 282**

20 A. Uh-huh. That's correct.

21 Q. Then at various times along the twelve-year history of
22 the Adolescent Centre you would have worked there
23 alongside those two Sisters.

24 A. That's right. That's correct.

25 Q. In various statements the Order has explained that there

1 were generally ten teenage girls, normally between 12
2 and 18 years of age, but there could be up to
3 twenty-one, because there were beds potentially for
4 twenty-one.

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 Q. And occasionally there would have been a girl
7 potentially younger than 12, and one of the individuals
8 who is coming -- who came forward to speak positively
9 about The Adolescent Centre explained that she was
10 brought in at 12, but her younger sister aged 9 was
11 brought in. So on occasions to keep families together
12 you could have a younger girl.

13 A. That's correct, yes.

14 Q. The importance of keeping family together -- it is very
15 hard to forget what you know, but if I can try and get
16 you to come back with me to the '70s, when you were
17 working in the Adolescent Centre -- would you have said
18 that the Order would have known the importance of
19 keeping families together during that period?

20 A. I think it was very important. The Order was very
21 caring towards siblings and would have tried hard to
22 keep families together and to keep the children
23 connected with their families.

24 Q. So the importance of that, of brothers and sisters in
25 this case living together --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- was something that was understood?

3 A. Was understood as being quite -- quite ...

4 Q. Then the second issue you raised there, SR295, was the
5 importance of connection outside the centre --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- with family from outside.

8 A. Exactly, yes.

9 Q. Was the Order again aware of the importance of trying to
10 maintain that?

11 A. Yes, the Order made great efforts to keep families
12 connected and to keep parents visiting or an older
13 brother or sister to visit as well.

14 Q. I think we looked at the rules or the guide that was
15 published by the Irish Provincial in 1971 that referred
16 to facilitating visits. When you and I were speaking
17 last week, you were explaining to me that those could be
18 very difficult experiences for the young people, because
19 the families that were coming in could be quite
20 troubled.

21 A. Very troubled. They had come from very chaotic
22 backgrounds. There was quite a number of the girls we
23 had taken in had been sexually abused by their own
24 parents, father and mother colluding in those
25 situations, and just they were quite traumatic

1 experiences for these young girls who did come into us.

2 Q. The visitations, depending on the circumstances, could
3 be supervised by a Sister --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- to make sure that everything went as smoothly as it
6 could.

7 A. Sure, yes. They were always placed by Social Services
8 and we had them as -- you know, supporting us in the
9 supervision of the teenagers, deciding with us at case
10 reviews whether, you know, the girl needed to be
11 supervised or not during the visit.

12 Q. You were explaining to me last week when we were
13 speaking, SR295, that some of those visitations with the
14 more difficult families --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- was the toughest part of the work that you were doing
17 in The Adolescent Centre.

18 A. Very, very difficult to support the parent and to
19 support the young girl as well, especially if the young
20 girl didn't wish to see her father because he might be
21 -- you know, have drink taken, and you mightn't be in
22 a position to -- she wouldn't be happy to see him, and
23 we'd have to talk with the father initially and talk
24 with the girl to know what did she want in this -- you
25 know, on this occasion when her father was here, did she

1 want to see him, and the girl has to decide with us, you
2 know, whether she'd go ahead with the visit or not, and
3 we'd always be with her then for the visit.

4 Q. If I summarise it in this way, SR295: your experience of
5 working in the Adolescent Centre during that period was
6 it could be complex trying to keep the relationships
7 between some girls and their families going.

8 A. Yes, yes. We had to balance it and we had -- you know,
9 we were working from, shall we say, the paramountcy
10 principle that, you know, the child had to be consulted
11 and we had to meet her needs, not the father's needs or
12 other family members' needs, first. The child came
13 first for us.

14 Q. You explain in your statement, SR295, that between
15 March 1973 and October 1973, so for that six-month
16 period, you worked on a part-time basis in the
17 Adolescent Centre along with GSC21 and Sister **SR 282** .

18 A. March -- no, I didn't work from March '73 to October
19 '73. I -- yes, I worked in very short stints, shall
20 I say, during that time.

21 Q. Yes.

22 A. I believe I was working elsewhere.

23 Q. Then you went out to do -- between October 1973 --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- and May 1974 you were studying.

1 A. That's right.

2 Q. Then you'd be back for short visits.

3 A. Back for short visits. Then I would have some input at
4 that time in The Adolescent Centre. I would have
5 supervised and stayed with them during recreation, just
6 getting to know them.

7 Q. Then you were away for a period of time until
8 September 1978.

9 A. Yes, that's right.

10 Q. Then for that four-year period, or just short of four
11 years, between September '78 and The Adolescent Centre
12 closing in 1982 you would have again worked there on
13 a part-time basis.

14 A. That's right.

15 Q. That wasn't your only role --

16 A. No.

17 Q. -- unlike GSC21 and Sister **SR 282** , but you would have
18 been there on a regular basis --

19 A. With Sister --

20 Q. -- during that four-year period.

21 A. Yes, that's correct with GSC21, yes.

22 Q. You also explain, just so we put it on the record, you
23 never worked in the laundry in St. Mary's.

24 A. No, I didn't work in St. Mary's laundry.

25 Q. Now you mention in your statement GSC21. The Panel have

1 had the opportunity to read what you have said about
2 GSC21 and to look at some of the documents that were
3 authored by her while I was opening this module and also
4 in relation to her work, for instance, with HIA124, as
5 you would have known her --

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. -- now HIA124.

8 A. Uh-huh.

9 Q. Do you want to say something about how you found her
10 approach to the girls?

11 A. I found GSC21 was very respectful, very caring, very
12 firm, and girls knew exactly where they were with her
13 and they respected her greatly.

14 Q. You explained to me when we were speaking last week that
15 she was a great defender of the girls --

16 A. Oh, yes.

17 Q. -- in the sense of they were her girls --

18 A. They were her girls.

19 Q. -- and she stood up for them.

20 A. She stood up for them on all occasions and the girls
21 knew that.

22 Q. You were explaining to me that -- I was asking you,
23 "Well, presumably -- you have got teenage girls,
24 difficult backgrounds -- you would have difficult
25 situations to deal with from time to time".

1 A. That's right.

2 Q. You explained to me that the ones you could remember
3 were of squabbles and fights taking place.

4 A. Exactly, yes, we did.

5 Q. You were explaining to me how you handled those type of
6 situations when they occurred.

7 A. That's right.

8 Q. Can you explain to the Panel how you would have dealt
9 with them?

10 A. Well, there would have been fights among the girls in
11 a sense and you'd have to come between them. In fact,
12 one girl was able to relate to me recently how when
13 she -- you know, they got a Paris bun when they got home
14 from school in the evening. If there was no Paris bun
15 in her place, she knew there was something -- something
16 wasn't right with GSC21, but this girl got a smaller
17 Paris bun for some reason, and she swapped it with
18 another girl thinking to get a bigger Paris bun, and the
19 other girl started to fight with her, but she said she
20 rubbed the Paris bun on the other girl's face she was so
21 angry with her. So -- and then a fight started and they
22 had -- you know, I had to come between them and speak to
23 them later in the office.

24 Q. So what you were explaining to me, if I summarise it in
25 this way, the way these types of situations were handled

1 when they arose was you split the girls up --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- and then --

4 A. Calmed them down, you know.

5 Q. -- when things calmed down, they would have been spoken
6 to separately --

7 A. Yes, that's right.

8 Q. -- in the office. I think one of the or, in fact, both
9 of the girls who provided positive accounts of The
10 Adolescent Centre explained that when they really
11 stepped out of line, the biggest punishment they
12 received --

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. -- was to be banned from going to the youth club.

15 A. Oh, very definitely. That was very serious punishment
16 actually from their perspective, because -- especially
17 on a Sunday night, because there was a disco on on
18 a Sunday evening, and they used to spend the evening
19 beautifying themselves to catch the eyes of boys, as
20 they used to say to me, and it would be very, very
21 disappointing if they weren't allowed to go for some big
22 misdemeanour.

23 Q. In terms of punishment you explain in your statement and
24 we have looked many times at the Order's position about
25 what's known as corporal punishment, but in 1845 when it

1 was first being talked about by your Foundress --

2 A. Uh-huh, yes.

3 Q. -- it was not to be hitting children --

4 A. That's right.

5 Q. -- and you were explaining to me that that was something
6 that was effectively drummed into you during your --

7 A. Novitiate.

8 Q. -- formation.

9 A. Yes, exactly.

10 Q. That was just part of the culture of your Order.

11 A. Yes, exactly, yes.

12 Q. And you couldn't recall ever seeing a Sister being
13 violent towards a child in -- at any stage in your
14 career, but not in The Adolescent Centre.

15 A. Well, I have never seen a Sister strike a child. I have
16 never struck a child myself. I haven't heard any girl
17 tell me that she had been struck by a Sister.

18 Q. You mentioned in passing in one of your earlier answers
19 just something I want to pick up on. You mentioned the
20 review process --

21 A. That's right.

22 Q. -- or the six-monthly reviews --

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. -- as the Panel have heard at various points in various
25 modules. That was a process where the social worker

1 team from it would have been the Eastern --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- Board normally --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- in your case would have come in and worked with you,
6 and you were explaining to me that quite often the girl
7 herself would have had some participation in the
8 reviews.

9 A. Oh, yes. We would have talked to her beforehand and we
10 would have said the review was happening and what would
11 she like us to say on her behalf, or we'd get her to
12 write a little report herself and we'd bring it into the
13 review process, or sometimes, you know, the chairperson
14 of the review process might ask to see the girl and
15 you'd have her come in -- and we'd have her prepared
16 beforehand -- if she wished to come in, and to talk
17 about herself to the Panel -- to the committee inside,
18 the review team.

19 Q. So that was just a standard part of operating procedure
20 during your time --

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. -- these monthly -- six-monthly reviews.

23 A. Six-monthly reviews, yes.

24 Q. Now unfortunately when I was discussing with you last
25 week, you are now the Sister who has to look after a lot

1 of the archive --

2 A. That's right.

3 Q. -- and the records.

4 A. Yes, in preparation for this --

5 Q. For the Inquiry.

6 A. -- for the Inquiry, yes.

7 Q. One of the difficulties there has been unfortunately
8 there isn't a lot of --

9 A. Records.

10 Q. -- records beyond the admission registers.

11 A. That's right. That's right.

12 Q. Can you remember how you kept records during your time
13 in The Adolescent Centre? I think Sister Eithne has
14 said on behalf of the congregation that GSC21 kept
15 a diary --

16 A. That's right. That's correct.

17 Q. -- which might have --

18 A. Recorded.

19 Q. -- it was an administration diary, but it might have
20 recorded particular events happening.

21 A. Yes, particular events, yes.

22 Q. Was there also a file on each girl?

23 A. Each girl had a file. Oh, yes, each girl had a file and
24 there was documentation in relation to her, yes, in the
25 file.

1 Q. And that would have been personal information --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- about her?

4 A. Yes, her own documentation.

5 Q. Can you remember where those files were kept?

6 A. We had a closed -- a locked filing cabinet in GSC21's
7 office.

8 Q. You can't assist with what might have happened to those
9 files. You just can't find them now. Is that right?

10 A. Well, the essential registers would have gone to the
11 archives, but, you know, there would have been
12 a whittling down of their materials that would have been
13 seen not to be needed in the future.

14 Q. On the basis that the girl had left --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- and there was nothing you were aware of --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- that would have required you to keep the material.

19 A. That's right.

20 Q. You mention in your statement when you are talking about
21 the review process just one other issue I want to pick
22 up with you about links with child psychiatry.

23 A. Oh, yes. We had close links with Dr McAuley in the
24 Royal Victoria Hospital and with Dr Jane Manville, who
25 was his assistant, and I would have taken girls up to

1 Dr Manville for, you know, help in relation to their
2 many problems.

3 Q. The name Dr McAuley I know is a name I was discussing
4 with the Health & Social Care Board --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- because he's written a textbook in the '70s about
7 some of the issues the Inquiry has heard about, but one
8 of the issues that came up, for instance, in HIA124's
9 evidence that you heard the other day --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- was to do with bedwetting --

12 A. That's right.

13 Q. -- and her perception of that, and then what she could
14 see in the records --

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. -- which suggested she was getting some help from the
17 City Hospital --

18 A. The City Hospital.

19 Q. -- with that. Were medical services to help with
20 psychological difficulty, or things like bedwetting,
21 were those facilities that were available to you to then
22 have the girls looked at by doctors?

23 A. Well, the girls had access to the local doctor in the
24 local practice and we would have had the doctor up to
25 discuss different cases. At different times I recall

1 meeting the doctor.

2 Q. That's the local GP, who would have been in the --

3 A. The local GP practice --

4 Q. -- in the Ormeau Road?

5 A. -- in the Ormeau Road, yes.

6 Q. Then they had -- Dr McCauley you have mentioned. Then,

7 for instance, in HIA124's case she was going out

8 a hospital to --

9 A. Oh, yes. I used to take her out, accompany her out.

10 Sorry. Oh, no, not -- sorry. Not this HIA124, no.

11 Q. You are thinking of a different ...?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. You would have accompanied girls to hospital --

14 A. Yes, yes.

15 Q. -- for medical appointments --

16 A. Yes, yes.

17 Q. -- during your time in The Adolescent Centre?

18 A. That's right. That's right.

19 Q. There's one last issue I'm going to ask you about, which

20 isn't specifically connected to The Adolescent Centre.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. We were discussing it the other day. That's about the

23 orchard --

24 A. Oh, yes.

25 Q. -- that was on the site, because you were explaining to

1 me, as was one of your colleagues, that you could
2 remember an orchard on the Good Shepherd complex. I am
3 going to just put a map on the screen --

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. -- that will hopefully help, SR295. If we look at 5047,
6 if we just can turn that round, please, there's no doubt
7 there was an orchard on the Nazareth House side --

8 A. Uh-huh.

9 Q. -- between the chapel and Nazareth House, and one of
10 your Sisters referred to a conversation she had had and
11 there's a statement available to the Inquiry about the
12 fact there was an orchard there and the Panel are aware
13 of that from the previous module, but you were
14 explaining to me that you can remember there also being
15 an orchard on the Good Shepherd complex site.

16 A. I vaguely recall there must have been an orchard, but
17 I said since then we -- Sister Eithne has done a lot of
18 research and I would prefer her to --

19 Q. She --

20 A. -- and she's made her statement and I would prefer her
21 to talk to you about that.

22 Q. She will explain it.

23 A. She will.

24 Q. I am right in saying you remember there being an orchard
25 on the site?

1 A. Well, I was saying yes, there was an orchard, but
2 I wasn't sure where it was located.

3 Q. Right. SR295, I'm not going to ask you any more
4 questions.

5 A. Thank you.

6 Q. The Panel Members may want to ask you something. So if
7 you just bear with us for a short time to allow them to
8 do that.

9 A. Thank you.

10 Questions from THE PANEL

11 CHAIRMAN: If you could just leave the map on the screen for
12 a moment, please, sister, just when we are on the topic
13 of where things were, looking at the map, can you remind
14 us just where The Adolescent Centre was? It utilised
15 what had been the Sacred Heart home.

16 A. The Sacred Heart Home centre, yes.

17 Q. So we see the words "Sacred Heart Home".

18 A. That's right, yes.

19 Q. Was it that building you see slightly at a diagonal
20 above just between the "D" of "Sacred" and the "H" of
21 "Heart" or was it somewhere else? The map has obviously
22 been divided, which makes it a little bit difficult.

23 A. I'm not sure. I'm sorry. I'm not sure.

24 Q. But it was what had been The Sacred Heart Home. Is that
25 right?

1 A. That's right. Oh, yes.

2 Q. Can I just ask you about the age of the children who
3 came into The Adolescent Centre during your time? Were
4 there any who were below school leaving age?

5 A. Below school leaving age?

6 Q. In other words --

7 A. They were all going to school. They were all attending
8 either Whiteabbey Immaculata Special School or
9 St. Monica's School I think.

10 Q. St. Monica's was a --

11 A. Was a secondary, yes.

12 Q. -- secondary school just down the Ravenhill Road, not
13 that far away. Isn't that right?

14 A. Yes, that's right.

15 Q. Whiteabbey was a special school.

16 A. Yes, yes. They used to go by minibus.

17 Q. I think you mentioned a third, which I didn't catch.

18 A. I am not quite sure of a third, yes.

19 Q. I see, but there definitely were children in The
20 Adolescent Centre --

21 A. All children in The Adolescent Centre went out to
22 school. They were all school-going girls, you know.

23 Q. They were all school ...?

24 A. Oh, yes. That was the stipulation. That was the group
25 we cared for was girls who were school-going age and

1 were attending school.

2 Q. Well, does that mean that some of them went on to
3 secondary school after others had left; in other words,
4 they stayed for 'O' level or 'A' level or anything like
5 that, or did they mostly leave school when other
6 children left?

7 A. They most left at 16, 17.

8 Q. I appreciate it is very difficult for you to remember
9 this exactly I am sure, but can you remember the
10 youngest children in terms of their age who would have
11 been in The Adolescent Centre in your time?

12 A. The youngest child I remember was 9 years of age and her
13 older sister was 12, and she came from a very chaotic,
14 dysfunctional family, and it was seen as important to
15 keep the younger sister with her older Sister, because
16 they were very traumatised when they came in.

17 Q. Was there much coming and going between the girls in The
18 Adolescent Centre and other females who weren't sisters
19 who were on the Good Shepherd site or it was
20 a self-contained unit?

21 A. A self-contained unit, yes.

22 Q. What contact, if any did, they have with the other
23 people on the site?

24 A. It was minimal. They had their own separate building
25 and they were out at school, but they did go to the

1 youth club, you see.

2 Q. I am just going to ask you about the youth club, but in
3 terms of the older women who worked in the laundry, for
4 example, did they have much contact with them?

5 A. Very little interaction really, but friendly, yes,
6 friendly. Any time there would have been interaction it
7 would have been on a friendly basis, yes, social.

8 Q. Can you tell me when the youth club started?

9 A. I'm not --

10 Q. Did it come after The Adolescent Centre or had it
11 already been in being before The Adolescent Centre?

12 A. I think they were more or less in tandem as regards the
13 timing. I'm not sure.

14 Q. Where was the youth club physically located?

15 A. It was located on the Carolan Road directly opposite
16 Wellington College now, and there was an entrance in
17 there for the young people from the district to come to
18 that youth club.

19 Q. If we look at the map again, Carolan Road we see running
20 along the side of the convent grounds at right angles to
21 the main road.

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. But most of the houses seem to be on Rosetta Avenue and
24 have their backs facing --

25 A. That's right.

1 Q. -- on to Carolan Road.

2 A. That's right.

3 Q. Where exactly was the youth club in that context? Do
4 you know?

5 A. You see the Mother & Baby Home? Over to the right from
6 the Mother & Baby Home.

7 Q. To the extreme left as we look at it. Is that right?

8 A. You see just the right-hand side here, straight down
9 from Roseville Hostel, down that way.

10 Q. Yes. I saw Roseville a moment ago.

11 A. Yes, yes, and that's ...

12 Q. But was the building physically on the Good Shepherd
13 site or was it across the road?

14 A. Oh, no, it was on -- within the Good Shepherd site;
15 I mean, within the walls of the Good Shepherd, yes.

16 Q. But it was open to people from the surrounding
17 community?

18 A. Oh, from the surrounding area, not only the parish, but
19 the wider area as well children used to come.

20 Q. I gather from what you say that it was very popular with
21 the girls. Is that right?

22 A. Very popular, yes, and with the whole area. Families
23 were delighted that we kept the club open during a very
24 troubled period when there was no other recreational
25 facilities for young people in the wider area.

1 Q. We have heard already earlier in this module, as you may
2 be aware, that there was a really tragic episode when
3 one of the youth workers, a **GSC 43** --

4 A. Yes, I was away at that time.

5 Q. That wasn't actually when you were there?

6 A. No, no, but I heard.

7 Q. I am sure you heard about it.

8 A. Yes, I did.

9 Q. We gather the youth club closed for a year or so.

10 A. It closed for a period, yes.

11 Q. But it then reopened for a while?

12 A. Yes, because the calls came to us to reopen it for the
13 young people, for .

14 Q. Was the building itself a little way off the main road?

15 Did you --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- people come into the -- walk through the grounds to
18 get to it?

19 A. That's right. You had to come in the Carolan Road gate
20 and there was a little distance then to the Nissan huts,
21 yes.

22 Q. Did it often happen that what one might from your
23 description call the ultimate punishment of being
24 stopped to go to the youth club -- was that imposed
25 frequently or was it ...?

1 A. No. Very, very, rarely. It was for some real big issue
2 among the teenagers themselves, individual ones.

3 Q. Other than the nights when they went to the youth club,
4 which I think was -- was it two or three nights a week
5 it operated?

6 A. Yes, for three nights I think, yes.

7 Q. On other nights how did the girls pass their time?

8 A. Well, the recreation room was quite big and there was
9 a record player and they would play records, and they'd
10 be looking at Top of the Pops, and they'd have their own
11 fun and they'd be putting on their own plays, and they'd
12 be looking at television. There would be a good
13 programme on.

14 Q. Was there any control imposed on what type of programme
15 they could watch, what films that might come on
16 television, or were they pretty well left to their own
17 devices?

18 A. I think they had a choice, yes. Choices would be put to
19 them, but I am not sure now.

20 Q. Well, in those days there were only two or possibly
21 three channels --

22 A. Yes, yes, yes.

23 Q. -- depending on what time it was.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. I suppose if there was a popular programme on one

1 channel that others wanted to watch, somebody had to
2 make a decision.

3 A. Somebody or GSC21 would make the decision then which
4 would be the programme they were putting on, yes.

5 Q. We have heard that one of the Sisters, and I can't just
6 recall whether it was GSC21, insisted that the girls did
7 not receive free school meal tickets at St. Monica's but
8 bought their lunch tickets like anybody else so they
9 didn't stand out in any way.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Were you aware of that?

12 A. Oh, we were made very aware of that, yes, that the girls
13 were to be one of -- you know, they would fit in in
14 school without being noticed that they were children
15 from the home.

16 Q. Yes.

17 A. That was seen to be very important.

18 Q. Thank you very much.

19 MS DOHERTY: Thanks very much, Sister. Can I just ask: did
20 the nuns sleep in The Adolescent Unit?

21 A. Yes. There was two bedrooms upstairs for the Sisters.

22 Q. They would have slept there permanently, not just ...?

23 A. Permanently, yes.

24 Q. Was there a sense of rotas or were the Sisters mainly
25 around? Was GSC21 usually around or was there a sense

1 that she worked mornings or afternoons or ...?

2 A. Well, you see, when the girls went out to school, she
3 would have some time for her records and for, you know,
4 homework and with regard to shopping and things for the
5 girls.

6 Q. In the evening?

7 A. In the evening, yes, would have been there and we
8 would have taken turns at nights. We could do a rota at
9 night with the girls, yes.

10 Q. You would do a rota then. Can I ask: did a key worker
11 system operate with the girls?

12 A. No, we hadn't a key worker. GSC21 was in charge and
13 that was it.

14 Q. That was it. Okay. For yourself was there regular
15 supervision? I know you didn't work there all the time,
16 but when you did work there, would you have sat down
17 with GSC21 and discussed your work?

18 A. Oh, the two of us would have -- yes, we would have sat
19 down and we'd have discussed the girls and, you know,
20 how -- how best to help them, what -- what was coming up
21 next and how we'd approach.

22 Q. Did you have an opportunity to talk about your practice?
23 I see you're a qualified practice teacher. I'm just
24 wondering --

25 A. Well, that was later.

1 Q. Yes, later, but when you were a young worker --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- did you -- did somebody give you some supervision?

4 A. Supervision. No. Well, I'd the leader in the house,
5 the community leader. We would have been conferring
6 with her as well in relation to, you know, what we were
7 doing with girls.

8 Q. She would talk to you about how you were working and
9 ...?

10 A. Oh, yes, about how was I getting on, yes.

11 Q. Getting on. Okay. In relation to the girls, were they
12 expected to go to mass daily?

13 A. Oh, I didn't know there was girls going to mass.

14 Q. Not even on a Sunday?

15 A. Oh, they would be Sunday. They would on a Sunday, yes,
16 yes.

17 Q. Sunday, okay, but not daily?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Can I just ask: were they allowed to have boyfriends?
20 You know, when they would get themselves sorted out ...?

21 A. Oh, yes. There were two girls and they got their
22 husbands at the youth club.

23 Q. Oh, right, but were that they allowed -- were boyfriends
24 allowed to come up and visit when the youth club wasn't
25 on? Were they allowed to come up and have visitors in

1 the house?

2 A. I don't think the -- I never recall the boyfriends in --

3 Q. In the house?

4 A. -- in the Sacred Heart Home.

5 Q. So the youth club was the place to be?

6 A. Yes, yes.

7 Q. Okay. That's lovely. Thank you, Sister.

8 A. Thank you.

9 MR LANE: I think you said that the girls left when they
10 were aged about 16 or 17.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. What sort of preparation was given for leaving?

13 A. Well, it would be in conjunction with the social worker.
14 It would come up at reviews --

15 Q. Uh-huh.

16 A. -- and then we would be consulting with the girls as to
17 what their plans -- what they would like, and Social
18 Services would arrange some work experience for them
19 on -- when they were leaving.

20 Q. So it was the social workers who arranged accommodation
21 and jobs or other training or whatever?

22 A. Yes, yes, yes, yes.

23 Q. Did you do anything in the centre by way of helping them
24 to be able to live independently, you know, teaching
25 them to cook and budget and things like that?

1 A. Oh, they would have helped in the evenings.

2 A girl would have taken a rota with regard to helping to
3 prepare the evening meal.

4 Q. Oh, right. What about other aspects of living
5 independently? Budgeting is obviously important as
6 well.

7 A. Well, they got their pocket money and it -- well, it was
8 up to them how they spent it really, but it --

9 Q. Right.

10 A. -- you know, some of them spent it on cigarettes, but if
11 they ran out of cigarettes then and they wanted to get
12 more money, there was no money available to them.

13 Q. Right. Did they do their own laundry and things like
14 that?

15 A. Oh, yes. They were taught how to do their own personal
16 laundry, yes.

17 Q. Could you tell me within the campus as a whole was there
18 also a closed convent, a contemplative one?

19 A. Yes. It was quite a distance away from the Sacred Heart
20 Home, yes.

21 Q. Did the Sisters who were in there mix with yourselves,
22 who were involved in working with the children, or were
23 they totally separate?

24 A. Oh, they were totally separate, yes.

25 Q. Right. Okay. Thank you very much.

1 A. Not at all. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN: Well, Sister, thank you very much for speaking to
3 us today. We are very grateful.

4 A. Thank you so much, Mr Chairman.

5 (Witness withdrew)

6 MR AIKEN: Chairman, Members of the Panel, perhaps if we
7 take a short break.

8 CHAIRMAN: Yes. We will rise for maybe ten minutes and then
9 we will take the next witness.

10 (10.55 am)

11 (Short break)

12 (11.40 am)

13 WITNESS SR283 (called)

14 CHAIRMAN: Yes.

15 MR AIKEN: Chairman, Members of the Panel, the next witness
16 today is SR283, who is "SR283", and she is aware,
17 Chairman, you are going to ask her to take the oath.

18 WITNESS SR283 (sworn)

19 CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Sister. Please sit down.

20 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY

21 MR AIKEN: SR283, coming up on the scene will be the first
22 of three statements that you've provided to the Inquiry.

23 At the moment there is no redaction marks, there is no
24 blacked-out marks of the personal information, but I was
25 discussing with you about keeping your anonymity --

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. -- and while you are not exercised about it, on
3 reflection you are going to keep your anonymity.

4 A. That is correct, yes.

5 Q. For the record, Chairman, I just checked with Mr Fee
6 that while -- SR295 is in the same position. She is
7 going to keep her anonymity while not exercised to
8 a great degree about it.

9 SR283, if I can just ask you to confirm for me
10 that's the first page of your witness statement in
11 respect of HIA203, as she was, or HIA203 she is now.

12 A. That's correct.

13 Q. Then if we look at the last page, which is at 307, and
14 I am just going to ask you to confirm you recognise that
15 as the last page of your first statement?

16 A. Uh-huh. That's correct, yes.

17 Q. And that you have signed it?

18 A. That's right.

19 Q. And you want to adopt it as part of your evidence to the
20 Inquiry?

21 A. That's right.

22 Q. We are going to follow that same process with statements
23 two and three. The second statement, if we can look,
24 please, at 349, it is about HIA387 --

25 A. Uh-huh.

1 Q. -- or now HIA387.

2 A. Uh-huh.

3 Q. Can you confirm you recognise that first page of your
4 second statement?

5 A. That is right. Yes, correct.

6 Q. If we go to 352, please, again you've signed the
7 statement?

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. And you want to adopt it as part of your evidence to the
10 Inquiry?

11 A. That's right.

12 Q. Both of those statements deal with two applicants who
13 were in St. Mary's in Belfast.

14 A. Right, yes.

15 Q. We will say a little bit more about them shortly.

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. Then your third statement, if we can go to 285, please,
18 again if you can just check the first page, that you
19 recognise that statement.

20 A. That's right.

21 Q. And then the second page is actually the next page, 286.
22 Again if you can confirm for me that you have signed the
23 statement.

24 A. That's right.

25 Q. And you want to adopt that as part of your evidence to

1 the Inquiry?

2 A. That's correct.

3 Q. This third statement deals with two applicants who lived
4 in Derry. One was HIA107 --

5 A. That's right.

6 Q. -- and the other HIA211.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. They were in St. Mary's, Derry during -- you were there
9 for a short period during their time.

10 A. That's right.

11 Q. We will say a little bit more about that shortly.

12 A. That's okay. Yes.

13 Q. Having done that with your three statements, SR283,
14 I want to confirm you were born on .

15 A. That's right.

16 Q. You took your final vows in 1957.

17 A. That's right.

18 Q. You became a qualified nurse in 1960.

19 A. That's right.

20 Q. Then you worked in Belfast between 1960 and
21 December 1963.

22 A. That's right.

23 Q. During your time in Belfast -- there's a bit of
24 complexity to this, so you make sure I get it right --
25 when you go to Belfast, you work first in The Sacred

1 Heart Children's Home.

2 A. That's right.

3 Q. That's -- we're going back in time. Your colleague was
4 talking about The Adolescent Centre --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- which was in the same building --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- but began in 1970 --

9 A. That's -- yes.

10 Q. -- whereas The Sacred Heart Children's Home had operated
11 from I think the '20s --

12 A. That's right.

13 Q. -- and it closed in 1962.

14 A. That's right.

15 Q. You worked there between 1960 and 1962.

16 A. That's right.

17 Q. After it closed you explain in your two statements about
18 Belfast --

19 A. Uh-huh.

20 Q. -- that you transferred over to the St. Mary's complex,
21 the laundry --

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. -- and the residential accommodation there until you
24 went to Derry in December 1963.

25 A. That is right.

- 1 Q. Just so I finish the sequence of this correctly, SR283,
2 you go to Derry for a very specific task --
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. -- following a Superior who'd moved from Belfast to
5 Derry.
- 6 A. That's right.
- 7 Q. You were there between December 1963 and September 1964.
- 8 A. October --
- 9 Q. October.
- 10 A. -- 1964, yes.
- 11 Q. A nine-month period.
- 12 A. That's right.
- 13 Q. Then during that period you worked in the convent
14 kitchen in Derry.
- 15 A. That is right.
- 16 Q. Not in the St. Mary's complex.
- 17 A. I had nothing to do with St. Mary's.
- 18 Q. After 1964 you weren't back in Belfast or Derry.
- 19 A. Not in the convents, no.
- 20 Q. Did you go back to -- you worked in the community.
- 21 A. I went back in 1974 and I worked in .
- 22 Q. Yes. So you didn't work again in St. Mary's --
- 23 A. No.
- 24 Q. -- in Belfast --
- 25 A. No.

1 Q. -- but you went back to Belfast in the mid '70s.

2 A. Mid '70s --

3 Q. In the height of --

4 A. -- and went to Derry in the mid-'80s.

5 Q. In the height of The Troubles --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- both places --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- working in the community.

10 A. That's correct.

11 Q. SR283, if we can bring up, please, 305, I want to begin
12 by taking you back to your time working in The Sacred
13 Heart Home, which was for children between the ages of
14 I think 2 up to their teenage years.

15 A. That's right, yes.

16 Q. In paragraph 7 of the statement that we have on the
17 screen --

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. -- you talk about:

20 "We liked to keep siblings together" --

21 A. That's correct.

22 Q. -- "as they were a great support and comfort to each
23 other."

24 A. Uh-huh.

25 Q. Now the period that we are talking about in The Sacred

1 Heart Home is right at the start of the 1960s.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. That's why I am bringing this up -- this subject up.

4 From a very early point, so from the early part of the

5 1960s, you are saying to the Inquiry that the

6 congregation understood and part of their approach --

7 A. Uh-huh.

8 Q. -- was to try and keep sisters together.

9 A. That is correct, yes. There were two lots of sisters in

10 Sacred Heart Home at that time.

11 Q. You actually remember those, because you were saying to

12 me the other day you remember your work here with

13 fondness --

14 A. That's correct, yes.

15 Q. -- in the Sacred Heart Home.

16 A. That's right, yes.

17 Q. You can remember two particular groups of siblings who

18 were kept together.

19 A. That's right, yes.

20 Q. You explain in paragraph 10, if we can just scroll down,

21 please, a little further, that you describe that home as

22 a family.

23 A. Yes. I really went out to make it a family experience

24 for the children at that time.

25 Q. And do you remember any major difficulties when you were

1 working in that two-year period in The Sacred Heart
2 Children's Home?

3 A. Nothing major stands out for me. I have no memory of
4 any major -- I can well imagine there were little
5 squabbles between them, but I have no major issue around
6 anything that happened there.

7 Q. Now this is the earliest point in time that we are
8 hearing evidence about the work with the children.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. I want you to stay there in The Sacred Heart Children's
11 Home with me for a moment.

12 A. Right.

13 Q. I want to talk about discipline.

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. We have looked at, as you have heard me outline --

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. -- to the Panel, the congregation's principle --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- about striking of children.

20 A. Uh-huh.

21 Q. From your time working in The Sacred Heart Children's
22 Home --

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. -- do you remember physical hitting to keep control or
25 discipline happening when you worked there?

1 A. No. I have no memory of anything like that, and I know
2 it -- well, I certainly didn't do it and I have -- there
3 was nobody else that did it. It was a very -- I suppose
4 one would say they were kind of contented children.

5 There was a nice atmosphere there and -- so, no, there
6 was no physical punishment.

7 Q. You were explaining to me when we were speaking last
8 week that it was really something ingrained into Sisters
9 in your congregation --

10 A. That is correct.

11 Q. -- as part of their approach to their work.

12 A. That's right.

13 Q. You were explaining to me that in saying you didn't see
14 it in The Sacred Heart Children's Home --

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. -- and didn't do it yourself, you have never witnessed
17 a member of the congregation striking a young person --

18 A. Never.

19 Q. -- or an adult.

20 A. Never, never saw it.

21 Q. Now I am going to leave The Sacred Heart Children's Home
22 and we are at the end of 1962. It is closing.

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. We looked with the Panel during the opening at the need
25 for it was not perceived by the congregation. It

1 closes.

2 A. Uh-huh.

3 Q. Sister Eithne has explained what happened to the
4 remaining children, that they transitioned --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- ultimately out of the Good Shepherd, but as you've
7 probably heard from what I have said to the Panel, at
8 least three teenagers come into the St. Mary's complex
9 --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- and have then come forward to the Inquiry.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. I want to take you to St. Mary's laundry --

14 A. Right.

15 Q. -- between 1962 --

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. -- and December 1963.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. So it's only one year --

20 A. Uh-huh.

21 Q. -- that you were there.

22 A. That's correct.

23 Q. But it's at an early point in its time before the
24 Inquiry.

25 A. Right.

1 Q. And between -- the Panel have statements from Sister

2 SR 282 --

3 A. Uh-huh.

4 Q. -- who worked there for a period later than you, and
5 I think she is too ill to attend herself.

6 A. Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

7 Q. Your statement covers an earlier point in time, but
8 bringing together the issues that you have described
9 between you about St. Mary's, there was reference to
10 a sports area, which was -- was that outside the
11 St. Mary's building itself, where recreation could be
12 played, or was the -- sports would have taken place in
13 the recreation hall? Can you remember sporting type
14 activity connected to St. Mary's?

15 A. No, I have no recollection of that. My only -- I worked
16 in the ironing room --

17 Q. Yes.

18 A. -- in St. Mary's and beyond that I had no other
19 involvement with the ladies.

20 Q. So you wouldn't have been there at night-time for the
21 recreation type activities?

22 A. No, no.

23 Q. So it's really only the time working in the --

24 A. Ironing room.

25 Q. -- laundry itself.

1 A. The ironing room department of the laundry, yes.

2 Q. You didn't have an involvement in night classes --

3 A. No, nothing.

4 Q. -- or taking -- going on the summer holiday and that
5 type of ...?

6 A. No, no.

7 Q. Can you -- I think when we spoke you couldn't remember
8 teaching as such occurring on the complex; that the
9 girls who were at school went out to school. That was
10 your recollection of it.

11 A. In St. Mary's?

12 Q. In St. Mary's there were no -- they were older teenagers
13 --

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. -- no longer at school --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- was your recollection of the people you could
18 remember.

19 A. All I can remember is that there were a few younger
20 teenagers there, but I have no knowledge of them going
21 out to school or I do not recall them going out to
22 school. I don't know.

23 Q. You don't know?

24 A. No.

25 Q. When you say "younger teenagers", do you mean

1 16/17-year-olds?

2 A. Yes, that age group.

3 Q. You are not talking about 12 or 13 or 14-year-olds?

4 A. I have no memory of that age group being in St. Mary's.

5 Q. So they may well have been and the congregation has said
6 they think they went out to school, but you don't
7 remember them specifically?

8 A. No, I have no knowledge of that.

9 Q. Working in the ironing room --

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. -- if I can get you to take yourself back, because it's
12 a long time ago now, Sister, you -- can you remember if
13 the -- the Sisters worked alongside the ladies who were
14 there?

15 A. Absolutely, yes.

16 Q. The Inquiry has heard from some applicants who say they
17 were working in the laundry.

18 A. Right.

19 Q. Did the Sister do the same work as the ladies or teenage
20 girls, older teenage girls?

21 A. Yes. I would have helped with the ironing. They had
22 pressers for doing coats. They had special machines for
23 doing shirts, and I would have shown them how to do it,
24 and if they were extra busy, I would help them to do it.

25 Q. So was your role a more supervisory one?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. But you'd lend a hand when it was needed?

3 A. Absolutely, yes.

4 Q. You were explaining to me last week when we were
5 speaking about the different sections --

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. -- that there were.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Can you just list those off for me for the Panel? You
10 explained you were in the ironing room --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- but there were a series of different sections.

13 A. You mean that -- are you talking about the packing room
14 and the washing?

15 Q. Yes.

16 A. Okay.

17 Q. So you were explaining to me that the laundry came in.

18 A. The soiled laundry came in.

19 Q. And went into the washing room.

20 A. Well, first of all, had to be marked and identified as
21 who it belonged to. Then when that was done, it was
22 sent into the wash house, as they called it, where the
23 laundry was washed, and from there then it came to the
24 next department, which was the ironing room.

25 Q. From the ironing room, once you had done your work on it

1 ...?

2 A. Yes, it was sent out then to the packing room to be
3 repacked and ready to be sent out.

4 Q. And the laundry catered for, amongst other things,
5 hotels and --

6 A. Hospitals.

7 Q. -- large organisations --

8 A. Yes, yes.

9 Q. -- as well as --

10 A. Private individuals.

11 Q. -- private work.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. If I can ask you to think back, was that a -- if
14 I describe it this way -- a tough station for a nun to
15 be working in there? Was that one of the less pleasant
16 jobs that was part of your work?

17 A. I didn't see it like that.

18 Q. So it wasn't something that you got up in the morning
19 and, "Oh, I have to go to the laundry again"?

20 A. No, no.

21 Q. It wasn't viewed in that way?

22 A. No. If it was helping the women that were in our care,
23 that was the important emphasis, and if we were in any
24 way supporting them, that was ... and I think it's how
25 we respected them and cared for them and attended to

1 them was the important thing. The work was how we did
2 it.

3 Q. Can you remember -- I am going to ask you this question
4 in two slightly different ways -- can you remember
5 girls, by which I mean young teenagers between the ages
6 of 12, 13, 14, the type you would have had in The Sacred
7 Heart Home --

8 A. Uh-huh.

9 Q. -- working in the laundry during the year you were
10 there?

11 A. No, I have no recollection of that young age group being
12 there.

13 Q. I want to ask you the same question in a slightly
14 different way. Based on your recollection of the
15 laundry and the different sections, would it have been
16 or would you have viewed it as an appropriate place for
17 12, 13, 14-year-olds to be working? Would they have
18 been fit to work in that type of environment?

19 A. Because I have no memory of them being there, I really
20 cannot comment, because I don't remember that age group
21 being there. They were 15 or 16 maybe. I remember some
22 young teenagers being there and I remember myself kind
23 of going down and saying, "Are you okay?" You know,
24 "Can you manage that?", you know, supporting them.

25 Q. Well, that's what I am getting at, Sister. You were

1 explaining to me that some of the machinery --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- a young pair of hands wouldn't have been able to --

4 A. Exactly, yes.

5 Q. -- to manage --

6 A. To manage them, yes.

7 Q. -- because there was a physical element to it.

8 A. Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

9 Q. But you yourself don't remember the younger age group
10 being there?

11 A. No.

12 Q. You said in -- if we look, please, at 351 and
13 paragraph 12, this is the statement where you comment --
14 you are commenting on HIA387 and what she's had to say.
15 You say you left St. Mary's, Belfast in December '63.

16 "I was broken hearted to leave Belfast."

17 What was it about your time in Belfast that had you
18 viewing it as a disappointment that you were having to
19 leave?

20 A. I suppose it was my first appointment and I was only
21 there three years, and in hindsight I suppose I was very
22 content there. So to have to move, I just was very
23 disappointed.

24 Q. So it's a place where you don't recall angst or
25 unhappiness --

1 A. No.

2 Q. -- or disquiet or -- it was somewhere you were happy?

3 A. That is correct.

4 Q. Can you remember discord when you were working in the
5 laundry? I mean, did fall-outs happen between the
6 ladies that you had to manage or was it generally
7 a place that didn't present a great deal of difficulty
8 for you?

9 A. My memory is it did not present a great difficulty, but
10 I have a vague recollection of one or two girls not
11 coming in to where they would say -- where they should
12 be doing the ironing and somebody would say to me,
13 "Well, they are sitting outside and they are in a huff"
14 or whatever.

15 Q. Yes. You mention that in your statement.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. That was the main -- every once in a while you would
18 have had a fall-out had taken place --

19 A. That's right.

20 Q. -- and someone was -- I think you had a particular
21 phrase for it.

22 A. That's right.

23 Q. But they were not coming in --

24 A. Uh-huh.

25 Q. -- and you had to go and smooth that over.

1 A. You'd go out and you'd talk to them and you'd kind of,
2 you know, "What happened?" and whatever, and sometimes
3 you might succeed and other times you might need to get
4 someone else to talk to them.

5 Q. But whatever the arrangements with the teenagers who
6 were there, other than helping the older teenagers who
7 have already left school in the ironing room --

8 A. Uh-huh.

9 Q. -- you had no involvement in their care --

10 A. No.

11 Q. -- from a children's home --

12 A. None.

13 Q. -- perspective?

14 A. The Sister-in-Charge was responsible for that.

15 Q. Now you and I were also talking about the orchard before
16 we leave Belfast. I am going to show you -- if we look
17 at 5047, and we are going to turn that round, and you
18 could remember an orchard, SR283, on the Good Shepherd
19 site in Belfast.

20 A. In the contemplative area.

21 Q. Yes.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. I am going to help you. If we see Nazareth House --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- and just above Nazareth House and to the left we can

1 see a combination of buildings before we get to the row
2 of houses. So if we take the arrow just to the left
3 now, please, and just up a little bit --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- that is where the contemplative convent was.

6 A. That's correct, yes.

7 Q. You were explaining to me that to the left of that, so
8 if we go a little left towards where we see "tennis",
9 that it is in that area that you remember there was
10 a nuns' garden and then a wall over slightly more to the
11 left into a small orchard area.

12 A. That is my recollection.

13 Q. But it's not really an area you were explaining to me
14 where you would have had cause to be very often.

15 A. Very rarely, because the contemplatives -- we didn't
16 have regular access to the contemplative community.

17 Q. You were explaining to me you could remember once being
18 there during it was a day off --

19 A. Uh-huh.

20 Q. -- if I remember correctly --

21 A. Yes, that's right, yes.

22 Q. -- where you had gone for a bit of peace --

23 A. Quiet.

24 Q. -- and quiet.

25 A. Absolutely.

1 Q. Now I am going to take you away from Belfast up to
2 Derry.

3 A. Uh-huh.

4 Q. You go there for nine months between December '63 and
5 October '64.

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. You explain in your third statement that **SR 300**

8 --

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. -- if I have got that correct --

11 A. Yes, that's correct.

12 Q. -- had a particular dietary problem --

13 A. That's right.

14 Q. -- and you were sent to -- I described it, you will
15 recall, as like Nehemiah, the cup bearer to the king.

16 You were to make sure that her food --

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. -- was in the form that she needed it to be for her
19 medical condition.

20 A. That's right, yes.

21 Q. You spent those nine months working in the convent
22 kitchen --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- and not in the St. Mary's kitchen.

25 A. I had nothing to do with St. Mary's.

1 Q. Am I right in saying that you weren't involved with
2 looking after any of the teenagers who might have been
3 in St. Mary's during that time?

4 A. No. I had no contact whatsoever with them.

5 Q. SR283, I am not going to ask you any more questions.
6 The Panel Members may want to ask you some questions.
7 So just bear with us for a short while while we do that.

8 A. Thank you so much.

9 Questions from THE PANEL

10 CHAIRMAN: Sister, can I take you back, first of all, to
11 what you told us about your years in Belfast working in
12 The Sacred Heart Home?

13 A. Right. Yes.

14 Q. Just before I ask you about that, looking at the area
15 that we have seen on the map and what you've said about
16 not having really any contact of any significant degree
17 with the contemplative --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- part of the Order, was it the position that there
20 were really completely autonomous groups or
21 organisations that were part of the Good Shepherd on the
22 same site that really had very little to do with each
23 other?

24 A. In the 19th -- yes, we were two distinct communities.
25 We had what we called the apostolic community, which

1 I was a member of, and the Sisters there would have
2 worked in the ministry. The contemplatives were down at
3 the bottom of the garden. We did not have access to
4 them. They daily came up to mass up through a covered
5 way, but apart from that we did not have any contact
6 with them. We might visit them at Christmas or a
7 special day, but apart from that we didn't have any
8 regular contact with them.

9 Q. Well, was this a formal division inside the Order in the
10 sense that you were a Sister in the contemplative part
11 of the Order --

12 A. Yes. You would have --

13 Q. -- formally designated as such?

14 A. You would have joined -- when you entered, you would
15 have joined the contemplatives --

16 Q. I see.

17 A. -- or you would have joined the apostolic.

18 Q. So it was two separate branches --

19 A. Communities.

20 Q. -- within one organisation?

21 A. Yes, that is right.

22 Q. As I understand what you say, in Belfast at least other
23 than what I take it were rare occasions, other than
24 seeing them in the chapel at the same service, you
25 really had nothing to do with them?

1 A. No. At that time the leader of the contemplatives was
2 a Good Shepherd Sister, but that changed later and they
3 had their own local leaders.

4 Q. So there was one Mother Superior over everyone -- is
5 that what you are saying -- initially?

6 A. No. The Mother Superior would have been of the
7 apostolic community.

8 Q. Yes.

9 A. The contemplatives had a different Superior --

10 Q. I see.

11 A. -- but at that time it was a Good Shepherd Sister.

12 Q. Does that mean later on a Sister from another Order was
13 in charge?

14 A. No, no, no, no. She was one of us.

15 Q. So an apostolic Sister was in charge of the
16 contemplatives at the same time?

17 A. Yes, at that -- in the 1960s, but that changed later --

18 Q. Yes, I see.

19 A. -- and they have their own superiors for many years now.

20 Q. Broadly speaking, there seem to have been three
21 substantial things happening. There were the
22 contemplatives who you described on the site.

23 A. That's right.

24 Q. There was the laundry in St. Mary's, which seems to have
25 been a big organisation in terms of numbers of people

1 working there --

2 A. That's right.

3 Q. -- and size of the operation altogether.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Then there was The Adolescent Centre, which came later
6 on, but in your time was a children's home -- is that
7 right --

8 A. That is correct, yes.

9 Q. -- The Sacred Heart? As far as The Sacred Heart Home is
10 concerned, you have told us that you remember two groups
11 of siblings who were kept together because they were
12 sisters.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. I think in your statement you say that the two had each
15 two groups of sisters. One was about 7 and one about 13
16 or 14 in each case. Is that right?

17 A. There was one about 7 or 8 and her sister was about 10.

18 Q. I see.

19 A. Then there was another set of siblings and one was going
20 to the grammar school. So she was about 13, maybe 14 or
21 15, and then she had a younger sister going to
22 St. Monica's, the secondary school.

23 Q. Where did the girl who went to the grammar school go?

24 A. She went to St. Dominic's.

25 Q. So she had to travel across the city. Is that right?

1 A. She travelled from Ormeau Road down to St. Dominic's.

2 Q. Yes, and her -- what was her age again?

3 A. I would --

4 Q. I mean approximately.

5 A. I put it at about 14 or 15, yes.

6 Q. I mean, clearly she was over 11, because she had
7 presumably done the 11 Plus?

8 A. Oh, yes, absolutely, yes.

9 Q. And her sister was at St. Monica's?

10 A. St. Monica's, yes.

11 Q. And her age approximately again?

12 A. I would put her at maybe 13.

13 Q. Where did the younger girl of that pair go, the one who
14 was 7 or 8 and the other a 10-year-old?

15 A. As far as my memory goes there was The Holy Rosary
16 Primary School.

17 Q. And did both girls go to that?

18 A. Yes, yes.

19 Q. I think that was somewhere in the vicinity. Isn't that
20 right?

21 A. It would have been quite close.

22 Q. Quite close?

23 A. Quite close, yes.

24 Q. I see, and as I understand what you are saying, that was
25 not an accident; it was a deliberate policy when you

1 received one girl to try to keep the younger sister with
2 the older sister.

3 A. That is right, yes, in as far as possible.

4 Q. Was that a policy that in your experience -- you may not
5 be able to answer -- but in your experience was that
6 unusual in the Order? Was it replicated elsewhere where
7 you worked or --

8 A. I couldn't answer that. I wouldn't know. I only know
9 the experience I had in The Sacred Heart Home.

10 Q. Because your career after that took a different path.
11 Is that right?

12 A. That is correct.

13 Q. I see, but in any event you have no recollection of
14 children as young as 12 or 14 working in the laundry
15 when you were there?

16 A. No, I don't, Mr Chairman, no.

17 Q. The nature of the work in the laundry I take it was very
18 hot. Was it a warm, hot atmosphere?

19 A. Yes. The ironing room was -- it was, yes.

20 Q. There would be a lot of steam and so on. Is that right?

21 A. Yes, from the rollers. There were rollers that, you
22 know, the sheets and tablecloths went through.

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. But at the same time it was very airy. There was
25 a whole side of it all windows.

1 Q. I see.

2 A. So it was airy enough.

3 Q. I described the operation as being quite a big one. In
4 general terms how many people were working in your
5 section, for example, in the ...?

6 A. Oh, there would have been about thirty I imagine.

7 Q. In your section?

8 A. In the ironing room, yes, yes.

9 Q. Thirty alone in the ironing room?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And then what -- how many in the packing, for example,
12 and in the wash room?

13 A. There would have been -- there'd be twenty, another
14 twenty or thirty there. Remember there were very big
15 numbers in St. Mary's --

16 Q. Yes.

17 A. -- at that period.

18 Q. This is the early 1960s we are talking about.

19 A. That's correct, yes.

20 Q. Altogether it sounds as if there were probably somewhere
21 sixty, seventy, eighty people working in St. Mary's --

22 A. And --

23 Q. -- ladies and Sisters?

24 A. Ladies and Sisters, yes, that is correct, and then you
25 had the kitchen, and then you had the infirmary --

1 Q. Yes.

2 A. -- and you had the workroom. You know, it was a very
3 big complex.

4 Q. But the children were in a separate location in all
5 senses -- is that what you are saying -- apart from
6 going out to school?

7 A. The Sacred Heart Home had nothing to do with the
8 laund... -- with St. Mary's.

9 Q. Yes. That's the point you are making.

10 A. Oh, yes. Nothing at all to do with it. Two separate
11 buildings.

12 Q. Thank you, Sister.

13 MS DOHERTY: Thanks very much, Sister. Can I just ask: when
14 it was decided that you would train to be a nurse --

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. -- was it seen that there was a need for that type of
17 professional service within the convent?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Was that expecting that you be more involved with the
20 mother and baby aspects or ...?

21 A. No. I think -- well, I mean, I can -- I imagine that it
22 was important that there would be a nurse in every
23 community --

24 Q. Right.

25 A. -- and that would have been it.

1 Q. You would have played that role at that time in Belfast.

2 If somebody was unwell, would you have gone and looked
3 at them --

4 A. I certainly would, yes, you know, yes.

5 Q. -- and given them a first view of things?

6 A. Sure, or attended to them or -- yes.

7 Q. Did you do that in Derry as well or ...?

8 A. On a very limited basis. It was a much smaller
9 community, but my main focus in Derry was looking after
10 SR 300 , and then if any of the Sisters got sick,
11 of course I would attend to them.

12 Q. You would attend to them as well?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Can I ask in relation to the Sacred Heart, was there
15 much contact with families? We heard about -- earlier
16 about later on families would come in and visit. Was
17 that the same in the '60s?

18 A. I don't have a huge recollection of many families
19 visiting. Now I know -- I mentioned there about the two
20 teenage sisters. Yes, I remember somebody coming to
21 visit them very clearly, but for the rest I don't have
22 a recollection.

23 Q. So that was more of an exception, that they were having
24 visitors you remember?

25 A. That is my memory.

1 Q. Can I just ask about Social Services? Was there social
2 workers coming in to do -- you know, to meet with
3 children within the home?

4 A. This was the early '60s and I have no recollection of
5 social workers coming in.

6 Q. So would social workers have been involved in placing
7 the children or would it have been more voluntary?
8 Would it have been more the priest organising it?

9 A. Well, I know the two younger children to my memory was
10 a court case, and some of the others I really wouldn't
11 know, no.

12 Q. No, but social workers visiting wasn't a regular thing?

13 A. It wasn't. It was in the early '60s. It was just --
14 social work and that were just beginning at that
15 particular stage.

16 Q. Okay. Thank you, Sister.

17 MR LANE: Later on you went and worked in roles in the
18 community I believe.

19 A. I went to ...?

20 Q. Worked in the community at .

21 A. Oh, yes, that's right, yes, in .

22 Q. Was that with children and families or was it with other
23 groups that you worked?

24 A. Oh, it was with everybody. We worked in the parish.

25 Q. Right.

1 A. So we were involved in parish visitation, families.

2 Q. Uh-huh.

3 A. We ran a youth club in , because it was a very
4 dicey area at the time, and my nursing background was
5 a great asset.

6 Q. Uh-huh.

7 A. You know, with young mothers and that kind of thing it
8 was a great asset too, because I felt, "What can I do
9 out there?", but I realised very quickly that my nursing
10 background and my midwifery background was a great
11 support to people.

12 Q. The fact that you went to that sort of job, did it show
13 a shift in what the Order was interested in doing out of
14 residential and into the community?

15 A. That was the whole purpose of it. You know, residential
16 care now was not being -- was no longer the way to do
17 it. So it was recommended that we should go out and
18 work in the parish. So three of us were sent out to
19 work in in 1974.

20 Q. Did you find those roles for yourselves or were you
21 asked and invited?

22 A. We were sent.

23 Q. You were sent?

24 A. We were sent. Uh-huh.

25 Q. Thank you very much.

1 A. Right.

2 CHAIRMAN: Well, I take it when you say you were sent,
3 Sister, the bishop presumably invited the Order to work
4 in a particular parish in . Is that right?

5 A. It was the parish priest who first initiated the idea --

6 Q. Yes.

7 A. -- and then we were sent by our Superiors.

8 Q. I see. Well, Sister, thank you very much for coming to
9 speak to us today. We are very grateful.

10 A. Thank you.

11 Q. Thank you.

12 A. Thank you.

13 (Witness withdrew)

14 MR AIKEN: Chairman, perhaps if we took a short break, we
15 should be shortly able to begin the next witness.

16 CHAIRMAN: Yes. We'll aim to take one more witness before
17 lunch, if possible.

18 MR AIKEN: Yes.

19 (12.20 pm)

20 (Short break)

21 (12.30 pm)

22 WITNESS SR281 (called)

23 CHAIRMAN: Yes.

24 MR AIKEN: Chairman, Members of the Panel, the next witness
25 today is SR281, who is "SR281". She is aware, Chairman,

1 you are going to ask her to take the oath.

2 WITNESS SR281 (sworn)

3 CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Sister. Please sit down.

4 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY

5 MR AIKEN: SR281, coming up on the screen will be the first
6 page of your first of the three witness statements that
7 you've provided to the Inquiry. I am just going to ask
8 you to confirm that you recognise that.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. There are no markings on the statement at the moment,
11 but the personal information will be blacked out,
12 because you want to keep your anonymity.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. If we go to the last page, please, at 346, so it's
15 eleven pages, and this first statement is about HIA 359
16 , and can you confirm that you have signed the
17 statement?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And you want to adopt it as part of your evidence to the
20 Inquiry?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Then you have provided -- your second statement relates
23 to HIA359, and if we can look, please, at 371, and again
24 you confirm you recognise that first page --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- as your statement? If we move through then, please,
2 to 376, again you signed the statement and you want to
3 adopt it as part of your evidence to the Inquiry?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. The third statement, which relates to HIA387, is at 357,
6 and again you recognise that as the first page of your
7 third witness statement?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And if we move to 360, please, and again if you confirm
10 for me that you recognise that as the last page, that
11 you have signed it and you want to adopt it as part of
12 your evidence to the Inquiry?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. SR281, you and I were speaking the other day -- I was
15 going to say last Thursday -- about HIA387 and we talked
16 I think about , who had spoken to Sister Eithne, and
17 there's a statement relating to her. She can remember
18 HIA387 leaving. You don't remember that yourself.

19 A. No.

20 Q. No. I am going to speak to you -- we have moved -- we
21 were in Belfast. We have been a short spell in Derry.
22 We are now moving to Newry, where you worked between
23 1957 to 1969 --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- and then for a second period between 1970 and 1971 --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- and then you went off elsewhere and didn't work in
3 Newry again.

4 A. That's correct.

5 Q. You have -- if I can get you to confirm your date of
6 birth for me, if you would.

7 A. .

8 Q. You have explained, if we go back to the first page of
9 your first statement at 335, please, that you were known
10 as "SR281" --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- until 1971 --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- and then you reverted back to SR281.

15 A. That's correct.

16 Q. So during the time that you worked in Newry you will
17 have been known as "SR281".

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. There is just some themes that I want to pick up with
20 you that we were talking about the other day about your
21 time in Newry.

22 You were explaining to me that there generally were
23 between twenty and thirty ladies living in St. Mary's,
24 Newry, as it was known.

25 A. Yes, possibly more, yes.

1 Q. But a smaller community than was the case in Derry and
2 certainly smaller than Belfast.

3 A. That's correct, yes.

4 Q. And of that twenty, thirty, possibly some more ladies in
5 St. Mary's, there were always between three and six
6 teenagers who were over school leaving age.

7 A. That's correct.

8 Q. The number changed over time, but there was always
9 a small number of girls at the younger end of the scale
10 of those who lived in St. Mary's.

11 A. Uh-huh. That's true.

12 Q. You were explaining to me that there were some practices
13 that you could remember like reading during meal times.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Do you want to just explain to the Panel how that
16 happened and what you might have read?

17 A. There was silence in the dining room which -- from my
18 experience I read for them, and I tried to make it as
19 humorous as I could to keep -- make it light, and just
20 to take away any tension that there might be during the
21 silent time.

22 Q. So the era that you remember being in Newry, which is
23 during the '60s --

24 A. Uh-huh.

25 Q. -- the practice then in Newry still in the refectory,

1 where everyone would have had their -- who worked in
2 St. Mary's would have had their meal at night-time, was
3 silence, but not complete silence, because a Sister
4 would have read --

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 Q. -- from a seat that they sat in --

7 A. That's right.

8 Q. -- while the meal was being eaten.

9 A. That's true, yes.

10 Q. Can you remember the policy operating of silence with
11 reading coming to an end during your time in Newry or
12 was it still happening when you left?

13 A. I vaguely remember that, but I feel that it kind of
14 lightened up a bit for them, you know, that perhaps
15 there were a couple of days in the week that we could
16 let them -- that they would speak, you know. That
17 was -- as far as I remember that's what happened, yes.

18 Q. And was -- was that policy set by -- it depended who the
19 Superior was in charge of the -- in this case it is
20 Newry whether that was the way things operated or was it
21 like that wherever you went?

22 A. The Sister would say, "Look, you can speak today.
23 I will allow them to speak today" or something like
24 that.

25 Q. And that would have been the Sister-in-Charge --

1 A. The Sister-in-Charge, yes.

2 Q. -- of St. Mary's?

3 A. Uh-huh.

4 Q. You talk in your statement, if we go to paragraph 18,
5 please, on 341 -- paragraph 19 -- about -- it goes on
6 I think into -- yes -- it is paragraph 19 -- the
7 policy -- you mention this in each of your statements in
8 different places, SR281 -- but the policy of changing
9 the person's christian name. From speaking to you your
10 recollection is it was always the christian name and
11 surnames were not really used.

12 A. That's true.

13 Q. So if I -- if Elizabeth, who is beside me here, had come
14 in with the name Elizabeth, the Sister-in-Charge would
15 have identified a new christian name for that person to
16 be known as.

17 A. Yes. That's correct.

18 Q. That system operated throughout your period in Newry?

19 A. It did.

20 Q. Do you remember it coming to an end while you were in
21 Newry?

22 A. No.

23 Q. You have explained in paragraph 19 that the thinking
24 behind the policy was about respecting the individual's
25 privacy.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Part of the culture of the Order was to accept the
3 person as you found them, to deal with them on that
4 basis and not to be prying into their background.

5 A. That's correct.

6 Q. Now that was thinking perhaps of its time, because
7 knowing something about a person's background might help
8 you with their care, but at the time this policy was
9 happening that was the thought process, that "If we
10 change the name, none of the rest of the ladies will be
11 able to find out anything about the person's
12 background", which might be a difficult background.

13 A. Uh-huh. Well, we weren't expected to know the surname.
14 So that's why we always called them by their christian
15 name. We were never meant to know it. So we weren't
16 able to pry into who they were or whatever.

17 Q. Yes, and the idea behind Elizabeth being known as Joanne
18 was so that the rest of the ladies wouldn't know
19 anything about Elizabeth's background, because they
20 wouldn't know Elizabeth.

21 A. That is true, but it would also depend on, you know,
22 when they would speak together, they may tell each other
23 who they were. That could happen.

24 Q. Yes, but the idea of it was --

25 A. Yes, for us.

1 Q. -- so that nobody would know anybody else's business or
2 background --

3 A. Yes, yes.

4 Q. -- if the policy worked as it was supposed to.

5 A. Uh-huh. Right.

6 Q. Do you remember at what point -- and if you don't
7 remember, just say -- at what point in the Order's
8 thinking that came to an end? Do you remember a point
9 in time when, wherever you were, people's own original
10 names were used?

11 A. I'm not sure, but it could have happened after Vatican
12 II.

13 Q. Right, but you don't have a date in your mind yourself?

14 A. I don't, no.

15 Q. It may be something that Sister Eithne can pick up.

16 You talk in paragraph 25 of this statement, if we
17 look at 342, please, that it's a small community of
18 ladies compared to other convents.

19 A. Uh-huh.

20 Q. You remember going out for day trips --

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. -- and also in the summer time a week-long holiday at
23 Cranfield.

24 A. Yes. That's true.

25 Q. That's somewhere known to me, but was this in caravans

1 that you would have stayed in or where did you stay for
2 the holiday?

3 A. We would have rented a house there.

4 Q. And would one house have taken everybody or did you --

5 A. Well, they didn't all go together, you know.

6 Q. So you would have had the house maybe for four weeks --

7 A. Yes, could be, yes.

8 Q. -- and there was a changeover of ladies having their
9 week holiday at the end of each week?

10 A. That way it could happen. You know, it could vary at
11 the times, but it happened that way, yes.

12 Q. You explain in another statement, if we go to 359,
13 please, and paragraph 8 and it is (vi), that you were
14 you involved -- if we just scroll up, please -- thank
15 you -- you were involved in teaching the ladies in the
16 evening in Newry.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. What did you do? Can you remember the teaching that you
19 performed?

20 A. Well, it was recreational as well as teaching. It was
21 very homely. I taught them crafts like canework and
22 embroidery and crochet and all that kind of --
23 dressmaking, yes.

24 Q. Would that have been done in a -- was it done in the
25 refectory or a hall, or where did you do that type of

1 work?

2 A. I had a room assigned to the teenagers, yes.

3 Q. Because you did some specific work with the younger
4 ladies who were in Newry. Is that right?

5 A. Yes. I taught them cooking and that, yes.

6 Q. Was that an optional thing? If they wanted to come in
7 the evening to what you were doing, they could, or did
8 they have to attend? Can you remember?

9 A. I would try to encourage them. They may not always want
10 to come, but I would like to invite them, and just, you
11 know, to be with the rest of the girls, yes.

12 Q. If we go to 374, please, you mention in paragraph 13 of
13 this statement, SR281, music being a feature and this
14 particular girl learned to play the guitar. You make
15 reference to **SR 299** who was very musical, and GSC35
16 teaching them singing and music. Was that a major
17 feature of the night-time recreation in Newry?

18 A. No. This could take place at weekends perhaps, mostly
19 at weekends, or if they were -- if there were other
20 times that were free, they would avail of that.

21 Q. So how would they have spent their recreation time in
22 the evenings during the week?

23 A. If the evening was fine, we'd go out for a walk,
24 whatever. Basically that's what we did. If it was
25 a wet evening or perhaps a cold evening, we would watch

1 television.

2 Q. And you had a television for its time quite early in
3 Newry.

4 A. I forget now the year. 19... -- I forget the year, to
5 be honest.

6 Q. But during the '60s you had a television in the convent
7 in Newry?

8 A. We had, yes. We had a television, yes.

9 Q. You describe in paragraph 39 of your statement, 345,
10 that you regarded Newry as what you describe as
11 a progressive house with warmth, openness and charm, and
12 you talk in a different statement about it feeling more
13 like a family home. What was it about it that made you
14 see it like that?

15 A. Well, we interacted very simply and very caringly. They
16 were free. They were free. I felt free to speak to
17 them and they felt free to speak to me.

18 Q. So there were good relationships --

19 A. There was, yes. Uh-huh.

20 Q. -- between you and the people who lived there?

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. In your statement at 464, if I have got the -- this may
23 be -- look at 464, please. This is maybe Sister
24 Eithne's statement, where she is talking about the type
25 of things that were available in Newry, that there was

1 cooking, baking, knitting, crochet, canework with the
2 aim of ensuring that life skills were acquired to ensure
3 independence and self-sufficiency. There were music
4 classes and Irish dancing lessons and drama classes.
5 Just scroll down, please. In fact, there it is at the
6 top of the page. Thank you. So there was dancing and
7 drama taught as well.

8 A. Yes, yes, yes.

9 Q. You mention in paragraph 9 of your statement at 373 that
10 the laundry was you felt modern and the work mechanised
11 to ease the -- just in paragraph 9 -- to ease the burden
12 on the Sisters and the ladies. Do you remember it being
13 modernised during your time living in Newry?

14 A. Yes. Well, we put on an extra building, for instance,
15 because the buildings were just pre-fabs after the time
16 of the war --

17 Q. Yes.

18 A. -- and (inaudible).

19 Q. I think it began as -- was it four Nissan huts?

20 A. Yes, that's right, yes, yes. So later on there was
21 a building, which consisted of bedrooms upstairs, and
22 then we had a hall where there would be dancing on
23 stage, yes.

24 Q. I think we have seen the picture of the stage --

25 A. Uh-huh.

1 Q. -- and some artwork --

2 A. Uh-huh.

3 Q. -- round the bottom of the stage, but you explain, if we
4 go to 335, please, in paragraph 6 that you worked in the
5 laundry packing room with a number of ladies and other
6 Sisters.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Is that where you worked during your entire time in
9 Newry?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. You probably heard SR283 describe the different sections
12 of the laundry --

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. -- during her work in Belfast. Was yours the same but
15 just on a smaller scale?

16 A. It was smaller, yes, yes.

17 Q. So you had the wash room -- it would have come in
18 from -- the laundry would have been marked --

19 A. Uh-huh.

20 Q. -- and then into the wash room.

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. Then through into the ironing room --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- and then into the packing room --

25 A. Yes, yes.

1 Q. -- where you were before being transported out.

2 A. Uh-huh.

3 Q. If I'm right, you had laymen who were employed as van
4 drivers, who then delivered the laundry in the
5 community.

6 A. That's correct, yes.

7 Q. You explain that you worked with a group of the older
8 teenagers.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Was that a task given to you specifically to do, SR281?

11 A. It was.

12 Q. When you say you were to work with them, what were the
13 sorts of things that you were to do?

14 A. Not actually working with them. Sorry. I didn't
15 actually work with the older teenagers. It was during
16 the recreation period that I would have them, yes.

17 Q. When I use the word "work" --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Let me put the word "work" aside then.

20 A. Sorry.

21 Q. So we can leave the laundry.

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. In the evenings or at the weekends you were given
24 responsibility --

25 A. Uh-huh.

1 Q. -- to be alongside the teenagers.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. What were the sorts of things that you were doing with
4 them?

5 A. Well, we chatted and we had fun and we worked at the
6 same time. We were doing our canework, our crochet or
7 whatever, yes.

8 Q. So that would have been a -- did you keep the age groups
9 together? So the 16, 17, 18, 19, 20-year-olds might
10 have been the ones you were working or frequenting or
11 being alongside at night-time, and then perhaps another
12 Sister was spending time with an older group of ladies
13 --

14 A. That's correct.

15 Q. -- who might have had more in common with each other --

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. -- than the younger group.

18 A. Yes, that's true.

19 Q. Is that -- am I summarising that correctly, SR281 --

20 A. Yes, that's right.

21 Q. -- that there would have been groupings based on age?

22 A. Yes, yes.

23 Q. You reply to two individuals who comment about hitting,
24 and the Order has made its position clear about its
25 approach and why it had that approach, but you explain

1 in your statements that you never saw anyone being hit.

2 A. No.

3 Q. You replied in relation to the suggestion of someone
4 being hit with a cane that you never saw any hitting
5 with a cane.

6 A. I didn't, no.

7 Q. But I asked Mr Fee, who clarified for me you were saying
8 that there was no cane in the Good Shepherd in Newry.

9 A. There wasn't.

10 Q. You certainly never saw one --

11 A. No, no.

12 Q. -- or any other strap or anything of that nature? Those
13 type of items that might have been used for discipline
14 --

15 A. I haven't seen any, no.

16 Q. -- were not there. You and I were discussing last
17 Thursday how discipline issues -- because inevitably any
18 group of people, and certainly younger people, issues
19 will arise from time to time about behaviour, and how
20 were those things to be dealt with, because the Order
21 did not resort to hitting as far as their policy was
22 concerned, and you were explaining to me there was only
23 one occasion where you could remember something being
24 dealt with in a way that you weren't happy about, and
25 that was a girl -- ultimately the decision was made to

1 transfer her to Belfast.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Do you want to just explain that in your own words, what
4 happened and why you were unhappy about it?

5 A. Well, she was a young girl. She worked with me and
6 I know she was happy to be working with me. She was
7 always trying, you know, to help me and all that. So
8 she -- for some reason or another she may have
9 differences with the Sister-in-Charge. So she ran away
10 and she ran away on three occasions. So -- and the
11 third time this wasn't accepted really by the
12 Sister-in-Charge. So she was separated from the rest of
13 us for a time until she was then sent away.

14 Q. When you say she was separated from you while she was
15 still in Newry, what -- what happened? Did she have to
16 stay in her room or did she work alone somewhere or ...?

17 A. She stayed in her room, yes.

18 Q. So she was asked to and made stay in her room?

19 A. That's right.

20 Q. At a certain point then she left?

21 A. That's right.

22 Q. Where do you understand her to have gone?

23 A. I understood that she went to Belfast. She came from
24 Belfast originally. So I understood that she went back
25 to Belfast.

1 Q. To the Good Shepherd in --

2 A. No.

3 Q. Out of --

4 A. I don't know. I'm not sure where she might have gone.

5 Q. So basically the Sister-in-Charge decided that the Good
6 Shepherd weren't going to look after her any longer
7 because she had run away on the three occasions?

8 A. Yes, obviously.

9 Q. That's the one instance where you can think of that
10 you -- you weren't happy with how it was -- everybody
11 can have a different view. The Sister-in-Charge took
12 her view and that's how she dealt with it. You didn't
13 like it being dealt with in that way?

14 A. I didn't.

15 Q. And wouldn't have dealt with it in that way yourself?

16 A. No.

17 Q. But you don't recall -- when you were speaking to me,
18 SR281, you don't recall there being major discipline
19 issues arising during your time working in Newry?

20 A. I don't recall anything like that, no.

21 Q. So that occasion where the girl has run off three times
22 and she has been made stay in her room and then she's
23 been asked to leave --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- that's the worst that you can think of?

1 A. Yes. I was sad for her, because, you know, she was
2 a good girl in my eyes. So I would have liked if she
3 could stay on further and we could have helped her
4 further.

5 Q. Do you remember what age she was?

6 A. I think she was about 16, 15 or 16, yes.

7 Q. You mention, just so I put it on the record, there was
8 a holding farm attached to St. Mary's in Newry.

9 A. I beg your pardon?

10 Q. A holding farm.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. A small farm holding, where potatoes would have been
13 grown --

14 A. Yes, a couple of acres, yes.

15 Q. -- and vegetables that would have been used in the
16 cooking.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. You explain across your statements that you had warm
19 memories from having worked there. It wasn't a time --
20 as you reflect on it, you were happy there.

21 A. Generally in Newry itself is that what you are referring
22 to?

23 Q. In Newry.

24 A. Yes, yes.

25 Q. The last question I want to ask you, SR281, is about the

1 approach of the Order to training you. Can you remember
2 was training you in the likes of social work or teaching
3 or nursing, was that seen as important?

4 A. Well, I was to be -- I was to be -- I was intended for
5 nursing originally, but for medical reasons I wasn't
6 able to pursue that profession. So for a number of
7 years I didn't do anything except be with the ladies.
8 So 1969 then I did residential social work, yes.

9 Q. Was that ethos of getting you trained --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- something that was important within the Order?

12 A. Yes, yes.

13 Q. SR281, I am not going to ask you any more questions.

14 The Panel Members may want to ask you something. So if
15 you just bear with us for a short while while they do
16 that.

17 A. Thank you very much.

18 Q. Thank you.

19 Questions from THE PANEL

20 CHAIRMAN: Sister, if I could ask you about the practice of
21 reading during meal times, I had gained the impression,
22 perhaps incorrectly, that the basic position was that
23 people were not allowed to talk during meal times, but
24 in order to perhaps make that a little less strict or
25 have less of an impact on them the gap, so to speak, was

1 filled by your reading something to them. Is that
2 right?

3 A. Uh-huh. That's right.

4 Q. You have described how you tried to lighten up the
5 atmosphere by reading something humorous.

6 A. Yes. I would read novels or something from the
7 newspaper.

8 Q. I see, and then there were occasions when the
9 Sister-in-Charge would say, "You can let them speak
10 today".

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Was there any pattern about how that would come about?
13 You said I think perhaps two or three days a week, if
14 I remember correctly.

15 A. How do I say it?

16 Q. I mean, were there special days that were marked in that
17 way?

18 A. I think it would depend. I think it would depend on the
19 Sister-in-Charge, when she felt they could speak, and
20 that -- I would get that message then from her.

21 Q. But you don't recall, do you, any particular pattern in
22 the sense you could always speak on a Friday or never
23 speak on a Friday or something?

24 A. No, not really. There would be occasions obviously
25 that -- it might be a feast day or a birthday maybe,

1 somebody's birthday.

2 Q. That's just what I was going to ask, if there was some
3 special reason why that would be granted. You think
4 maybe a feast day or a birthday?

5 A. I wouldn't have known -- sorry -- I wouldn't have known
6 the special reason, but she knew obviously.

7 Q. I see, but your impression was there had to be a special
8 reason --

9 A. I think so.

10 Q. -- for doing it, not just a whim?

11 A. I think so, yes.

12 Q. As I understand what you are saying, you can't remember
13 exactly when that stopped, but might it have been
14 relatively late in your time in Newry or would it have
15 stopped shortly after Vatican II?

16 A. I can imagine it stopped late in my time.

17 Q. Thank you very much, Sister.

18 A. Thank you.

19 MS DOHERTY: Thanks, Sister. Can I just check did the
20 Sisters eat their food in silence?

21 A. We did, yes.

22 Q. So that was something that was -- the Sisters did with
23 the Sisters and then was transported over to the girls?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Were the girls upset at having their first name changed?

1 Did any of the girls, you know, want to keep their own
2 names or ...?

3 A. Well, as far as I can remember they never questioned it.

4 Q. They just accepted that that was what --

5 A. I think so, yes.

6 Q. -- was to be?

7 We heard of a black book being used in Derry to
8 record punishments and calling out the punishments on
9 a weekly basis. Was there anything like that in Newry?

10 A. I never saw a black book.

11 Q. Okay, and in relation -- there was a girl that was
12 transferred, but other methods of discipline -- I know
13 no striking, but if there was girls not doing their work
14 properly or disputes, were there other forms of
15 discipline used?

16 A. To my knowledge there wouldn't be any discipline for
17 work that's not done properly.

18 Q. Could there just be encouragement to do it?

19 A. They would be encouraged, yes, and shown how to do it
20 right.

21 Q. So the only discipline you were aware of was this girl
22 being transferred? That was the only time that you were
23 aware --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- of anything? Was she upset to leave?

1 A. I don't know.

2 Q. You didn't see her again --

3 A. No.

4 Q. -- once ...?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Just it was decided and then she was kept away from the
7 group and then -- so there was no -- she didn't get her
8 chance to take leave of the group?

9 A. No.

10 Q. No. Okay. Thank you very much, Sister.

11 MR LANE: Did you see much of the Sisters who were working
12 in the other areas, in Derry and Belfast and so on?

13 A. No.

14 Q. You just met the ones in your own community then?

15 A. That's right. We'd visit. That's all. I never worked
16 there.

17 Q. Right, and did you ever have training sessions or
18 anything like this across the province as a whole?

19 A. In latter years, yes.

20 Q. Right. Okay. Thank you.

21 A. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN: Well, Sister, thank you very much indeed for
23 coming to speak to us today.

24 A. Thank you.

25 (Witness withdrew)

1 CHAIRMAN: 2 o'clock.

2 (1.00 pm)

3 (Short break)

4 (2.00 pm)

5 WITNESS SR293 (called)

6 CHAIRMAN: Yes.

7 MR AIKEN: Chairman, Members of the Panel, good afternoon.

8 The next witness today, who is a day earlier than
9 planned, and hopefully that will make life easier for
10 her, is SR293. SR293 is "SR293". She is very nervous,
11 but I have told her that she will be fine and not to
12 worry. Just keep her eye on me and we will walk through
13 the issues that we need to talk about. She is aware,
14 Chairman, you are going to ask her to take the oath.

15 WITNESS SR293 (sworn)

16 CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Sister. Please sit down.

17 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY

18 MR AIKEN: SR293, coming up on the screen will be the first
19 page of your first witness statement, and you have
20 provided two witness statements to the Inquiry. The
21 first one on the screen relates to HIA211. I just want
22 you to check that you recognise that first page.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. It doesn't have the black marks at the moment that will
25 block out your personal information, but when it is

1 published it will have, because you want to keep your
2 anonymity.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. We will go to the last page of the statement, which is
5 at 328. Can you confirm you recognise the last page?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And you have signed the statement?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And you want to adopt it as part of your evidence to the
10 Inquiry?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Then we will look at the second statement, SR293, which
13 is at 278. This relates to HIA107, as she would have
14 been at the time that she is in the Good Shepherd in
15 Derry, now HIA107. Again you recognise the first
16 page of your statement?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. We will go to the last page at 284, and again you have
19 signed the statement, SR293?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And you want to adopt it as part of your evidence to the
22 Inquiry?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Now, SR293, you were you in St. Mary's in Derry, as it
25 was known, between 1964 and 1970.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. It is that period that I am going to speak to you about

3 --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- but before I do that, I am going to get you just to
6 confirm for me your date of birth.

7 A. .

8 Q. You took your final vows in the congregation in 1962.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Then if we go back to 322, I am going to get you to
11 explain for me -- you explain in paragraph 6 that in
12 1963/1964 --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- so just after you complete your final vows and before
15 you come to St. Mary's in Derry, you go to do a Central
16 Training Council in Child Care certificate in London.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Can you remember what institute you did that in?

19 A. There were two sections to it. One was in ,
20 where there was a group of about twenty Sisters from
21 various congregations from Ireland, Wales, England and
22 Scotland, and in Kentish Town in I think it was the
23 Polytechnic or something there was another
24 group of lay people. We joined them one day a week, but
25 it was a similar course.

1 Q. And who ran the one for the Sisters?

2 A. There was a Sister-in-Charge and then there was a lady
3 called _____ and there would have been other
4 lecturers coming in.

5 Q. So it was tailored specifically or in part specifically
6 to the congregation of Sisters, but -- or not?

7 A. No.

8 Q. No.

9 A. It was tailored as a course in which we did our
10 practical work in various institutions throughout the
11 country. I did one for family child care setting in
12 _____ in Kent, and I did one for senior girls'
13 residential approved school in Birmingham, and I did
14 another one in Manchester, which involved a reception
15 centre as well as a training school.

16 Q. So you came out with the state qualification.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. At the time this was one of the early courses that were
19 available.

20 A. To the best of my knowledge it was, yes.

21 Q. I want to ask you -- I want to take you back to that
22 period. You had come into the Order and you had taken
23 your final vows and then you had gone off to do this
24 course.

25 A. Uh-huh.

1 Q. Was training -- how did that come about? Was it
2 an important thing in the Order? Was it something you
3 asked to get the opportunity to do? Can you remember
4 the sequence of events?

5 A. No. There had been two other Sisters had been in
6 England the previous year doing training, and there may
7 have been others before that, but while there would have
8 been Sisters trained in nursing and teaching who had
9 come to the Order, there was an emphasis on training for
10 child care and later for social work.

11 Q. So was it something you volunteered to do or were you --
12 was there a --

13 A. No.

14 Q. -- show of hands as to, "Who would like to go on this
15 course?" or ...?

16 A. No. I was proposed -- it was proposed to me that it
17 would be good for me to do this course.

18 Q. Is that the type of proposal that members of the Bar
19 might remember, which was a proposal that wasn't really
20 a proposal? It was, "This is what you are going to go
21 and do"?

22 A. Well, I suppose I would have been interested in it
23 anyway as a way of understanding the kind of work in
24 which I would possibly be involved.

25 Q. Yes. So you go off to London and do this course and

1 then you are assigned to St. Mary's in Derry?

2 A. Yes. I am assigned to St. Mary's in Derry with -- my
3 main focus at that time would have been on teaching the
4 older teenagers who were there -- they would have been
5 from about 16 to possibly 19 -- offering classes in
6 typing and shorthand -- sorry -- not shorthand -- typing
7 and English, and also having them for recreational
8 opportunities at the weekends and generally kind of
9 being with them. I wasn't actually in -- working in the
10 laundry itself. I was involved in more administrative
11 work, but I would have had many occasions to be in and
12 out, meet them, and on some occasions I would have
13 supplied for another Sister in the area where I would
14 have called it the dispatch area --

15 Q. Yes.

16 A. -- which brought me in contact with quite a number of
17 them.

18 Q. You probably heard the evidence of SR281 previous to
19 you.

20 A. Uh-huh.

21 Q. She was explaining that she was given -- effectively the
22 various ladies that made up the group were across
23 a broad age range and she was given the younger group,
24 if you like --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- I am sure that was a fluid concept -- but a younger
2 group to work with.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Was that the same with you?

5 A. It was my understanding that while I didn't have kind of
6 a specific role as a named role, that was still my focus
7 was to be with them in whatever opportunities I could
8 manage.

9 Q. When we were speaking last Thursday, SR293, you were
10 explaining to me that you would have conducted these
11 typing classes --

12 A. Uh-huh.

13 Q. -- during the morning.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And you would have endeavoured -- they weren't
16 compulsory.

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. You would have endeavoured to encourage participants to
19 come --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- from their role in the laundry --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- and engage in the class.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. You were explaining to me, and indeed you have explained

1 in your statement, that not everybody was prepared to
2 engage.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Some look back with hindsight that they wish they had
5 engaged, people you have kept in contact with who passed
6 through St. Mary's, but the importance of it was not
7 necessarily recognised by all.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. You also explained to me that you carried out this
10 teaching of typing, but it had an additional benefit of
11 the individuals who engaged imbibed in English.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Do you want to just explain to the Panel what you were
14 meaning when you were saying that to me?

15 A. I was using a standard typing manual and there were
16 a number of those actually in this room, which was used
17 generally as a classroom previously and ongoing, and the
18 focus of that would have been not just on developing
19 typing skills, but also on acquiring certain skills with
20 regard to setting out letters, doing business
21 statements, that type of thing, which would have
22 required corrections in English, helping to imbibe the
23 kind of standard form, and also through that hoping that
24 they would acquire skills where they would feel
25 competent in approaching interviews or applying for

1 work.

2 Q. So it had the corollary benefit --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- of improving English --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- but doing it through the mode of typing.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. You explained to me that that class was conducted in
9 what to normal view would have been an old schoolroom.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. It had a blackboard --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- and school type desks.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. But I was asking you when we spoke last Thursday whether
16 you could remember school classes per se as we would
17 have understood them taking place, and you said to me
18 you don't remember that in your time, ie a class running
19 during the day for --

20 A. Not during the day in my time, because those I was
21 dealing with, and it would have been there when I went,
22 except for this other girl who left shortly after
23 I went, HIA107, those would all have been school
24 leavers, and I understand that there were classes in the
25 evening, and since I spoke to you on Friday I clarified

1 that with one of the ex-residents with whom I am in
2 contact for over forty years, and she told me that she
3 remembered very clearly that there were needlework and
4 cookery and maths classes in the evenings.

5 Q. In the evenings?

6 A. In the evenings.

7 Q. That seems to sit with -- we have now a statement from
8 Sister Eithne explaining --

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. -- the three or four teachers who worked in other
11 schools --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- but came in in the evenings to run classes of various
14 types.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. You don't remember yourself those happening in the room,
17 the schoolroom, as it were, if I call it that, where the
18 typing was conducted?

19 A. Well, I didn't have much kind of contact with St. Mary's
20 in the evenings except when we were going for choir
21 practice, and frequently we -- particularly if we were
22 coming up to a special occasion or anything like that,
23 we would have -- a number of Sisters would have been in
24 the choir along with the girls.

25 Q. You explain just on the theme of education, SR293, that

1 from in and around 1968/'69, just in the year or two
2 before you leave Derry --

3 A. Uh-huh.

4 Q. -- a further development involved enrolling some of the
5 ladies in the technical college.

6 A. That's right, yes.

7 Q. They would have gone down for evening classes to the
8 technical college.

9 A. I would have been involved along with another Sister in
10 making that suggestion, that we felt it would be more
11 beneficial to them to actually go out to classes, and
12 a few of the Sisters -- we had bought a minibus
13 previously, and a few of the Sisters went out in the
14 evenings together with the girls, because at that time,
15 because of the location of the building in the
16 Waterside, trying to get across the city as far as
17 Strand Road, it would have been difficult to get there
18 and back. So we arranged it according to -- we went out
19 I think it was two evenings a week. Some of them did
20 English and typing, art.

21 Q. You explain in various parts of your two statements --
22 and I am just going to bring the issues together, if
23 I can -- you have explained that you would have worked
24 with this younger group --

25 A. Uh-huh.

1 Q. -- of the age spectrum in St. Mary's, and for you that
2 was mostly teenagers --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- who had already left school, who were beyond school
5 leaving age. You would have gone out on Saturdays to
6 beaches in Donegal --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- as a day out.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. You make reference in your statement to a house in
11 Donegal being rented --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- in the summer. I see that makes you smile. So
14 that's a memory you recall fondly of the summer holiday.

15 A. The excitement was tremendous once they got the -- once
16 they got the house. For almost a year they were hoping
17 they would get this particular house, because it seemed
18 very appropriate. It was suited -- the strand was very
19 close and so forth. So after that my memory is every
20 year there would have been a house rented and they would
21 have gone out in groups.

22 Q. Did they -- like the Cranfield holidays for the Newry
23 congregation, did a certain number --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- from St. Mary's go and then there was a changeover --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- until everybody had had their holiday?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. In terms of -- you mentioned having the older teenagers
5 for recreation.

6 A. That's right.

7 Q. You mention in a location in your statement at the side
8 of the St. Mary's house was a netball and a tennis
9 court.

10 A. That's right, yes.

11 Q. That would have been utilised for recreation.

12 A. Uh-huh.

13 Q. Can you remember what types of things you would have
14 done with the older teenagers when you weren't outside
15 during recreation?

16 A. Well, there would have been -- maybe on a Sunday
17 afternoon we would have gathered as a group. I had also
18 tried to teach them some poetry and that through kind of
19 group recitation, learning poetry, learning some aspects
20 of -- prior to my coming there had been musicals. So
21 some of them of the older people who were there would
22 have been used in becoming involved in that type of
23 thing and maybe making some kind of -- getting just
24 involved in the kind of public speaking aspect of
25 something, so that they didn't feel constricted when

1 they were asked to speak publicly, to read publicly,
2 that they felt comfortable in doing that. They would
3 have had singing and dancing. Some of them were quite
4 musical and they could have played the violin or the
5 accordion, and there could have been singsongs.

6 Q. SR293, we are talking about a period in Derry from '64
7 to '70 --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- and you have heard various references I am sure while
10 you have been here to people feeling it was like
11 a prison, that they couldn't leave, whether that was
12 Belfast, Newry, Derry, but that concept, that idea of
13 being, "We are here. We can't get out".

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. You talk in your statement about The Troubles and the
16 effect that that would have on the general mindset of
17 letting people be out on the streets, but can you --
18 were there regular going down into the town on
19 Saturdays? Can you remember that type of opportunity,
20 or was it quite a closed -- you really didn't go out in
21 Derry? You might have gone off to Donegal to the beach,
22 but you couldn't just head down the street to the
23 newsagent's. Can you remember what that was like?

24 A. No. I had the feeling that Derry was very open, because
25 of its location, and on a Saturday afternoon some of

1 them would have gone out in small groups -- that would
2 have been providing there was no trouble in the city --
3 and they could have done their shopping or whatever they
4 liked.

5 Q. So there was no prohibition on going out?

6 A. Not that I know of. It may have been organised in the
7 sense that some -- maybe with a few younger people maybe
8 an older people -- an older person accompanied them.

9 Q. What I take you to be saying is that was more a product
10 of its time because of what was going on in the city?

11 A. Well, certainly I went there in '64, and from about '66
12 or so there was tension, because there was a build-up
13 prior to the civil rights protests, and I think there
14 was a sense of unrest, and we were always very
15 protective of those under our care in terms of ensuring
16 that they wouldn't be in dangerous situations. So
17 possibly it was that.

18 Q. You make mention of the fact there was a qualified nurse
19 --

20 A. That's right.

21 Q. -- on the staff during your time.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. You think that was -- if I can get this right -- Sister

24 SR 301

25 A. SR 301

1 Q. **SR 301** Not for the first time my pronunciation has
2 gone awry I'm afraid!

3 You make reference to the policy of changing the
4 name --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- and the reason for that to do with privacy and the
7 approach of the Order to taking a person as they came to
8 you and not allowing other people --

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. -- to know the background of that person. I think you
11 mention in paragraph -- if we go to 326, please,
12 paragraphs 19 and 20, reflecting on that, you make the
13 point to the Inquiry that the ladies may well have
14 resented that change where their name was changed.

15 A. They may have, although none of them actually directly
16 expressed that to me, but the reason for it was to
17 protect their privacy, particularly if they came from a
18 similar kind of area, so that unless they wanted to
19 disclose information themselves about their background
20 or why they were there, none of the other residents
21 would have known the reason.

22 Q. Yes. If we scroll down just a little bit further,
23 please. So there was reason for it.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. It wasn't intended to cause resentment.

1 A. No.

2 Q. But reflecting, you can understand why it might have
3 been seen in that way.

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. You mention, just to give context to this before we look
6 at some specific issues, that there would have been
7 fifty to seventy ladies, including older teenagers,
8 living in Derry at any one time, but there could often
9 be many more than that.

10 A. I am not sure where I said that.

11 Q. If we look at 270. Just scroll down, please:

12 "I do recall for a short period there were large
13 numbers, but the average number would have been 50-70 at
14 any one time."

15 A. Well, possibly, but I wouldn't have thought there would
16 have been even as many as -- there couldn't possibly
17 have been any more than seventy.

18 Q. So that would have been --

19 A. A maximum I would have thought.

20 Q. In fairness to you -- and I am grateful to Ms Gibson --
21 it is SR49 has put that number on the individuals in
22 Derry.

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. So rather than me ascribe that to you, what can you
25 recall about the general numbers, and I appreciate you

1 are not going to remember precisely?

2 A. I would have thought, you know, the fifty -- maybe about
3 the fifty bracket possibly.

4 Q. That would have been a more -- that would have been the
5 norm?

6 A. Well, I am not sure about being the norm, but I felt
7 I could relate to most of those who were there over
8 time, and while I wouldn't remember all the names or
9 anything like that, I don't think I would have
10 remembered any more than that.

11 Q. You talk -- and I hope I have got this right, SR293 --
12 you talk about SR 312 in your statement --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- at 327, paragraph 24. You describe her as being firm
15 in her ways, strict, but you didn't see her hit anyone.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Now I know nobody likes to speak ill of other people,
18 but when you say -- you talk elsewhere in your statement
19 about SR49 and being a real breath of fresh air, if
20 I summarise it in that way.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. She was not the Sister-in-Charge until 1975, even though
23 she was there --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- during your time, having come in 1961. So what was

1 it -- when you say SR 312 was firm in her ways and strict,
2 what are you meaning by that?

3 A. Well, she was the person in charge of St. Mary's at that
4 time and she was obviously the person who had the
5 responsibility of ensuring that there was some degree of
6 organisation and keeping some form of discipline. At
7 a personal level she would have been very approachable,
8 and I certainly never heard or saw her strike anyone,
9 but she would have probably been responsible for
10 suggesting certain rules and seeing that they were kept.

11 Q. We will come back to a couple of those rules, SR293, but
12 she was in charge up until 1975. So she was in charge
13 during your time --

14 A. Yes. Uh-huh.

15 Q. -- working. I mentioned this to you already, the place
16 being like a prison. In paragraph 17, if we look at
17 325, please, that's not the place that you remember from
18 your time working in Derry. You make mention, for
19 instance, of in the evenings the music --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- the recreation, the atmosphere.

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. That's how you remember your time spent there.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. You explain in paragraph -- or it is explained in case

1 this isn't you -- it may be SR49 that I have picked this
2 up from -- at 279 the laundry being replaced in
3 1967/'68. Do you remember those changes taking place,
4 albeit you didn't work in the laundry?

5 A. Sorry. Which changes?

6 Q. The laundry being revamped?

7 A. Oh, yes. The laundry short -- about '67/'68 there was
8 a completely new building erected.

9 Q. Yes. So although you didn't work there, you remember --

10 A. Well, it was quite obvious.

11 Q. Yes.

12 A. There was a lot of work going on and we all knew that
13 this was in the pipeline.

14 Q. So that was the modernisation, as it were --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- of the laundry, that would make it more mechanised --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- and presumably more efficient, but as a result --

19 A. Yes, and the building itself was very bright.

20 Q. Were you in the laundry, even though you didn't work
21 there?

22 A. I wasn't in it except for a few hours when I went to
23 this place which was like a small packing room, but it
24 was where callers would have come to pick up laundry
25 themselves or where the phone would have been to make

1 enquiries. Sometimes I filled in there for another
2 Sister, but I would have had occasion to go through the
3 laundry at different times maybe for -- in the mornings
4 when I was going to bring these group of girls for
5 typing and that, I would have gone to their work place
6 and they would have accompanied me to the classroom.

7 Q. Can I ask you this: from -- and I appreciate your
8 experience of it, therefore, is limited, because you
9 didn't work there and you're just passing through, as it
10 were -- was it a place where 12-year-olds, 13-year-olds,
11 14-year-olds should be working?

12 A. No, and I wouldn't have seen any of that age group in
13 it.

14 Q. Now you talk in your statement at paragraph 22 at 282,
15 please, about -- and in various other locations -- about
16 SR49 and about her bringing warmth. She was not, as
17 I mentioned, the Sister-in-Charge at the time. So what
18 was it about her that stood out, SR293, that had you
19 singling her out? Was she a young nun at the time?

20 A. Well, she was -- would have been next to me, you know.
21 When I went, she would have been the youngest sister who
22 was there.

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. She had a very open kind of personality and very easy in
25 her manner and that, and just generally would have been

1 easy to relate to.

2 Q. Is that why she just stood out for you amongst others?

3 A. Well, I think -- not necessarily, but because the
4 younger residents, the younger ladies who were there
5 would have generally related more to younger Sisters
6 than to older, I think SR49 certainly would have been
7 somebody that they related to very easily.

8 Q. Now we talked last Thursday about some of the practices.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. I am going to mention to you some of those now, SR293.
11 The use of the black book and that system of discipline,
12 of recording what someone had done --

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. -- then having an occasion, I think on a Saturday
15 morning, where that would be a meeting held and these
16 matters would be discussed and someone would kneel and
17 then they would have the matter read out and there would
18 be some punishment flowing in terms of loss of privilege
19 of some kind.

20 You explained to me that you heard of that happening

21 --

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. -- but were never involved in it yourself.

24 A. Yes. That's right.

25 Q. But in speaking with you, you weren't a fan of that type

1 of approach.

2 A. No. I wouldn't have considered it important to deal
3 with things in that way, but I didn't actually know
4 until somebody said. They didn't go into any detail
5 about it. They just simply said, "I don't want my name
6 in the black book". That was it.

7 Q. So there was no -- it wasn't something that came
8 regularly to your attention --

9 A. No.

10 Q. -- while you were in Derry.

11 A. No.

12 Q. You have had the opportunity to think about it as
13 a result of it coming up as part of the Inquiry.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. The other practice that I want to mention to you at this
16 point is the punishment of standing to eat your meal.
17 You were explaining to me when we spoke last Thursday
18 that you ate your meals in the convent --

19 A. That's right, yes.

20 Q. -- and weren't eating in the refectory or the dining
21 hall in St. Mary's.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. So you didn't see that happening.

24 A. No.

25 Q. Were you aware of that happening --

1 A. No.

2 Q. -- while you were in Derry?

3 A. No.

4 Q. You said to me if you had seen that happening --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- you would have been very upset by it.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Why would you have been upset by that?

9 A. I wouldn't have liked it as a method of discipline.

10 Q. What it was about it that you wouldn't have liked?

11 A. Just that it -- I would have questioned whether it was
12 an appropriate way of dealing with the situation and of
13 having respect for an individual.

14 Q. Is that -- don't agree with this if you don't agree with
15 it, SR293 -- is that because there is an element of,
16 like the black book, a humiliation to it where your
17 peers are seeing it -- seeing you being dealt with?

18 A. There would be that aspect of it, yes.

19 Q. I want to ask you, SR293, about the three girls that
20 have come into sharp focus before the Inquiry --

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. -- who were 12 whenever they entered the Good Shepherd.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. The Inquiry has heard from HIA107, now HIA107.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. She referred to the fact that at the same time as her
2 entered GSC16 --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- GSC16 --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- and her other friend, GSC17, was already there.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Obviously we are using the names to make sure we're
9 clear what we are talking about. As ever, they won't be
10 repeated beyond the chamber. They entered in
11 November 1960. You didn't come until 1964.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. But you were explaining to me that you don't have
14 a memory of girls going out to school while you were
15 there.

16 A. No, because there wasn't anyone other -- when I went in
17 October '64, November '64, according to the record
18 HIA107 was still resident there. I do not remember her.

19 Q. Yes, and at that point she would have been over 15 in
20 any event?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. But you can't think -- there is no other --

23 A. There was no other -- there was no other girl there at
24 that time.

25 Q. That you can remember --

1 A. No.

2 Q. -- who ever was of that age?

3 A. No.

4 Q. And no-one you can remember was going out to school --

5 A. No.

6 Q. -- in November '64?

7 A. No. Those that I knew as far as -- would have been --

8 they possibly came in around 16 or 17, and when I went

9 there, they would all have been 18, 17, 18.

10 Q. I just want to ask you can you remember -- because

11 clearly work has been done to try to put as much

12 information as can be put about this -- do you remember

13 , , -- would you

14 have remembered those names yourself as lay teachers who

15 came in in the evenings to teach?

16 A. Well, I remembered hearing some of those names, but

17 I didn't personally meet them.

18 Q. Right, and a I think was the other ...

19 CHAIRMAN: .

20 MR AIKEN: Yes, . You don't --

21 A. I remember hearing Sisters mention those names and some

22 of the girls also mentioned them.

23 Q. And GSC20 --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- if I -- I am not sure I have still pronounced that

1 correctly -- she is said to have done some teaching of
2 a kind.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Can you remember her teaching during your period?

5 A. Because during my period those who were -- I would have
6 been responsible for the classes, the shorthand and
7 typing.

8 Q. So did you effectively take over from what -- if I put
9 it this way: you don't remember her teaching during your
10 period?

11 A. Not during the day. I taught the typing and English
12 during the day, and I understood that there were other
13 teachers coming in in the evenings. Now GSC20 may have
14 also -- earlier or later may have been teaching during
15 the day.

16 Q. Do you remember Sister of the SR 287 --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- or Sister SR 287 ?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Do you remember her teaching during your period?

21 A. She would have had some input, but I can't remember what
22 she was doing.

23 Q. You don't. Right. Now you mentioned to me when we
24 spoke last Thursday -- was GSC16 still there in
25 St. Mary's when you arrived?

1 A. No.

2 Q. No, but you know her well --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- because you explained to me that she later came back

5 --

6 A. That's right.

7 Q. -- as an older person.

8 A. She was at least 18 when she came back.

9 Q. So it appears -- and maybe we will need to do a little

10 bit more work on this to be clear of the dates --

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. -- it appears she came in at 12, left at some point --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- thereafter, but came back.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. When I say "left at some point thereafter", some point

17 before November 1964, when you arrive, and then at some

18 later date while you are still in Derry --

19 A. Yes. Uh-huh.

20 Q. -- she comes back.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. If she's 18, that may be in and around 1968/'69,

23 something like that.

24 A. That would be about right. Uh-huh.

25 Q. You leave Derry in 1970.

1 A. '70, yes.

2 Q. But if I understood what you were explaining to me, even
3 though you never went back to work in Derry again --

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. -- you continued to have contact with her.

6 A. That's -- yes. She was friendly with another Sister who
7 was there, and when that Sister died, she made contact
8 with me and asked me to keep contact with her.

9 Q. I think from listening to HIA107 she was **SR 312** pet and
10 GSC16 was said to be GSC18's pet.

11 A. That's right, yes.

12 Q. Is that the Sister she was very close to?

13 A. Yes, yes.

14 Q. So she went back. Can you remember had GSC16 left again
15 before you left Derry?

16 A. Yes, yes.

17 Q. So she'd come back for a short period.

18 A. She'd come back for maybe twelve months or ...

19 Q. And --

20 A. She didn't go back home. As far as I know she went to
21 live with a sister.

22 Q. You explained to me that you are still friendly with her
23 today --

24 A. Yes. Uh-huh.

25 Q. -- and that in speaking to her, she says she didn't go

1 out to school.

2 A. She said she didn't go to school, but she didn't say she
3 didn't have classes.

4 Q. No. That's -- they're two different -- what I am trying
5 to be clear about --

6 A. Yes, yes.

7 Q. -- is that she was telling you she didn't go out to
8 a local school --

9 A. That's right, yes.

10 Q. -- but it may be a different matter --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- about whether she was at classes --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- within St. Mary's.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. SR293, you will be pleased to know I am not going to ask
17 you any more questions. If you just bear with me for
18 a short time --

19 A. Right. Uh-huh.

20 Q. -- the Panel Members may want to ask you something. So
21 just bear with me, please.

22 Questions from THE PANEL

23 CHAIRMAN: SR293, can I just establish something about
24 terminology? In your written statement you generally
25 refer to "ladies", presumably being women who are over

1 --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- whatever the age is --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- and "girls". When you were you there, were all the
6 women indiscriminately referred to as "girls"; in other
7 words, if you were talking amongst yourselves, the
8 Sisters, would you say, "Oh, the girls went to Donegal
9 this weekend", or whatever, meaning the older ladies?

10 A. I just don't remember.

11 Q. Yes, because we had been directed to some entries in
12 records kept by the Order where it is not very clear to
13 make out which category it is they are talking about,
14 but in general terms when you were in Derry, if we could
15 take people under the age of 18, were they a large or
16 small proportion of the total number of women in there,
17 leaving out of account the Sisters, of course?

18 A. When I was in Derry, those who would have been from,
19 say, 16 to 20, there wouldn't have been more than six or
20 seven. Later on, around about '68, there were a few
21 girls, children, of possibly 15 or that came in, and
22 that was at the beginning of the time where the teenage
23 centre was beginning. They were -- they were going out
24 to school, any of those who were of an age.

25 Q. When you say "of an age", might there have been some

1 under school leaving age who came in at that time?

2 A. In my time?

3 Q. Yes, about '68, or were they perhaps 15-year-olds who
4 could still go on to the tech or something like that?

5 A. I -- those who were there when I went from '64 until the
6 time I left in '70 that I would have had contact with
7 would have been all of the older -- they would have been
8 --

9 Q. Over school leaving age?

10 A. -- over school leaving age. Some of those were the ones
11 we -- that I would have had for typing and English and
12 who would have also gone out to the technical school at
13 night.

14 Q. Yes. Were you ever aware in your time there of children
15 under school leaving age being in the community in any
16 capacity?

17 A. No. There were a few children came towards the end of
18 my time there, and I don't know what age they were, but
19 I know that they would have started to go out to school,
20 or if they were over school leaving age, that they would
21 have been given lessons, but they wouldn't have been --
22 to my knowledge wouldn't have been in the laundry. They
23 were in a separate unit.

24 Q. You have referred to GSC16, with whom you still keep in
25 touch.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. She was in very much younger when she came. Isn't that
3 right?

4 A. She was. She came with -- she told me that she came
5 with HIA107.

6 Q. Yes. The classes which you ran during the day in the
7 mornings --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- from what you have said it is clear they were
10 entirely voluntary. If somebody wanted to come, you
11 encouraged them to come.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. They could leave their work, could they, in the laundry
14 and come?

15 A. They did, yes.

16 Q. But it was up to them whether they wanted to take
17 advantage of it or not?

18 A. As far as possible they -- but there may have been a few
19 of them at times that just felt they really weren't --
20 preferred to stay where they were, but generally they
21 were quite willing to come, because it was a different
22 atmosphere and so forth from work.

23 Q. I see. Thank you very much.

24 MS DOHERTY: Thanks very much, Sister. Can I just check
25 about the Mother Superior? Would she be responsible for

1 the religious community or would she have had any
2 involvement in the running of the laundry and the
3 discipline of the girls?

4 A. She would be mainly responsible for the religious
5 community, but I would -- the Sister who was in charge
6 of St. Mary's would have been in -- been more or less
7 kind of talking to her probably about any things that
8 had to be changed or any concerns that she had. So
9 there would have been certain discussion.

10 Q. That would have been about that Sister bringing issues
11 to her. Would the Mother Superior walk round the -- you
12 know, been in and out of the laundry, walked round and
13 seen the girls at their work?

14 A. Well, she may have. I can't say, but if she did, it
15 would have been in a friendly kind of way and maybe
16 asking them how they were and so forth.

17 Q. And getting a wee idea herself --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- about how things were --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- running, and as Sisters did you have the opportunity
22 to sit together and say, you know, "What approach are we
23 taking to things?" Was there ever any opportunities as
24 a group to come together to discuss the kind of regime
25 that was used for the girls?

1 A. We would frequently have talked about what was
2 happening. We may not have talked specifically about
3 the actual regime at the time, but we would certainly
4 have shared concerns about individuals, someone, you
5 know, that -- if Sisters were concerned about, they
6 would have asked us to maybe pray for them and that, and
7 there would have been kind of just an awareness that we
8 were doing this together. Whether a Sister was totally
9 involved with the girls at the time or whether she was
10 simply more or less in the community setting, that we
11 were all together in this, and that we were doing our
12 best to help them.

13 Q. You all shared a commitment --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- to doing your best --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- but in a sense the bit that said, you know, "Let's
18 look at how we encourage them or let's ..." -- I mean,
19 I can see where individual -- you would be concerned
20 about individual girls --

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. -- and what was happening, but a sense of you coming
23 together to say, "Next year we might really concentrate
24 on getting some girls out to the tech or whatever",
25 would that happen? Would there be kind of like more of

1 a staff meeting?

2 A. I know that when we did start sending them out or going
3 out with them to the tech, that that was discussed as
4 a group.

5 Q. Right. So that's ... Can I just ask, Sister,
6 particularly given your admin job, do you remember any
7 inspections? Do you remember any visitors from the
8 Ministry going round and looking at ...?

9 A. I don't.

10 Q. You don't?

11 A. I don't.

12 Q. Okay. Thank you very much, Sister.

13 CHAIRMAN: Well, Sister, that is the last question we have
14 to ask you. Thank you very much --

15 A. Thank you very much.

16 Q. -- for coming to speak to us today.

17 (Witness withdrew)

18 CHAIRMAN: Yes.

19 MR AIKEN: That, Chairman, Members of the Panel, concludes
20 today's oral evidence, slightly more than we had
21 expected, but we can resume to complete the oral
22 evidence tomorrow morning.

23 CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

24 (3.00 pm)

25 (Inquiry adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning)

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I N D E X

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4 WITNESS SR295 (called)2

5 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY2

6 Questions from THE PANEL21

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8 WITNESS SR283 (called)33

9 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY33

10 Questions from THE PANEL55

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