

HIA REF:
Witness Name:

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 – 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF **SAU 27**

I, **SAU 27** will say as follows –

1. I was born on the [date] in [general address eg Limerick, Cork]. I joined the Sisters of Nazareth in [year] and was professed in [year]. *Feb 1931* *C. Clare* *Aug 1933*
2. I recall travelling to Australia with some of the children. Myself and **SR 139** sailed on board the Ormond in 1947. We were accompanying the Migrant Children to sail to Australia, the trip took about six weeks. All of our children were from the North of Ireland and we had never met the children before our sailing.
3. My memory is that a Christian Brother sent by the Bishop came to say the Government wanted 'Catholic Children' to populate Australia. We left from Southampton with about 85 children aged from 4 – 10 years. This was just after the war and we thought the children would have a good chance to make a life in Australia.
4. **SR 139** and I had never even seen the children before, so it was a daunting challenge for us to take charge of them for this long trip. To assist in the care of the children on board we had a nurse named Walsh, a priest called Father Rodgers and around 7 helpers; the helpers got passage for about £5. It was hectic on board trying to keep the children occupied, but we did our best.
5. We tried giving them school for a few hours a day, but the rest of the time, we organised games and other entertainment. We tried to ensure that the children did not annoy the passengers. The passengers were very helpful and friendly and I do not recall any incidents on the boat. They were very friendly towards the children.
6. The sailors were very good to the children, as were the other passengers. I do not recall any child being particularly sick or ill during the journey – maybe the odd bout of sea sickness if we hit a rough patch.
7. We disembarked at Fremantle. The Superior from Nazareth House, Geraldton came to meet us and took the girls back with her to Geraldton, Western Australia. The boys went with the Christian Brothers to Tarten which is North of Geraldton. I believe this was badly organised.
8. Once all the children had gone to their appointed places, **SR 139** and I boarded the ship and sailed to Melbourne.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed **SAU 27**

02/09/14