

HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE INQUIRY

Statement of **DL 445**

I, **DL 445**, formerly **DL 445**

1. I was born on the [REDACTED] in Belfast.
2. I was abandoned by my mother and admitted to Nazareth Lodge, Belfast on the [REDACTED] I was raised by the Sisters of Nazareth.
3. I considered Nazareth Lodge as 'my home'. I enjoyed my time there. [REDACTED] was particularly good to me and arranged for me to be fostered by the [REDACTED] family. I stayed visit the [REDACTED] during the Christmas, Easter & Summer holidays. At one stage I stayed with them for about a full year with a view to adoption. Although I returned to Nazareth I maintained contact with this family and went to live with them after I left Rubane House, Kircubbin.

4.

[REDACTED]

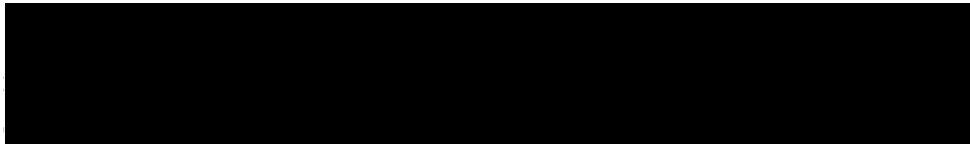
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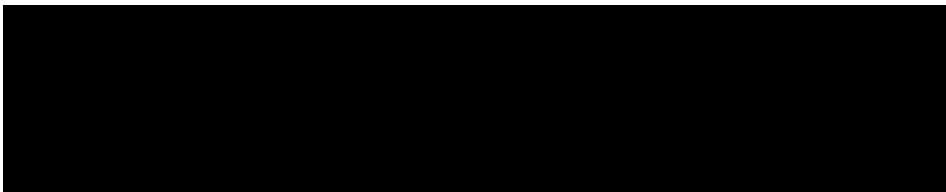
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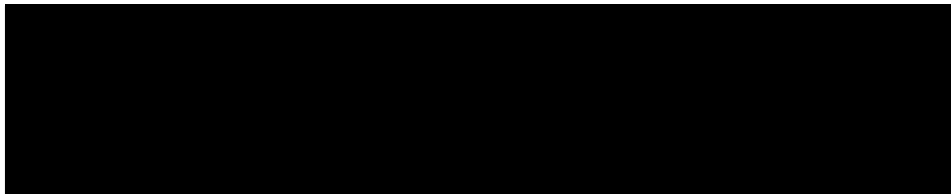
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8.



9.



10. I cried the day I left Nazareth, I did consider it my home. Rubane boys had come to Nazareth visiting siblings and had told stories that it was a lot tougher than Nazareth. Aged [REDACTED] I was leaving the place I considered home and I was apprehensive.

11. I moved to Rubane with a number of fellow Nazareth Lodge residents on the [REDACTED] This Nazareth group was separated into different dorms within the main home. We were mixed with the boys who were already resident there.

12. Within a short space of time I was subject to sexual interference from the older boys. This abuse did not take place in the dorms but rather in the outbuildings, the pool room and TV room. It is hard to describe but I was just aware of something that I had not been exposed to before; boys were touching you and

being overtly friendly. I, like the rest of the Nazareth boys had led a very sheltered life and had received no sexual instruction or guidance. I had absolutely no sexual awareness. People started talking about it and you began to learn what was going on. You did your best to avoid those boys who would try and interfere with you but at the same time you wanted to be liked.

13. Generally, it was the older boys interfering with the younger ones. As I grew older the abuse diminished, but even right to the end some of the older or stronger boys within your own group would still approach you.
14. There was definitely an underlying innuendo about sex. It was a sexualised environment.
15. I was conscious that the sheltered and protected life we had in Nazareth was no preparation for mixing with the streetwise boys who arrived in Rubane on Court orders. I recall teaching one resident how to be an altar boy. Later, in one of the fields who told me that he wanted to thank me and said he would show me something that his sister had taught him. He went on to explain his 'present' and it was obvious to me that he had clearly been exposed to sexual activity before he arrived in Rubane. On reflection, this was the biggest problem:- streetwise, sexualised boys being placed into care with vulnerable sheltered children.
16. I can categorically say that I never heard any credible story about a De La Salle Brother abusing a boy in a sexual manner. There was innuendo ok, typical teenage gossip about pets etc and what was going on between boys and certain Brothers but I saw it as nothing other than that - rumour and gossip.
17. I met a number of De La Salle Brothers;
 - (i) **BR 27** - he was responsible for getting me [REDACTED] He recognised I had a talent for music and introduced me to [REDACTED] and later the [REDACTED] He was responsible for bringing [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Both I, and another guy, [REDACTED] whom he also involved

in the music later [REDACTED] He was a good lad and I liked him.

(ii) **BR 73** - I really liked him. He got me into [REDACTED] but he did not stay long.

(iii) **BR 6** - he was like a father figure. Ok, he did cane me on occasion for misbehaving but I distinctly recall shaking hands with him on each occasion; there were 'no hard feelings'. Indeed, I was more upset when he shouted at me, like a child who had upset their father. I preferred to get caned than by shouted at. I can't recall what exactly I got caned for - probably for fighting but on one occasion I believe it was for breaking into the filing cabinet, seeking information from my file. He always caned me on the hand - 2-3 strokes - no more. I'm conscious of allegations having been made against **BR 6** I just don't believe that he was an abuser. I would say he was a 'touchy' sort of person but it was in a fatherly sort of way. He would have said things like having nice hair or nice eyes but I wouldn't have taken the comments whether about me or other boys than to be anything other than complimentary - like a father.

(iv) **BR 13** I was his [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] Other boys would have seen me as one of his pets and insinuated that something was going on, the sexual innuendo point, but nothing went on and at no stage did I feel uncomfortable. He was interested in [REDACTED] He developed my own interest in [REDACTED] He used to communicate with a family in [REDACTED] and two years in a row one of their boys would come over to learn English. This stimulated my interest in [REDACTED] Although, he had no teaching roll in the school he tried to teach me [REDACTED] and we listened to [REDACTED] together. I remember being fascinated with him going to visit this family [REDACTED] I suppose, given my sheltered life - this adventure to the outside world was memorising. **BR 13** dispensed the money, the pocket money and petty cash. I remember having a camera and recall asking **BR 13** to get me money so I could develop the film and he did.

- (v) **BR 12** - he as [REDACTED] I liked him as a character and had total respect for him. Generally we had little contact with him other than if you were working on [REDACTED] He was a straight sort of man, if you gave respect then you got respect.
- (vi) **BR 15** - I think he was the first Brother I met on arrival. He had no teaching role, and was a bit of a handyman. He did a lot for the kids. I wouldn't have seen any harm in him. I was an inventive child with an interest in mechanics/electronics. I remember on one occasion [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] **BR 15** found out. We should have been in big trouble but he knew we were inquisitive, said nothing, and gave us stuff to make things with. I'd say he had a bit of a drink problem. I understand that allegations of sexual abuse have been made against him. I find that very difficult to believe. I was in the main house for a few months after I arrived before being moved, by **BR 15** down to the old school house. At no stage did I see or hear anything about him which gave me cause for concern.
- (vii) **BR 3** - he was my teacher. I recall being fascinated and intrigued by his accounts of life in [REDACTED] I do recall him talking to us about behaviour among the boys - sexual behaviour and to watch out of this/that. I have a distinct recollection of him making a comment about a certain boy having a nice shape/bum but it was more of an athletic than sexual comment. I also recall that a couple of the residents would have visited his room. There was innuendo about what was going on. There was talk of pets but I never heard or suspected anything untoward. He was not overly physical, preferred to talk. In fact I can't remember him ever using the cane.
- (viii) **BR 65** - he was only there a short time. He got me French books. I remember boys visiting his room - **HIA 152** I remember being annoyed because I liked to spend time with **HIA 152**

(ix) **BR 2** - he was an inoffensive man, rather quiet. He just did his job. He was big into the sports which I was not particularly good at on account of [REDACTED]. I did feel that at one point **BR 2** may have seen a guy called [REDACTED] try to interfere with me, and I thought he could have intervened but perhaps he didn't see it or appreciate what was happening.

(x) **BR 44** - I didn't like him. He was very alert to the sexual activities among the boys. He was always asking questions. It was almost like an obsession. On one occasion he tried to get me to spy on the other boys - to check if they had pornographic magazines. We all celebrated when he left.

18. Before I left the home I was transferred into one of the Chalets. The ^{DL 134 & DL 135} [REDACTED] were my houseparents. **DL 134** would have asked sexual questions, wet dreams etc but I didn't feel it was offensive. I saw it as sexual education. I was in a single room, a charge boy or head boy. I would say I was about [REDACTED]. I got on ok with them. I would say they were very inexperienced and totally out of their depth in terms of caring for the boys.

19. I remember **DL 6**. He was a really decent person. I was in his company alone, on a number of occasions involved with [REDACTED]. There was nothing untoward about him.

20. I remember **DL 477** and **DL 140**. I served the altar for both. **DL 477** would have set you on his knee ok but I didn't see it, nor do I see it, as abuse.

21. I remember the nuns coming to Rubane. We called them the [REDACTED]. There was a certain amount of flirtation and boys chat among the older boys. I suppose you could say it was sexual energy or something like that but nothing more than you would expect between [REDACTED] old something females and adolescent boys.

22. I have read about **BR 1** and the abuse he is alleged to have perpetrated. In the years I was there, from until I have no recollection of a **BR 1** either coming to visit the home or of the boys talking about him. It is just not a name I would associate with my time in Rubane.
23. There were 4/5 boys, included, who were very streetwise and sexually aware. They tried to entice you in - essentially seduce you. They would then seduce others by telling them that they had 'done it with you'.
24. There were other boys who were sexually disturbed; **HIA 147** who went through Nazareth with me, stood on one occasion in the middle of the dorm and masturbated himself.
25. While I have no real criticism of the individual Brothers I was glad to get out of Rubane. In my view it was badly managed, under staffed and under resourced.
26. The biggest problem was the mixture of the two types of children - those from the sheltered background of the orphanage with those from the streets of Belfast.
27. I was never physically or sexually abused by a De La Salle Brother.
28. The only adult who tried to abuse me in Rubane was the electrician who came into the home. On one occasion as we worked in the Chapel he grabbed and fondled me but that was the only time an adult sexually assaulted me in the home.
29. In terms of physical abuse, you could get a 'cuff' ok but it was not an overly robust regime. None of the Brothers ever raised their hand to me. I have a distinct memory of **BR 6** using the cane but he always removed the boy from the classroom - to the corridor before administering the punishment. A

paradox it may seem – but **BR 6** was a gentleman about caning. I never witnessed any boy being caned in front of the class or being made an example.

30. Mr [REDACTED] visited Rubane once or twice and I received regular phonecalls from the [REDACTED] family.
31. The first person, outside the [REDACTED] Nuns or Brothers who showed an interest in my welfare was **NL 40** whom I understand was [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
32. I had no social worker throughout my time in Rubane. I had an occasional visit from a Doctor but by and large it was the nuns and brothers who assisted with [REDACTED]. There was no assistance from welfare or ministry of health.
33. In fact, at one point I believed that my [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. My records show I was vaccinated while I was at Nazareth Lodge. I have undertaken some research and believe that [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. I'm not sure if this was Nazareth Lodge but I do recall Queens University having a close affiliation with the Lodge and I attended Christmas functions in Queens.
34. I left Rubane on the [REDACTED]. I recall that the Brothers were away on holiday. There was nobody to say goodbye, and I effectively walked out. I went back to Rubane once after I left but generally my foster parents, the [REDACTED] discouraged it. I believe they thought it was best to leave that element of my past behind me, to start afresh so to speak. I slowly lost contact with all my former ex-resident friends as well.
35. I went on to work in a number of [REDACTED] jobs after I left Rubane and can safely say that I actually felt more vulnerable to sexual assault in open society

than I did in Rubane. I'm not sure whether people viewed me as more vulnerable or not but I was subject to a number of sexual assaults and propositions, even from married family men, after I left Rubane. I was appalled. On reflection, this experience simply mirrored a societal problem and may well have explained the attitudes of some of the streetwise boys whom I meet in Rubane.

36. By 1995 I had gone through a number of employers. I had generally tried to keep my background a secret. Obviously, I revealed it various HR departments etc but it was not widely known by my working colleagues. It was with a sense of absolute shock and amazement that I discovered that the RUC had been looking for me. They had tracked me down from job to job. Indiscreet would not describe it. They asked former colleagues whether they knew I had grown up in a home, whether I had ever complained about it, whether I had ever told any stories about it, whether they had noticed anything about my behaviour etc. The invasion of privacy and breach of confidence was unbelievable. They arrived at my work. I told them I would not speak to them. They had already been to my employers head office, where my wife worked, and all the staff 'were talking'. I later met them again in my home. They asked whether I had been abused. I denied it. They told me that **HIA 56** had seen me being abused by **DL 134**. I wasn't abused by **DL 134** and I have no idea where **HIA 56** got that story from. My only complaint was one of 'mismanagement'. They prepared a statement. I signed it and have not seen it since. I told the police that I considered they were on a 'bash the Church mission'. That's how it felt to me.

37. In hindsight I believe the Brothers hadn't the necessary training to allow them to deal with the underlying sexual tension - the activity between the boys. However, I don't believe that any of them were actually involved in perpetrating sexual abuse.

38. I did not apply to the acknowledgment forum because I did not consider myself a victim or survivor as portrayed by some sections of the media and campaign groups. I am however willing to testify at the Inquiry and if it would prove useful

to meet with the Inquiry solicitor and counsel prior to the commencement of the Inquiry or any hearing into Nazareth Lodge or Rubane House.

PREPARED 10th JANUARY 2014.

RECEIVED + SIGNED 10th JULY 2014 with 7 Amendments

SIGNED :

DL 445

DATED : 10/7/2014.