

PRIVATE

HIA REF: 152

Witness Name: HIA 152

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 152

I, HIA 152 will say as follows:-

Personal details

1. I was born on [REDACTED]. I never knew my mother and father. I have an older brother called HIA 64 who is three years older than me, an older sister called NHB 12 who is a year older than me and a younger brother called HIA 19 who is two years younger than me.
2. I was placed in Nazareth Lodge at a young age. I do not know the details of how I ended up in care. I knew my two brothers as they were in the home with me. My older brother was sent to Rubane before me so I knew my younger brother better. I never really knew my sister as she was in Nazareth House and I never got to see her.

Nazareth Lodge Children's Home, Belfast (26/02/1958 – 16/08/1966)

3. I was placed in Nazareth Lodge when I was four years old. My younger brother and I were in the Our Lady's group. We did everything in our groups. Each group had their own dormitories and we ate in our groups in the dining room. SR 47 was in charge of our group and she was helped by a lay worker

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called [REDACTED] NL 4 [REDACTED]. The lay workers were evil, even worse than the nuns. I remember [REDACTED] NL 4 [REDACTED] and another lay worker would come round our dormitories at night time and if you weren't sleeping they would take you out to a big washroom where they would make you sit until you were tired and then you would go back to bed. I would pretend to sleep when they walk around the dormitory so I wouldn't be sent to the washroom. I remember one night when I had a bad cough [REDACTED] NL 5 [REDACTED] came in and slapped me across the face and made me cough into the pillow.

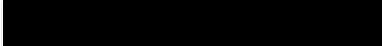
4. The main nun was [REDACTED] SR 34 [REDACTED]. She was in charge of the St. Joseph's group but she took it upon herself to be in charge of everything. She was the worst nun. She was an evil bully. I remember [REDACTED] SR 34 [REDACTED] taking us for communion practice in the chapel. We were at the altar rail. She told me I wasn't opening my mouth wide enough and she hit me so hard across the face that I landed in the aisle. I could never understand how she could do that in a chapel which was a sacred place. I was an altar boy and I knew that if I did anything wrong she would hit me. She used any excuse to beat me. If you did anything wrong, no matter how trivial, she would give you a time to be in the dining room. You were lined up and had to wait your turn to be hit. She would hit us with a strap. She also called the boys derogatory names. She called me [REDACTED]

5. I got used to the beatings but the comments that the nuns made about [REDACTED] [REDACTED] always upset me more. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] There was a man and

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woman who the nuns decided I should go out with during holiday time. They wanted to adopt me but they were not allowed. They were lovely people but I do not understand why I was sent with them 

6. I used to see my younger brother get beaten for things that weren't his fault and it would tear me apart. Sometimes it was for things that were my fault. The nuns hit him in front of me so I would have to watch which was worse than being hit myself.
7. Our daily routine was to get up early, go to mass, have breakfast, go to school, have tea, and go to benediction and then bed. Religion was a very big part of our daily routine with mass, benediction and confession. It was more important to the nuns than education which is why we were not well educated in Nazareth Lodge. I have no recollection of homework or exams. We went to school in Nazareth Lodge. It felt like we never left the building.
8. All the boys had to do chores before school every day like cleaning and tidying.
9. When I was eleven I was sent to Rubane House in Kircubbin. I was happy about getting away from the nuns but sad about leaving my younger brother behind. I had very little contact with him for about a year after that. The odd weekend my grandparents would have taken me to see him.

De La Salle Boys' Home, Rubane House, Kircubbin (15/08/1965 – 30/08/1968)

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Life After Care

22. I left Rubane when I was fifteen. I had planned with [REDACTED] that I would move in with them. I got the bus myself to Oxford Street where I had arranged to meet them. I had never had a visit from a social worker during my time in Rubane or Nazareth Lodge but out of the blue a social worker called **NL 40** came to the bus station and insisted I went with him. [REDACTED] were left standing there. I often wondered why social services were never involved with me in care and suddenly showed up when I was leaving. I was taken to a lodging house on [REDACTED] and I was told I was going to live there. I hated that lodging house. My older brother was there with another boy from Rubane. The other boy tried to abuse me in the same way as the older boys did in Rubane. I went to [REDACTED] every opportunity I got. [REDACTED] had organised a job for me in the mill. My wages were not enough to pay my lodgings so the welfare covered the rest. I gave them my wages every week until I was eighteen. I saw [REDACTED] for a short time after I got out of Rubane [REDACTED]

23. It was difficult to settle in to life outside an institution and despite hating Brothers and nuns for so long I actually went back [REDACTED]

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went from job to job doing manual work and then I returned to Belfast. I have now lost my faith.

24. I live on my own. I keep in touch with my brothers. My sister died about ten years ago. I have never told anyone about my childhood or background. My friends all think I've just had a normal life.

25. I reported the abuse I suffered to the Police in 2012.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

HIA 152

Dated

9.30.14
D4

82. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] - [REDACTED]

83. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] HIA 152 [REDACTED] HIA 152

89. I remember [REDACTED] HIA 152 and his brother [REDACTED] HIA 19 even though they were not in my group.

File 121
PERSON INTERVIEWED:

NL 4

Recording Number and
Recording Times:

Was there ever anybody else that worked in the laundry?

A I'm not sure, I remember NL 178 coming because NL 178 used to work up in the Good Shepherds and then she came down to work in, but she was there for a good few years.

Q OK so you don't remember any such incident?

A Not, not at all honestly.

Q He then alleges that you told him that the next time he wet the bed that you would do that again, only turn on the machine.

A Don't know, honestly.

Q NL 4 if you just speak up for the tape for me.

A I just can't understand how they would, honest to God it's not true.

Q

Q No.

Q OK. Halfway there, there's only another 3. What would you like to do, would you like to continue on NL 4 or would you...?

A No I'm fine, are you all right?

Solicitor

- Oh I'm, no it's yourself NL 4.

Q OK, the next one is a HIA 152 OK, who was the brother of

HIA 19 OK. Do you remember him?

A I don't remember him.

Q Did you work with SR 47?

A I did for a while yes.

Q And did you help oversee Our Lady's group?

A That was SR 47 group, yes.

Q Now would you have patrolled the dorms at night? Apart from going to

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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89. I remember HIA 152 and his brother HIA 19 even though they were not in my group.

RESTRICTED (when complete)

Continuation of Statement of: HIA 152

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lay woman from St Josephs group, NL 5 was patrolling our dorm and I coughed. She came straight over to me and put a pillow over my face, after she slapped me hard across the face, she held the pillow there telling me to cough into it. I think I must have been about 8 years old at the time. It's hard to describe every physical assault I sustained at the hands of the nuns or lay women as this sort of thing happened on a regular daily basis, but I distinctly remember one particular incident when SR 34 took us for a practice run for our communion the following day. I remember kneeling at the altar rails and SR 34 came to me and told me to open my mouth to receive the bread. She told me my mouth wasn't open wide enough and with that she slapped me so hard across the face that I was thrown back into the aisle. I remember being so embarrassed that I wet myself, either through the shock or the pain, or both. I remember there were other times when SR 34 would beat me with straps, keys, canes or she would grab me by the ears and swing me around. These incidents always followed something trivial and I could never understand the reasons for being beaten. I think what effected me more during my time in Nazareth Lodge was the emotional abuse. I was always made to feel worthless, unloved, a burden, and even when my grandparents visited the sisters would belittle them and call them names to the point where I became embarrassed and ashamed when they visited. My grandparents were old and poor, my grandfather was blind yet they never failed to visit. If my grandparents ever brought me anything for example lemonade, apples or oranges the nuns or older boys would have taken it off me. The abuse never stopped, I think it was something I accepted was the norm. When I look back on my time in Nazareth Lodge I see it as a time where I was emotionally and physically abused, I was brought up to feel unloved, uncared for, never nurtured, worthless. Yet although times were bad in Nazareth Lodge, things got worse when I was moved to Rubane House at the age of 11.

Certified a true copy of an original signed document

Signature of witness:	HIA 152
Signature witnessed by: (Appropriate Adult)	

Name: Sister Brenda McCall

Date: 3 December 2014

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

Witness Statement of Sister Brenda McCall

I, Sister Brenda McCall, will say as follows: -

1. I have read through the statement of **NL 152** and can confirm he was a resident within Nazareth Lodge. **NL 152** born [REDACTED] was admitted to Nazareth Lodge on 26 February 1958 and discharged on 15 August 1965.
2. With regard to paragraph 2, the Congregation can only apologise for the separation in **NL 152** family as the facilities in Nazareth Lodge catered only for boys until the early 1970's. The Congregation endeavoured to maintain sibling relationships and it was a common occurrence for the children to visit their siblings whenever possible. Boys all played together in the large play area behind Nazareth Lodge and the girls in Nazareth House would visit and also use the play areas.
3. With regard to paragraph 3, the Congregation is upset that **NL 152** felt the lay staff workers were evil. The staff of Nazareth Lodge were employed with trust in their ability to ensure the needs of the children were met and, unfortunately, this was not always upheld. The Congregation, whilst recognising the use of corporal punishment, would not accept any abuse, physical or mental, of a child by a member of staff as acceptable.
4. It is difficult to speculate on each child's period within the home without any regard for the context of the time. Physical chastisement discussed by **NL 152** is not accepted by the Congregation as a tolerable approach in dealing with children. However, corporal punishment did exist and was widely used within family homes, schools and institutions in Northern Ireland at the time **NL 152** was in our care. With regret, the Sisters believe that, on occasion, the policy of 'no physical punishment' may not have been adhered to.