

and dressed and fed and would then have brought them over to School after, At least some of them, attending Mass . I would have come into contact with the children at school on occasions when I would have attended to visit to speak with them on matters of religious education and to assist in the preparation for First Communion, Confession and Confirmation. I do not recall ever being in attendance for their First Communion or Confirmation and believe that these may in fact have taken place in the Parish Church rather than in the Church in the House. This would have been quite a sensible approach as it would have involved the children being part of the wider community in the Ormeau Road/Ravenhill area. Other than that I really had very little contact with the children. I do recall all the children making Confessions and this would have been reasonably regularly as would have been the practice at the time. Maybe once a month, that sort of time period. My recollection is that the children would have come over in their group with the Sister who was in charge of their group. They would each have said their confession and then would have waited in the Church and then returned to the residence in their group as a unit. The Confessions which I carried out were always held in the Chapel inside Nazareth House itself.

9. [REDACTED] lived in Fitzwilliam Avenue close to the House with his mother and sister while he was a lecturer at Queens University. He celebrated Mass sometimes in Nazareth House and took the evening service of Rosary and Benediction occasionally.
10. I remember the layout of the house as follows. There were rooms to the front of the building at ground floor level and that is where I had my breakfast. On the Ravenhill side at Groundfloor level was the residence for the elderly men. On the Ormeau Road side there was a long corridor on the first floor and a room which had some of the youngest children in it. Along the corridor was a stairway which led to the area where the elderly ladies lived on the first floor. At the end of the corridor a stairway led up to the chapel on the first floor and at the end of the corridor at ground floor level were the classrooms. Beyond these rooms were the dining room and residence for the girls but I never visited these. There was also a hall where occasional entertainments were held.
11. I have been asked to respond to an allegation brought by a former resident,

PRIVATE

HIA REF: 250

Witness Name: **HIA 250****THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995**

WITNESS STATEMENT OF **HIA 250**

I, **HIA 250** will say as follows:-**Personal details**

1. I was born on [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] My maiden name is **HIA 250** I was a child that had been kept a secret because I was born outside marriage.

Nazareth House, Belfast, 30th May 1955 – 16th September 1972

2. I think I came from Nazareth House, Portadown to Nazareth House, Belfast when I was five years of age, although the records would suggest I was received into Nazareth House when I was aged two years. I believe I was put into care by my grandparents.
3. I remember going into this big room, the nursery in Nazareth House. I don't remember anything bad about the nursery.
4. After the nursery, I went into what was known as the children's part. In the garden there was a small wall with railings in between the nursery and the children's part, to stop the younger children from getting out or getting lost. There were four and five year olds on one side, and the seniors on the other

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side. I felt there would have been more freedom in the children's part. The front part of the convent was reserved for the nuns. There was a beautiful garden with flowers at the front of it. Children were only allowed in there on certain occasions but we weren't totally isolated from it. In the earlier days, around the 1960's, we would only have been allowed into the nuns' garden during the month of May to say prayers, but that all changed and the gardens were more open to both the old people as well as the children. Beside the nun's garden was the nursery garden and then the children's garden, which had swings and climbers. These were used constantly. The garden was used for skipping, netball and many other activities.

5. There were three groups, St Anne's, Sacred Heart and Our Lady's. In the early days, we were all dressed in the same clothes, a tweed skirt and a jumper. The nuns must have got one roll of material for each group, and made skirts with a matching jumper for each child. Our Lady's wore blue uniforms, Sacred Heart wore red, and St Anne's wore green. It was an easy way of identifying which group each child belonged to. This form of dress changed over the years.
6. I was in St Anne's group. There were thirty children in our group. I don't remember being a number at all. We each had our own hand-made cloth toiletry bag, with our names written on them in marker pen. I still have my toiletry bag. We kept our toothbrush and our gibbs toothpaste in it, which were renewed when necessary. In the 1970's the house mother of St Anne's was a lady named **NL 143** who then became **NL 143**. Our whole group were taken to her wedding. She passed away a year ago.
7. Our life in the convent was basic, which you would expect. We were fed and given a roof over our heads. Our basic needs were met, but there was no emotional side to it, there couldn't be. Who were we to get that off? In my view that was just a product of society in the fifties – who did care? My family did not. To me, it was worse on the outside than it was on the inside. Every child had a different background, circumstances, genetics. Some people who came

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finished it, I handed it in to her in her cell which was in our dormitory. She told me to kneel on the floor as punishment. I saw the light going out in Sister SR 134 cell so after a while I sneaked into bed. Not long after that, my bed clothes were pulled back and I was made to get out and kneel out in the middle aisle again. I was only allowed in bed for a short time before it was time to get up again. On another occasion I was made to take all my bedclothes out onto the fire escape and sleep there all night. I was being punished for something but I can't remember what. When we were children, we just thought that all children were treated the same way as us.

20. There were big walls all around Nazareth House, and there were bits of broken glass embedded into the top of the walls, as well as barbed wire. I'm not sure if the walls were like that to keep people out or keep us in.

21. I left Nazareth House when I was about seventeen years because I couldn't stick it. I tried to live with my mother but I couldn't. Although she had visited me in Nazareth House over the years, I never really knew her. One night she came in and kissed me and I slapped her and told her not to kiss me again. I couldn't understand her kissing me because I wasn't used to anybody showing me affection.

22. I wasn't out for long before I was back in Nazareth House again. I think the doctors had me put back in because I wasn't well again. This time I was sent to look after the older ladies, instead of working in the laundry. The jobs were easier in the old people's home. I didn't get paid for these jobs as I was getting my board and keep in Nazareth House. I was seventeen at the time. This time I wasn't only having headaches, but I had terribly sore legs as well. I was having serious problems with my balance. I lost my hearing again but it came back. I had to have another operation, and this time I had to learn to walk again. I was paralysed down one side. I was moved to [REDACTED] at the [REDACTED] for rehabilitation and I spent six months there learning to walk. When I came out of the hospital I went back to Nazareth House, where I stayed until I was approximately twenty three years of age. I wasn't well for a long time.

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Nazareth House Belfast (18th July 1960 – 19th December 1965)

6. The day we were brought into Nazareth House, we were taken into a big room while my mother talked to [SR 176], the Mother Superior. Then my mother said goodbye to us and we all started crying. We were taken to the sewing room by [SR 122] and changed out of our clothes into old clothes. We were brought to the canteen and given our supper and then just put to bed. We were just thrown in, we weren't introduced to anyone.
7. My sisters and I were kept in the same group – Our Lady's. [SR 31] was in charge of our group. There were three groups – Our Lady's, Sacred Heart and St. Anne's. We all wore different colours to Mass on Sunday. Our Lady's were blue, Sacred Heart was red and St. Anne's was green. I didn't know I had a younger sister in the home until one day [SR 31] asked us if we wanted to see our sister. I looked at her and asked what she meant and she said 'you know you have a sister in the baby section'. They brought her down to the railings then which separated the baby section from the children's part. We didn't have much contact with [NHB 69] after this as the two sections were completely separate.
8. A normal day in Nazareth House began with the nuns clapping to wake us up. If it was our group's turn to go to Mass, we would get up at 5am. We washed and dressed then after Mass we went down to get our breakfast. We got porridge or dipping bread. The food was terrible but you had to eat it. I hated the bread pudding, it made me sick but [SR 134] would stand over me and make me eat it even while I was retching. We wore pinafores to school which the nuns made themselves and we weren't allowed have our sleeves down. If you were caught with your sleeves down, you got a knuckle on your head from [SR 116]
9. We were punished for every little thing in the home. You would be brought into the sewing room and slapped with a bamboo cane on the knuckles. If you pulled your hand away, you would get an extra slap. [SR 134] used to beat me with a wooden walking stick like a shillelagh. She used to hide it under her clothes if she saw anybody coming, like the priest. [SR 116] had the

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Nazareth House, Belfast (21/10/1952 – 10/01/1967)

3. When I was two I was transferred to the nursery in Nazareth House and then I was transferred to the children's department when I was five.
4. I remember there were two dormitories; the senior dormitory and the junior dormitory. Shortly after I arrived the two dormitories were divided into three groups which were called Our Lady's, Saint Anne's and Sacred Hearts. There were about 30 children in each group ranging in age from 5 to 16. There was a nun in charge of each group and she slept in a cell at the end of the dormitory. I was in the Sacred Heart group and **SR 134** was in charge of my group.
5. We were all dressed in similar clothes. We all had to wear pinafores. We were given shoes to wear and if they did not fit we had to squeeze our feet in to them. The older girls were in charge of handing out the shoes and you were too afraid to say that they did not fit.
6. We went to Mass first thing most mornings and went to benediction in the evening. I tried to avoid sitting in front **SR 134** in chapel because if she thought you were doing anything wrong she would reach over and nip your neck or pull your hair. I was also made to pump the church organ which was hard work. Services lasted over an hour and I had to pump for the entire time. Sister **SR 134** also had a terrible habit of grabbing you by your wrists and making you hit yourself and then say "see I didn't touch you".
7. After Mass we had breakfast which consisted of porridge, bread and butter. Until I was about eleven, meals were eaten in complete silence. I do not know why. If you did not eat your dinner you were made to sit until it was finished or Sister **SR 116** would make you come up and get more. The food could have been better. We seemed to live on bread and butter and any meat was very grisly. It felt like we were always being given the butcher's scraps. I was always hungry. We had to say the Rosary before bed every night. The juniors went to bed between 6.30pm and 7pm and the seniors had to be in bed for 9pm.

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over from **SR 189** **SR 198** was very cruel even though she was supposed to be the nurse. **SR 31** was a hard nun. **SR 134** wasn't that bad to me, but could be very cruel to other girls. The only nun I remember that wasn't cruel was **SR 71**. She was a lovely, gentle woman. I believe that she may have been transferred down to Nazareth Lodge after a year of being in Nazareth House. I remember the names of other girls in the home at the same time as me – **NHB 51** **NHB 89** **NHB 89** **NHB 79** and the three Dunn sisters, **HIA 63** **HIA 61** and **HIA 62**.

5. I was in **SR 134** group. We first slept in dormitories and then after a few years, the dormitories were divided up into cubicles. We had to go to Mass every day. The Mass on Saturday was supposed to be voluntary but we didn't really have a choice. The nuns would come behind us and nip us on the back of the neck or pull our hair, if we were talking, or not kneeling right. Religion was drilled into us. I was on my knees all the time.
6. We were bathed on Tuesdays and Saturdays. We were bathed in Jeyes fluid. After the bath we were then sent to two tubs, one of which was for washing our hair and the other for rinsing it. There was Jeyes fluid again in one of the tubs, and it would have stung our eyes.
7. The food wasn't up to much. We used to get porridge in the morning. One morning it would be really thick and the next morning it would be really thin. It was always really salty. We were given fish on a Friday for tea, and the head wasn't removed so we had to cut the head and tail off ourselves. It was full of bones. We hardly saw any meat in Nazareth House. I hated the stew because of the bits of fat in it, and I still hate to have fat on my plate. The nuns didn't care. They threw everything at us. If we didn't eat the meal, the nuns would leave it on the table for the next meal.
8. Sometimes I got the blame, and got punished, for things I didn't do. I recall one occasion when **SR 116** had something stolen from her. We were all sent out to search for this item, and because I was the one to find it, she

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to do things and they didn't like that at all. There were many times I heard **SR 153** crying and the other nuns shouting at her. She was ostracised because she didn't fit in with the regime. She would always come back in and say everything was fine.

28. We older girls had an agreement with **SR 153** that if we did all our chores we could go to the church disco in the hall next door. Three of us used to go – **NHB 22** and myself. There weren't even any boys at the disco, only girls and it was on from 7 to 9pm. All of a sudden **SR 153** got another assignment and left the home. Initially she went to Nazareth Lodge but **SR 31** was there too so one of them had to go and **SR 153** was sent to Hammersmith. She had been there about two years from when I was thirteen to fifteen.

29. There were a lot of changes taking place in the home when I was about fourteen or fifteen. They got rid of the big dormitories and replaced them with smaller bedrooms with about three girls to a room. The skinny mattresses were replaced with proper mattresses. All of a sudden we had minty toothpaste instead of Gibbs block and scented soap instead of carbolic soap. They also got voluntary staff in to help look after the children in the early 1970's.

30. After **SR 153** left she was replaced by a nun who came from Derry called **SR 18**. Although she was young, she had the same kind of disciplinary attitudes as the older nuns. She wanted to make all these negative changes and there was a lot of resistance from the older girls. We told her about our agreement with **SR 153** about the disco and she actually seemed to take it on board. She said we could go but there were a lot of conditions attached. We had to scrub the tiles in the bathroom with a toothbrush. We did everything we said we would and then at 5pm on the day of the disco **SR 18** said she was cancelling it because she had a headache and wanted an early night. Looking back now I know **SR 18** never had any intention of letting us go; she played us. She was

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in to the Convent still had families, and they came in with siblings, and their experiences were different from mine. I was an orphan, totally on my own.

8. When I was very young, it was tough. We slept in huge dormitories, on wrought iron beds and thin mattresses. It was simply a product of the time. There wasn't a lot of money, and the thin mattresses we had would have been standard everywhere. As a young child, moving from the small nursery to a large dormitory, with all those children, would have been traumatic. As time passed, the dormitories were split into three different groups. We had our own bed, a lovely comfortable bed, with our own wardrobe, cupboard and chest of drawers. This would have been around 1970. There was a living room for each dormitory as well, and we had a record player. The children who lived in Nazareth House before me, in the 1950's, would have had it much harder, but as we moved along, times changed and systems changed.
9. Because I was one of the older girls, I had a lot of responsibility. After we got up, I had to get the breakfast. I would roll the trolley up to the kitchen to get thirty pieces of bacon and thirty sausages, or whatever was on that day. In the earlier days, around 1960, we all ate in one huge dining room, and then over a space of time, the dining rooms were divided up, so each group had their own. It was a great transformation. I would have been about ten or eleven years at the time. The food was okay. We didn't have a choice in what we ate, after all it was not a hotel. We ate what was put on the table, and if we didn't eat it, we didn't get anything else. Once the dining rooms were divided, things were better and the food seemed to change. I remember us getting a lot of food from Marks & Spencer's, marzipan cakes, huge bags of crisps and meat.
10. After breakfast, we went to school, which was on site. I was taught by Mrs [REDACTED] Children from outside the home came into the school as well. We called them the highfalutin people. This is the language that was used. Their parents were doctors, whereas we were paupers. We got dinner in school, and then we got a meal when we came back. I recall on Sunday mornings I went to the massive kitchen, where I would have to make toast and a huge pot of scrambled eggs, enough to do thirty children.

Name: SR 18
Date: [UNDATED]

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

Witness Statement of SR 18

I, SR 18 will say as follows: -

1. I transferred from Nazareth House, Bishop Street, Derry to Nazareth House, Ormeau Road, Belfast on the 7th October 1973.
2. At that time there were three independent family groups in the home, each supervised by a Sister. Each group consisted of eight to ten children, made up mainly of two to three sibling groups. The units had just been refurbished. The layout of each was very homely, easy to manage and tastefully decorated. It consisted of four bedrooms, each with two /three beds, a lounge, dining room with adjoining kitchenette, a study room, two bathrooms/toilets, a laundry room and a bedroom for each Sister. The age range in my group was between nine and sixteen years. The senior Sister was responsible for all the groups. She attended to all admissions and discharges.
3. During school terms, from Monday to Friday the daily routine was as follows - rising at 7.30am for the older children who had to walk to the secondary schools and 8.00am for the younger children who attended the primary school on the grounds of Nazareth House. Children with learning difficulties were collected by special transport at agreed times. All of these times are approximate.
4. After washing and dressing the children ate breakfast and went off to their respective schools. All the children ate dinner in school.
5. The children arrived home from school between 3.30 and 4.00p.m. After a light snack they changed out of their uniforms, started homework watched television or listened to music.

6. The evening meal was served about 5.30p.m. The children helped both in preparing for the meal, by setting the tables etc, and after by washing and drying the dishes and leaving the dining room tidy. The evenings were spent completing homework, attending local clubs, eg girl guides, Irish dancing, ballet dancing, going to the shops and watching television, listening to music or playing games.
7. Bed times were staggered according to age. All the children ate a snack before going to bed. The younger children were bathed as and when necessary, while the older children were free to bath at any time. If a child wet his/her bed the child was bathed and the wet sheets put by the washing machine to be laundered by the staff.
8. The children on the whole were very well behaved. If they misbehaved they were usually disciplined by withdrawal of some privileges.
9. Weekends and holidays were less structured. The children were not called in the mornings. They were expected to get up in their own time, eat breakfast and tidy their rooms before dinner. The afternoons were generally spent either shopping in the local area or in the city, going for walks to the local parks, swimming, or in the minibus visiting seaside resorts and parks in Co Antrim and Co Down. Christmas was always a busy and happy time with numerous parties, pantomimes and concerts organised by local clubs.
10. At this time families and friends of the children visited but not on a regular or frequent basis. Some children went out for weekends, school and summer holidays with families. These families usually were friends or benefactors of the Sisters.
11. About 1975 the number of children in the home greatly declined so it was arranged that one group would close and the children move to another group. Another Sister joined the third group which meant there were two groups each supervised by two Sisters. The number of children in the home was then reduced to sixteen/eighteen. Also about this time boys were admitted to the home.
12. Before I left in 1977 when only two families had social workers, who visited on a regular basis.

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in to the Convent still had families, and they came in with siblings, and their experiences were different from mine. I was an orphan, totally on my own.

8. When I was very young, it was tough. We slept in huge dormitories, on wrought iron beds and thin mattresses. It was simply a product of the time. There wasn't a lot of money, and the thin mattresses we had would have been standard everywhere. As a young child, moving from the small nursery to a large dormitory, with all those children, would have been traumatic. As time passed, the dormitories were split into three different groups. We had our own bed, a lovely comfortable bed, with our own wardrobe, cupboard and chest of drawers. This would have been around 1970. There was a living room for each dormitory as well, and we had a record player. The children who lived in Nazareth House before me, in the 1950's, would have had it much harder, but as we moved along, times changed and systems changed.
9. Because I was one of the older girls, I had a lot of responsibility. After we got up, I had to get the breakfast. I would roll the trolley up to the kitchen to get thirty pieces of bacon and thirty sausages, or whatever was on that day. In the earlier days, around 1960, we all ate in one huge dining room, and then over a space of time, the dining rooms were divided up, so each group had their own. It was a great transformation. I would have been about ten or eleven years at the time. The food was okay. We didn't have a choice in what we ate, after all it was not a hotel. We ate what was put on the table, and if we didn't eat it, we didn't get anything else. Once the dining rooms were divided, things were better and the food seemed to change. I remember us getting a lot of food from Marks & Spencer's, marzipan cakes, huge bags of crisps and meat.
10. After breakfast, we went to school, which was on site. I was taught by Mrs [REDACTED] Children from outside the home came into the school as well. We called them the highfalutin people. This is the language that was used. Their parents were doctors, whereas we were paupers. We got dinner in school, and then we got a meal when we came back. I recall on Sunday mornings I went to the massive kitchen, where I would have to make toast and a huge pot of scrambled eggs, enough to do thirty children.

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wasn't scrubbing hard enough. She hit me over the head with her keys because she said I wasn't doing it right.

26. Girls would often run away from the home but the police always brought them back. I remember one occasion when **NHB 40** and **NHB 25** were brought back at 4am by the police and the nuns made them scrub a big long corridor all night. They wouldn't let them go to bed. Any girls who tried to run away would be put into the Good Shepherd when they were brought back. That was the threat the nuns held over us. The Good Shepherd was across the road from Nazareth House and we were told you never got out of there. We were also threatened with a place in Scotland where you were locked up 24/7.

27. Some of the girls would stand up to the nuns occasionally. There were two girls who had brains to burn – **SR 31** and **SR 32**. They passed their tests and were going to the big school but one day they were caught mitching. As punishment the nuns brought them into this wee storeroom off the sitting room where they used to make us kneel for hours. The girls were about 17 then and they had obviously had enough. We were outside the room and heard squealing. **SR 31** was beating **SR 32** with a stick and then **SR 31** pulled her habit off. The girls left the home soon after that.

28. When I was 16, I was moved over to the girls' dormitory from the children's section. I couldn't believe how completely different it was. You had your own bed and your own curtain to pull round so the other girls couldn't see you undress. It was great to have that privacy. We were allowed sit and watch television for longer, until 9pm. I had to leave my sisters in the children's part and I told them to watch themselves and not get into any fights or trouble. The nuns would stand and let girls fight with each other and afterwards they would give you six slaps.

29. I was only in the girls' section a few weeks when we were told it was time to go home. My parents got back together again and they got my granny's house so they came to take us all out on 19th December 1965. **SR 176** told

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would have recognised [REDACTED] This only happened once or twice and we lost touch over the years.

3. I remember being dragged along the long hall by my hair, by a nun in a white dress. She was telling me that I wasn't a baby anymore. I must have been about four at the time. She handed to me a nun who was wearing a black habit, and I remember I was holding a doll, which they took off me. I was brought into a room, like a large classroom, which was full of children and there was lots of noise. It was very intimidating. I remember I was put on a table and I had wet myself. All of the children were looking at me. I recall a nun striking a cane hard across the table to get everyone's attention. I was given the number 49. If a nun called out my number and I didn't happen to hear, I would be slapped with a ruler. We were all separated into different dormitories.
4. The nuns that I recall being in the Convent at the time were **SR 31** and **SR 134** I remember one nun with a really red round face. She always looked angry. There was another nun, **SR 59** who would give me a sweet sometimes. If she was standing talking to me, and another nun came along, she looked scared, and she would stand back from me. **SR 59** was the only nun I remember who was kind.
5. I had no idea what lay in store for me over the next few years. The nuns constantly told us that no one wanted us because we were bad, we were orphans. There was emotional abuse and humiliation. I was only a child feeling very small and helpless. I was told that I wasn't worthy to have such a beautiful name of [REDACTED] and how dare I be born on [REDACTED] the day of the Annunciation when the Angel Gabriel came down to the Blessed Virgin Mary. I always felt scared and bewildered about why they said this to us as we were only children. We called the nuns the dark shadows. We could always tell which nun was coming into the dormitory by the way they walked and the tinkle of their beads.

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questioned why you were beaten you would be hit even more. We weren't allowed to speak or to cry. I would cry out for my Mum and my sisters. The older children hit the younger ones as well. I remember being beaten by one nun with a big long belt that she wore on her habit, she left me bleeding on my bum and legs and I have scars from this on my legs to this day. If you yelled when you were hit you were hit more.

3. The clothes that I was wearing when I went into the home were put on somebody else and I remember saying 'They're mine' and being beaten for saying it. I remember I had a wee cardigan, a dress and ankle socks with frills round the top. They were given to girls who were going out of the home visiting. It was horrendous. I was given guttys to wear but one shoe was too small and the other was too big. The small one cut my foot.
4. I wet the bed and I was punished by being left to sleep in the wet because the bed wasn't dried. I would try to find the dry part of the bed and sleep across the top where the pillow is. I was also punished by having to wash the wet sheets in a tiny wee sink. Sometimes I soiled the bed and I was stripped naked by the nuns for this. You were made to sleep with your arms crossed over your chest. I sleep like this to this day.
5. I had to scrub the floors as well even though we were only about four or five years old.
6. I was often hungry and the food was not very good. I remember porridge and eggs. I often went four or five days without eating and I have struggled with food for my whole life.
7. I slept in a room with a number of other children. I remember a man coming round the beds. I could hear him coming because his breathing was heavy. I was scared of him. A wee girl in the next bed to me would shout out 'Here he comes' and she would scream, she was trying to tell me he was coming, she was scared of him too. He carried a walking stick and he used to whack our legs with this stick. I could hear the walking stick hitting the floor as he walked

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no food in the house. My mother wasn't even there at the time. We were crying – we didn't want to be taken away. Even though it might have been a good thing for us at the time because we weren't being well looked after at home, no matter what's happening to you, you don't want to be taken away from what you know.

5. I was taken to Nazareth House a week before my 8th birthday and I stayed there for nine years. My brothers were taken somewhere else – I now know it was St. Joseph's Babies Home.

Nazareth House, Belfast (13th November 1953 – 19th February 1962)

6. I went in to Nazareth House with my sisters NHB 6 and NHB 5 when I was almost eight years old.
7. The first thing that happened when you went in to the home was you were stripped off, put into a bath and changed into different clothes. Then the older girls went through your hair checking for nits. They spent a whole day delousing us.
8. My younger sister NHB 5 went into the nursery section of Nazareth House because she was only four at the time. NHB 6 and I were put into SR 134 group – Sacred Heart. I remember NHB 6 couldn't stop crying and she would get thumped by SR 134. We used to call SR 134. You got thumped by her for anything – there didn't have to be a reason. She would grab you by the ears and pull you over to a door and bang your head off the door. She used to bang our heads off the wall outside as well.
9. SR 189 used to bash your head off the wall as well. You didn't have to do anything – you might have pushed somebody over by accident. She was a rough, wicked woman and she would belt you. She had a habit of grabbing you and squeezing you tightly so you would end up with bruises. Even though SR 134 gave me more beatings, SR 189 was the worst. NHB 6 was her favourite and she used to say to me "there's more in her little finger than

PRIVATE

HIA REF: 375

Witness Name: HIA 375

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 375

I, HIA 375 will say as follows:-

Personal details

1. I was born HIA 375 on the [REDACTED] in Belfast. I had two older sisters, an older brother and a younger brother.
2. My mother had mental health problems and my father struggled to cope. I later learned that SR 207 Head Teacher of my primary school St. Vincent's, reported my family to Social Services. Our attendance was not good and we would be sent without breakfast. Eventually we were all sent into care.

Nazareth Lodge 29/01/69-07/03/69 (readmitted 04/06/69)

3. I remember the day we went into the home. I was very excited because I had been told that we were all going to a big, big house. We all got a bus from the City Hall in Belfast and arrived at a big dark building. When we went in to the building it smelled of mould, there were two big benches sitting in the hall where we were told to sit. Mummy and daddy left us on those benches and we were never told why they were going without us.

HIA 375

PRIVATE

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PRIVATE

4. On the first night in the home the elastic in my knickers broke and I remember being upset because I couldn't hold them up.
5. I remember we were given some hot milk and put into a horrible dormitory. A nun slept in the corner in a box like structure. We weren't allowed to have a pillow and they locked the door to the dormitory at night. I realised then that I was staying there but no one ever told us why we were there. This was a very frightening experience for me.
6. There was never a feeling of love from the nuns. The only feeling I ever remember was that of being petrified.
7. I was a much neglected child and this would have been obvious from my appearance. I was thrown to the sidelines by the Home. The teachers at my Primary School, St. Joseph's, should have noticed this and reported to Nazareth Lodge that I had not settled. I was small for my age, although I was aged four I might only have looked three. I was forced to eat and I remember feeling sick because I was made to eat porridge and drink hot milk. To this day I can't have either. Sometimes my sister would eat my food for me because the rule was that we had to clear our plates. She didn't want me to get into trouble so she tried to help whatever way she could.
8. I went to St Joseph's Primary School beside Nazareth Lodge. In school I was very timid and I didn't speak. I remember being put in a classroom with lots of kids and I couldn't stop crying. I cried so much that they eventually put me in a corner with a big divide so I was behind it. Nobody ever came near me because the teacher shouted at them to stay away. They never asked if I was alright. I remember the teacher shouting for me to stop but I couldn't. The only way they pacified me was to put me in the bigger class with my sister. This settled me because I felt so alone in P1 class. I still get flashbacks from time to time sitting behind the divide in the book corner.

PRIVATE

9. My sister was in Primary Five and I just sat and cuddled her all the time. She didn't learn and I didn't learn. I don't recall ever lifting a pencil. I always felt a sense of rejection be it in the home or in the school.
10. On the way to and from school we had to pass the Nursery. My wee brother was in the Nursery and I pined for him. I wanted to see him but we were never allowed to be together. I could see him playing outside and wanted to be near him. I would have done anything to get out of P1.
11. The nuns did not have any child care skills or understanding of children. They did not know how to show us love or comfort us. I found out in later years that they were being paid to care for us. I am still angry with Social Services as it was their duty to make sure our physical, emotional and educational needs were being met by the Sisters of Nazareth but they didn't do this.
12. The care worker in charge of my group in Nazareth Lodge was called **NL 155** I don't know how she ever came to work with children. I can only describe her as an animal who should never have been allowed to work with children. We were petrified of her. I don't recall playing very much in the home. We just sat and watched TV afraid to move from our chairs. I always felt frightened and to this day I am still frightened of authority.
13. **NL 155** was a very lazy woman. I recall an occasion when a fruit man came into the home. He had a big box of fruit and we all jumped up to greet him. She was ever so nice to him and when he left she made us get down and polish the floors before we would get any of the fruit. She said to us, "You are not getting any fruit until you polish that floor."
14. The routine in the home was very strict. We were like robots. We were afraid to speak and we were told where to sit and what to do. We had to make our beds and stand until they were inspected. I remember being sick all the time and nobody comforting me. I always felt nervous and anxious and as a result I soiled myself a lot. I have suffered with IBS all of my life and I believe it is as a result of the conditions in the home.

PRIVATE

15. I remember one night I woke up and needed to go to the toilet. The door to the bedroom was locked so I could not get out. I soiled myself and sat on the bed all night. I must have found some clean pants somewhere because I left my soiled pants on the bathroom floor. I remember being afraid of NL 155 in case she found out what I had done. I had nobody to turn to. Later, I was watching TV with some other children when NL 155 came in yelling my name. She said "What did I see up in them toilets? What did I see? What did you do? Did you go and poo yourself again?" She made me get up and go clean my pants. I was so small I could not even reach the sink I remember crying and feeling distressed as I could not get them cleaned. My big sister looked after me that day, she pretended she needed to go to the toilet and came in after me. She came into the bathroom and I was crying my eyes out. She washed me, my pants and gave me a hug telling me not to tell NL 155 what she had done.
16. As a result of this I stopped going to the toilet and left myself constipated. I constantly had stomach upsets. To this day I cannot use anybody else's toilet. I believe this is because of the way I was treated by NL 155 in Nazareth House. I don't remember ever seeing a doctor for my tummy problems. All I got told to do was put my head between my knees and to be quiet. We never got any comfort. I relied on my sister who was a mother figure I never wanted to be away from her she was my only contact of feeling belonged.
17. In the last six months I have been having nightmares. I wake up saying "Stop stop, get off me, leave me alone" and "Mummy! Mummy!" It is so loud that I nearly take the roof off the house. My two sons have been staying with me and have witnessed this as have some of my friends when we have been on a night away together. I am unsure what it is but the last few months have been very stressful and I feel difficult, unresolved issues may be coming to the surface.
18. The dormitories were always dark and you weren't allowed to share with anyone. I really needed to be close beside my big sister as I shared a bed at

PRIVATE

HIA REF: 43

Witness Name: HIA 43

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 43

I, HIA 43 will say as follows:-

Personal details

1. I was born on [REDACTED]
2. I am the youngest of four children. I have two older brothers HIA 128 and NL 25 and one older sister HIA 103
3. When I was three years old, my mother ran away with another man. My father tried to get her to come back which she did for a little while but then she left again. My father had to work and left us children in the house alone. A neighbour called the Welfare and we were taken into care.
4. My sister HIA 103 and I were placed in Nazareth House and my two brothers were taken to Nazareth Lodge. I can't remember who took us there.

Nazareth House, Belfast (22nd January 1960 – 18th October 1967)

5. I went into the nursery section of Nazareth House when I had just turned four. My sister HIA 103 was in the girls' section and we never got to see each other. If we saw each other in the segregated playground and tried to touch each other, the nuns would pull us apart. Looking back, this was cruel and

PRIVATE

inhumane as we only had each other in there and they should have let us comfort each other.

6. My first memory of Nazareth House was the sheer loneliness which hit you as soon as you walked in the door. We were just left in beds and cots crying. The nuns never showed any warmth or affection; they never touched you. To this day I cannot stand being touched as a result of this. Things didn't improve when I was moved over to the older girls' wing. The older girls bossed me about, pulled my hair, called me names and kicked me repeatedly. As I learned how to make them leave you alone, I would try to curry favour with the older girls by giving them sweets at Christmas.
7. The nuns I remember are [SR 31] and [SR 134] [SR 31] was in charge of the school and I was put in her class. [SR 134] was in charge of my group and she taught in the school as well. She was nicknamed [REDACTED] because of her loud, thunderous steps. [SR 31] was nicknamed [REDACTED]. Both of these nuns beat me on numerous occasions. I also remember a nun called [SR 122] but she never beat me.
8. The nuns always seemed to be away praying. They used to leave the older girls in charge of us but they could hardly look after themselves. During the winter, the older girls would lock us out on the forecourt under the nuns' orders. We were only in our short dresses and we would be crying to get back in. They wouldn't let us in and would force us back out if we tried to get inside.
9. The nuns didn't care about us children at all. They were more concerned with praying and collecting money. They were always asking for money. My older sister remembers my daddy giving her money to give to the nuns and I remember giving them a ten shilling note on numerous occasions. My daddy didn't have much money because he had a breakdown and couldn't work. He was quite fearful and intimidated by the nuns asking for money all the time. He was a countryman and the nuns took advantage of him.

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PRIVATE

3. When [REDACTED] was old enough she had to work with the elderly residents in Nazareth House and also with the deceased. When they died she had to do their hair and other chores. She would try to get down to see me and every now and again I would try and sneak into see her. One day one of the dead bodies frightened the life out of me because they burped or made some sort of noise and I ran away at once.
4. I did not get to see [REDACTED] as she was in a different section and the only time I would see her was at playtime. She would also be out playing and I could see her through the railings but there was never anything arranged.
5. [REDACTED] would sometimes sneak down into the dormitory and wake me up just to let me know she was there and thinking about me or to give me a sweet or something. One night she actually put a sweet in my mouth because when I woke up in the morning I didn't know what on earth it was. It was that kind of thing that siblings had to hide from the nuns. When I left the nursery and moved to the infants section I would ask to see my sisters but was rarely allowed. The nuns would call me "the scum of the earth" amongst other things and they talked a lot about the sins of our parents. I never knew my parents and my sisters and I never had any visitors so it was safe to abuse us as we had no-one to tell about our treatment.
6. Every morning a nun would walk up the dormitory and ring a hand bell. We had to get out of bed and kneel by our bed to say morning prayer. We then got washed and changed into our clothes and went to mass. After mass we got breakfast before starting our chores. The same routine was followed in the home every day. We would have benediction every afternoon and we had to say the Angelus every evening at 6pm. On a Friday we had to attend confessions and we would often make up stories about any sins we had in order to have something to say. We would also have to do the Stations of the Cross every Friday.
7. There were several priests that used to visit the home, I recall specifically Father Fulton and Father Daly, they were treated with reverence by the nuns

PRIVATE

4. I was placed in Nazareth House on 1st March 1935 when I was four and a half years old. [REDACTED] was three and [REDACTED] was only a baby. I remained there for nine years and seven months until I was fourteen.
5. The first day we went into Nazareth House, my parents brought us into this big room and just left us there. My sisters and I were separated shortly after entering. I was placed in the baby's section at first and then when I was five, I was moved up to the big girls' dormitory. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] remained in the babies section. For a while I didn't know they were my sisters.
6. My mind seemed to go blank when I went into Nazareth House. I felt numb for the first couple of years. It took me a while to get used to it, being surrounded by all the other children. There were 160 children altogether. We were always called by a number in Nazareth House, not our name. My number was 28. The odd time we would be called by our surname [REDACTED] and that's how I realised [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were my sisters. The nuns never bothered telling us.
7. The age range in the older girls group would have been from five to fourteen. There were four dormitories in Nazareth House. [REDACTED] SR 112 [REDACTED] was in charge of my dormitory and she had a cell in the dormitory.
8. A typical day in Nazareth House started at 5am when we were woken by the nuns with a whistle. My sister [REDACTED] used to wet the bed so I would run up and take the wet sheet off her bed and try to pinch a new one from the cupboard. [REDACTED] would have got a hiding if they found out she had wet the bed.
9. I and five other girls had to go down to the chapel. We only had our nightdresses on and we were in our bare feet. The six of us got into a line and polished the aisles and floors with cloths. I was only about seven or eight at this stage.
10. After we had polished the chapel, we went back up to make our beds, get washed and ready for school. We had to line up to be inspected by the nuns

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Joseph's Baby Home. My brother [REDACTED] was only a year older than me so he was in the nursery with me for a time. I have no real memories of the nursery, although my earliest memory would be of sitting on the potties. We stayed in the nursery until we reached school age. [REDACTED] was transferred to Nazareth Lodge where he stayed until he was aged eleven years, when he went to Rubane.

4. I think may have we went home at one stage for a very short while and my sister told me that we were in Bawnmore at one stage, but I don't remember this. When we first went into care, we were called [REDACTED] which was our mother's name, but later we were known by [REDACTED] my father's surname. I have no idea why our name was changed.

Nazareth House, Belfast, 29th November 1961 – 9th July 1971

5. There were three groups in Nazareth House – St Anne's, Sacred Heart and Our Lady's. We all wore different coloured clothes depending on what group we were in. I was in Our Lady's group, and **SR 31** was the nun in charge of the unit. I was given the number eighty-three.
6. I was in the same group as my three sisters, **NHB 52**, **HIA 171** and **HIA 328** but I didn't know who they were at first. When I was in the nursery, I didn't mix with the older children. I recall leaving the nursery and seeing a girl hovering, but I didn't know she was my older sister. I was only four years old at the time, and she would have been around twelve years. She took my hand but I didn't know who she was until later. She left the home when she was aged fifteen years. I remember being at Mass one morning and I was looking around because there were two new faces I hadn't seen before. We always got excited when there were new children. I found out eventually that they were my two younger sisters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]
7. **SR 31** had a bedroom in our dormitory. We slept in basic metal beds with lumpy mattresses. **SR 31** would come in and she would just clap

4. As soon as the social workers went away we were all taken down and put in a bath of jeyes fluid, our heads were shaved and a uniform was put on each of us. At this time we did not speak, we just looked at each other whilst it was happening and it was very frightening. They then took us outside to the other girls. I remember a girl approached me, she asked me if I was the new girl and if I had any sweets. I can then recall the thud she got as she was not allowed to be talking or asking for sweets.
5. We got up each morning at seven, kneeled down beside our bed to say our prayers, made our bed and then went to mass. When we came back from mass we had our breakfast and nobody was allowed to talk at meal times. After this we did our cleaning before going to school. Anybody who could clean cleaned, your age did not matter. Everything was timed and followed a strict routine. We each were given a number and there was a hundred odd of us in the home and I was number [REDACTED]. We were also divided into groups, Our Lady's, **SR19** **SR194** and **SR134** group. There was a garden with swings and climbing frames in it. We got to be outside for one hour each day. That was when you got to speak to other children and a nun would have walked around the garden with her prayer book watching you. I like to read a lot but there was nothing to read. The TV was very limited. You had to watch mostly what the nuns wanted to watch. We were made to watch Paul Durnigan on a Saturday night. Everything was for them and not for us.
6. We attended a primary school inside the building. Outsiders attended the primary school but they were treated differently. They were not allowed to be slapped; however they did get shouted at. The number was printed on our clothes and this was embarrassing when you were outside of the home. When I attended the secondary school if I heard my name being called I also would have heard the number ninety three. I recall hearing my sister's numbers also being called. It used to annoy me and you would think that you would have got used to it. Even now you know that prisoners wouldn't even be treated like that.

PRIVATE

Nazareth House, Belfast (21/10/1952 – 10/01/1967)

3. When I was two I was transferred to the nursery in Nazareth House and then I was transferred to the children's department when I was five.
4. I remember there were two dormitories; the senior dormitory and the junior dormitory. Shortly after I arrived the two dormitories were divided into three groups which were called Our Lady's, Saint Anne's and Sacred Hearts. There were about 30 children in each group ranging in age from 5 to 16. There was a nun in charge of each group and she slept in a cell at the end of the dormitory. I was in the Sacred Heart group and **SR 134** was in charge of my group.
5. We were all dressed in similar clothes. We all had to wear pinafores. We were given shoes to wear and if they did not fit we had to squeeze our feet in to them. The older girls were in charge of handing out the shoes and you were too afraid to say that they did not fit.
6. We went to Mass first thing most mornings and went to benediction in the evening. I tried to avoid sitting in front **SR 134** in chapel because if she thought you were doing anything wrong she would reach over and nip your neck or pull your hair. I was also made to pump the church organ which was hard work. Services lasted over an hour and I had to pump for the entire time. Sister **SR 134** also had a terrible habit of grabbing you by your wrists and making you hit yourself and then say "see I didn't touch you".
7. After Mass we had breakfast which consisted of porridge, bread and butter. Until I was about eleven, meals were eaten in complete silence. I do not know why. If you did not eat your dinner you were made to sit until it was finished or Sister **SR 116** would make you come up and get more. The food could have been better. We seemed to live on bread and butter and any meat was very grisly. It felt like we were always being given the butcher's scraps. I was always hungry. We had to say the Rosary before bed every night. The juniors went to bed between 6.30pm and 7pm and the seniors had to be in bed for 9pm.

Name: SR 18
Date: [UNDATED]

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

Witness Statement of SR 18

I, SR 18 will say as follows: -

1. I transferred from Nazareth House, Bishop Street, Derry to Nazareth House, Ormeau Road, Belfast on the 7th October 1973.
2. At that time there were three independent family groups in the home, each supervised by a Sister. Each group consisted of eight to ten children, made up mainly of two to three sibling groups. The units had just been refurbished. The layout of each was very homely, easy to manage and tastefully decorated. It consisted of four bedrooms, each with two /three beds, a lounge, dining room with adjoining kitchenette, a study room, two bathrooms/toilets, a laundry room and a bedroom for each Sister. The age range in my group was between nine and sixteen years. The senior Sister was responsible for all the groups. She attended to all admissions and discharges.
3. During school terms, from Monday to Friday the daily routine was as follows - rising at 7.30am for the older children who had to walk to the secondary schools and 8.00am for the younger children who attended the primary school on the grounds of Nazareth House. Children with learning difficulties were collected by special transport at agreed times. All of these times are approximate.
4. After washing and dressing the children ate breakfast and went off to their respective schools. All the children ate dinner in school.
5. The children arrived home from school between 3.30 and 4.00p.m. After a light snack they changed out of their uniforms, started homework watched television or listened to music.

PRIVATE

3. When [REDACTED] was old enough she had to work with the elderly residents in Nazareth House and also with the deceased. When they died she had to do their hair and other chores. She would try to get down to see me and every now and again I would try and sneak into see her. One day one of the dead bodies frightened the life out of me because they burped or made some sort of noise and I ran away at once.
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7. After Mass we had breakfast which consisted of porridge, bread and butter. Until I was about eleven, meals were eaten in complete silence. I do not know why. If you did not eat your dinner you were made to sit until it was finished or Sister **SR 116** would make you come up and get more. The food could have been better. We seemed to live on bread and butter and any meat was very grisly. It felt like we were always being given the butcher's scraps. I was always hungry. We had to say the Rosary before bed every night. The juniors went to bed between 6.30pm and 7pm and the seniors had to be in bed for 9pm.

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Date: [UNDATED]

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4. After washing and dressing the children ate breakfast and went off to their respective schools. All the children ate dinner in school.
5. The children arrived home from school between 3.30 and 4.00p.m. After a light snack they changed out of their uniforms, started homework watched television or listened to music.

6. The evening meal was served about 5.30p.m. The children helped both in preparing for the meal, by setting the tables etc, and after by washing and drying the dishes and leaving the dining room tidy. The evenings were spent completing homework, attending local clubs, eg girl guides, Irish dancing, ballet dancing, going to the shops and watching television, listening to music or playing games.
7. Bed times were staggered according to age. All the children ate a snack before going to bed. The younger children were bathed as and when necessary, while the older children were free to bath at any time. If a child wet his/her bed the child was bathed and the wet sheets put by the washing machine to be laundered by the staff.
8. The children on the whole were very well behaved. If they misbehaved they were usually disciplined by withdrawal of some privileges.
9. Weekends and holidays were less structured. The children were not called in the mornings. They were expected to get up in their own time, eat breakfast and tidy their rooms before dinner. The afternoons were generally spent either shopping in the local area or in the city, going for walks to the local parks, swimming, or in the minibus visiting seaside resorts and parks in Co Antrim and Co Down. Christmas was always a busy and happy time with numerous parties, pantomimes and concerts organised by local clubs.
10. At this time families and friends of the children visited but not on a regular or frequent basis. Some children went out for weekends, school and summer holidays with families. These families usually were friends or benefactors of the Sisters.
11. About 1975 the number of children in the home greatly declined so it was arranged that one group would close and the children move to another group. Another Sister joined the third group which meant there were two groups each supervised by two Sisters. The number of children in the home was then reduced to sixteen/eighteen. Also about this time boys were admitted to the home.
12. Before I left in 1977 when only two families had social workers, who visited on a regular basis.

Name: SR 15

Date: 19th November 2014

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

Witness Statement of SR 15

I, [REDACTED] will say as follows: -

1. I transferred to Nazareth Lodge, Ravenhill Road, Belfast on the 26th August 1986. At this time, some of the children were on holidays with families and some had already returned.
2. There were three independent family groups in the home, each supervised by a Sister, who was supported by a team of staff, some qualified and some studying. I had obtained a Diploma in Education and taught in primary schools for fifteen years. The other two Sisters had already obtained their degrees in Social Work. During my time in Nazareth Lodge all three Sisters obtained a degree in Supervisory Management.
3. Each group consisted of ten to twelve children, mainly made up of siblings. The age range was between five and sixteen years. There was an independent unit attached to the family groups to accommodate four/five young people aged over sixteen. When I arrived, there were two young people living in this unit who had left school and were working. Later on a member of staff, who was a trained social worker, had the responsibility of preparing the young people for leaving care by helping with budgeting, finding accommodation etc.
4. During my time there, the unit was refurbished into smaller, well-decorated rooms for each individual child. Each child had their own bedroom and wash basin.
5. Mondays to Fridays in the school term allowed for a similar routine which was rising at 7.30am for the older children who had to walk to the secondary schools and 8.00am for the younger children who attended the primary school on the grounds.

Some children with learning difficulties were collected by special transport at agreed times. If there were any wet sheets, they were put in the laundry basket to be washed by the staff.

6. After washing and dressing, the children ate breakfast and went off to their respective schools. All the children ate dinner in school.
7. The children arrived home from school between 2.00pm and 4.00pm. After a light snack, they changed out of their uniforms, started their homework and then played outside or inside, depending on the weather. Some watched television or listened to music or played with visiting friends.
8. The evening meal was served about 5.30pm. The children helped both in preparing for the meal, by setting the tables etc, and after, by washing and drying the dishes and leaving the dining room clean.
9. The evenings were spent attending local clubs, swimming, ice skating, going to the cinema or the beach, playing football or rugby in the big playing field, watching television, completing homework, going to the shop and meeting friends or visiting family.
10. Bed times were staggered according to age. All the children ate a snack before going to bed. The younger children were bathed as and when necessary. Bedtime stories were read to them.
11. Weekends and holiday times were less structured. Some of the children went home to their families at the weekend; others went out with friends. The children left in the unit were not called in the mornings. They were expected to be up before dinner time. On Saturdays the children were free to go to the town with their friends or with the staff. In the evenings they would watch a video or play games on the computer. Those who wished could go to Confession in the local parish church. On Sundays, after Mass and dinner, the children either went for walks on the beach or the parks or to the local swimming pools, depending on the weather. Events in the local area and in the city were attended by the children; for example mini-marathons for charity, marches for peace, visiting the motor show and concerts in the Kings Hall.
12. During the school holidays, the children usually spent two weeks in County Donegal. At Christmas time, there were lots of invitations to parties and pantomimes. Some

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inhumane as we only had each other in there and they should have let us comfort each other.

6. My first memory of Nazareth House was the sheer loneliness which hit you as soon as you walked in the door. We were just left in beds and cots crying. The nuns never showed any warmth or affection; they never touched you. To this day I cannot stand being touched as a result of this. Things didn't improve when I was moved over to the older girls' wing. The older girls bossed me about, pulled my hair, called me names and kicked me repeatedly. As I learned how to make them leave you alone, I would try to curry favour with the older girls by giving them sweets at Christmas.
7. The nuns I remember are [SR 31] and [SR 134] [SR 31] was in charge of the school and I was put in her class. [SR 134] was in charge of my group and she taught in the school as well. She was nicknamed [REDACTED] because of her loud, thunderous steps. [SR 31] was nicknamed [REDACTED]. Both of these nuns beat me on numerous occasions. I also remember a nun called [SR 122] but she never beat me.
8. The nuns always seemed to be away praying. They used to leave the older girls in charge of us but they could hardly look after themselves. During the winter, the older girls would lock us out on the forecourt under the nuns' orders. We were only in our short dresses and we would be crying to get back in. They wouldn't let us in and would force us back out if we tried to get inside.
9. The nuns didn't care about us children at all. They were more concerned with praying and collecting money. They were always asking for money. My older sister remembers my daddy giving her money to give to the nuns and I remember giving them a ten shilling note on numerous occasions. My daddy didn't have much money because he had a breakdown and couldn't work. He was quite fearful and intimidated by the nuns asking for money all the time. He was a countryman and the nuns took advantage of him.

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was placed in the nursery at first. NHB 62 and NHB 63 were placed in the "big girls" part. NHB 62 is six years older than me and NHB 63 is four years older than me. I remember that I never got to see my sisters when we were in different parts. There were railings that separated the playgrounds for the two parts and I only ever saw them through the railings when they were queuing for mass. I remember crying for them. SR 180 looked after me in the nursery and she was very nice. She would cuddle me and kiss us goodnight.

4. My mother had two more children after we were admitted to Nazareth House. They were both born in England as my mother moved back and forwards to England a lot. I remember SR 180 telling me I was no longer the baby of the family.
5. When I was about six or seven years old I moved to the "big girls" part. I was in a massive dormitory which I always remember being cold. SR 116 was in charge of my dormitory. There were two other dormitories; one was run by SR 31 and the other by SR 134. NHB 62 was SR 116 dormitory when I moved over. NHB 63 was in SR 31 dormitory for a while and was then moved to SR 116 with NHB 62 and I from what I recollect.
6. SR 116 told us to sleep with our arms crossed over our chest so that we would go to heaven if we died in our sleep. She told us if our arms were not crossed we would burn in hell. One morning SR 116 told me she had seen the devil dancing on my bedside locker during the night. She had an obsession with the devil. She used to use the long pole to open the window and said she was letting the devil out.
7. I remember one time, not long after I moved in to the "big girls" dormitory I wet my bed. SR 116 pulled back my blankets in the morning and started shouting at me. She called me a "filthy cow". She then grabbed my head and pushed my face in to the wet sheet. She did not clean me up. She then left me to remove the wet sheet and remake my bed with fresh sheets. We were all responsible for making our own beds which had to be done every morning

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5. In my eyes the early stages in the home were not the worst but as we got older the head nun [REDACTED] SR 112 was very bad to us. She battered us stupid, she couldn't hit me hard enough so she would make me take my shoes off and she would hit me on the feet. [REDACTED] SR 112 used a cane and she would hold the sleeve of her habit so she could get a good whack at you. In the home we were only ever known as a number never called by our name.
6. In the morning we cleaned the dormitories they were massive they might have had fifty two beds. I was in Our Lady's Dormitory. We had to sleep with our hands crossed over our chests. The nuns would go around and check that our hands were neat beneath the covers fearing we were interfering with ourselves. They would hit us really hard if they discovered our hands were not where they should be.
7. The floors had to be shining and we cleaned them with a cloth under our feet going up and down until they were glittering. I remember us scrubbing a big passage that ran the length of the convent. We would have been on our knees.
8. On occasion we were sent to the laundry and there was a lady there called [REDACTED] who was in charge she had been reared in the convent. She was a cross old woman with a double chin. We had to scrub when washing the boards in the sink; we thought it was great because she would give us bread and jam.
9. I ran away from the home on one occasion with three or four others. We did not know Belfast and the police found us and brought us back. The nuns shaved our hair when we returned so that we could be identified and known as the runaways. We were hit and punished but the punishment was not too bad. I was made kneel in the Church with the old people. I liked doing it because the old people were nice and they would bring in biscuits and sweets. This didn't last too long as one of the nuns seen us and we hadn't eaten our sweets in time so she took us back.

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3. When [REDACTED] was old enough she had to work with the elderly residents in Nazareth House and also with the deceased. When they died she had to do their hair and other chores. She would try to get down to see me and every now and again I would try and sneak into see her. One day one of the dead bodies frightened the life out of me because they burped or made some sort of noise and I ran away at once.
4. I did not get to see [REDACTED] as she was in a different section and the only time I would see her was at playtime. She would also be out playing and I could see her through the railings but there was never anything arranged.
5. [REDACTED] would sometimes sneak down into the dormitory and wake me up just to let me know she was there and thinking about me or to give me a sweet or something. One night she actually put a sweet in my mouth because when I woke up in the morning I didn't know what on earth it was. It was that kind of thing that siblings had to hide from the nuns. When I left the nursery and moved to the infants section I would ask to see my sisters but was rarely allowed. The nuns would call me "the scum of the earth" amongst other things and they talked a lot about the sins of our parents. I never knew my parents and my sisters and I never had any visitors so it was safe to abuse us as we had no-one to tell about our treatment.
6. Every morning a nun would walk up the dormitory and ring a hand bell. We had to get out of bed and kneel by our bed to say morning prayer. We then got washed and changed into our clothes and went to mass. After mass we got breakfast before starting our chores. The same routine was followed in the home every day. We would have benediction every afternoon and we had to say the Angelus every evening at 6pm. On a Friday we had to attend confessions and we would often make up stories about any sins we had in order to have something to say. We would also have to do the Stations of the Cross every Friday.
7. There were several priests that used to visit the home, I recall specifically Father Fulton and Father Daly, they were treated with reverence by the nuns

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Nazareth House, Belfast (1947 – 1949 approximately)

3. I recall being driven by Father Mackel to a large grey building, where the door was opened by a nun. My brothers just seemed to disappear. I had no idea where they were taken to. I think that it was only girls who lived in the home that I was in. It was only after I asked my mother in later years about this home that she told me that I had been in Nazareth House in Belfast.

4. I have one persistent memory of being in the home. I recall that once a week we were made to go into a big room where there were little piles of clothes set out, arranged in semi-circular rows. We each had to kneel down behind one of the piles, and then change into the clothes that were lying in front of us. We were expected to change modestly. We then had to form a queue, and make our way up to one particular nun, who was standing in the corner. We had to hold our underwear tightly in our hands and present them to the nun to inspect. We then had to turn our underwear round so that she could see both sides. If your underwear was damp, then you would have received a couple of whacks on the palm of your hand, with a large cane that the nun had. If your underwear was stained, then you would have received even more strokes. I remember as we were queuing up to see the nun, we would have been rubbing our underwear in our hands to try and dry it so that we wouldn't get slapped. We didn't dare try to pull our hands away, because then the nun would have turned your hand over and hit the knuckles with the cane instead. I don't remember the name of this nun, but I do recall that she would have been quite young, maybe in her twenties or thirties. I also remember that her cane was really long and had a sharp point on it. I can still hear the sound of the cane coming down, and I can hear the children crying as they were leaving the room, rubbing the palm of their hands which were always red raw. I remember trying to figure out why I had to show the nun my underwear, when my mother had never made me do this. This memory has never left me, but my memory largely goes blank after that.

1 Q. Yes, because the congregation have said to the Inquiry
2 in paragraph 5 of their replying statement at 2035 they
3 don't accept -- they accept they didn't handle
4 bedwetting very well, but they don't accept that
5 children were made clean their own sheets. You did not
6 see that, but you remember that being the conversation
7 that you heard.

8 **A. Uh-huh. Yes.**

9 Q. Then in paragraph 8 you describe the underwear
10 inspection that you were made -- this was on a Saturday.

11 **A. Uh-huh.**

12 Q. You would take your underwear off and you had to stand
13 naked in front of everyone and show your underwear front
14 and back. Now as a result of the discussion we were
15 having today --

16 **A. Uh-huh.**

17 Q. -- you don't think you were naked.

18 **A. No. I might have like a slip on.**

19 Q. Because one of the things -- and you mention this in
20 your police statement -- the nuns were very clear about
21 was modesty.

22 **A. Yes.**

23 Q. You didn't have -- for this to be right you would have
24 to have a group of girls with all not wearing underwear
25 in a hall --

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were bathed two or three times a week. The nuns put Jeyes fluid into the bath water, and it would burn our skin. The same water was used for all the children and it was cold by the end. The nuns washed our mouths out with carbolic soap, which made us feel sick. We had to stand naked and have our hair washed in big tin baths in the yard, regardless of the weather. We were checked for nits. If I had nits, the nuns would cut all my hair off, and then push my head back down into the water. Sometimes it felt like they were drowning me. They would hit me at the same time and pour Jeyes fluid onto my skin. They would hit us if we tried to lift our head out of the water. Sometimes we would try and wet our hair so it would look as if we were already washed, but the nuns would smell it to check, and then they would really make us feel as if we were going to drown to teach us a lesson. If we wet the bed, we had to walk around the yard with the sheets on our head and no shoes on, regardless of the rain and snow, so that everyone could see us. Sometimes the nuns would rub our faces in the wet sheets. On a Friday night, we were made to stand naked in a big hall and hold our knickers in our hands and turn them inside out so the nuns would inspect them. If my underwear was soiled, I would be punished and called a rank, smelly dirty girl. The first time I had my period, I was petrified. I thought the devil had actually got me for all the bad things the nuns told me I did. I tucked myself up in bed and wouldn't get out. The nuns told me I was an evil wicked child because of what the devil had done to me. They never told me what was actually happening to me. There was no education about personal development.

9. Our clothing was not warm enough for the winter days when we were put into the garden. We would be sent out without any coat, and indeed I don't remember having a coat at all the entire time I was in Nazareth House. Our clothes were always hand-me-downs, and we generally didn't have our own personal clothes. Everything was shared. My shoes were always too big for me and sometimes I needed an elastic band to keep them on. Sometimes we used to steal apples from the Holy Rosary. We would tuck them in our knickers. When the nuns realised what we were doing, they started to remove the elastic from our knickers so that we couldn't hide anything in there. We had to tie string around our legs instead.

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11. On Saturdays we used to have to go down to the workroom to have our underwear changed. We had to queue up and show the gusset of our underwear to [REDACTED] SR 122 [REDACTED]. If you had any marks on your underwear, you would get cracked around the head. I always remember when lights went out on Friday night; there would be a lot of scrambling about with girls trying to swap their underwear. The older girls used to bully the younger ones into swapping their underwear with them. When you moved from the nursery to the older girls' part you were assigned a charge who showed you how to make your bed and wash your socks in carbolic soap.
12. We had a lot of chores to do in the home. All the floors were made of herringbone oak and we had to wax and polish these large halls. About fifteen of us would line up and then the nun would throw orange wax on the floor. We had to get down on our knees and polish back and forth until the floor was gleaming. We also had to clean the windows, the pews in the church and the candles. There was a furnace outside the dining room and every so often a girl would be picked to go and sweep the cockroaches off the wall so the handyman [REDACTED] could throw them in the fire. I was petrified of doing that and I used to have nightmares about the cockroaches. [REDACTED] was a lovely, kind man and he would try to cheer the children up.
13. One of the punishments for talking in the dormitory was being forced to kneel on the floor in your nightdress with your nose pushed up against the cold wall. I was talking one night after lights out and [REDACTED] SR 134 [REDACTED] came out of her cell and made me do this. She would be looking out of her cell window and if you dared to slump or relax she would knock on the window. She would leave you like that for a long, long time and if you fell asleep she would come out and straighten your face so your nose was touching the wall again. Eventually she would give up and fall asleep and then you could fall asleep but it seemed to go on for ages. The bedding in the dormitories was fine – I was always warm when I was in bed but the mattresses were very thin. There was central heating in the home but the radiators were always only lukewarm and were turned off at night.

1 an adequate education for children. Children were
2 classed according to their age rather than according to
3 their ability.

4 **A. I don't think that's true. Age didn't -- right enough,**
5 **when we went to St. Monica's Secondary School, I was 11,**
6 **and I don't think my age came into it, because in**
7 **St. Monica's there was , and then it went up to ,**
8 **, and then up to the A stream, but we weren't -- we**
9 **weren't picked out. "Oh, they are Nazareth House girls.**
10 **Throw them all in ", and that's where we stayed.**

11 **Q.** In paragraph 6 here you talk about the uniforms and you
12 say you think you had to change them twice a week.

13 "We had to show our knickers to the nuns for them to
14 inspect. It was very embarrassing."

15 Were you ever -- was there ever any explanation
16 given to you, HIA223, as to why you had to show your
17 underwear?

18 **A. Nothing at all. I think it was to -- for the nuns to**
19 **show they were in charge of us and we did what they**
20 **wanted us to do. It doesn't matter how embarrassing it**
21 **was.**

22 **Q.** You say:

23 "You got bathed in Jeyes Fluid and the same water
24 was used for everybody, so that by the time it came to
25 the last few girls the water was freezing."

5. With regard to paragraph 8, we are aware of allegations that the children's underwear would have been checked; however we do not accept that this was a common practice.
6. With regard to paragraph 9, the children would not have been given extensive chores to do before school but may have assisted in clearing and setting the table for the next meal. The Congregation has accepted that the children were given chores to do within the home; however these chores were not excessive. It is difficult to see that disputes would not arise in a setting where many children of different ages are together. We are pleased that [REDACTED] was treated well by the older girls.

7. With regard to paragraphs 10 - 13, [REDACTED] states that she was put in the drier however the Congregation refutes that any Sister would have done such a thing to a child. The physical chastisement discussed by [REDACTED] is not accepted by the Congregation as a tolerable approach in dealing with children. With regret, the Sisters believe that, on occasion, the policy of 'no physical punishment' was not adhered to.
8. With regard to paragraph 14, the food was always the best standard we could provide. In the interests of the child, the Sisters would encourage them to eat the meals provided as there may not have been another option; however we cannot accept that the children would be force fed by the Sisters.
9. With regard to paragraph 16, the Sister in charge of the children would bring them to the visitor's room but would not have stayed with them during the visit. We are pleased that [REDACTED] has such fond memories of her First Communion; however we do not accept that their communion money was taken from them except perhaps to keep it safe.
10. With regard to paragraph 17, the Congregation offer [REDACTED] sincere condolences on the loss of her sister [REDACTED] and cannot understand why she was unable to attend her funeral.
11. With regard to paragraph 18, the same checks and balances were not in place as in today's society, the Sisters would try to ensure that foster families who were responsible for the children were pleasant and good-natured people. We apologise if [REDACTED] believes she was not cared for correctly or treated the same as the other children.

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8. The children did all of the cleaning within the home. All we knew was scrubbing, waxing and polishing. On Friday evenings we scrubbed and polished the long corridor which ran the entire length of the home from the children's department to the kitchen. We cleaned it in pairs and [REDACTED] SR 31 [REDACTED] would stand watching. If the work was not done to her satisfaction she would make you do it again. I remember her making me scrub the stairs up to the dormitories three times once. On another occasion the mop handle broke on me when I was standing beside her and she said "I know where you will be next madam, Muckamore Abbey". We were always being threatened with being sent to Muckamore Abbey. Saturdays were spent fine combing each other's hair, polishing shoes, darning socks and once a month changing the beds. Once a month the dormitories, classrooms, landings and toilets had to be scrubbed, waxed, polished and inspected. In the summertime we used to help the handyman, [REDACTED] to paint the enamel bed frames. .
9. On a Sunday we were taken for walks. The nuns always warned us not to speak to anyone from outside. We walked down Ormeau Road to Ormeau Park, played there for half an hour and then walked back up the Ravenhill Road. We walked in twos but we were not allowed to talk. I remember we used to pass a graveyard. The older girls used to say "if I hear you talking you'll be put in the grave with the dead ones". I remember one day when we were out walking I soiled myself. I must have had a tummy bug. I was so embarrassed. The nuns were so angry and shouted at me. I had to take a bath in cold water as there was only hot water on bath days. I also had to wash my clothes in the cold water and take them down to the laundry.
10. I had an ongoing problem with wetting the bed. I was called one of the "wet the beds". That was a phrase used by the children however when I was older Sister SR 134 [REDACTED] asked me to get the "wet the beds" up so the nuns even started using the phrase too. If you woke up during the night to discover you had wet the bed you had to lie in your wet sheets until the morning. I used to get out of bed, find a dry part of the sheet, roll my nightdress up and get back into bed. Because I wet the bed so much the nuns put a buzzer on my sheet and when I wet the bed an alarm sounded. The piercing alarm woke me and the other girls in the dormitory

PRIVATE

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who shouted at me for waking them. I was hit and called names by the other children. I got up and turned the buzzer off. The nun never got up. I eventually learned to turn the buzzer off before I went to sleep so that it wouldn't make a noise if I wet the bed. The following morning I had to strip the bed and rinse the sheets in cold water in the bathroom. I then took them to the laundry. My bed was always made with fresh sheets the following evening but I have no recollection of doing that myself or how that was done. I was taken to see a doctor at the Ulster Hospital twice and I think it was about my bed wetting.

11. We were given a bath twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays. The baths were filled with water and Jeyes fluid. In the summertime we had our hair washed in tubs of water containing Jeyes fluid in the yard of Nazareth House. Before our bath the nuns inspected us and our underwear. I was given the number [REDACTED] at some stage and I had to shout it out when I was showing the nun my clothes. If our underwear was not clean we got a slap across the face. I had quite swarthy skin and I have a clear memory of **SR 134** grabbing me by the scruff of the neck and scrubbing my neck over the sink until it bled. **SR 189** got an older girl called [REDACTED] to scrub my neck. She was told to do it again and again as I was still dirty. A couple of days later when [REDACTED] was cleaning Sister **SR 189** pointed to a pile of dust in the corner and said "I suppose you are going to tell me that can't be cleaned because it is swarthy".
12. I remember one day when we were playing in the hall, which was only permitted when there was very heavy rain, one of the nuns either **SR 59** or another nun called three girls to the front, told them to bend over the stage and punished them by pulling their pants down and smacking their bare bottoms in front of everyone.
13. I remember being beaten by **SR 116**. It was always for a trivial reason. She had a classroom that you were made to stand outside and wait for her to call you in to hit you. She used a bamboo cane and hit me again and again on the arm. It was extremely painful and left marks on my arm. She hit you until you cried so I learned to cry as quickly as possible. There was also a lady called **NHB 32** who worked in the sewing room who hit me. I was called in to

recognise. Towels should be hung so that they dry and are not in contact. Supervision may be necessary in the use and care of these articles, but the aim should be to train the children as quickly as possible in habits of personal cleanliness and independence. Baths, with clean water for each child, should be taken at least twice a week, just before bed, and the children should be trained to bath themselves. Bedtimes naturally vary with the ages of the children, and it should be possible to plan some bathing each night without interfering with evening activities. The children's hair should be washed regularly, and attention given to the cleanliness of their heads. Children should be trained in regular habits and encouraged to report constipation; an aperient should never be given as a matter of routine, but only where it is required in the individual case. The needs of the adolescent girl should be provided for.

DRESS AND FOOTWEAR

29. Uniformity of dress is to be avoided. The disadvantages of central purchasing should be weighed against its advantages. There should be variety, and opportunity for individual choice. Children attending school or a youth organisation should wear the kind of clothes that are required. From an early age, children should accompany the housemother when she is buying their clothes. Older children should be taught something of the prices and suitability of clothes and materials, and the girls should be encouraged to make attractive clothes for themselves. Uniformity should be avoided also in such matters as the dressing and cutting of hair.

30. Great care should be taken to provide children with correctly fitting boots and shoes. They must be of adequate length with flexible soles to allow proper use of the foot muscles, and the heels should fit comfortably. The passing of part-worn footwear from one child to another carries with it the risk of injury and possibly infection to the feet: where it is done, only well-fitting boots or shoes which are in good condition and not in any way misshapen should be passed on. It is important also to see that the feet of socks or stockings are of sufficient length after laundering as well as when new.

MONEY AND PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

31. Learning to handle money is an essential part of a child's training in everyday matters. Children should have a reasonable and known amount of pocket money. While pocket money will usually be given weekly, it may be helpful on occasion to give a larger sum for a longer period so that the experience of weighing the usual limited expenditure against the making of some special purchase may be possible. Older children should be allowed whenever possible to undertake shopping for the home, and to buy things for their own use. Younger children should be allowed to accompany the older children or housemother on shopping expeditions, and themselves be trusted to make simple purchases such as small birthday presents. Those nearing school-leaving age might be given an allowance to cover the purchase of clothes and personal necessities and so learn to take a greater pride in their own things. Unless some arrangement of this kind is made, a child may start work without knowing how to lay out money on personal needs.

HELP IN THE HOME

32. Boys and girls should be expected to take a moderate share in the daily running of the home, but not at the expense of sleep, meals, education or reasonable recreation. Young children should not be discouraged from trying to help in the house. Older children, in assisting members of staff, should progress from light routine tasks, such as dusting, bed-making and washing up, to skilled work, such as cooking, bottling, ironing and making things for the home. It is sometimes forgotten that a share in the running of the house means a share in the interesting as well as in the dull occupations. Older children could be given some responsibility for planning meals, purchasing household goods and checking the laundry, and should have opportunity of attending demonstrations or exhibitions of domestic interest in the neighbourhood.

6. The description of the duties undertaken by NL 164 is not one which the Sisters accept. Whilst children would have been asked to carry out some chores such as polishing the floors or assisting with tidying the dining area and making beds, these chores were appropriate to their age and would not have been excessive. The chores described by [REDACTED] would not have been required of him and we do not accept that this is an accurate description of the chores which a child would have been required to perform.
7. The Sisters are now aware of the activities of Brendan Smyth and are appalled to learn about these in later years when this became public knowledge. The Sisters openly apologise to any child who suffered sexual abuse at the hands of Brendan Smyth or any other abuser. They were not aware of his activities at the time when he was a visitor to Nazareth House or Nazareth Lodge.
8. The children would have had an opportunity, when available, to spend time with families. This would have been to try to ensure that they had some experience of life outside of the house. We are very grateful for all of those families who offered to look after the children and to the vast majority of those families who were good caring people and who looked after the children. There were occasions when some of the families were not kind to the children and took advantage of the situation unknown to the Sisters. The Sisters apologise to any child who was not looked after appropriately while they were boarded out with families.
9. The two girls identified by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were employed by the Sisters and came with Sister Vincent from South Africa. Sister Vincent has confirmed this. The Sisters have no information in regard to the incident described by [REDACTED] concerning NL 52 [REDACTED] and are unable therefore to comment on that or indeed to comment on an incident involving [REDACTED]

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9. I recall being taken to the Royal Victoria Hospital because of my bed wetting and they stuck pins in my bum or used an electric shock. I think the purpose of it was to probe the reasons for the bed wetting.
10. The school was on site and there were both teachers and nuns. The teachers were **NHB 43** **NHB 44** and **NHB 45** The nuns were Sister **SR 189** **SR 134** **SR 177** who taught me when I was very young and **SR 112** who taught the higher classes. The education was very basic, there was no such thing as special attention, and rather those with difficulties were ignored or made an example of.
11. I liked school although I wasn't very good at maths I was able to get by at other subjects. I remember them teaching us pounds, shilling and pence and it was known as L.S.D. In the summer holidays we would get six weeks off school. The nuns would find jobs for us to do dependent on our size. I was small so I always had to stay in the lower section and hence I had to scrub the floors.
12. After school if it was a nice day we were allowed to play in the garden it was more akin to a recreation hall. After school we would get tea and jam then we would go to church for our prayers and then we would have to come back to do some cleaning. At about 6pm we had supper.
13. At the weekends particularly on a Saturday we would spend the day cleaning. We would change our beds, sweep and scrub the dormitory, and then we would have to scrub and polish the wooden floors in the recreation hall. All the children in the home had to do the cleaning. From the age of seven or as soon as you could kneel down you'd be scrubbing.
14. There was always someone supervising the cleaning it was either a nun or one of the older girls. If we were not doing the cleaning correctly we would be clipped across the ear or maybe hit with a fist or kick. Both the nuns and the older girls would have hit us.

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4. We had to get up at 6.00am every morning and say prayers at the end of the bed. We stripped the bed and dusted the bed frame and the nun who was in charge of the dormitory would have come round to inspect the beds afterwards. After the inspection we could remake them, but if she found fault, we had to clean the bed all over again. When we got dressed we had to put on our clothes underneath our nightdress, in the way we were taught. We weren't allowed to strip. We then went to Chapel for Mass. When we came back we were given breakfast.
5. We had mealtimes in the big dining room, and meals were supervised by the nuns. At breakfast we were only ever given one slice of bread and dripping and a cup of tea. I didn't know what porridge was and I didn't see an egg until I was about ten or eleven years of age. They introduced meat as well but it was usually bits of fat. If we didn't eat the food the first time, it would be placed in front of us again at dinner time, and if we didn't eat it at dinner, it would be there for us at supper. We tried to find different ways of hiding the food that we didn't want to eat. We tried to put it into serviettes, but the nuns soon realised. I always tried to sneak mine into the bin but if I was caught, the nun would make me take it out of the bin and eat it, even if I was sick. This happened quite regularly. To this day, I hate fat on my meat.
6. We were all trained in cleaning. We started our chores at the age of five and these would have been lighter chores. At the age of seven we would have been given something harder to do, and again a few years later, the chores would have got worse. I would work three months in the dining room, where I was responsible for six or seven tables, cleaning the tables, the legs of the furniture and the floors around the tables. I then worked three months in the kitchen, cleaning the pots and pans and floors, and then three months in the dormitories, cleaning the whole room. Then there was three months polishing the wooden floors and the marble corridors. We had to polish it on our knees. There would have been rows of girls, with pads on their knees, and by the time the last row finished, the floor would be spotless. Although we wore pads, our knees would still hurt. These chores had to be done every day

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17. We children were treated like slaves. We were forced to scrub and polish the floors in Nazareth House. We were constantly down on our hands and knees scrubbing with deck brushes and orange wax. I remember the wax getting embedded under my fingernails, in my eyes, hair and mouth. My arms would be aching and my back was in agony from being bent over scrubbing.
18. Bath time in Nazareth House was a nightmare. The older girls used to wash the younger ones and I remember them towering over me. There were two older girls in particular I was terrified of – NHB 46 and NHB 47. NHB 47 They were in charge of me and they were bullies. We were bathed in Jeyes fluid – our bodies and our hair. It would get in your eyes and any cuts you had and it stung really badly.
19. I was beaten all the time in Nazareth House by both SR 31 and SR 134. SR 134 They would beat me for no reason; it just seemed like a way for them to vent their anger. They loved their weapons whether it was their straps or sticks. SR 31 would beat me with a bamboo cane in the classroom and SR 134 would hit me on the head with her keys. I was terrified of SR 134. She always said never to tell lies but when you told the truth she would whack you over the head with her keys or whatever was in her hand. The nuns used to lock me up in a dark cupboard and leave me lying there the whole day or even overnight. It was cold and dark and there were cleaning materials in there. SR 31 would quite often leave me out on the fire escape for hours as a punishment. I was freezing in my short dress and I would just play with the mucky pools on the ground.
20. I would be covered in bruises and welts from SR 31 especially at the top of my thighs where she hit me with a bamboo cane. One time my father saw bad bruising on my arm from where SR 31 had trailed me along the corridor digging her nails into my arm. He asked me what happened and I told him the truth. When he brought me back to the home he asked to see one of the nuns. As punishment for telling my father SR 31 beat me the whole way to the cleaning cupboard. When she got me in the cupboard, she beat me with a stick on my hands and the top of my legs under my dress. She

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everything, every room we went into. We had to scrub all the passageways. We were always on our hands and knees. I was in charge of cleaning the big hall before we went to school. We all had our jobs to do when we came back from school as well. At weekends we had to scrub the top kitchen and the top passage. When I was a bit older I was sent to work in the kitchen. I didn't mind it. There was one nun up there that we liked, SR 187 I went up one day to help her fill the fires but I must have been too early. The kitchen was in darkness. The Mother Superior, SR 176 was there and told me that if she saw me in the kitchen again, she would send me to the Good Shepherd, which was the home across the road for unmarried mothers. It terrified me and I never went up again. I didn't want to go over there and spend the rest of my life in another home. We were glorified slaves for the nuns. We were exhausted. We got nothing for all the work we did.

5. I went to the primary school in Nazareth House, but I didn't learn anything. I think I was taught by SR 134 I couldn't read or write, or tell the time. I then went to St Monica's Secondary School on the Ravenhill Road. We were all dumped into one class because we were from Nazareth House. We were in the lowest stream and were given no education. There were some lucky girls who were picked to go into a different class because they had sponsors or family. We were easily picked out as the Nazareth House Girls because of the blouses we wore, which were made by the nuns.
6. I think we had to change our uniforms twice a week. We had to show our knickers to the nuns for them to inspect. It was very embarrassing. We got bathed in Jeyes fluid and the same water was used for everybody so by the time it came to the last few girls, the water was freezing. Bath time took place twice a week. As we got older and were taking more pride in our appearance, we used to wash our clothes ourselves at night so that we weren't going into school with dirty clothes. Our skirts were supposed to be pleated but they weren't. We used to soak our skirts in a bath of water and then put them under a mattress at night. We had to wash our own socks and put them on the radiators so that we weren't wearing dirty socks every day. Anybody who

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worked in the kitchens peeling potatoes. We had to scrub the floors, and there were lots of areas and passageways, and a huge hall. The nun would stand at the far end of the hallway to inspect it and if it wasn't done right, we were hit. We were slapped or grabbed by the hair at the back of the neck which was so painful. They would lift us up by the hair and pull us up from the nape of the neck until we were standing on our tip toes. They would intentionally pinch us under our arms, where the marks wouldn't be seen. I believe that all of the nuns would have done this.

10. From about the age of eleven years, we worked hard in the laundries, mainly at the weekends. We did the washing for the entire convent, including the old people's home. If they were soiled we had to stand over the sink scrubbing them on the washer boards, before they went into a big industrial machine, and then into the huge industrial pressers. I remember I had to stand on a stool so that I could reach the sink and use the washboards. My fingers would be raw, from rubbing them on the boards, and from the carbolic soap. There were two ladies who worked in the laundry, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were quite elderly and I believe they may have been brought up in the convent themselves. [REDACTED] had a stick which she would hit us with if we weren't doing the washing properly. [REDACTED] was a terrifying lady, but that was all she knew. She also worked in the sewing room. She hit us as well and we would be terrified if she caught us doing anything, because she was always threatening to tell the nuns on us.

11. The whole environment of the home and the school was fear. To my mind, if we were ever caught doing something, it would only have been something minor. The punishment seemed unnecessary for some things. It was just a way of frightening us and keeping us down. [REDACTED] SR 31 [REDACTED] had a particular room upstairs where we were brought to if the nuns were going to cane us. If we back-chatted, tutted or showed an expression that they didn't like, they would take us upstairs, and say that they would beat the stubborn streak out of us. We never used foul language and we weren't rude children, but the nuns saw it as us standing up for ourselves so they would make an example of us. On one occasion [REDACTED] SR 31 [REDACTED] was hitting me across both hands with

1 weekends."

2 **A. Uh-huh.**

3 Q. "We did the washing for the entire convent, including
4 the old people's home."

5 **A. Uh-huh.**

6 Q. "If they were soiled, we had to stand over the sink
7 scrubbing them on washer boards before they went into
8 a big industrial machine" --

9 **A. Uh-huh.**

10 Q. -- "and then into the huge industrial pressers.
11 I remember I had to stand on a stool so that I could
12 reach the sink and use the washboards. My fingers would
13 be raw from rubbing them on the boards and from the
14 carbolic soap."

15 **A. Uh-huh.**

16 Q. "There were two ladies in the laundry",
17 whom you name there.

18 **A. Yes.**

19 Q. I am just going to give the names as NHB 32 and .

20 **A. Uh-huh.**

21 Q. "They were quite elderly and I believe they may have
22 been brought up in the convent themselves. One of them
23 had a stick, which she would hit us with if we weren't
24 doing the washing properly. The other was a terrifying
25 lady, but that was all she knew. She also worked in the

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all I had ever known. I had no contact with my mummy and daddy and that was tough. My brother **NL 106** was only five minutes down the road in Nazareth Lodge but I only saw him once or twice a year when all the children would go down for a supervised visit. This was organised for all the children whether they had brothers in the Lodge or not. It was like a day out. **NHB 72** and I got to spend time with **NL 106** during these visits but that was just a coincidence; the nuns made no effort to encourage contact between us. We only went on these day trips five or six times in the five years **NL 106** was in the Lodge. This had a severe psychological effect on me because we had been very close as siblings before going into care. **NL 106** was all alone and **NHB 72** and I were so close by.

8. My mother only ever visited us once. She took us down to the Lodge to visit **NL 106** as well. Apparently, **NL 106** was going to be fostered but my mother refused to let this happen.
9. There were three groups in Nazareth House. I was in St. Anne's group which **SR 116** was in charge of. **NHB 72** was in the same group. The daily routine in Nazareth House was you got up really early in the morning and knelt by your bed to say your prayers. It was probably about 5.30am or 6.30am. Then you got yourself dressed and went to Mass. Religion was a big part of life in the home. A few of the younger ones would faint at Mass because they were so tired and hungry. If you fell asleep or dozed off in Mass the nuns would physically assault you by flicking their fingers at the back of your head and ears or striking you with their knuckles. **SR 134** in particular did this.
10. No matter what age you were you had chores to do in the morning. One of my chores was to clean the bathroom. I was in charge of the upstairs bathroom and it had thirty sinks, four toilets and four baths. I had to make sure these were all clean. Then I went down for breakfast and went to school. I also had the task of taking a wooden box containing soiled sanitary towels down to the furnace and burning them all once a week on a Tuesday. I was only thirteen

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years old at the time. The nuns used to say it was a privilege but if it was why didn't they do it themselves? The other girls and I were treated like slaves.

11. Every Friday night, we had to scrub the long corridors after school. The floors were made of stone and we worked in pairs on our hands and knees with a scrubbing brush and soap. We used to chant "left, right, Peggy's right". We wore a pinafore over our clothes and our pinafore, shoes and socks would be saturated. Our hands would be red and raw. On a Saturday we had to do the same to the floors in the chapel. We had to shine them until you could see your face in the floor. I never once saw the nuns do any physical work, it was always the children.

12. We had to work in the laundry sometimes as well. It was hard, severe work for a child but I didn't really mind because it broke the monotony. The standard the nuns expected of us children was exceptional. A nun would always be standing over you watching you and if you didn't do your chores to their standards, you had to do them again. This very much depended on the mood of the nuns on a particular day. They used to go out collecting on a Saturday and if they had a bad day they would take it out on us when they got back. They used to tell us they would be spat on and verbally abused while out collecting for us.

13. The food in Nazareth House wasn't great but food wasn't top of my list. It didn't bother me to be hungry. I remember going to bed hungry. In the morning we would get porridge and sometimes it would have big lumps in it and you wouldn't want to eat it but you had to eat what was on your plate. A nun and a couple of the older girls did the cooking. Mealtimes were in silence and the supervising nun would single out me and other girls who were whispering. We would have been taken to the front of the dining room and slapped with a cane, ruler, spoon or strap.

14. On one occasion before we were due to go on holiday to Glenariff, we had mutton stew but the mutton was gone off. The smell was horrendous but the nuns made us eat it. All the girls were vomiting including me but the nuns kept

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our uniform. We used to put our skirts under our mattress to keep the pleats in them. After school and on Saturdays we had chores and played for a while. My chores included cleaning, laundry and shovelling coal into the furnace which heated the home. We said the Angelus outside at 6 o'clock. We were then brought in for our dinner. If you did not eat your dinner **SR 116** would clip you round the ear and then spoon fed you. Our lips would have swollen from the force of her digging the spoon in. Sometimes we did not get to go to bed until 10pm so we were always tired. We were late going to bed if we were cleaning somewhere.

7. We were always hungry. The food was not of good quality and there was not very much of it. There was a dog that lived at the home and the outside toilet was near where he stayed. I was so hungry that I used to hide in the toilet until **SR 116** had fed him and then I would eat his food.
8. One day we were cleaning the floors in the dining room and I looked in to the big cupboard in the dining room and saw a big block of cheese. Another girl and I were so hungry that we ate some of the paper which was covering the cheese. When we chewed it it turned into chewing gum. We knew we could not eat the cheese as the nuns would have known if any of it was gone.
9. We were bathed every Saturday. Jeyes fluid was put in the bath which burned really badly. The three nuns took it in turns to be on bath duty on a Saturday. **SR 116** was the worst. She used to use a scrubbing brush. She used it on our private parts to make sure we were clean. When we got out we were brown all over but we were not allowed to use clean water to clean it off. We just had a big sheet to dry ourselves with which we had to share and it was soaking by the time I would get it so I was not able to dry myself properly. The nun on bath duty used to check our necks to make sure they were spotless and if they weren't we had to go back in and clean them again. We had a rag that we used to clean our necks. We also had to use carbolic soap, we even used it to clean our teeth.

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10. We had to work in the laundry. We washed all the clothes and bed sheets on washboards. When I came out I was soaking and in the winter I was also freezing. We did not get a change of clothes and we were expected to spend the rest of the day in wet clothes. We also had to scrub the floors in the laundry. We had to scrub the halls, the dormitory, the church and polish the pews in the church. There was a rota of what each group had to clean each week. We also had to clean the nun's room which was at the corner of our dormitory. I was cleaning in **SR 31** room one day and I saw a framed photograph on her windowsill of a girl in her communion dress. I was shocked when I saw it was a photograph of me. I have no idea how she got it or why she had it.
11. I had to shovel coal into the furnace which heated the home along with another girl called **SR 31**. It was frightening in there. People sent in boxes of sweets but the nuns said they were poisoned and made us burn them in the furnace. **SR 31** and I would eat the sweets before we threw the boxes in to the furnace. One day **SR 31** came down and saw the colours from the sweets on our face. She took us to a room upstairs and caned us on the hands.
12. I remember sitting in the dining room with my sisters one day and **SR 31** who had been in a terrible mood that day, came in and said that our parents had not paid for us so why should they feed us. I do not think we were fed that day. That has stuck in my head.
13. One day when I was playing in the yard with my sister **NHB 65** I was standing on a bench which toppled over and I fell and hurt my back. **SR 134** came over and I tried to tell her that I was hurt but I had been winded so badly I was unable to speak. She did nothing to help me, in fact she hit me on the side of the head with her knuckles for falling. **NHB 65** had to look after me and lift me up and try to get me to walk.
14. I was never taken to hospital. I only saw a doctor once when I got my BCG. I remember another girl was taken to hospital once and when she returned she told us she had got beautiful food. So I swallowed a screw to see if I could be brought to the hospital but I was not taken. I was put in a room with just a bed

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scrubbing brush meant for the floor and my neck would bleed. If we had our period, we were only given a certain number of sanitary towels and the nuns wouldn't give us anymore. It would smell awful and when we were at St Monica's other girls would comment on how we smelt foul. Every week our knickers were examined. We had to line up and wait our turn. We then had to turn our knickers inside out and if there were any marks we would get smacked in front of all the other girls.

8. Mass was at 7.15am. We also had to say the Rosary most evenings before bed. We would take turns saying the Decades. We had to go to Mass twice on Sundays, in the morning and again in the afternoon for the Benediction. Sometimes we would even have to go to Mass three times in one day but this was infrequent. On occasions the nuns would want music for their Mass, and some girls would be brought up to sing for them or pump the organ.
9. Breakfast was either cornflakes or porridge. Sometimes the porridge in the morning would be burnt. I remember one occasion when I was trying to eat the burnt porridge. **SR 116** grabbed my hair and started feeding me the porridge with a spoon. She just kept pushing it into my mouth, even though I hadn't finished what I was eating. I was nearly sick. She just kept scraping the porridge and feeding it to me until the plate was clean. She did this to me on more than one occasion. Sunday dinners were quite nice sometimes. We might have got a bowl of chicken soup, and maybe some chicken and vegetables. Every Sunday evening we had spam salad. We would have been given a fried egg on Christmas morning which we all looked forward to. I don't remember anything about Christmas dinner.
10. We did get to play a little bit, but most of our spare time was spent doing chores. After school we would be sent to sweep the corridors, clean the bathrooms or wax and polish the floors. From the age of about seven, I worked in the old people's home. We would set the tables for their meals. I liked it because the old people shouted and I didn't have to worry about my poor hearing. Sometimes I was sent to work with the old men and I didn't like that because they tried to touch me. None of the girls liked being sent to see

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the old men. [REDACTED] knew I preferred working with the women so she would send me back over to the women's section.

11. Once a week we had to clean the organ in the church and polish the chalice.

SR 134 would look after the children cleaning the first six rows, and Sister [REDACTED] would supervise the children on the next six rows. Sometimes if the nuns left their glasses case sitting down, we would peek into it to find out their real name. We were just making our own entertainment. I was caught once by

SR 134 and she nipped me on the neck. **SR 31** name was **SR 31** **SR 31** and **SR 134** name was **SR 134** **SR 116** first name was **SR 116**

12. In the autumn time we had to clean the garden and sweep all the leaves up.

We weren't allowed to have our sleeves below our elbows so we would have been cold. We had to lift the leaves with our hands and if the nuns saw us kicking the leaves up, we would have been clapped over the head. We weren't really allowed to laugh.

13. Anytime there was thunder and lightning the nuns would tell us that we had made God angry and he was moving furniture in heaven. **SR 31** would

grab one child, and make them listen to the thunder and say that we must have done something to make God angry. I remember **SR 116** telling **SR 31** there was no point trying to get me to listen because I wouldn't be able to hear the thunder.

14. For some reason **SR 116** always picked on me. She really took against me, and she was the worst nun as far as I was concerned. She was always beating me over the head, and smacking me across the ear. Sometimes she just hit me with her hand and sometimes she used the metal crucifix of her Rosary Beads, her big leather belt or a big bunch of keys. The Reverend Mother would be around the home, but I don't remember her ever being there when **SR 116** was beating me. **SR 31** was quite sly when she was being cruel. She would do things, give you a smack over the head when there was nobody else around.

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supposed to come out of **SR 116** class she had to keep me back a year because I was so behind.

22. From then on **SR 116** made my life hell. She still kept beating me. She beat me throughout my childhood. At one stage I was in **SR 134** group because there were too many in Sister Thomas' group, but **SR 116** always kept that contact with me. Whenever I looked she was there and she would find fault with me. She always seemed to be waiting on me, and seeking me out. She told me all the time that I was deaf, I was hopeless, and I would never go anywhere in my life. She always threatened me that I would be put in the Good Shepherd with all the naughty people. She said that because I was deaf I would be better in a backward school with the stupid people. I had no confidence anyway because I was deaf and so I believed all that she told me. I often wondered whether I had done something in a past life to deserve what was going on.

23. On one occasion I was in the bathroom and **SR 116** called me. I didn't hear her so she came behind me and just pulled me by the hair. I told her that I couldn't hear her but she told me to wait in the corner and she would give me my punishment later. I had to go over to the old people's part of the convent where one of the residents, [REDACTED] had died. I was very fond of [REDACTED] and wasn't aware that she had passed away. My punishment, along with another girl, [REDACTED] was to lift [REDACTED] body in and out of the bath, and bath her with cotton wool. Then she was laid out on a table and we had to comb her hair, put powder on her face and put a shroud on her. I remember that [REDACTED] wanted [REDACTED] glasses and I wanted her hearing aid, but it didn't fit because it was for the wrong ear. We then had to wheel the trolley to the dead house. When **SR 116** came back to check if we had finished, we got another beating because we didn't put any cotton wool in her ears, nose and back passage. Every day until [REDACTED] was buried, I had to go and pray for her soul in the dead house. This affected me quite badly as I was only nine or ten years at the time.

to humiliate or degrade the children but to have the sheets cleaned and the bed redressed.

6. With regard to paragraph 7, we cannot accept that a child's neck would have been scrubbed by a floor brush until their neck bled. We are aware of similar allegations that the girls were not given a sufficient amount of sanitary towels and we must apologise if any child suffered because of this. We are aware of allegations that the children's underwear would have been checked; we do not accept that this was a common practice.
7. With regard to paragraph 8, the children were not expected to attend Mass every day at 7.15am; however they would have been given the option to attend during lent. We do not accept that the children would have gone to mass twice or even three times on a Sunday.
8. With regard to paragraph 9, the food was always the best standard we could provide. In the interests of the child, the Sisters would encourage them to eat the meals provided as there may not have been another option. We are horrified at the allegations made by [REDACTED] and do not accept that any child was force fed.
9. With regard to paragraphs 10-12, the Congregation accepts that the children were given chores to do within the home; however these chores were not considered excessive. Whilst [REDACTED] may have helped in the old people's home, she would have been merely assisting a lay staff member or Sister in carrying out their duties.
10. With regard to paragraphs 14-15, the physical chastisement discussed by [REDACTED] is not accepted by the Congregation as a tolerable approach in dealing with children. With regret, the Sisters believe that, on occasion, the policy of 'no physical punishment' was not always adhered to.
11. With regard to paragraph 16 - 20, we do not hold the medical records of Rose and therefore cannot comment on these allegations.

to sit the 11+ we were all queuing up and the nerves got the better of me. I began to laugh out of nerves and [SR 31] grabbed me, gave me a beating and said I wasn't doing the 11+. We all went to St. Monica's Secondary School – I don't remember anyone ever going to a different school.

13. My mother's family always came to take [NHB 107] out but not me. They'd take her out on a Sunday. The family blamed me for us being taken into care. They used to say if I hadn't gone out and got attacked we wouldn't have been taken but I was only six or seven. My mother should have been looking after me. I believe the man who attacked me was convicted and served time in prison.

14. When I was about nine they made me start looking after the old people in Nazareth House after school and at the weekends. I was the only one sent over to do this. I did it until I was fourteen or fifteen. [SR 31] said it was to get the devil out of me and to keep me away from the other children. I used to have to bathe the old ladies, change their nappies and if they were dying I had to sit up all night with them and then wash their dead bodies. A civilian woman I called 'Matron' and two Scottish girls worked there and they were good to me. They were in their early 20's and they used to buy me sweets with their wages.

15. I continued to wet the bed until I was about eleven. I remember coming home one day and telling [SR 134] I had cut myself because I didn't know I had gotten my period. I lay all night thinking I was dying. I was terrified of getting a hiding. I was put into a dark room and then I was brought out to the canteen and put in front of everyone to tell them I was a woman now. You had to go to [SR 134] to ask for a sanitary towel. They were old-fashioned ones with a belt and you only got one for the day and one for night time.

16. The older girls used to try to bully me but they picked the wrong girl. I got in trouble for standing up for myself. One time a woman who used to look after us when the nuns were away praying got into my bed and tried to touch me but I beat her out of my bed. I was about eight or nine at the time. She was an adult civilian worker the nuns brought in to keep an eye on us when they were at prayer. I don't remember her name – we just knew her as 'Miss'.

6. With regard to paragraph 11, Jeyes Fluid may have been used on the girl's hair in order to prevent head lice within the home. We do not accept that the children would have bathed, washed and fed the younger children in the home.
7. With regard to paragraph 12, the sisters sought to provide an adequate education for all children.
8. With regard to paragraph 14, Isabella may have helped in the old people's home, however she would have been assisting a lay staff member or sister in their duties or possibly visiting the elderly residents. We do not accept that Isabella would have been expected to bathe the old ladies, change their nappies and wash dead bodies.
9. With regard to paragraph 15, it may have been difficult for a sister to discuss puberty and sexual education with children. Any parent in this position may understand that this is a difficult conversation to have with a child even now and we regret how the seriousness of these changes may have avoided due to discomfort or embarrassment. We are aware of similar allegations that the girls were not given a sufficient number of sanitary towels and we apologise if any child suffered because of this.
10. With regard to paragraph 16, the staff of Nazareth House were employed by the Sisters with the utmost faith in their ability to ensure the needs of the children were met. The congregation is devastated to consider that a member of staff would perform such an acts on a child under our care. As we are not aware of the identity of this staff member, we cannot comment further.
11. With regard to paragraph 20, we have no record of Isabella's pregnancy during her residency in Nazareth House.
12. The Sisters offer Isabella a sincere and unreserved apology for any occasion when the standard of care provided fell below an acceptable standard.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed Sr Brenda McBall

Dated 19 January 2015

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never get anything like that?". This is when I started thinking to myself that I was bound to have some family. When I was about ten or eleven I asked **SR 178** "haven't I got anyone at all?" and she told me that I had a brother. I never thought any more about it at the time. We all received sweets from the Orangemen who marched past Nazareth House. We used to get up on a Sunday and climb on the wall and watch them play and clap and they used to give us lollies.

11. We had a good priest while I was in the home. His name was Father Geoffrey. He used to take us for sport. He gave us all nicknames and called me **[REDACTED]** after the famous dog. He was just lovely. I named my first son after him – **[REDACTED]**
12. The days on which we made our First Holy Communion and our Confirmation were special days as we were allowed to go on the trams outside the home. We wore white and people used to see us and give us sweets and pennies.
13. When I was about ten years old I was made to help out in the morgue in the old people's home at Nazareth House. I used to have to go in and dress the bodies and put pennies in their eyes. I was absolutely petrified working there. We took it in turns.
14. We went to Mass every day in the home. We had to learn the catechism off by heart. If we didn't know it, we would be whacked over the ear or hit across the hands with an implement. We also had to learn hymns in Latin as part of the Latin Mass.
15. I never had shoes to fit me in Nazareth House. I had big feet and I was always given shoes that were too small for me and I had to squeeze my feet in them.
16. I made good friends in the home and it was hard leaving them. They were very upset too. I didn't know where I was going. I wasn't told I was going to Australia. One day in school, a Brother Conlon came and talked about Australia. He said we would be able to ride horses and pick oranges off trees. He also told

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9. I recall being taken to the Royal Victoria Hospital because of my bed wetting and they stuck pins in my bum or used an electric shock. I think the purpose of it was to probe the reasons for the bed wetting.
10. The school was on site and there were both teachers and nuns. The teachers were **NHB 43** **NHB 44** and **NHB 45** The nuns were Sister **SR 189** **SR 134** **SR 177** who taught me when I was very young and **SR 112** who taught the higher classes. The education was very basic, there was no such thing as special attention, and rather those with difficulties were ignored or made an example of.
11. I liked school although I wasn't very good at maths I was able to get by at other subjects. I remember them teaching us pounds, shilling and pence and it was known as L.S.D. In the summer holidays we would get six weeks off school. The nuns would find jobs for us to do dependent on our size. I was small so I always had to stay in the lower section and hence I had to scrub the floors.
12. After school if it was a nice day we were allowed to play in the garden it was more akin to a recreation hall. After school we would get tea and jam then we would go to church for our prayers and then we would have to come back to do some cleaning. At about 6pm we had supper.
13. At the weekends particularly on a Saturday we would spend the day cleaning. We would change our beds, sweep and scrub the dormitory, and then we would have to scrub and polish the wooden floors in the recreation hall. All the children in the home had to do the cleaning. From the age of seven or as soon as you could kneel down you'd be scrubbing.
14. There was always someone supervising the cleaning it was either a nun or one of the older girls. If we were not doing the cleaning correctly we would be clipped across the ear or maybe hit with a fist or kick. Both the nuns and the older girls would have hit us.

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12. I went to primary school onsite in Nazareth House. [SR 116] [SR 31] [SR 31] and [SR 31] all taught in the school. When I was eleven I remember thinking I'd be doing my 11+ soon but then [SR 31] told me I wasn't eleven, I was only ten. That was deliberate on [SR 31] part. She didn't like me and it was about control. I had to stay an extra year in [SR 31] [SR 31] class then and I never did my 11+. I went to St. Monica's Secondary School on the Ravenhill Road but I left when I was fifteen. The nuns never encouraged education. I believe if I had stayed in school longer and got some qualifications it would have been better for my career.
13. We had a lot of chores to do in the home. It wasn't just a bit of cleaning or tidying up after you; it was excessive manual labour. There was a huge hall with parquet flooring and we had to wax and polish that every weekend. There was a line of us and one girl would put the wax on, the next would polish it and so on. That floor was gleaming by the time we were finished with it. In the mornings after breakfast, we had to go and mop and clean the landings. [SR 116] would come along with her finger to see if you missed any dust. It was hard work – too much for small children.
14. A lot of the children in the home wet the bed. I never did but I witnessed the humiliation those girls suffered. Before they got the buzzers for the beds, I remember one nun who I think was [SR 134] putting the wet sheet over a girl's head as punishment for wetting the bed. That happened to a few different girls.
15. We got bathed once a week in Nazareth House. There were three tin baths for washing our hair out in the yard – one for each group. We had to queue up and take our turn. The water was warm but it was never changed so you were lucky if you got washed first you got the clean water but if you got washed last the water was filthy. We were bathed in Jeyes fluid which should never have been used. When it was put into the bath, the water turned white. The Jeyes fluid made my skin red and inflamed. We had to wear a pinafore in the bath to protect our modesty and when you got out you had a sheet put around you.

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18. There was an older girl in Nazareth House called **NHB 25** and all the girls were terrified of her. She used to wet the bed but she would put her wet sheets on another girl's bed and blame them. The other girl would have been beaten then. **NHB 25** used to get us to fight with other girls and she would sit there and laugh. She made us cover our faces with the blanket when we were in bed and if you showed your face she would hit you. She never actually hit me but I was really frightened of her.
19. Every weekend, **SR 31** made us scrub the floors on our hands and knees. They were wooden floors. First we scrubbed them and then when they were dry, we had to polish them with wax. If they weren't right, she would make us go over them again. We also had to clean the classrooms in Nazareth House and the dining room where we ate our food every Friday. At Easter, summer and Christmas we had to get up on ladders and wash all the walls. Once, **SR 31** got me up at 4am and made me scrub the floor of the big canteen in the school at Nazareth House as punishment for something or other. The nuns got up at 4am every day to go to the chapel.
20. **SR 134** used to hit me as well. On one occasion she put me and another girl called **NHB 26** into a freezing cold bath as punishment for taking too long in the toilets. When I tried to jump out, **SR 134** punched me in the nose and made my nose bleed. She didn't even try to stop it; she just let it bleed. I believe she's dead now. They used to bathe us in Jeyes fluid and it burned my skin. I remember as a child my skin coming out in spots from the Jeyes fluid.
21. **SR 116** used to mind our group when **SR 31** was away on retreat. She used to come into the dormitory at night, open the window and say 'Nick, get out from under the bed'. She was talking about the devil and we were terrified. We genuinely believed there was a devil under the bed.

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nursery until she was aged about five years. We didn't have any contact with her other than when we were in the garden. I remember being pulled away from her on one occasion by a nun, **SR 31** I think.

4. There were three groups, St Ann's Group, Sacred Heart Group and Our Lady's Group, and there was one nun in charge of each, **SR 116** **SR 134** and **SR 31**. Each group had approximately thirty three children. Each group was on a different floor in the home and had its' own dormitory. We were all given numbers which the nuns would use to identify us, but at a later stage they started to use our surnames. ^{HIA 63} remembers being called by a number because she is older than me. I would be more familiar being referred to as **SR 116**.
5. We were in St Ann's Group of which **SR 116** was in charge. She had a cell in our dormitory so that she could keep watch on us and make sure we were in bed. The dormitories were like hospitals, with about thirty wee iron beds. We had to paint our beds cream every summer. **SR 116** taught the infants. I was in her class.
6. We got up at 6.45am. In the morning we had to pull our bed sheets back and the nuns would come round to inspect our beds. I only ever wet my bed once, at a time when I was in **SR 134** group. I remember sweating, hoping **SR 134** would pass me by. She pushed me out of the way and felt my bed. She grabbed me by the back of the head and stuck my nose in the bed sheets, and rubbed my face in it, then pulled me back by my hair. If we wet the bed, we had to take our sheets off and leave them on the floor. It was as if we were being marked out, so everyone would know what we had done, and we would be teased by the other girls. We had to make our beds after they were inspected.
7. After our beds were inspected, we had to wash, and then **SR 134** would inspect us. She would point at us and we would have to put out our hands, turn them over so she could look at our arms, and then show our necks. If I had a mark on my neck **SR 134** would scrub it again, but she would use a

Name: Sister Brenda McCall

Date: 29 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 Rose Hutchinson and can confirm she was a resident within Nazareth House. Rose (Mary) Dunn, born 26 September 1954, was admitted to Nazareth House on 3 June 1961 and discharged on 9 January 1970
2. With regard to paragraph 3, the Congregation apologise for the separation in Rose's family. The Sisters acknowledge that groups were often arranged according to age and not according to family groups. The Congregation endeavoured to maintain sibling relationships and it was a common occurrence for the children to visit their siblings whenever possible.
3. With regard to paragraph 4, clothes and belongings were marked with a number to keep them together. The children were known and called by their first names; not the number marked on their belongings and not by their surname. It is possible a staff member or Sister did call Rose by her surname on occasion however this would not have been a common practice.
4. With regard to paragraph 5, the children would not have been expected to paint their beds every summer.
5. With regard to paragraph 6, we cannot accept that Rose would have had her nose and face pushed into the wet bed sheets. We believe the children would have taken the wet sheets off and left them on the floor; this practice was not

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9. I recall being taken to the Royal Victoria Hospital because of my bed wetting and they stuck pins in my bum or used an electric shock. I think the purpose of it was to probe the reasons for the bed wetting.
10. The school was on site and there were both teachers and nuns. The teachers were **NHB 43** **NHB 44** and **NHB 45** The nuns were Sister **SR 189** **SR 134** **SR 177** who taught me when I was very young and **SR 112** who taught the higher classes. The education was very basic, there was no such thing as special attention, and rather those with difficulties were ignored or made an example of.
11. I liked school although I wasn't very good at maths I was able to get by at other subjects. I remember them teaching us pounds, shilling and pence and it was known as L.S.D. In the summer holidays we would get six weeks off school. The nuns would find jobs for us to do dependent on our size. I was small so I always had to stay in the lower section and hence I had to scrub the floors.
12. After school if it was a nice day we were allowed to play in the garden it was more akin to a recreation hall. After school we would get tea and jam then we would go to church for our prayers and then we would have to come back to do some cleaning. At about 6pm we had supper.
13. At the weekends particularly on a Saturday we would spend the day cleaning. We would change our beds, sweep and scrub the dormitory, and then we would have to scrub and polish the wooden floors in the recreation hall. All the children in the home had to do the cleaning. From the age of seven or as soon as you could kneel down you'd be scrubbing.
14. There was always someone supervising the cleaning it was either a nun or one of the older girls. If we were not doing the cleaning correctly we would be clipped across the ear or maybe hit with a fist or kick. Both the nuns and the older girls would have hit us.

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years old at the time. The nuns used to say it was a privilege but if it was why didn't they do it themselves? The other girls and I were treated like slaves.

11. Every Friday night, we had to scrub the long corridors after school. The floors were made of stone and we worked in pairs on our hands and knees with a scrubbing brush and soap. We used to chant "left, right, Peggy's right". We wore a pinafore over our clothes and our pinafore, shoes and socks would be saturated. Our hands would be red and raw. On a Saturday we had to do the same to the floors in the chapel. We had to shine them until you could see your face in the floor. I never once saw the nuns do any physical work, it was always the children.

12. We had to work in the laundry sometimes as well. It was hard, severe work for a child but I didn't really mind because it broke the monotony. The standard the nuns expected of us children was exceptional. A nun would always be standing over you watching you and if you didn't do your chores to their standards, you had to do them again. This very much depended on the mood of the nuns on a particular day. They used to go out collecting on a Saturday and if they had a bad day they would take it out on us when they got back. They used to tell us they would be spat on and verbally abused while out collecting for us.

13. The food in Nazareth House wasn't great but food wasn't top of my list. It didn't bother me to be hungry. I remember going to bed hungry. In the morning we would get porridge and sometimes it would have big lumps in it and you wouldn't want to eat it but you had to eat what was on your plate. A nun and a couple of the older girls did the cooking. Mealtimes were in silence and the supervising nun would single out me and other girls who were whispering. We would have been taken to the front of the dining room and slapped with a cane, ruler, spoon or strap.

14. On one occasion before we were due to go on holiday to Glenariff, we had mutton stew but the mutton was gone off. The smell was horrendous but the nuns made us eat it. All the girls were vomiting including me but the nuns kept

1 you didn't need them.

2 **A. No, unfortunately.**

3 Q. So they were for --

4 **A. But I wanted to win the prize. The whole thing, you**
5 **know, that I tried to point out to you earlier is that**
6 **everything was a competition. Everything that we did**
7 **with each other was to see who was best from cleaning**
8 **the floors to singing, to whatever, to dancing --**

9 Q. Well, on the subject of chores --

10 **A. -- and we were encouraged as well. Whatever we were**
11 **good at we were always encouraged.**

12 Q. The nuns encouraged you to be the best you could be at
13 whatever it was you wanted to do.

14 **A. Yes, yes. I mean, I was allowed to take the record**
15 **player in. I used to go into SR199's classroom on my**
16 **own and take the record player with the Irish dancing**
17 **tunes and I would have danced every day on my own.**

18 Q. In paragraph 15 of your statement you talk about chores
19 and there is a number of matters that aren't in the
20 statement that I just from our discussion earlier I want
21 you to explain to the Panel, because the Panel has heard
22 a lot of evidence about the extent of chores that were
23 required and the -- as I said to you, the Order have
24 said to the Inquiry again in your replying statement,
25 paragraph 7, 2039 -- they say yes, chores were engaged

1 whatever it was that you were asked to do, but the floor
2 polishing itself was a Saturday and a Saturday only.
3 The, come Easter, it would have been -- because Easter
4 -- the Easter calendar within the church is one of the
5 most important times of the year. So therefore before
6 Easter we would have been washing the walls down,
7 sometimes standing on top of chairs, sometimes using
8 mops with rags over them --

9 Q. Yes. Just --

10 A. -- doing the walls.

11 Q. -- you got ahead of me there.

12 A. **Sorry.**

13 Q. You're okay. I was just about to say to you there was
14 a deep clean, as it were, which the kids helped out with
15 at Easter --

16 A. **Yes.**

17 Q. -- which included the likes of cleaning down the walls
18 and so on.

19 A. **Yes.**

20 Q. The point you made to me this was just on a grander
21 scale than you might get your own children to do.

22 A. **Absolutely.**

23 Q. The floors, you pointed out a number of them weren't the
24 parquet floors. They were, in fact, marble floors.

25 A. **That's right. All the hallways were marble.**

1 Q. They were dealt with --

2 A. With a mop and maybe a scrubbing brush as in a deck
3 scrub with a handle, but we didn't have to get down on
4 our hands and knees and do that, no. We usually used
5 a mop. If there had been a stain or something, you
6 would have got it out. Don't forget the school
7 basically went through the large hallway. So there
8 might have been chewing gum, things like that there. So
9 you would have got a knife and scraped it or tried to
10 scrub it with a scrubbing brush by hand, but in general
11 we didn't have to get down and mop the marble stone
12 floors, no.

13 Q. So you didn't see the cleaning role you were asked to
14 perform as a punishment?

15 A. Not at all.

16 Q. You saw it as that's what has to be done to keep the
17 place in good shape?

18 A. It obviously helped me for later life, as I feel it is
19 important for my own children to take a role in their
20 house to help them, that when they get married or
21 whatever, they'll be able to keep house. It teaches you
22 cleanliness or whatever. So -- and when we polished the
23 floors, it was a game. It was an absolute game.
24 Someone polished the floors. It was a big thing to see
25 who was going to -- we all lined up. A square room. We

1 **A. I don't remember how that came about.**

2 Q. But in any event you did speak to the police and you
3 were one of the seven individuals who made statements
4 relating to SR31.

5 **A. Yes.**

6 Q. If we just look, please, at 60311, this is the statement
7 that you made at the time. I know you have had a chance
8 to have a read over this today --

9 **A. Yes.**

10 Q. -- HIA175. You say you have no good memories. You
11 recall SR31 in charge of the unit that you were in. She
12 beat you on a number of occasions, once for dancing to
13 Top of the Pops.

14 **A. Yes.**

15 Q. She beat you with keys that hung by her side.

16 "I ran away from the home once and was taken back by
17 the police. They found me in a doorway."

18 You then talk about the bed wetting connected to
19 **HIA 368** and having to wash your brother --

20 **A. Yes.**

21 Q. -- on occasion, because he was stinking. If we just
22 move through, please, to the next page, and how if you
23 hadn't done the floor cleaning properly, then you were
24 beat with the keys.

25 **A. Yes.**

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10. Our routine was school and prayer, we prayed all through the summer holidays. At one stage they shipped some children to Australia I remember **HIA 335** and [REDACTED] going. We had to pray that they would arrive safely even though the trip would take six weeks. At mass if we didn't go to communion we would be slapped.
11. Bath day was a Thursday and there were three baths all different sizes. Our hair was washed in the first bath and then we were dipped in jeyes fluid, the result of which would be that we would have two big red eyes the following day. We were not allowed to be seen and there would be two people standing with a sheet up. They put some sort of washing soda in the hand basin and we cleaned our teeth there. We never had toothpaste and cleaned our teeth with soap on our finger. It was only when there was a new Mother Superior that we got toothbrushes.
12. Every year we would be taken on a day out around Christmas, they gave us a couple of shillings and we went to Woolworths. I would always buy Gibson's toothpaste in a wee tin. It was dry toothpaste and lasted for quite a period of time. Prior to Christmas the Woolworths ladies would come into the home and put on a concert for us.
13. We were occasionally taken on walks and we had to go like soldiers in a line. We used to pick up the chewing gum on the street and put it in our mouths. We never had sweets and we never got visitors who would bring us any. Even the children that had been given stuff would get it taken off them by the nuns.
14. When the girls in the home took their period they were given sanitary pads that were made in the workhouse. They were big and thick with a wee tab on each of them and a wee belt that you put in. We had to wash them every night and you never got new ones. Our legs were rubbed off us and you had to wash them down the toilet to try and get the blood off. We dried them on our shoulders or we lay on them under our sheet to dry them out. It was

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but I wasn't good at it. I couldn't tell the time. Anything I learned after the Convent, I taught myself. I just listened to everything around me and learned.

9. Each class had a certain time during which we were allowed to use the toilet. No sooner was I back at my desk and I would need to use the toilet again. I think it was my nerves. I was always running to the toilet. When I asked to go the toilet, the nun would say "no, you've already been". I wet the floor dozens of times and I would be sent to get the mop and bucket. This involved me walking through all of the classrooms so all the girls would know what I had done and that was even more embarrassing. And then I had to bring the mop and bucket back and rinse it and wring it, before going back to class. I would be mortified. I think I was just living on my nerves all the time. None of the girls ever made fun of each other, because we all knew what each other was going through. We all stood up for each other.
10. At bath time, we all had to queue up and wait our turn. We were washed in the first bath and then we were but into a second bath that had Jeyes Fluid in it. The nuns would dunk our heads to make sure that the Jeyes Fluid got everywhere and we would be crying with the stinging in our eyes. We were all washed in the same bath water.
11. I always had a very swarthy neck and my teeth were a different colour. In later years my doctor told me that it was a lack of vitamins in my diet. After we got washed we had a routine of showing our hands and arms, turning them round so they could be inspected by the nuns, and putting our heads down so they could check our neck and ears. **SR 145** would make me go back to rewash my neck repeatedly because my skin was slightly darker than the other girls. On one occasion she made me wash my neck eight times. I was a bit older at this stage and I lost my temper with her. I grabbed her and pulled her habit off, and I could see she had ginger hair. The other girls couldn't believe it because I was always so quiet. They were chanting but I told them to stop. I was made to stand on the marble corridor in my bare feet, with only a nightdress on. I had to stand there for hours with my hands on my head. If I was caught taking my hands off my head, I would be made to stand there for

22. Care should be taken to see that children are warm in bed at all seasons of the year; underblankets should always be provided. A feeling of warmth and comfort will play a part in preventing such happenings as night terrors and bed wetting.

23. Bed wetting cannot be attributed to any one cause; if effective help is to be given, the child must be studied as an individual. The trouble may be due to an organic cause, to delay in learning bladder control, or to emotional disturbance due to loneliness, a sense of being left in strange surroundings, or of not being wanted. A feeling of hopelessness about the habit may cause it to persist. A child who persistently wets the bed should be seen by the medical officer so that he can advise on treatment or, if necessary, refer the case to a hospital or child guidance clinic.

24. Understanding and consideration on the part of the staff are of the first importance. Bed wetters should not be separated from other children, and members of the staff dealing with the child or with the wet bed should proceed in a matter of fact way, and should never exhibit impatience, disgust or anxiety. Mackintosh sheets should be used only when necessary; when they have to be used, a thin blanket should be placed between the mackintosh and the bed sheet. Sheets should always be changed after being wet. Bed wetters should not be required to wash their sheets. There is nothing to be gained by restricting drinks unreasonably, but it is undesirable that any child should drink large quantities late in the evening. There should be easy and lighted access at night to a lavatory, and where necessary the children should have their own chamber pots.

RECREATION

25. Play is as necessary to children as food and sleep; through it they develop in mind, body and personality. Play should not be thought of only in terms of organised activities. The children should be given ample opportunity to play and amuse themselves in their own way, and should be encouraged in initiative, resource and self-reliance. They should be taught to use the facilities of the neighbourhood, for instance, the public library, and allowed a reasonable choice of their own books.

26. Indoors, the children should have a varied supply of play material, including materials for dressing up; hobbies should be encouraged, and opportunity given to look at picture books, to read newspapers and periodicals suited to their age, and to listen to the gramophone and wireless. Children should be encouraged to choose their programmes, and not have the wireless on continuously. There should be small tables at which the children may play games or pursue hobbies, and arrangements should be made, if possible, for a child to have some place where a half-finished model or other cherished piece of work can be left with safety.

27. Fresh air, sunshine and activity are essential to the health and the full physical and mental development of children. Much of their time should be spent out-of-doors. Where the garden is large enough, part of it should be set aside for the free use of the children. Sand-pits in suitable conditions and if properly looked after, provide happy occupation for small children. The keeping of pets gives children the experience of caring for living things and develops a sense of responsibility. Bicycles, besides being popular, provide training for the older children in independence and road sense. The children should be taught to look after the bicycles as well as to enjoy their use. Outings and treats should be arranged. As opportunity offers, the children should be helped in the observation of growing and living things and in the life of the countryside.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

28. Children need training in how to use and look after their toilet articles, which they should regard as their own property and be able to identify easily. Individual towels, face cloths, tooth brushes (with individual tooth paste or powder) and brushes and combs should be provided and clearly marked by name or initials, or, in the case of children too young to read, by symbols which they can

recognise. Towels should be hung so that they dry and are not in contact. Supervision may be necessary in the use and care of these articles, but the aim should be to train the children as quickly as possible in habits of personal cleanliness and independence. Baths, with clean water for each child, should be taken at least twice a week, just before bed, and the children should be trained to bath themselves. Bedtimes naturally vary with the ages of the children, and it should be possible to plan some bathing each night without interfering with evening activities. The children's hair should be washed regularly, and attention given to the cleanliness of their heads. Children should be trained in regular habits and encouraged to report constipation; an aperient should never be given as a matter of routine, but only where it is required in the individual case. The needs of the adolescent girl should be provided for.

DRESS AND FOOTWEAR

29. Uniformity of dress is to be avoided. The disadvantages of central purchasing should be weighed against its advantages. There should be variety, and opportunity for individual choice. Children attending school or a youth organisation should wear the kind of clothes that are required. From an early age, children should accompany the housemother when she is buying their clothes. Older children should be taught something of the prices and suitability of clothes and materials, and the girls should be encouraged to make attractive clothes for themselves. Uniformity should be avoided also in such matters as the dressing and cutting of hair.

30. Great care should be taken to provide children with correctly fitting boots and shoes. They must be of adequate length with flexible soles to allow proper use of the foot muscles, and the heels should fit comfortably. The passing of part-worn footwear from one child to another carries with it the risk of injury and possibly infection to the feet: where it is done, only well-fitting boots or shoes which are in good condition and not in any way misshapen should be passed on. It is important also to see that the feet of socks or stockings are of sufficient length after laundering as well as when new.

MONEY AND PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

31. Learning to handle money is an essential part of a child's training in everyday matters. Children should have a reasonable and known amount of pocket money. While pocket money will usually be given weekly, it may be helpful on occasion to give a larger sum for a longer period so that the experience of weighing the usual limited expenditure against the making of some special purchase may be possible. Older children should be allowed whenever possible to undertake shopping for the home, and to buy things for their own use. Younger children should be allowed to accompany the older children or housemother on shopping expeditions, and themselves be trusted to make simple purchases such as small birthday presents. Those nearing school-leaving age might be given an allowance to cover the purchase of clothes and personal necessities and so learn to take a greater pride in their own things. Unless some arrangement of this kind is made, a child may start work without knowing how to lay out money on personal needs.

HELP IN THE HOME

32. Boys and girls should be expected to take a moderate share in the daily running of the home, but not at the expense of sleep, meals, education or reasonable recreation. Young children should not be discouraged from trying to help in the house. Older children, in assisting members of staff, should progress from light routine tasks, such as dusting, bed-making and washing up, to skilled work, such as cooking, bottling, ironing and making things for the home. It is sometimes forgotten that a share in the running of the house means a share in the interesting as well as in the dull occupations. Older children could be given some responsibility for planning meals, purchasing household goods and checking the laundry, and should have opportunity of attending demonstrations or exhibitions of domestic interest in the neighbourhood.

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6. I was beaten senseless sometimes, either because I said something wrong, or because the nun didn't like me. When we did not do the right thing, we were slapped around the head and the back of the neck. The nuns would hit us on both sides of our hands with a ruler, until our hands bled. We were getting punched most days for something or other. If we did not cry, they would hit us around the face and pick us up by the ears. Sometimes it left me dizzy and momentarily dumb. Sometimes at school, if we didn't know an answer or we were being punished, we had our hands tied behind our backs and the nuns would come behind us and slap us on the head. They also hit us with the leather belts they wore around their waist. We also would have been dragged to the front of the class, where we had to stand in the corner with a dunce hat on. They would make us kneel on the ground for a long time. I was put in a dark room for talking out loud. When we got older, we were put in charge of younger ones, and when they did wrong, we were punished as well. I used to stare at the nuns in the eye and I would refuse to cry until I get into bed at night-time. I don't know where I got my strength from.
7. We were worked as children, like little slaves. We had to clean and polish the floors and stairs, which we did with cloths tied to our feet. We had to polish the church, and do the washing. I had to gather wet sheets up, take them across the courtyard to where the laundry was and put them in big hot tubs. There was many a night where I had to kneel at the top of the dormitory darning socks, and I would fall asleep on the floor. There was a bucket of socks for me to work through. The rest of the children would be asleep somewhere. The nuns would come and bump me on the head whilst I was working, and I wouldn't even know what I had done wrong to deserve this. I was made to darn the socks at least one night a week. I was quite a stubborn child, and I believe that I might have been made to do these chores because the nuns saw me as being defiant. They were trying to break us down. We received no payment for the work we did.
8. In the morning we had to get up and tidy the area around our bed. We were stripped naked first thing in the morning. We had to take our nightclothes off and walk naked down cold halls into the bathroom. It was embarrassing. We

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were bathed two or three times a week. The nuns put Jeyes fluid into the bath water, and it would burn our skin. The same water was used for all the children and it was cold by the end. The nuns washed our mouths out with carbolic soap, which made us feel sick. We had to stand naked and have our hair washed in big tin baths in the yard, regardless of the weather. We were checked for nits. If I had nits, the nuns would cut all my hair off, and then push my head back down into the water. Sometimes it felt like they were drowning me. They would hit me at the same time and pour Jeyes fluid onto my skin. They would hit us if we tried to lift our head out of the water. Sometimes we would try and wet our hair so it would look as if we were already washed, but the nuns would smell it to check, and then they would really make us feel as if we were going to drown to teach us a lesson. If we wet the bed, we had to walk around the yard with the sheets on our head and no shoes on, regardless of the rain and snow, so that everyone could see us. Sometimes the nuns would rub our faces in the wet sheets. On a Friday night, we were made to stand naked in a big hall and hold our knickers in our hands and turn them inside out so the nuns would inspect them. If my underwear was soiled, I would be punished and called a rank, smelly dirty girl. The first time I had my period, I was petrified. I thought the devil had actually got me for all the bad things the nuns told me I did. I tucked myself up in bed and wouldn't get out. The nuns told me I was an evil wicked child because of what the devil had done to me. They never told me what was actually happening to me. There was no education about personal development.

9. Our clothing was not warm enough for the winter days when we were put into the garden. We would be sent out without any coat, and indeed I don't remember having a coat at all the entire time I was in Nazareth House. Our clothes were always hand-me-downs, and we generally didn't have our own personal clothes. Everything was shared. My shoes were always too big for me and sometimes I needed an elastic band to keep them on. Sometimes we used to steal apples from the Holy Rosary. We would tuck them in our knickers. When the nuns realised what we were doing, they started to remove the elastic from our knickers so that we couldn't hide anything in there. We had to tie string around our legs instead.

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who shouted at me for waking them. I was hit and called names by the other children. I got up and turned the buzzer off. The nun never got up. I eventually learned to turn the buzzer off before I went to sleep so that it wouldn't make a noise if I wet the bed. The following morning I had to strip the bed and rinse the sheets in cold water in the bathroom. I then took them to the laundry. My bed was always made with fresh sheets the following evening but I have no recollection of doing that myself or how that was done. I was taken to see a doctor at the Ulster Hospital twice and I think it was about my bed wetting.

11. We were given a bath twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays. The baths were filled with water and Jeyes fluid. In the summertime we had our hair washed in tubs of water containing Jeyes fluid in the yard of Nazareth House. Before our bath the nuns inspected us and our underwear. I was given the number [REDACTED] at some stage and I had to shout it out when I was showing the nun my clothes. If our underwear was not clean we got a slap across the face. I had quite swarthy skin and I have a clear memory of **SR 134** grabbing me by the scruff of the neck and scrubbing my neck over the sink until it bled. **SR 189** got an older girl called [REDACTED] to scrub my neck. She was told to do it again and again as I was still dirty. A couple of days later when [REDACTED] was cleaning Sister **SR 189** pointed to a pile of dust in the corner and said "I suppose you are going to tell me that can't be cleaned because it is swarthy".
12. I remember one day when we were playing in the hall, which was only permitted when there was very heavy rain, one of the nuns either **SR 59** or another nun called three girls to the front, told them to bend over the stage and punished them by pulling their pants down and smacking their bare bottoms in front of everyone.
13. I remember being beaten by **SR 116**. It was always for a trivial reason. She had a classroom that you were made to stand outside and wait for her to call you in to hit you. She used a bamboo cane and hit me again and again on the arm. It was extremely painful and left marks on my arm. She hit you until you cried so I learned to cry as quickly as possible. There was also a lady called **NHB 32** who worked in the sewing room who hit me. I was called in to

1 You say:

2 "Bathtime took place twice a week",

3 and you were talking about this earlier with me and
4 you were saying that there would be one child in the
5 bath, one waiting to go in and one getting dried --

6 **A. Yes.**

7 **Q.** -- and that was how it operated. Is that right?

8 **A. Yes. Christine, what happened, the first one went into**
9 **the bath. We sat down. The next -- no. The first one**
10 **went in. She was washing her feet at the side of the**
11 **bath. Then she moved up to the bath, sat in the bath**
12 **and the bath was full of water. The water was freezing**
13 **anyway and Jeyes fluid stung you right around you**
14 **(gesturing). They didn't care. I don't know who put**
15 **the Jeyes fluid in, but the Jeyes fluid was in the bath**
16 **when we went into the bathroom, and then the girl who**
17 **was finishing with her bath, she had to get out and**
18 **stand in the corner and dry herself. She dried her...**
19 **-- she must have dried herself with the soaking towel**
20 **that everybody else used.**

21 **Q.** There was another child waiting to get into the bath
22 after her. Is that right?

23 **A. Once they moved up, the other child moved in, sat at the**
24 **-- sat on the edge of the bath and scrubbed her leg and**
25 **waited till the other girl who was in the bath to get**

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Once a week you got your underwear changed. We had to show each side and if you had a mark on your knickers you got a hiding from [SR 134]

13. There was another nun called [SR 116] who was a wicked woman. I never had much contact with her but I saw her abuse and beat children - she used to take them away upstairs sometimes and they'd come back upset. We were all terrified of a nun called [SR 145] who worked in the sewing room where we got our uniforms. She never did anything; she just put the fear of God into you. Not all the nuns were nasty. There was a nun called [SR 190] [SR 190] who worked in the kitchen who was lovely and then [SR 191] [SR 191] who worked in the old people's home was nice too.

14. Some girls in the home used to wet the bed and they were made to walk round with their damp sheets around them. I used to be one of the girls who got up in the middle of the night to get the 'wet the beds' up because my bed was next to [SR 134] cell under her window. After a while I had to stop this though because I became violently sick when I woke up out of my sleep suddenly. I suffer from Meniere's disease which is a disorder of the inner ear that causes vertigo. I've had this since I was a child but it was never diagnosed. I was very ill as a child and the nuns just left me in bed. They didn't have much choice because if I stood up I just fell down again. We had to sleep with our hands crossed over our chest. I now know this was to stop us touching ourselves. I still sleep like that to this day. We also used to have to sit on our hands to stop us fidgeting and I find myself doing that even now.

15. I hated bath time in the home. We got baths about twice a week. There were two bathrooms with four baths. We were bathed in Jeyes fluid and our skin used to be red raw from it. We had our hair washed in it as well. We lined up and you would try to be first in the queue because the water was warm at first but it certainly wasn't warm at the end. One girl would sit on the edge of the bath scrubbing her knees while another girl was in the bath. Then you got in the bath when she got out. When you got out the older girls held a sheet up and you had to stand in the corner with the wet sheet around you.

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bathroom. I was caught getting back into my bed and one of the older girls told the nun I was running round the dormitory waking everybody up. The nun hit me a few times with her bare hands she then picked up my studded shoes hitting me so hard. She caught me with the stud just across the right eye and it split open causing blood to go everywhere. She took me to the bathroom to wash the blood and put a bandage and a plaster on it. I was told if anyone asked what happened I was to say that I had fallen out of the bed and knocked my head of the corner of the bedside locker. I wasn't allowed in the classroom until the swelling had gone down I was hidden away in case any visitors to the home would see me and ask questions. They brought me my work in the recreation hall. I was never treated by a doctor for this injury and still have the scar which I call my third eyebrow.

28. We were bathed twice a week on a Wednesday and Saturday. They used jeyes fluid and when we got out of the bath we would be burning up to our waists because they used so much. The routine was that you would firstly have your hair washed with carbolic soap then rinsed out in a separate bath. We wore a sleeveless shaped shift dress garment while we had a bath so we couldn't see what our bodies looked like. We used a flannel under the dress to wash ourselves.
29. The nuns and the older girls were in charge at bath time. There would be one girl in the bath and then another girl would be getting her feet washed. Then at the corner a girl would be holding up a sheet like a curtain, it wasn't a towel but you were expected to get dried and dressed.
30. One day at bath time **SR 189** the nun in charge said that my neck was still dirty and I had to wash it again. It was a mark and she said that I didn't know how to wash my own neck. She got a floor scrubbing brush and scrubbed my neck until it was red raw and bleeding. It was a mark of sunburn and I was about eight or nine at the time.
31. I worked in the laundry and we had to wash the nun's wimples. They were washed and starched and then pressed by **NHB 35** I was sent to

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31. I worked in the laundry and we had to wash the nun's wimples. They were washed and starched and then pressed by **NHB 35** I was sent to

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before mass. Other bed wetters were also subjected to the same treatment and called names by the nuns.

8. Once a week on a Thursday night we had to line up and show our knickers to the nuns. If they were not clean we got shouted at or they would hit you over the head with your knickers. We only got a clean pair of knickers once per week so I do not know how they expected them to be clean. It was humiliating and degrading.
9. I think we had a bath every Tuesday and Saturday night. At bath time we were treated as though we were dirty animals and we were bathed in Jeyes fluid and scrubbed all over with carbolic soap, including our genitals. The older girls would have scrubbed us and the nuns would just have supervised. It was awful and it made my skin and my vagina really sore. I suffered from eczema and I think it was as a result of the carbolic soap. There was a nun who we had to go to if we needed a plaster or something. It was either **SR 134** or **SR 122** **SR 122** I cannot remember. I lined up to see her one day because my vagina was stinging from the Jeyes fluid in the bath but she told me to go away so I never got to tell her what was wrong.
10. When we had our bath we were all expected to share the same bath water. I did not like it because by the time I got a bath the water was always dirty and cold. I remember one occasion I went up early to try and get bathed first when the water was hot and clean. I think I was about seven or eight years old. I was in the bath when **SR 134** came in. There were a couple of other girls but I cannot remember their names. **SR 134** started shouting at me. She then grabbed my hair and started repeatedly pushing my head under the water, holding it down and then pulling me back up by the hair. I remember being petrified and unable to breathe. She then dragged me out of the bath by the hair and started to whip me over my legs and back with the leather belt she wore around her waist. I had red marks where the belt had hit me. I have been left with a fear of water. I was unable to take my sons swimming as children and I still do not enjoy taking baths.

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10. We all wore the same clothes, it was like a uniform. There was one nun who was very cruel, **SR 122**. She was in charge of the sewing room. We had to wear an apron, and we would call them pinnies. We had one pinnie to wear for a whole week, and then every Saturday morning it was inspected. If the pinnie was torn or had even the tiniest bit of dirt, we would get it from **SR 122**. On one occasion I tore my pinnie and my sister **NHB 52** hid it for me, by rolling it up in her own pinnie, but when it was discovered, she was hit by **SR 122**.
11. We were bathed twice a week. I remember the nuns would put Jeyes fluid in the bath, and it would sting really badly if we had any cuts. Sometimes ten other children would be in the bath before it was my turn so the water wasn't fresh. Older girls would sometimes supervise bath time, and they could be just as bad as the nuns. They were always rough and pulling at us.
12. The food in the home was terrible, but we were always hungry so we just had to eat it. We weren't starved but we still weren't fed a proper nutritional diet. The food was very bland and stodgy. We had lumpy porridge for breakfast. We were given pork pies that were just full of jelly and fat. The nuns would walk up and down the tables and stand behind us, always watching to make sure we ate our meals. I was physically sick at times. Sometimes I tried to hide my food, put it down my knickers. I remember being hungry quite a few times and going to steal apples and rhubarb out of the nun's part. I wouldn't say we ever felt full. On feast days, and at Christmas, a bottle of HP sauce and a bowl of sugar would have been put on the table. I don't remember being cold in the home.
13. **SR 31** had a massive bunch of keys, like jailers keys, and she had a habit of digging them into our heads. If we were talking at the table at mealtimes, she would come behind us and hit us with the keys. They are what I remember most about **SR 31**. We called her **SR 31** because we could hear her coming a mile away with the jingle of her keys. We very rarely saw her smile or laugh. **SR 31** had her favourite children. On one

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14. When there were visitors for other girls I remember begging to be allowed to bring the tea to them. When you brought the tea in, the visitors would give you a threepence bit and it was like winning the lottery. I don't remember anybody from Social Services or the Welfare ever visiting the home or offering any support.
15. There was a priest in Nazareth House who would take me and other children out in his red sports car. He would take us in groups of one or two. I can't remember the priest's name. He would give you sweets and hug and kiss you. He was affectionate towards us but we didn't realise it was inappropriate. We thought it was brilliant getting out of the home.
16. At bath time, we had to line up and the older girls took charge of the younger ones. The girl who was in charge of me would trail my hair and check for nits with a fine tooth comb. You nearly got the scalp taken off you. We were bathed once a week with carbolic soap. I can't remember if the water was warm but it was never changed – you just took turns getting in and out. Some of the older girls were treated very badly over the years and then they were bad to us younger ones but they were only repeating what happened to them.
17. I can't really remember the food in Nazareth House except for one occasion when **SR 31** force fed me onions. I wouldn't eat my dinner because there were onions in it so she stuffed them in my mouth and made me violently sick. To this day I won't touch onions because of that memory.
18. I went to school onsite in Nazareth House but I can't really remember much about it.
19. I had friends in the home – was one of my best friends and was another close friend. I also remember a girl called who I heard died of cancer recently.
20. I remember being sent on a train to Dublin once and there was a nun waiting for me at the other end. For some reason though I was sent back to Nazareth

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were bathed two or three times a week. The nuns put Jeyes fluid into the bath water, and it would burn our skin. The same water was used for all the children and it was cold by the end. The nuns washed our mouths out with carbolic soap, which made us feel sick. We had to stand naked and have our hair washed in big tin baths in the yard, regardless of the weather. We were checked for nits. If I had nits, the nuns would cut all my hair off, and then push my head back down into the water. Sometimes it felt like they were drowning me. They would hit me at the same time and pour Jeyes fluid onto my skin. They would hit us if we tried to lift our head out of the water. Sometimes we would try and wet our hair so it would look as if we were already washed, but the nuns would smell it to check, and then they would really make us feel as if we were going to drown to teach us a lesson. If we wet the bed, we had to walk around the yard with the sheets on our head and no shoes on, regardless of the rain and snow, so that everyone could see us. Sometimes the nuns would rub our faces in the wet sheets. On a Friday night, we were made to stand naked in a big hall and hold our knickers in our hands and turn them inside out so the nuns would inspect them. If my underwear was soiled, I would be punished and called a rank, smelly dirty girl. The first time I had my period, I was petrified. I thought the devil had actually got me for all the bad things the nuns told me I did. I tucked myself up in bed and wouldn't get out. The nuns told me I was an evil wicked child because of what the devil had done to me. They never told me what was actually happening to me. There was no education about personal development.

9. Our clothing was not warm enough for the winter days when we were put into the garden. We would be sent out without any coat, and indeed I don't remember having a coat at all the entire time I was in Nazareth House. Our clothes were always hand-me-downs, and we generally didn't have our own personal clothes. Everything was shared. My shoes were always too big for me and sometimes I needed an elastic band to keep them on. Sometimes we used to steal apples from the Holy Rosary. We would tuck them in our knickers. When the nuns realised what we were doing, they started to remove the elastic from our knickers so that we couldn't hide anything in there. We had to tie string around our legs instead.

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12. I went to primary school onsite in Nazareth House. [SR 116] [SR 31] [SR 31] and [SR 31] all taught in the school. When I was eleven I remember thinking I'd be doing my 11+ soon but then [SR 31] told me I wasn't eleven, I was only ten. That was deliberate on [SR 31] part. She didn't like me and it was about control. I had to stay an extra year in [SR 31] [SR 31] class then and I never did my 11+. I went to St. Monica's Secondary School on the Ravenhill Road but I left when I was fifteen. The nuns never encouraged education. I believe if I had stayed in school longer and got some qualifications it would have been better for my career.
13. We had a lot of chores to do in the home. It wasn't just a bit of cleaning or tidying up after you; it was excessive manual labour. There was a huge hall with parquet flooring and we had to wax and polish that every weekend. There was a line of us and one girl would put the wax on, the next would polish it and so on. That floor was gleaming by the time we were finished with it. In the mornings after breakfast, we had to go and mop and clean the landings. [SR 116] would come along with her finger to see if you missed any dust. It was hard work – too much for small children.
14. A lot of the children in the home wet the bed. I never did but I witnessed the humiliation those girls suffered. Before they got the buzzers for the beds, I remember one nun who I think was [SR 134] putting the wet sheet over a girl's head as punishment for wetting the bed. That happened to a few different girls.
15. We got bathed once a week in Nazareth House. There were three tin baths for washing our hair out in the yard – one for each group. We had to queue up and take our turn. The water was warm but it was never changed so you were lucky if you got washed first you got the clean water but if you got washed last the water was filthy. We were bathed in Jeyes fluid which should never have been used. When it was put into the bath, the water turned white. The Jeyes fluid made my skin red and inflamed. We had to wear a pinafore in the bath to protect our modesty and when you got out you had a sheet put around you.

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he stayed for about six months. [REDACTED] wasn't taken into care because he would have been about eighteen. He went to live with his paternal granny.

4. The intention was that I would be put into Nazareth Lodge, but apparently I refused to leave [HIA 175] so agreement was reached that I would stay in Nazareth House.
5. I was in the same group as [HIA 175] I slept with the rest of the girls in the dormitory. I would have wet the bed a lot. Sometimes I would wake up with the nun hitting me because she knew I had wet the bed. I was made to stand out in the hallway with a wet sheet over my head. If she could, [HIA 175] would try to hide the sheets and change them before the nuns found out that I had wet the bed.
6. I was made to bath with the older girls because there were no separate facilities for boys. We were all put in the same bath at the same time. The nuns used to put a bowl over my head to cut my hair.
7. I remember that I never liked butter, probably because we didn't have butter when I lived with my mother and I wasn't used to it. They would plaster the food with it. I hated vegetables because we were forced to eat them. We weren't allowed to leave the table until we had finished everything that was in front of us.
8. The nuns gave us hidings for nothing. There are very few good memories that I have of my time in Nazareth House. I don't remember going to school.
9. Some of the older girls used to sexually abuse me. This would have taken place when I was aged between eight and eleven years, and they would have been in their mid teens. They made me climb up their nightdress and touch them intimately. It happened in the dormitory, and there would have been a few girls present at the time.
10. Somebody from Social Services would take us out to buy clothes and whatever else we needed, but as soon as we went back into the home, the

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11. On Saturdays we used to have to go down to the workroom to have our underwear changed. We had to queue up and show the gusset of our underwear to [REDACTED] SR 122 [REDACTED]. If you had any marks on your underwear, you would get cracked around the head. I always remember when lights went out on Friday night; there would be a lot of scrambling about with girls trying to swap their underwear. The older girls used to bully the younger ones into swapping their underwear with them. When you moved from the nursery to the older girls' part you were assigned a charge who showed you how to make your bed and wash your socks in carbolic soap.
12. We had a lot of chores to do in the home. All the floors were made of herringbone oak and we had to wax and polish these large halls. About fifteen of us would line up and then the nun would throw orange wax on the floor. We had to get down on our knees and polish back and forth until the floor was gleaming. We also had to clean the windows, the pews in the church and the candles. There was a furnace outside the dining room and every so often a girl would be picked to go and sweep the cockroaches off the wall so the handyman [REDACTED] could throw them in the fire. I was petrified of doing that and I used to have nightmares about the cockroaches. [REDACTED] was a lovely, kind man and he would try to cheer the children up.
13. One of the punishments for talking in the dormitory was being forced to kneel on the floor in your nightdress with your nose pushed up against the cold wall. I was talking one night after lights out and [REDACTED] SR 134 [REDACTED] came out of her cell and made me do this. She would be looking out of her cell window and if you dared to slump or relax she would knock on the window. She would leave you like that for a long, long time and if you fell asleep she would come out and straighten your face so your nose was touching the wall again. Eventually she would give up and fall asleep and then you could fall asleep but it seemed to go on for ages. The bedding in the dormitories was fine – I was always warm when I was in bed but the mattresses were very thin. There was central heating in the home but the radiators were always only lukewarm and were turned off at night.

1 Q. You remember SR134 putting a sheet over a girl's head
2 who'd wet the bed.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. She had to kneel with the sheet over her body. You say:
5 "She said, 'Yes, you can smell that for the rest of
6 the night'",

7 and she was left there, which to you seemed like
8 hours.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. You don't remember her name.

11 A. I don't remember her name, but I wanted to include this
12 in my statement hoping that I could give some credence
13 or credibility or validation to somebody else's
14 statement, because it wasn't me, but I wanted to say
15 that I had witnessed that. I don't remember the girl's
16 name, but if someone has made a statement, I witnessed
17 that, that it was something that did go on.

18 Q. You mention that there were alarms used --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- on the bed. I think they were an early, quite
21 advanced for its time --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- attempt to medically deal with the problem. Do you
24 remember how many there were in your group of these
25 devices on the bed?

1 **A. There was a lot. There was a lot of them, yes. I think**
2 **they replaced the brown mackintosh things they used to**
3 **put on beds, and then these alarms were introduced, but**
4 **there was a lot of alarms I seem to remember, yes.**

5 Q. The Order has said to the Inquiry that while they accept
6 they didn't deal appropriately with bedwetting -- this
7 is in paragraph 10 of their replying statement --

8 **A. Uh-huh.**

9 Q. -- they don't accept that a Sister would have put a wet
10 sheet over someone in this way. That's your
11 recollection of what -- what occurred?

12 **A. It very, very definitely occurred, because it's a memory**
13 **that haunts me. It didn't happen to me, but it was the**
14 **shivering, because the sheet was over her head, and it**
15 **was the shivering of this person really, really got to**
16 **me, because I couldn't help her. I couldn't do anything**
17 **for her, but she was shaking, and she was shaking**
18 **because she was cold. That's in my head now.**

19 Q. You explain in the last two lines of paragraph 15 the
20 stigma that bedwetting carried and you refer to someone
21 who wet the bed being called a "Fish". Then there were
22 some who soiled the bed and they were called "Messy
23 Bum".

24 **A. Yes.**

25 Q. I was asking you and you were explaining to me those

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years and we put on a concert for her. We did Irish dancing and we often won but we never got our medals. At Christmas time, we used to go out to parties in Mackies on the Falls Road. If we brought any sweets or anything back we would never see them again. I remember once the American Navy brought us out to see a submarine. We used to go to Glenariff for two weeks in the summer to a house owned by the Christian Brothers. It was an escape for us. We used to sing "this time next week, where shall we be – outside the gates of misery".

8. We all wore the same dresses and under slips in the home. There was never any individuality. I have seen photos of girls wearing different clothes and I think they must have been taken when the girls were going out to families and the nuns wanted them to look good. When a nun died we would all march in a procession from Nazareth House to the graveyard in Nazareth Lodge. We were all dressed in black from top to toe including these lovely black coats that we never saw again. There was three days of mourning whenever a nun died – we weren't allowed to go into the nuns' garden and the death knell rang continuously.
9. After tea we went to the bathroom where we queued up for washing and examination. We lined up and the nuns would examine our hands - back and front, our arms, ears and feet. Then we had to line up and show our underwear for stains. If your underwear was stained you were sent to the queue with the 'wet beds'. These girls were singled out and put in a separate line every evening. They were slapped regularly, roused in the middle of the night and their wet sheets were put over their heads. They would be lined up inhaling their own urine in the freezing cold. Everybody lived in fear of being associated with the 'wet beds'.
10. The main nuns I remember are **SR 189**, **SR 134** and **SR 183**. **SR 189** and **SR 134** were in charge of the children and **SR 183** was in the workroom. **SR 190** worked in the top kitchen and Sister **SR 145** looked after the older girls. We knew of **SR 145** reputation from a young age. The older girls spoke harshly of her and we knew about her

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14. There was an old people's section in Nazareth House and once you got to ten or eleven there was an expectation that you'd go down and help out. I remember having to empty these plastic things that they used to spit the catarrh into and rinse them out. This used to make me sick. Whenever one of the old people died, you were expected to go into the morgue and say a prayer at their coffin. This happened quite often and it was really traumatic for me to be exposed to that as a child. I had dreams about dead bodies and the stench of death stayed with me.
15. Girls who wet the bed were humiliated in Nazareth House. I remember one girl in my dormitory wet the bed and [SR 134] came out, pulled the sheet off the bed and put it over the girl's head. [SR 134] made her kneel with the wet sheet over her body. She said "yes you can smell that for the rest of the night" and left her there shivering for hours. I don't remember the girl's name. She would have been about eight years old at the time. The nuns had alarms on the beds of girls who used to wet the bed but I never understood the point of these. They woke everybody up. There was a real stigma attached to bed wetting. If you wet the bed you were called a fish and if you soiled the bed you were called 'messy bum'. That stuck with you until the day you left.
16. I went to primary school onsite in Nazareth House. My teacher was called [REDACTED] and then depending on how you did in her class you either went into [SR 31] class or [SR 134] class. [SR 31] was preparing girls for the 11+ and she had a lot of outside girls in her class whereas [SR 134] [SR 134] took the remedial class. My older sister [HIA 63] was in [SR 31] class and [SR 31] didn't like her because [HIA 63] would challenge the status quo. Because I was [HIA 63] sister, [SR 31] said there was no way I was going in to her class so I ended up in [SR 134] remedial class for two years doing jigsaws.
17. I didn't sit the 11+ as you weren't expected to if you were in [SR 134] class and I had no preparation for it given that I had spent two years in a

may have been given a gown to protect their modesty however this was not a practice to degrade [REDACTED] body in any way.

7. With regard to paragraph 11, we are aware of allegations that the children's underwear would have been checked; however we find it difficult to accept that this was a common practice.
8. With regard to paragraph 12, the Congregation has accepted that the children were given chores to do within the home; however these chores were not considered excessive. The children would not be given the chore of sweeping cockroaches off the wall for the handyman to throw into the fire. We are not aware of an issue with cockroaches in the houses.
9. With regard to paragraph 13, it is accepted that the children would be punished for misdemeanours or misbehaviour. We do not accept that the children were made to kneel on the floor with their nose pushed against the cold wall.
10. With regard to paragraph 15, a number of allegations have been made regarding bed wetting in Nazareth House and the Sisters of Nazareth are upset that they did not assist children in a satisfactory manner. Whilst our methods in dealing with bed wetting may not have been appropriate in every case; we do not accept that Sister would have put the wet sheet over a child's head and made her kneel with the wet sheet over her body.
11. With regard to paragraph 16, the Sisters sought to provide an adequate education for all children.
12. With regard to paragraph 17, it may have been difficult for a Sister to discuss puberty and sexual education with children. Any parent in this position could understand that this is a difficult conversation to have with a child and we regret how these changes may have been overlooked due to discomfort or embarrassment.
13. With regard to paragraph 18, most children would have been encouraged to go on day trips and holidays with benefactors or local couples/families. The Sisters would try to ensure that those responsible for the children were pleasant and good-natured.
14. With regard to paragraph 20, the sexual abuse of children within our care has only recently come to our attention. The Sisters are horrified and shocked that this abuse

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favourite girls, and they always seemed to favour the girls who had families outside of the home. It seemed to me that the girls who didn't have any family always got it hardest from the nuns, probably because they had no one to turn to. We were also punished more often than the children who had family come in to see them. They were very harsh on us, and slapped and picked on us for very minor things. They were always crushing us. I believe the nuns knew they had to be more careful and they couldn't be as hard on the girls with families in case they were caught out.

4. **SR 134** had a cell in our dormitory. She would get us up in the morning. We had to tell her if we wet the bed. Bed-wetters were degraded by **SR 134** **SR 134** in front of everybody else, and we were told we were dirty. We had to pull our dirty sheets off the bed and take them to be washed. I recall on one occasion when I wet the bed, **SR 134** rubbed my nose in the sheets. We were then sent down to the bathroom where we were bathed in cold water. There was Jeyes fluid in the bath water. We would be degraded again in the bathroom. I believe we were wetting the bed because we were a bundle of nerves. We were being constantly humiliated. At one stage we got rubber sheets, and there was an alarm attached. If we wet the bed, an alarm would sound to wake us up, and the nun would come out and make us go to the toilet. It was an awful way to treat a child.
5. We all wore the same gingham dress, like a uniform. We had to go to church early in the morning, before we went to school. **SR 134** had long fingernails and she would pinch us on the arm really hard if we weren't paying attention. **SR 116** and **SR 31** would nip us as well. Sometimes we got a knock to the head instead, or a nip at the back of the neck. I didn't even understand really about Church as it was just a drill we were going through.
6. There wasn't an education at all. The school was non-existent in terms of teaching. All I can remember about the school is the religious aspect of the teaching. It was an education of religion and fear. **SR 134** **SR 31** and **SR 116** were teachers in the school. There was a kind of

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were bathed two or three times a week. The nuns put Jeyes fluid into the bath water, and it would burn our skin. The same water was used for all the children and it was cold by the end. The nuns washed our mouths out with carbolic soap, which made us feel sick. We had to stand naked and have our hair washed in big tin baths in the yard, regardless of the weather. We were checked for nits. If I had nits, the nuns would cut all my hair off, and then push my head back down into the water. Sometimes it felt like they were drowning me. They would hit me at the same time and pour Jeyes fluid onto my skin. They would hit us if we tried to lift our head out of the water. Sometimes we would try and wet our hair so it would look as if we were already washed, but the nuns would smell it to check, and then they would really make us feel as if we were going to drown to teach us a lesson. If we wet the bed, we had to walk around the yard with the sheets on our head and no shoes on, regardless of the rain and snow, so that everyone could see us. Sometimes the nuns would rub our faces in the wet sheets. On a Friday night, we were made to stand naked in a big hall and hold our knickers in our hands and turn them inside out so the nuns would inspect them. If my underwear was soiled, I would be punished and called a rank, smelly dirty girl. The first time I had my period, I was petrified. I thought the devil had actually got me for all the bad things the nuns told me I did. I tucked myself up in bed and wouldn't get out. The nuns told me I was an evil wicked child because of what the devil had done to me. They never told me what was actually happening to me. There was no education about personal development.

9. Our clothing was not warm enough for the winter days when we were put into the garden. We would be sent out without any coat, and indeed I don't remember having a coat at all the entire time I was in Nazareth House. Our clothes were always hand-me-downs, and we generally didn't have our own personal clothes. Everything was shared. My shoes were always too big for me and sometimes I needed an elastic band to keep them on. Sometimes we used to steal apples from the Holy Rosary. We would tuck them in our knickers. When the nuns realised what we were doing, they started to remove the elastic from our knickers so that we couldn't hide anything in there. We had to tie string around our legs instead.

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up to the bedroom door and he trailed his leg as well. He would come to me and put his hands in my pants and touch my lady garden, my genitals. I tried to get into bed with some of the other children but they told me to go away, that I was going to get them hit. I remember getting into bed with another wee girl, she was sleeping and I remember this man leaning over me to touch the wee girl. I'm sure he touched her sexually. We were around four or five years old at the time. I don't know who this man is and I don't remember seeing him during the day. This happened nearly every night of the week.

8. One night I was trailed out of bed and taken to a room like a kitchen where I was stripped naked and hosed down. I think this may have been because I soiled myself. I was made to keep my eyes to the front so I don't know who did this to me but I'm sure there was nun there because I saw a habit. She grabbed me and started thumping my back. I also remember a man there as well. The nun was shouting 'You're dirty, you're dirty'. I went to bed soaking wet. I was panicking and couldn't breathe because of my asthma.
9. I don't remember going to school when I was in the home. I only remember being in the Chapel, praying on my knees. My first memory of school was when I returned to live with my Mummy.
10. I used to ask for my Mummy and sister alot. When I mentioned them I got beat. Then I was told that my Mother was dead, I screamed and screamed with shock and loss and went through a grieving stage. Later she turned up in a taxi, when I saw her I nearly died. I tried to hug her but she pushed me away and hugged my younger sister, [REDACTED] instead. She wouldn't tell me why I was there. I've been trying to build a relationship with her for years but she hasn't acknowledged my experiences. She didn't even come to my wedding.

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HIA REF: 316

Witness Name: **HIA 316**

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF **HIA 316**I, **HIA 316** will say as follows:-Personal details

1. I was born on [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]
2. My mother had me outside of marriage and she put me in to Nazareth House, Belfast. I always thought my mother kept me until I was five or six but I found out recently I went in to Nazareth House when I was a year and eleven months old.
3. I stayed in Nazareth House until I was sixteen years old. I spent my entire childhood there.

Nazareth House, Belfast (1953 – 1967 approximately)

4. The routine in the home was we got up at about half six in the morning. I remember it was always dark. We slept in big dormitories with about 25 to 30 girls in each one. I think there were three dormitories in total. A nun slept in a partitioned cell off the dormitory.
5. The only nuns whose names I remember are **SR 116** and **SR 134**. I believe **SR 116** was the nun in charge of my dormitory. I think **SR 134** was younger. Every morning the girls who had wet the bed had to line

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up in a row outside the nun's cell. I wet the bed a lot. We had to take our sheets and wash them in the bath. If you wet the bed the first night, you got four whacks with a cane. If you wet the bed two nights in a row, you got eight whacks and so on.

6. **SR 116** used to shout at me that my mother didn't want me and they were stuck with me and they didn't want me either. I remember the swish of the roly poly bamboo cane as it went through the air. **SR 116** would lose control and hit me on the head and the hands. She would always hit me on the knuckles where it hurt the most. We would have to hold out our knuckles, we never got hit on the palm. I used to have black and blue knuckles all the time; they were always swollen.
7. Every morning I woke up terrified my bed would be wet, especially if it was the fifth night in a row. I knew then I would be getting twenty whacks. I used to lie and say I hadn't wet the bed to save myself from a beating. I would just sleep in the wet sheets night after night. We must have smelled terrible when we went out to school. I wet the bed up until I was 13. They got a special device which set off a buzzer if you wet the bed and it must have worked.
8. We went to Mass every morning and we also had to say the Rosary and Benedictions throughout the day. The priests I remember are **NHB 84** and Canon Daly. Canon Daly had a relative in the old ladies part of the home. I remember one night I woke up in the middle of the night and **NHB 84** was standing at the edge of my bed. He was quite young at the time. I was about 7 or 8. My nightdress was around my waist. I don't remember anything sexual happening but when I look back as an adult I wonder if I was sexually abused. As soon as I woke up **NHB 84** moved away. That is the only time I remember anything like that happening but it has really stuck in my mind. We would never have seen the priest in the dormitory.
9. After Mass we went down for breakfast which was usually porridge. The food wasn't great but it kept us alive. For dinner we would have meatballs, beans

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that was cut to fit me. HIA 368 and I were sent to the Sacred Heart Group and SR 31 was in charge. The kids in it were making fun of me. I vividly remember us not getting off to a great start.

5. The routine in the home was that you got up in the morning and went down to breakfast in a single file. We had to walk on the right hand side of the corridor. After breakfast we would come back up and do our chores before going to school. In the home you had to go to the chapel every day before breakfast and we always had to say the rosary.
6. The first morning when we were walking down to breakfast I noticed children standing on the left of the corridor with bed sheets over their heads. As we walked I saw my brother HIA 368 standing there. He had wet the bed and this was the punishment. When we came back up there was a very strong smell and when I saw HIA 368 I hugged him. He smelt of jeyes fluid as that is what they used to bathe him. It was very hard being taken from your mummy because she couldn't look after you and that is how we were treated.
7. I used to steal sheets from the laundry and at night I would check if HIA 368 had wet the bed and if he had I stripped his bed so that he would not have to stand in the corridor the next morning. I would hide the sheets so the nuns wouldn't know. It didn't always work because HIA 368 wet the bed every night. The older girls would come and forcefully move the children that wet the beds.
8. After school we came back and did more chores. One that I remember was using a very heavy buffer to polish the floors. The nuns watched us as we did our chores. My only real dealings were with SR 31 because she was in charge of our group. When we had our chores completed we got our tea and then we would be allowed to watch TV for a short time before going to bed.

Name: Sister Brenda McCall

Date: 12 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 HIA 175 and can confirm she was a resident within Nazareth House. born was admitted to Nazareth House with her brother HIA 368 on 16 May 1969 and discharged on 9 July 1971.
2. With regard to paragraph 5, it is accepted that there was a routine within the home; similarly to a routine in a familial home. We do not accept that the children were made to go to Mass first thing every morning. The children would have been given the option to go every day during Lent, however this would have been their own decision to attend. The children would not have chores before school which exceeded clearing up their dishes and clearing the area in which they had eaten.
3. With regard to paragraph 6, we do not accept that the children who had wet the bed were made to stand on the left of the corridor with bed sheets over their heads. Whilst we do accept that children who wet the bed were not dealt with appropriately; we cannot accept this practice stated by HIA 175
4. With regard to paragraph 8, the Congregation accept that children would have been given chores. We do not accept that these were excessive.
5. With regard to paragraph 9, the Congregation would like to express their hurt and sadness at the allegations brought forward. The Congregation endeavoured to provide a safe and loving home for children and are deeply saddened that the policy of 'no physical punishment' may not have been adhered to.

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5. The routine in the home was that you got up in the morning and went down to breakfast in a single file. We had to walk on the right hand side of the corridor. After breakfast we would come back up and do our chores before going to school. In the home you had to go to the chapel every day before breakfast and we always had to say the rosary.
6. The first morning when we were walking down to breakfast I noticed children standing on the left of the corridor with bed sheets over their heads. As we walked I saw my brother HIA 368 standing there. He had wet the bed and this was the punishment. When we came back up there was a very strong smell and when I saw HIA 368 I hugged him. He smelt of jeyes fluid as that is what they used to bathe him. It was very hard being taken from your mummy because she couldn't look after you and that is how we were treated.
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8. After school we came back and did more chores. One that I remember was using a very heavy buffer to polish the floors. The nuns watched us as we did our chores. My only real dealings were with SR 31 because she was in charge of our group. When we had our chores completed we got our tea and then we would be allowed to watch TV for a short time before going to bed.

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he stayed for about six months. [REDACTED] wasn't taken into care because he would have been about eighteen. He went to live with his paternal granny.

4. The intention was that I would be put into Nazareth Lodge, but apparently I refused to leave [HIA 175] so agreement was reached that I would stay in Nazareth House.
5. I was in the same group as [HIA 175] I slept with the rest of the girls in the dormitory. I would have wet the bed a lot. Sometimes I would wake up with the nun hitting me because she knew I had wet the bed. I was made to stand out in the hallway with a wet sheet over my head. If she could, [HIA 175] would try to hide the sheets and change them before the nuns found out that I had wet the bed.
6. I was made to bath with the older girls because there were no separate facilities for boys. We were all put in the same bath at the same time. The nuns used to put a bowl over my head to cut my hair.
7. I remember that I never liked butter, probably because we didn't have butter when I lived with my mother and I wasn't used to it. They would plaster the food with it. I hated vegetables because we were forced to eat them. We weren't allowed to leave the table until we had finished everything that was in front of us.
8. The nuns gave us hidings for nothing. There are very few good memories that I have of my time in Nazareth House. I don't remember going to school.
9. Some of the older girls used to sexually abuse me. This would have taken place when I was aged between eight and eleven years, and they would have been in their mid teens. They made me climb up their nightdress and touch them intimately. It happened in the dormitory, and there would have been a few girls present at the time.
10. Somebody from Social Services would take us out to buy clothes and whatever else we needed, but as soon as we went back into the home, the

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the side. I suppose it was similar to a play pen. I remember a similar experience when I worked in the kitchen. When I was older if you were naughty you would be placed in the tea chest to keep you out of the way. You would be thrown in and hit and told to stay there until you behaved yourself. The nuns would slap you about.

Nazareth House (31/08/1948-1960)

5. From the nursery at the age of four or five you would move to the children's department. I believe that records show I was admitted to Nazareth House when I was five years of age. SR 66 [REDACTED] from the Good Sheperd provided me with this information.
6. I always celebrate my birthday on [REDACTED] because I remember in the home thinking my birthday was [REDACTED] and one of the nuns slapped me and said I was wrong my birthday was October.
7. The daily routine in the home was that you got up, went to the bathroom to wash, then you dressed, made your bed and went to mass. The chapel was on site so after mass you would have breakfast and then go to school. The school was for children from the home and also children from the community.
8. I was one of the children that wet the bed on a regular basis. In the morning after I had wet the bed I was made go round the dormitory in my wet nightdress to open the windows while the other children looked on. When I was about eight or nine the nun moved me to the bed beside her cell. She put an object on top of the mattress it was in the shape of a tray and I was to sleep on it. It consisted of a battery attached to wires going along the tray which was connected to an alarm clock in a metal bowl. The tray was covered in foil so as I began to pass water I would get an electric shock which would set off the alarm clock so SR 189 [REDACTED] would know I needed to use the toilet. At this stage my bed was at the top of the dormitory so I had to go a long way to get to the bathroom. Every day I would have the stinging sensation from the shocks and a tingling sensation for a few days after it was over.

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9. I recall being taken to the Royal Victoria Hospital because of my bed wetting and they stuck pins in my bum or used an electric shock. I think the purpose of it was to probe the reasons for the bed wetting.
10. The school was on site and there were both teachers and nuns. The teachers were **NHB 43** **NHB 44** and **NHB 45** The nuns were Sister **SR 189** **SR 134** **SR 177** who taught me when I was very young and **SR 112** who taught the higher classes. The education was very basic, there was no such thing as special attention, and rather those with difficulties were ignored or made an example of.
11. I liked school although I wasn't very good at maths I was able to get by at other subjects. I remember them teaching us pounds, shilling and pence and it was known as L.S.D. In the summer holidays we would get six weeks off school. The nuns would find jobs for us to do dependent on our size. I was small so I always had to stay in the lower section and hence I had to scrub the floors.
12. After school if it was a nice day we were allowed to play in the garden it was more akin to a recreation hall. After school we would get tea and jam then we would go to church for our prayers and then we would have to come back to do some cleaning. At about 6pm we had supper.
13. At the weekends particularly on a Saturday we would spend the day cleaning. We would change our beds, sweep and scrub the dormitory, and then we would have to scrub and polish the wooden floors in the recreation hall. All the children in the home had to do the cleaning. From the age of seven or as soon as you could kneel down you'd be scrubbing.
14. There was always someone supervising the cleaning it was either a nun or one of the older girls. If we were not doing the cleaning correctly we would be clipped across the ear or maybe hit with a fist or kick. Both the nuns and the older girls would have hit us.

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7. The nuns decided to put a buzzer on my bed then. I was about six at the time. There were two net sheets and you put one at the bottom, then you put an ordinary sheet on and then the top wired sheet with a draw sheet over that. The idea was that when the wet hit it the buzzer went off. SR 31 would grab me out of bed and beat me because I had woken everyone in the dormitory. This was a daily occurrence. I would be dragged into the bathroom then and thrown into the bath. I never knew what the smell was at the time but I know now it was Jeyes fluid. The smell was overpowering. I remember the water was white but I just thought that was the colour of bath water. I would be dipped in and out of the water by SR 31 very roughly. I would try not to fall asleep because I was so afraid of wetting the bed and I would pray I didn't fall asleep but I always did.
8. Every morning SR 31 and SR 134 would come in to the dormitory and tell everyone to hold the gusset of their knickers out for inspection. We all had to stand in a line and SR 31 and SR 134 would walk along examining our underwear. I never knew what this was about. It was humiliating. The bed wetters were told to stand to one side with our wet sheets and then you were brought out to the landing to put the sheets in a big linen basket. It was almost like a ceremony being paraded in front of everyone but thankfully none of the other girls laughed.
9. After you made your bed, you knelt down to say your prayers and then went down for breakfast. After breakfast we had jobs to do. I had to mop the floors with a big heavy polisher. One girl polished the bathroom and another one polished the dormitory. Everybody had jobs to do. The older girls looked after us younger ones. A girl called [REDACTED] looked after me and a girl called [REDACTED] looked after my sister [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] weren't bad to us but some of the other older girls would have hit the younger ones. Because they were getting hit themselves it just led on to them hitting the younger ones and bullying them.

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4. We were placed in the Our Lady's group. In the dormitory we each had metal beds and a small locker. **SR 31** was in charge of our group. **SR 31** **SR 31** should not have been a nun. She was very wicked and she showed no emotion or affection. She slept in a cell at the end of the dormitory. Her cell had a door and a small window so she could see into the dormitory. The other groups were called the St Anne's group which **SR 59** was in charge of and the Sacred Heart group which **SR 134** was in charge of.
5. Some of the girls in my dormitory wet the bed. Tthe bed wetters had a sheet attached to their bed which had a buzzer that sounded if they wet the bed. If the buzzer sounded during the night **SR 31** would go mad. The girl who wet the bed was made to kneel beside their bed for the rest of the night in the freezing cold with just their night dress on. Sometimes **SR 31** would not get up when the buzzer sounded and she would shout to one of the other girls to get up instead. I remember **HIA 28** having to get up to kneel beside the girl a couple of times. In the morning the girl who wet the bed wa responsible for taking her sheets to the laundry and getting herself fresh sheets.
6. In the morning we were woken by a bell or **SR 31** clapping. . If we were going to mass we would be woken at 6am, for mass at 7am. We went to mass two or three times a week as well as Sundays and Holy days. If we did not have to go to Mass we got up about 6.30 / 7am. We got out of bed and knelt down to say our prayers We were taken to the bathroom to brush our teeth. We had toothbrushes but no toothpaste so we rubbed our toothbrush into carbolic soap instead. We then got dressed, went to mass and had breakfast. The food was not good and we were always hungry. I remember my sister **HIA 29** ate the dog's food nearly every day as she was so hungry. When we had the opportunity we used to take the paper off the cheese and eat it like chewing gum.
7. We went to primary school in Nazareth House. We were taught by Sister **SR 31** and **SR 134** **SR 59** taught the younger children. When Sister **SR 31** was in bad form she would take it out on us. When we turned eleven we were sent to St Monica's. We wore a uniform at St Monica's. I remember

1 Q. You mentioned bedwetting and I am going to deal with
2 bedwetting. In paragraph 6 at 836 you explain
3 bedwetting and give two examples of what appears to be
4 medical treatment to try and deal with the problem.
5 I mentioned to you -- maybe it's a problem of
6 recollection of me, but I think this is the first time
7 that someone has mentioned being given medicine for --
8 to try and deal with bed wetting, and you remember being
9 lined up --

10 **A. Yes.**

11 Q. -- those who wet the bed --

12 **A. Yes.**

13 Q. -- to receive --

14 **A. Wet the bed medicine.**

15 Q. -- this medicine.

16 **A. It was called "wet the bed medicine".**

17 Q. That's how it was known to you?

18 **A. That was the terminology used by all the children. You**
19 **know, "Do you get wet the bed medicine?"**

20 Q. You mention -- I will not bring it up -- you mention in
21 your police statement -- I will just give the Panel the
22 reference, 61455 -- that it was purple coloured.

23 **A. Yes.**

24 Q. I was saying to you it brought Calpol to my mind.

25 **A. Yes.**

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favourite girls, and they always seemed to favour the girls who had families outside of the home. It seemed to me that the girls who didn't have any family always got it hardest from the nuns, probably because they had no one to turn to. We were also punished more often than the children who had family come in to see them. They were very harsh on us, and slapped and picked on us for very minor things. They were always crushing us. I believe the nuns knew they had to be more careful and they couldn't be as hard on the girls with families in case they were caught out.

4. **SR 134** had a cell in our dormitory. She would get us up in the morning. We had to tell her if we wet the bed. Bed-wetters were degraded by **SR 134** **SR 134** in front of everybody else, and we were told we were dirty. We had to pull our dirty sheets off the bed and take them to be washed. I recall on one occasion when I wet the bed, **SR 134** rubbed my nose in the sheets. We were then sent down to the bathroom where we were bathed in cold water. There was Jeyes fluid in the bath water. We would be degraded again in the bathroom. I believe we were wetting the bed because we were a bundle of nerves. We were being constantly humiliated. At one stage we got rubber sheets, and there was an alarm attached. If we wet the bed, an alarm would sound to wake us up, and the nun would come out and make us go to the toilet. It was an awful way to treat a child.
5. We all wore the same gingham dress, like a uniform. We had to go to church early in the morning, before we went to school. **SR 134** had long fingernails and she would pinch us on the arm really hard if we weren't paying attention. **SR 116** and **SR 31** would nip us as well. Sometimes we got a knock to the head instead, or a nip at the back of the neck. I didn't even understand really about Church as it was just a drill we were going through.
6. There wasn't an education at all. The school was non-existent in terms of teaching. All I can remember about the school is the religious aspect of the teaching. It was an education of religion and fear. **SR 134** **SR 31** and **SR 116** were teachers in the school. There was a kind of

1 doctor for something". That was it and this was
2 recommended. I do remember the younger little one. She
3 was about maybe seven. I do remember giving her that at
4 night and she was delighted, because she knew what it
5 was for and she took it without any hesitation, yes.

6 Q. Can you just explain to the Panel how you dealt with the
7 children who had a bedwetting problem and how you dealt
8 with the practicalities --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- of their bedwetting problem?

11 A. Yes. Well, those children who wet the bed with their
12 third sister -- there was one family, but the third
13 little girl, the older one, didn't wet her bed. So they
14 were sleeping in the room next to me. I deliberately
15 put them there so I could get them up first in the
16 morning, because I knew they would wet the bed quite
17 frequently in the beginning, so that their sheets could
18 be taken down to the bathroom and put in a container
19 there, and then they could get washed and get bathed or
20 whatever they did, you know, before coming up and
21 getting dressed, and the laundry would have been done
22 during the day by the girl who helped and their beds
23 would have been made up. You know, sometimes they would
24 help to make it up as well, but there was no punishment
25 whatsoever. It was really a concern as to why --

unacceptable. The sex abuse of children that were in our care has only come to light in recent years. The Sisters are horrified, shocked and devastated that this abuse took place and offer a most sincere and profound apology to any child that suffered this horrendous act.

4. With regard to paragraph 12, it is clear a number of allegations have been made regarding bed wetting in Nazareth Lodge. As the Sisters cared for a number of children from a number of various backgrounds, it may have been difficult for them to consider the individual needs of each child. The reason behind a child's bedwetting was clearly not dealt with appropriately and methods used to prevent bedwetting were not well known at this time. Medical advice was later sought by the Congregation to help the children and the Congregation do accept that their methods were not acceptable. The Sisters of Nazareth are remorseful that they did not assist HIA 411 in a satisfactory manner.
5. With regard to paragraph 9, the Congregation can only apologise for the separation in HIA 411 family as the facilities in Nazareth Lodge catered only for boys until the early 70's. Without the appropriate resources, the Sisters of Nazareth had no choice but to separate the children of the family according to gender. The Congregation endeavoured to maintain sibling relationships and it was a common occurrence for the children to visit their siblings whenever possible.
6. One of the Sisters referred to in HIA 411 statement has since died and the other two Sisters in his statement have given statements to the Inquiry. The Congregation therefore offers HIA 411 an unreserved and sincere apology for any treatment he received by any Sister which fell below the acceptable standard.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed Sr Brenda McCall .

Dated 9 November 2014 .

'Missionaries: Life in the wilds of New Guinea'. Nazareth Lodge Diary - November 1959.

"Swimming was introduced – the bigger boys now go to the baths every Saturday and are being taught to swim." Nazareth Lodge Diary - November 1957.

"We got special permission to have a Halloween Bonfire. The Rotary Club came and gave the children a lovely party. They also brought a magician and some entertainers". Nazareth Lodge Diary – September/October 1969.

"April brought the beautiful feast of Easter. The children attended the first Holy Week ceremonies and rendered Music. As a reward for their excellent singing, Rev Mother took the choir boys and altar servers for a picnic during the holidays." Nazareth Lodge Diary – April 1958.

Bedwetting

35. There are many complaints by HIA applicants regarding the treatment of children who bed wet. The Sisters cared for a large number of children from different backgrounds and it was simply not possible for them to consider the individual needs of each and every child. This inability to attend to each child individually is an example of where the Sisters' care fell below what they would have wished to provide and is accepted as a failing on their part. The causes of bedwetting were not understood by all Sisters and it is accepted that bedwetting was mismanaged in some instances. Sisters were not aware of the Home Office Memorandum guidance and that is a failing on our part. The system for disseminating relevant information such as the Home Office memo was inadequate. The requirement that a child carry their wet sheets and pyjamas to a laundry collection point was clearly a source of embarrassment and humiliation and ought not to have occurred. I reiterate our submissions on bedwetting in Module 1 and I repeat those admissions in respect of this module.
36. Over time and with the increase in qualified Sisters and staff, there was a radical change in how bedwetting was managed. Before the Sister in charge of the group

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15. During the 1940's I remember the food being porridge in the mornings and maybe bacon and sausage on a Sunday but not very often. I always remember kippers on a Friday. Dinner was mostly stew and on a Sunday we might get a cooked dinner. It wasn't a roast but ordinary boiled potatoes, stable vegetable and meat. In general we just ate because we were hungry. I have always bitten my nails until very recently and I think that is due to the fact that I was constantly hungry in the home.
16. We would often be thirsty as well and sometimes when we were out playing in the garden we would be locked out of our department. The only water we could get was water from the toilet cisterns and somebody would climb up with a bottle or a jam jar and we'd all drink from it.
17. A doctor attended the home on a yearly basis. During any examination there was always a nun present so you'd be afraid to tell him anything. We were examined in a room just off the classroom. He would listen to our chests and the nun would be there removing our petticoats slightly off the shoulder. We never complained to the doctor because later the nun would give you a hiding for not telling her first. The first doctor was called Dr Hunter but I have been unable to establish where he practiced. I remember he was replaced by a Dr Wilson who had a practice on the Ormeau Road.
18. The fear of telling the doctor anything came from visits to the pharmacy in the home. There was a nun in charge called **SR 145** she had what was known as the workroom. If you had an ailment you were sent down to see her. All the medicines were kept in a cupboard by the door and there was a basin beside it. If you had a bad tummy you were given Epson salts in boiling water to drink. It had to be drunk before you left the room. Often we had other complaints but were afraid to say for fear you'd get a slap across the ear.
19. I remember on one occasion getting a splinter in my little finger. She would just go at you with a needle without any care her nursing skills were not very gentle. As young girls we got period cramps but we did not understand why

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18. The nuns discouraged close friendships between us in the home. Even amongst themselves, they were never allowed to walk around in groups of two – they were always in threes. I don't think we were capable of friendship anyway because the friend you had could be getting hit this evening so you weren't going to be their friend then. We learned to sort things out between ourselves. Physical abuse was all we knew.
19. Every Saturday, the routine was we scrubbed the three stories, the corridors and the stairs all day. We worked in pairs, moving aside for nuns and priests who passed. They never glanced at us or uttered a kind word in our direction. Most of us were so small we weren't able to lift the pail. They gave us rags to use as the scrubbing brush was too big. I remember the smell of Jeyes fluid – if we spilled it, the smell was terrible. Sometimes we took turns to go in and wax all the floors in the church. We used to get splinters in our knees and the nuns never took them out – they would have got festered. One of my friends **HIA 166** actually ended up in hospital with a festered knee.
20. When I was thirteen, I had a serious ear infection which was neglected and I ended up in hospital. I had had a sore ear for a long time but I was afraid to say anything because I didn't want to be accused of showing off or drawing attention to myself. I was afraid of being put in the queue with the 'wet beds' and beaten alongside them. You were better off if there was nothing wrong with you. If anybody ever cried in pain the nuns would bark "who's making that noise?" so you learned not to cry.
21. I remember **SR 134** giving me a clap on each ear in school one day and it took me a minute to recover from it. From then on I had trouble. If I was playing in the garden or on the swings it would make me dizzy. I always seemed to have wax in that ear and I was sent back to clean it out myself with the end of a flannel. A lump developed on my ear and I tried to hide it but it got bigger so I had to report it. I told **SR 189** and she sent for Sister **SR 217** who was in charge of the old ladies. I was just sent to bed and when I woke up the next morning the whole side of my face was inflamed. It went

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right over my eye and my eye was closed and swollen. The nuns sent for Dr Hunter then and I was taken to the children's unit in the Royal. I had an operation and I stayed in hospital for about a week. They made me wear a big round hat and I had to go back for weekly changes for a few months after that. I still have hearing problems to this day. Twenty years ago I had another operation on the same ear in Altnagelvin Hospital. Three years ago I fell and cut my brow. I went to Altnagelvin for an X-ray and the doctor asked me if I had a bad fall as a child because the two sides of my brain didn't match.

22. Puberty was an awful time in the home. It was a very vulnerable time in our lives and the nuns humiliated and degraded us constantly. One day when I was about fourteen years old I was out playing in the playground when I was called in by **SR 183**. She stripped me to the waist and put stays on my breasts to hide the fact I was developing. The daily inspections continued and I remember having to raise my slip without knickers to be inspected.

23. We were told periods were a gift from Our Lady and when you got your period you said to the nun "Sister, I'm unwell". She would go down to the linen room then and get you a sanitary towel. The sanitary towels were made from sheets and we were given six each with our name on which we had to wash daily in the laundry. If they weren't washed well enough, **NHB 35** called you out in front of everyone and told you to wash them better. It was embarrassing and our hands would be red raw from rubbing. **NHB 35** was an old Nazareth House girl who had stayed there all her life and was in charge of the laundry. The nuns used to tell us we would go mad when our periods went away like the old ladies who lived in the old people's part of Nazareth House. The only sex education we got in the home was to marry a Catholic and keep the faith.

24. The records say I left Nazareth House on 16th December 1960 when I was eighteen but I am sure I left in the summer of 1959 when I was seventeen as I remember celebrating my 18th birthday on the outside. When I left the home, I was sent up to two old biddies on the **██████████** Road with another girl called **██████████**. All we were given was a bus number and an address and we had to ask

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SR 177 used to terrify us by saying things like "If you don't go to sleep the banshees will come and get you". I was petrified.

6. I used to walk in my sleep. I was told by one of the nuns that I nearly walked out a window three storeys up. **SR 177** used to keep me awake until she was going to bed, and then she used to strap me in the bed to stop me from getting up in the middle of the night. I do not recall waking up with straps on but I assume she had taken them off before I wakened. She did say to me "I have to stay up all night and tie you up". She used to yell at me because she had to do this. I only found out I was a sleepwalker years later.
7. We were allowed to have a bath every night but we had to share the water. We had to wear a modesty sheet in the bath. The sheet was a rag. We didn't have any personal soap. We had to wear bloomers for one week without washing them. The older girls inspected our underwear every morning. We used to wash our underwear when we got a chance, and put them below the mattress and sleep on them so they could dry out.
8. I was beaten with a belt by **SR 177** and **SR 112** **SR 112** **SR 112** was a teacher. She was very strict. School was in the home and if you were caught misbehaving all of a sudden you got a whack across the knuckles with a thick leather strap or a ruler by **SR 112** The strap hung from her belt. Sometimes she used her hand to hit me.
9. I was quite good at schoolwork. I didn't mind school and I was very good at mental arithmetic. I think I tried harder than other girls. I always wanted the nuns to like me because I thought they didn't, as I was never allowed out. I used to sit in the corner and think to myself about what I could possibly do to get liked. I decided I would be good at school.
10. My mother never came back to visit me in the home. When I asked the nuns about her they said "Oh you don't want to know, she is gone now, you haven't got her anymore". It was hard because other children had families that used to come and visit and bring them sweets, and I used to think to myself "why do I

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was basically evil. I didn't realise until later life that the man that I had seen had been down an alley relieving himself and hadn't zipped himself up properly. I didn't know what a man's shape was like and I think the nuns who saw it probably got more of a shock than me that's why she called me evil.

22. On occasion we would have visitors from outside they were called benefactors. They often came in and put on little concerts for us. On those occasions we would get very excited, our meal would be served to us and I recall on one particular day I got ice-cream for the first time. One of the girls brought it down in a cone and I remember putting it on my plate because I thought you had to eat it with a knife and fork. I felt in the home we missed out on a lot of things from outside.
23. I did not have any real visitors until I was about twelve or thirteen. A lady that my mum used to stay with came to see me. It only lasted for about a year. My mother never visited and they didn't talk about our parents, a lot of the children didn't know if they had a mother or father. It was during war times and after the war a lot of children were taken out by their parents.
24. I formed strong relationships with some of the girls I grew up with and we are still in contact today. We only had each other as we were never shown any type of love or affection from those in charge of our care. I believe the nuns didn't know how to show love and affection.
25. I always had a feeling of fear in the home. I felt that we had to know our place and if you looked at the sisters in the wrong way they might slap you. It was like you always had to sit down and behave, the nuns didn't want to hear from you.
26. The dormitories were always cold and we had the old grey army blankets with a band of blue or green across them. Each nun had a cell at the top of the dormitory and there were older girls in our dormitory as well.
27. I remember one morning the girl two beds down from me was crying and I went to see her. She said she was sick and I got her a bucket from the

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bathroom. I was caught getting back into my bed and one of the older girls told the nun I was running round the dormitory waking everybody up. The nun hit me a few times with her bare hands she then picked up my studded shoes hitting me so hard. She caught me with the stud just across the right eye and it split open causing blood to go everywhere. She took me to the bathroom to wash the blood and put a bandage and a plaster on it. I was told if anyone asked what happened I was to say that I had fallen out of the bed and knocked my head of the corner of the bedside locker. I wasn't allowed in the classroom until the swelling had gone down I was hidden away in case any visitors to the home would see me and ask questions. They brought me my work in the recreation hall. I was never treated by a doctor for this injury and still have the scar which I call my third eyebrow.

28. We were bathed twice a week on a Wednesday and Saturday. They used jeyes fluid and when we got out of the bath we would be burning up to our waists because they used so much. The routine was that you would firstly have your hair washed with carbolic soap then rinsed out in a separate bath. We wore a sleeveless shaped shift dress garment while we had a bath so we couldn't see what our bodies looked like. We used a flannel under the dress to wash ourselves.

29. The nuns and the older girls were in charge at bath time. There would be one girl in the bath and then another girl would be getting her feet washed. Then at the corner a girl would be holding up a sheet like a curtain, it wasn't a towel but you were expected to get dried and dressed.

30. One day at bath time **SR 189** the nun in charge said that my neck was still dirty and I had to wash it again. It was a mark and she said that I didn't know how to wash my own neck. She got a floor scrubbing brush and scrubbed my neck until it was red raw and bleeding. It was a mark of sunburn and I was about eight or nine at the time.

31. I worked in the laundry and we had to wash the nun's wimples. They were washed and starched and then pressed by **NHB 35** I was sent to

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others quick enough. When I was one of the older girls, I moved into another bedroom with other girls who were working in the home.

16. I remember being asked to close the windows one day. They were very high and you needed to stand on a chair. There were chairs along the wall, but they had laths between them and there were some missing. My legs went down between two chairs and there was a nail where the lath was missing and it hit the top of my leg. It went through my leg but I was never taken to hospital and it took ages to heal. I still have the scar and there is a dent in my leg. I never saw a doctor during my time at the home.
17. In later life I found out that the nuns sent my mother numerous letters requesting money to pay for my care. I am unsure if she ever replied to the letters but they constantly sent them as they were looking for money. My mother always paid for my care. I only discovered these letters when my mother had taken ill and was receiving treatment in hospital. I was searching for documents for my mother and I came across the letters by accident.
18. At the age of sixteen I was sent to Liverpool and from there went to work in a baby home. My mother was never told that they were sending me there. It was where mothers left babies to be taken care of if they could not keep them. I got some pocket money in return for all the work that I had carried out. I loved Cliff Richard and another girl and I found out that he was playing in Liverpool so we saved all of our money to go and see him. The nuns found out and took my ticket from me and tore it up, so I did not get to go. I stayed in Liverpool for just over a year.
19. I came back to Ireland and took up a place at a dress making college in Dublin. I loved needlework and cookery and my teacher always encouraged me. She told the nuns that I had a talent and should apply, but the nuns said no because they would have to pay for it. I didn't know until later life that my mum had regularly paid £5 for me to attend the course, as the nuns gave me the impression that they would have to pay for me. SR 31 said to me "eaten bread is soon forgotten", which I took to mean that she thought that I

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but nobody ever told us what to expect. When I was fourteen another nun **SR 198** took over she was much nicer but we still had a fear of attending the workroom. The fear that enveloped me as a child continued as I was growing up and I was always apprehensive about visiting any medical services.

20. When I was fourteen I had no family so when I finished school I was put to work in the home. One day I got three splinters in my knee from scrubbing the floors. I tried to get them out but only managed to get two. I continued my cleaning and didn't tell anyone. After about a week my knee became badly inflamed and one morning whilst making the beds in the dormitory I was very sick and the nun sent me down to the pharmacy. I did not tell the nun there about my knee and I was sent to bed. The doctor then came to see me and checked me all over. He saw my knee and I was in bed for about three weeks having it dressed by **SR 198**. I know that I was very ill at times because I remember waking up and the nuns praying around my bed. Finally, after a few weeks the splinter fell out and it felt as if it erupted but I felt great relief. I knew that I was going to get better but I was made stay in bed for two weeks. I never received any physio or aftercare and still have problems with what I call my gammy knee. On reflection I know that we were never brought to the hospital for fear of what questions would be asked about our care.

21. Sometimes after school we would go for a walk, we walked two in a row with nuns at the front in the middle and at the back. We would walk from the Ormeau Road to Ravenhill Road as some of the girls had brothers in Nazareth Lodge and we went down so they could keep in touch. One day when we were walking back up passed an alleyway I saw a man running towards us and I let out a scream. I pushed the girls beside me and one of the nuns came over and hit me a clout saying wait to we get back. I said to the nun "he stole a pig he's got it up his jacket." I thought it was the pig's trotters. We did not know what shape our own bodies were never mind that of a man. When we got back I was taken to another room with the nun and she gave me a thorough beating. She used a stick to beat me and I was bruised. She also preached the gospel to me highlighting the evils of the world meaning that I

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accused me of stealing it. **SR 116** put paper on my back saying that I was a thief.

9. One day whilst we were on our way to the bathroom I was pulled out of line. It always seemed to be me that was pulled out. I remember **SR 198** threw me on the stairs, and pulled up my petticoat. She had one hand on the banisters and was hitting me in the stomach repeatedly, as hard as she could, with her fist. I have no idea why she did it. We didn't really have to do anything to get hit. I would only have been aged seven or eight years at the time.
10. I was out in the playground one day playing on the climbing bars. I think I would have been aged around ten or eleven years. There was a nun walking around the garden, saying her prayers. It was spitting rain and my hands gave way. I fell onto the ground and was knocked out. I opened my eyes to see **SR 116** looking down at me. I had a big bump on my head but nothing was done about it. I believe that the medical problems I began to suffer may have started here.
11. The next time I was out playing in the playground, **SR 31** blew her whistle to indicate we had to go in to eat. We all had to go back in, walking in lines. I was pulled out of the line by **SR 31**. There were two other girls with me but they weren't pulled out. She banged my head against the wall. When she was finished with me I was making my way to the dining room and the two girls were waiting on me. **SR 31** came up behind me and cut all my hair off, which I had been wearing in a ponytail. I remember not knowing what I had done to deserve this.
12. I started to suffer headaches all the time, and I remember vomiting a lot. I had continual problems with the sight in my right eye and the odd time I lost the sight in my left eye. At one stage I couldn't see anything in either eye, but the sight in my left eye came back. I generally kept all these problems to myself. I knew I was going blind but I was too afraid to say anything. I would have a sty in my eye, every three or four weeks. **SR 198** would pierce it with a

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darning needle and then just rub it off with a bit of cotton wool. It was very painful. She was supposed to be the nurse but she was very rough and she didn't sterilise the needle.

13. I started at St Monica's Secondary School, after sitting an exam. I was relieved to be going to a school that was outside the Convent and being able to mix with the girls from outside, but it was always the same people in the same class. The girls in my class were [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We were in the lowest class every year.

14. The nuns and the teachers in St Monica's knew that there was something wrong with me. They caught on during a game of netball. I used to be really unsteady and bump into people. I wasn't even walking straight. At the age of fourteen years, I was sent to a small hospital in [REDACTED] where I was seen by Dr Millar. He diagnosed a brain tumour and I was referred to the Royal Victoria Hospital. I had an operation shortly after and I was in hospital for about a month. The nuns, in particular [REDACTED] SR 191 would have called to see me when I was in hospital. Then I went to [REDACTED] outside [REDACTED] for another month to recuperate. I remember going back to hospital for follow up appointments, and I would have been seen by Dr Gordon. When I got back to the home after being in hospital, the girls would tell me that they were made to pray for me whilst I was in hospital, and I always felt guilty about that.

15. I left school when I was about fifteen or sixteen years of age and I was put into the laundry to work. The laundry was on the grounds of Nazareth House. It was very heavy work and I could hardly do it. The equipment was really old. There was a big roller which was used to iron out sheets and clothes. There was a big wheel we had to turn to lift the roller so we could fit the sheets in. We had to turn all the machines by hand. Another resident called [REDACTED] [REDACTED] worked in the laundry at the same time and would have been about the same age as me. The laundry was run by lay people. I remember one woman whom we called [REDACTED] NHB 35 but I later found out that she

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10. I used to tap the big girls on the shoulder for attention. I remember one incident when the nuns were asking who scribbled on the wall and nobody would own up. I put my hand up and said I did it even though I hadn't, just for the attention. I got spanked by **SR 199** for this but the abuse from her was generally more mental than physical. I was totally crushed by **SR 199** **SR 199** saying I had made up the story about **NHB 76** I broke my arm in the house but **SR 199** didn't believe me so I went around for three days in pain with a broken arm before they got me a cast. It happened outside. We were playing with a rope with wooden handles and one of the kids pushed me and the rope hit my wrist. It hasn't been right since. There was a doctor who we saw maybe once every four months and he said I had to go to the hospital to get a cast.

11. I went to school onsite in Nazareth House. My education was really poor. I wasn't very good in school; I had problems learning but I was a good little athlete. They should have acknowledged that I needed special care because I had an attention disorder. Now I take medication for attention disorder.

12. The best times were with the sponsors. They were strangers who volunteered their time. They cared about you and made you laugh. We used to go to Christmas parties outside Nazareth House ^{cm} but my name was never on the list of children who were going. ^{cm} I was always left out. ^{cm} Ever since I told on **NHB 76** ^{cm} **SR 199** checked my name off the list for speaking the truth. At Christmas we just got a toothbrush without toothpaste. The nuns never made sure our teeth were cleaned and I had trouble with my teeth as a result.

cm
my name was
always on the
List

13. Summertime was good in the home. If we didn't get anybody to take us out for the summer, we would play skip rope and throw balls against the wall. I was taken out by an old woman once when I was about seven and she was very good to me. I was meant to be taken by a younger couple but I had nits and they didn't want me so they gave me to their mother. ^{cm} I had thousands of creepers all over my eyebrows. ^{cm} Their mother was a lovely woman; she had a heart of gold. She cleaned my hair and spent hours fine combing my hair by

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no interaction encouraged between us.

5. I went to primary school onsite in Nazareth House. The nuns taught us but it was more Religion than anything else. We had to say the catechisms. There were some clever girls and the nuns picked them out and sent them to night school but they didn't bother with the rest of us. I always loved music and I used to sit under the stairs playing a mouth organ. I wish the nuns did more to encourage my passion for music. I then went to secondary school in St. Monica's on the Ravenhill Road. It was a huge school that had just opened. I felt so lost there – it was so big and different and I was used to our small class in the home. I think I only spent a year in St. Monica's.
6. I recall bath-time every Saturday night and the washing of our hair. We lined up and went into the bath one after the other. One girl would sit at the taps washing her feet while another girl was in the bath washing her body. When that girl got out, the first girl got into the bath. We were wrapped in a sheet when we got out. The water was often cold; we were afraid to ask for warm water. I remember once we asked for warm water and the nun gave it to us; it depended what kind of mood they were in. The nuns put Jeyes Fluid in the bath, which was very unpleasant and stung the skin, and would make the skin smart. Whichever nun was on duty would bathe us. When getting out of the bath our skin would be red and inflamed due to the harshness of the fluid. This continued until we reached puberty and began our period. From that time onwards we were permitted to bathe ourselves, using normal soap.
7. During bath-time our hair would be washed by the older girls in the home, as instructed by the nuns. This would consist of the girls using the same Jeyes Fluid to wash our hair. On one occasion an older girl in the home put the Jeyes Fluid directly into my ear. This resulted in my ear-drum bursting and severe pain. After the incident one of the nuns took me to the Mater Hospital in Dublin and we were told that they could not do anything for me as they were afraid of me going deaf. As a result my ear has been

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problematic for most of my life, and has continued to discharge fluid.

8. When I was experiencing problems with my ear I would visit the nun who was in charge of the sick children – **SR 145** I told her I had a bad ear and she asked me which ear it was. I pointed to it and upon telling her, she proceeded to give me a slap on the other ear saying “now you have two sore ears” and sent me on my way. I was bullied and tormented by the other girls because of my ear. I was called ‘leaky ear’ because my ear would weep and smell of discharge. This led to me isolating myself. In the home we were all very frightened of being ill, as it was not allowed in my view, and you would never be given the appropriate care and support. We did see a doctor every now and again but you were afraid to tell him anything and the nuns were always there anyway. I believe **SR 145** was removed from the home during my time there.
9. At the age of 56 years, when I lived in **SR 145** my husband and I worked in a hospital theatre and my husband told a specialist about my ear problem. They then investigated it and I had an operation on my ear to correct the problem, and it has been fine since.
10. The food in Nazareth House wasn't great but at least we were fed. I remember being hungry all the time. We got supper at about 5 or 6pm and nothing else for the rest of the night. We got boiled eggs on a Friday but half of them were black inside. We only ever got a fried egg on a feast day – that was a treat. Before breakfast we would have to go to Mass and then we had chores to do. We were never off our knees – either praying or scrubbing floors.
11. Lots of the girls would wet the bed at night, and if we did, we were severely punished for it. It got so bad that I was too scared to go to sleep, and would pray to God and say “please God don't let me wet the bed tonight”. When I was in my early teens the nuns made us ‘wet the beds’ walk around with nappies on. When I wet the bed, **SR 189** used to make me go down to

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18. A doctor came to the home once a week or once a fortnight. I think his name was Hunter. He would examine all the new children who had come in. He was a privately contracted doctor which I don't understand because the NHS was well established then. The nuns were always complaining about money so why would they hire a private doctor? I think it was to keep things hidden. A lot of the new children would have head lice. We used to sit like monkeys doing each other's hair, combing through with the nit comb. I used to like that; it broke the monotony and gave us something to do. The nuns never exposed themselves to risk in any way. The doctor examined me a couple of times because I was prone to chest infections and I had a bad flu or bronchitis once.

19. I remember one nun was nice to me when I was sick. It was **SR 116** and it was just after she arrived in the home. She brought me gruel with sugar in it and would check on me. She used to put Vicks on me and I remember thinking she was trying to touch me up but she wasn't. She was a nice nun to begin with but she soon changed. She was only a novice when she first came in and she took her final vows in the home. She was clearly influenced by the other nuns and became cruel like them. It's true that one bad apple can ruin the barrel.

20. I remember once there was an epidemic of measles or something but I must have been a carrier because I never contracted it. I had to take the trays of food up to a lot of the girls. The nuns never took them up. I was exposed to infection rather than them. **NHB 72** had the measles once and I remember taking her food up. Another girl called **[REDACTED]** was put in an isolation room because she had jaundice and I had to bring her food and medicine up to her. The nuns kept themselves well guarded.

21. The nuns never showed any compassion or nurturing. When a child is sick, all they want is a hug but we never got any affection from the nuns. They even discouraged affection between families. I would have been quite affectionate to **NHB 72** but we learned quite early on not to show that in public especially if the nuns were around. If she had fallen I wouldn't have been able to give her a hug, I'd have to tell her not to make a fuss.

1 were always complaining about money. So why would they
2 hire a private doctor, but they make the point, in fact,
3 they didn't.

4 **A. Uh-huh.**

5 Q. You talk about checking other girls' hair for head lice.
6 You say you used to like that, because it broke the
7 monotony and gave you something to do.

8 **A. Yes.**

9 Q. You say the nuns never exposed themselves to risk in any
10 way. By that I take it that the nuns did not examine
11 the girls' hair for head lice.

12 **A. No. They didn't treat -- they would have known we had**
13 **head lice, but they never physically treated any of the**
14 **children. They didn't expose themselves to any**
15 **possibility of -- well, the nits thing I would overrule,**
16 **because they had a habit. You know, you didn't see**
17 **their hair, but the other thing was even if -- I have**
18 **got it here -- an outbreak of measles, we all had to**
19 **look after each other. So they wouldn't have exposed**
20 **themselves to any risk.**

21 Q. You say you do remember SR116 being nice to you when you
22 were sick. You think that was just after she arrived in
23 the home, and she bought you some food and would check
24 on you. You say she put Vicks on you, because you had
25 -- you were prone to chest infections and you had a bad

to sit the 11+ we were all queuing up and the nerves got the better of me. I began to laugh out of nerves and [SR 31] grabbed me, gave me a beating and said I wasn't doing the 11+. We all went to St. Monica's Secondary School – I don't remember anyone ever going to a different school.

13. My mother's family always came to take [NHB 107] out but not me. They'd take her out on a Sunday. The family blamed me for us being taken into care. They used to say if I hadn't gone out and got attacked we wouldn't have been taken but I was only six or seven. My mother should have been looking after me. I believe the man who attacked me was convicted and served time in prison.

14. When I was about nine they made me start looking after the old people in Nazareth House after school and at the weekends. I was the only one sent over to do this. I did it until I was fourteen or fifteen. [SR 31] said it was to get the devil out of me and to keep me away from the other children. I used to have to bathe the old ladies, change their nappies and if they were dying I had to sit up all night with them and then wash their dead bodies. A civilian woman I called 'Matron' and two Scottish girls worked there and they were good to me. They were in their early 20's and they used to buy me sweets with their wages.

15. I continued to wet the bed until I was about eleven. I remember coming home one day and telling [SR 134] I had cut myself because I didn't know I had gotten my period. I lay all night thinking I was dying. I was terrified of getting a hiding. I was put into a dark room and then I was brought out to the canteen and put in front of everyone to tell them I was a woman now. You had to go to [SR 134] to ask for a sanitary towel. They were old-fashioned ones with a belt and you only got one for the day and one for night time.

16. The older girls used to try to bully me but they picked the wrong girl. I got in trouble for standing up for myself. One time a woman who used to look after us when the nuns were away praying got into my bed and tried to touch me but I beat her out of my bed. I was about eight or nine at the time. She was an adult civilian worker the nuns brought in to keep an eye on us when they were at prayer. I don't remember her name – we just knew her as 'Miss'.

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remedial class. I went to St. Monica's Secondary School on the Ravenhill Road. On my first day of secondary school I woke up and there was a brown sticky mess on my sheets. I had no idea what it was; I thought I had soiled myself. I was terrified of being called 'messy bum'. I hid the sheets under the mattress and got dressed for school as normal. On the way to school a woman tapped me on the shoulder and asked if I wanted to come in to her house for a cup of tea. I said no as I was late for school but she insisted. She said "you've had an accident dear" – I was bleeding all down my leg on to my white socks. I had no idea what it was; I thought I was injured. This woman and her husband took me back to the convent then and I was put into the isolation room and given a book to read called 'My Dear Daughter'. I couldn't understand all the big words in it like menstruation.

18. We used to be sent out to people during the school holidays and I was taken out by a family called the [REDACTED] outside Lurgan. I spent the whole summer picking peas and potatoes but I enjoyed it. It was hard work but I liked being out in the sunshine. I went there every summer for three or four years. Apparently the [REDACTED] wanted to adopt me. I found this out later when I was almost 16. I went to visit the [REDACTED] to thank them for taking me out and [REDACTED] told me they had wanted to adopt me but I wouldn't go without my sister.

19. I remember adoption days in the home. Every Sunday, people from outside in fancy clothes would come round the garden, look at all the children and point certain children out. If you were pointed out the nun told you to go wash your face and go up to the parlour. I remember seeing the fruit in the parlour; we never got fruit in the home except an orange at Christmas. There were various efforts made to adopt me out. I would be brought up to the parlour with my sister [REDACTED] and these people would sit there saying they had a television and they wanted us to come live with them. It was a scary thought for me to go somewhere with people I didn't know and even though the home was bad, I didn't know any different. I preferred the home to going somewhere different that could be even worse. Some of the people scared me. There was one woman with a fox head on her fur coat and I remember thinking if she did

1 Q. That fact of only getting a clean pair of underwear each
2 week --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- might explain -- regardless of the appropriateness of
5 how it was done -- might explain the checking to see was
6 the underwear okay each day.

7 A. Um.

8 Q. You found the experience of how that was done
9 humiliating.

10 A. Yes. So would you if you were sitting in a circle and
11 you had to turn your knickers inside out for someone
12 else to look at. It is degrading. Whether it was done
13 for one reason or another, it was done.

14 Q. You made the point to me arising out of that discussion
15 this morning that there was a similar experience with
16 sanitary towels --

17 A. That's right.

18 Q. -- or it wasn't a sanitary towel. It was a --

19 A. They used to make them. That's what I asked you, "When
20 did sanitary towels come into being?", if you like. We
21 used to make them with a piece of material of several
22 layers. They obviously made some and sewed them in the
23 sewing room with two loops on them. When you used
24 those, you put them into a special box. They were taken
25 down to the laundry and washed. Your name was on them

1 and you got them back again. That's what you used, but
2 then maybe -- I don't understand why. I didn't know
3 about sanitary towels until much later, because
4 I started very early. I started at 9 years old, which
5 was very young.

6 Q. I was asking you whether you had been -- whether there
7 had been any discussion with you to explain the changes
8 that were going to happen.

9 A. No, nothing at all. We didn't know what had happened to
10 us. It was frightening to know you were bleeding and
11 you didn't know why.

12 Q. In paragraph 14, HIA95, you talk about the bedwetting --

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. -- and the wet beds, as they were known to you. You
15 explain that SR134 made those who wet the bed walk with
16 the wet sheets round them to the bathroom.

17 A. Uh-huh. That's true. She'd make -- you would have to
18 pull them off, because I was the one that used to get
19 them up in the middle of the night. You'd sleep under
20 her cell window, your bed. You'd have to get up and get
21 what they called the wet beds up. When they wet the bed
22 in the morning, their sheets were -- they had to carry
23 them. That is how they carried them down to the room
24 after that. Then they would go to the laundry.

25 Q. The Sisters have said to the Inquiry they did not deal

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right over my eye and my eye was closed and swollen. The nuns sent for Dr Hunter then and I was taken to the children's unit in the Royal. I had an operation and I stayed in hospital for about a week. They made me wear a big round hat and I had to go back for weekly changes for a few months after that. I still have hearing problems to this day. Twenty years ago I had another operation on the same ear in Altnagelvin Hospital. Three years ago I fell and cut my brow. I went to Altnagelvin for an X-ray and the doctor asked me if I had a bad fall as a child because the two sides of my brain didn't match.

22. Puberty was an awful time in the home. It was a very vulnerable time in our lives and the nuns humiliated and degraded us constantly. One day when I was about fourteen years old I was out playing in the playground when I was called in by **SR 183** She stripped me to the waist and put stays on my breasts to hide the fact I was developing. The daily inspections continued and I remember having to raise my slip without knickers to be inspected.

23. We were told periods were a gift from Our Lady and when you got your period you said to the nun "Sister, I'm unwell". She would go down to the linen room then and get you a sanitary towel. The sanitary towels were made from sheets and we were given six each with our name on which we had to wash daily in the laundry. If they weren't washed well enough, **NHB 35** called you out in front of everyone and told you to wash them better. It was embarrassing and our hands would be red raw from rubbing. **NHB 35** was an old Nazareth House girl who had stayed there all her life and was in charge of the laundry. The nuns used to tell us we would go mad when our periods went away like the old ladies who lived in the old people's part of Nazareth House. The only sex education we got in the home was to marry a Catholic and keep the faith.

24. The records say I left Nazareth House on 16th December 1960 when I was eighteen but I am sure I left in the summer of 1959 when I was seventeen as I remember celebrating my 18th birthday on the outside. When I left the home, I was sent up to two old biddies on the **██████████** Road with another girl called **██████████** All we were given was a bus number and an address and we had to ask

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10. Our routine was school and prayer, we prayed all through the summer holidays. At one stage they shipped some children to Australia I remember **HIA 335** and [REDACTED] going. We had to pray that they would arrive safely even though the trip would take six weeks. At mass if we didn't go to communion we would be slapped.
11. Bath day was a Thursday and there were three baths all different sizes. Our hair was washed in the first bath and then we were dipped in jeyes fluid, the result of which would be that we would have two big red eyes the following day. We were not allowed to be seen and there would be two people standing with a sheet up. They put some sort of washing soda in the hand basin and we cleaned our teeth there. We never had toothpaste and cleaned our teeth with soap on our finger. It was only when there was a new Mother Superior that we got toothbrushes.
12. Every year we would be taken on a day out around Christmas, they gave us a couple of shillings and we went to Woolworths. I would always buy Gibson's toothpaste in a wee tin. It was dry toothpaste and lasted for quite a period of time. Prior to Christmas the Woolworths ladies would come into the home and put on a concert for us.
13. We were occasionally taken on walks and we had to go like soldiers in a line. We used to pick up the chewing gum on the street and put it in our mouths. We never had sweets and we never got visitors who would bring us any. Even the children that had been given stuff would get it taken off them by the nuns.
14. When the girls in the home took their period they were given sanitary pads that were made in the workhouse. They were big and thick with a wee tab on each of them and a wee belt that you put in. We had to wash them every night and you never got new ones. Our legs were rubbed off us and you had to wash them down the toilet to try and get the blood off. We dried them on our shoulders or we lay on them under our sheet to dry them out. It was

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- considered shameful to have your period. I am riddled with arthritis and I believe that this process is part of the cause.
15. The food in the convent was awful you couldn't eat it, it wasn't a bit healthy. The bread would be spread with dripping lard. I was used to good country food. Once a year on Easter Sunday we got an egg, most days it was porridge. **SR 183** was an old nun from Derry and if we dropped any porridge back onto our plates she would spoon it up and force it into us.
16. **SR 184** was in charge of the store and that's where all the good stuff stayed, she kept jam and other things. There was always a supply of apples and when we were out in the garden she came out and threw them at us but they were always half rotten.
17. A girl that worked in the old people's part of the Convent used to bring down the bread cuttings for us. We got to know what time this would be and we would run to get the bread crusts from her. There was an old nun called Sister **SR 185** who was half blind we used to run up and open the door for her with the intention of grabbing something from her plate. I know it was a terrible thing to do but we were very hungry.
18. There were bullies in the home as well. I am not sure that the nuns knew of them but they controlled us. In one instance we were outside and the Holy Rosary Chapel was next door to us **SR 186** was in charge. After the last bell rang which was known as the Jesus, Mary and Joseph bell the nuns would go to their cells. The bullies would send me over the wall to get pears and apples because I was a great tom boy and good at climbing. We were caught by one of the nuns that night she shouted at us from her cell. I threw myself over the wall I was all cut with glass because the top of it was surrounded with glass but I never let on and hid it because I knew that they would punish me.
19. Part of my job included looking after the children who wet the beds. Those children were routinely slapped. I would have to ensure that the beds would be dry for the following night but the sheets never got cleaned. I had to get up

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22 in the morning, their sheets were -- they had to carry
23 them. That is how they carried them down to the room
24 after that. Then they would go to the laundry.

25 Q. The Sisters have said to the Inquiry they did not deal

6. With regard to paragraph 11, we believe Jeyes Fluid may have been used on the girl's hair in order to prevent head lice within the home. We do not accept that the children never had toothpaste and were made to clean their teeth with soap on their finger.
7. With regard to paragraph 13, the children would have walked in a line in order to keep the children safe. We are aware of allegations in relation to items being taken away from children however we do not accept this. Toys and presents may have been tidied up and put away but these were not maliciously taken from the children.
8. With regard to paragraph 14, while we agree that the congregation did not deal with puberty sufficiently, we do not accept that the girls were given one sanitary pad which they had to wash every night and reuse.
9. With regard to paragraph 15, the food was always the best standard we could provide. In the interests of the child, the Sisters would encourage them to eat the meals provided as there may not have been another option. We do not accept that any child was force fed porridge which had been dropped on the floor. The Sisters deeply regret that any child went hungry under their care; however we cannot accept the allegations which [REDACTED] makes in paragraph 16 and 17.
10. With regard to paragraph 18 & 20, Anna has discussed peer abuse amongst the children in the home. When there are so many children of different ages together it is hard to see that disputes would not arise. Bullying occurs in all educational environments but this was not accepted or tolerated by the Sisters. If Anna suffered bullying or peer abuse of any sort, we do believe this to be wholly unacceptable.
11. With regard to paragraph 19, a number of allegations have been made regarding bed wetting in Nazareth House. The reason behind a child's bedwetting was clearly not dealt with appropriately however we do not accept that Anna was made to lie on top of the wet bed to dry it for other children.
12. With regard to paragraph 21, the children were provided with the best clothing and shoes available to the congregation at the time; we do not accept that Anna's shoes were taken from her and she was put into the snow. All parents, siblings and families would visit the home at their own discretion; the sisters would not discourage any person from visiting a child in Nazareth Lodge.

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16. When you got to the age where you were going to get your period you were given a book called 'My Dear Daughter' and told to say a prayer to Our Lady. We weren't given any sex education at all. Anything you learned was from the older girls. If you needed a sanitary towel, you had to go ask the nuns. The nuns never just handed one to you; they made you leave the dormitory and then they would leave one under your pillow. The sanitary towels were limited to one a day and we never had enough.

17. We used to get our underwear changed once a week. We had to go down to **SR 122** who was in charge of the sewing room and show the gusset of our underwear. If there were marks on your underwear, you got a clout. That was awful. The children were so frightened they'd be running around trying to swap their pants. Another time when I was coming out of the classroom **SR 122** was there and I must have been playing up. She hit me on the knuckles with the side of a ruler and it really hurt. **SR 122** **SR 122** could be very wicked sometimes and she did whatever would hurt you the most.

18. Any clothes or shoes we got in the home were usually hand me downs. I remember one instance when we all got brand new jelly shoes – I think they were called 'Jellybeans'. It was great to get something new but of all the children, mine were the first to rip. **SR 116** accused me of cutting the shoes with scissors but I hadn't – there was no way I could get scissors in the home. She hit me over the head with the shoe and told me to go into her classroom, kneel down and not to come out until I said I cut them. I was about ten or eleven at the time. I didn't know what to do because if I told the truth I would get in trouble and if I lied and said I cut them I would get beaten too. It was a Catch 22 – I was never going to win. I knelt down in that classroom the whole day crying; I was too frightened to come out and say I had cut the shoes. I never did say I cut them. Eventually **SR 116** had to tell me to come out of the classroom. After that the other children's shoes started to rip as well.

to sit the 11+ we were all queuing up and the nerves got the better of me. I began to laugh out of nerves and [SR 31] grabbed me, gave me a beating and said I wasn't doing the 11+. We all went to St. Monica's Secondary School – I don't remember anyone ever going to a different school.

13. My mother's family always came to take [NHB 107] out but not me. They'd take her out on a Sunday. The family blamed me for us being taken into care. They used to say if I hadn't gone out and got attacked we wouldn't have been taken but I was only six or seven. My mother should have been looking after me. I believe the man who attacked me was convicted and served time in prison.

14. When I was about nine they made me start looking after the old people in Nazareth House after school and at the weekends. I was the only one sent over to do this. I did it until I was fourteen or fifteen. [SR 31] said it was to get the devil out of me and to keep me away from the other children. I used to have to bathe the old ladies, change their nappies and if they were dying I had to sit up all night with them and then wash their dead bodies. A civilian woman I called 'Matron' and two Scottish girls worked there and they were good to me. They were in their early 20's and they used to buy me sweets with their wages.

15. I continued to wet the bed until I was about eleven. I remember coming home one day and telling [SR 134] I had cut myself because I didn't know I had gotten my period. I lay all night thinking I was dying. I was terrified of getting a hiding. I was put into a dark room and then I was brought out to the canteen and put in front of everyone to tell them I was a woman now. You had to go to [SR 134] to ask for a sanitary towel. They were old-fashioned ones with a belt and you only got one for the day and one for night time.

16. The older girls used to try to bully me but they picked the wrong girl. I got in trouble for standing up for myself. One time a woman who used to look after us when the nuns were away praying got into my bed and tried to touch me but I beat her out of my bed. I was about eight or nine at the time. She was an adult civilian worker the nuns brought in to keep an eye on us when they were at prayer. I don't remember her name – we just knew her as 'Miss'.

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scrubbing brush meant for the floor and my neck would bleed. If we had our period, we were only given a certain number of sanitary towels and the nuns wouldn't give us anymore. It would smell awful and when we were at St Monica's other girls would comment on how we smelt foul. Every week our knickers were examined. We had to line up and wait our turn. We then had to turn our knickers inside out and if there were any marks we would get smacked in front of all the other girls.

8. Mass was at 7.15am. We also had to say the Rosary most evenings before bed. We would take turns saying the Decades. We had to go to Mass twice on Sundays, in the morning and again in the afternoon for the Benediction. Sometimes we would even have to go to Mass three times in one day but this was infrequent. On occasions the nuns would want music for their Mass, and some girls would be brought up to sing for them or pump the organ.
9. Breakfast was either cornflakes or porridge. Sometimes the porridge in the morning would be burnt. I remember one occasion when I was trying to eat the burnt porridge. **SR 116** grabbed my hair and started feeding me the porridge with a spoon. She just kept pushing it into my mouth, even though I hadn't finished what I was eating. I was nearly sick. She just kept scraping the porridge and feeding it to me until the plate was clean. She did this to me on more than one occasion. Sunday dinners were quite nice sometimes. We might have got a bowl of chicken soup, and maybe some chicken and vegetables. Every Sunday evening we had spam salad. We would have been given a fried egg on Christmas morning which we all looked forward to. I don't remember anything about Christmas dinner.
10. We did get to play a little bit, but most of our spare time was spent doing chores. After school we would be sent to sweep the corridors, clean the bathrooms or wax and polish the floors. From the age of about seven, I worked in the old people's home. We would set the tables for their meals. I liked it because the old people shouted and I didn't have to worry about my poor hearing. Sometimes I was sent to work with the old men and I didn't like that because they tried to touch me. None of the girls liked being sent to see

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right over my eye and my eye was closed and swollen. The nuns sent for Dr Hunter then and I was taken to the children's unit in the Royal. I had an operation and I stayed in hospital for about a week. They made me wear a big round hat and I had to go back for weekly changes for a few months after that. I still have hearing problems to this day. Twenty years ago I had another operation on the same ear in Altnagelvin Hospital. Three years ago I fell and cut my brow. I went to Altnagelvin for an X-ray and the doctor asked me if I had a bad fall as a child because the two sides of my brain didn't match.

22. Puberty was an awful time in the home. It was a very vulnerable time in our lives and the nuns humiliated and degraded us constantly. One day when I was about fourteen years old I was out playing in the playground when I was called in by **SR 183**. She stripped me to the waist and put stays on my breasts to hide the fact I was developing. The daily inspections continued and I remember having to raise my slip without knickers to be inspected.

23. We were told periods were a gift from Our Lady and when you got your period you said to the nun "Sister, I'm unwell". She would go down to the linen room then and get you a sanitary towel. The sanitary towels were made from sheets and we were given six each with our name on which we had to wash daily in the laundry. If they weren't washed well enough, **NHB 35** called you out in front of everyone and told you to wash them better. It was embarrassing and our hands would be red raw from rubbing. **NHB 35** was an old Nazareth House girl who had stayed there all her life and was in charge of the laundry. The nuns used to tell us we would go mad when our periods went away like the old ladies who lived in the old people's part of Nazareth House. The only sex education we got in the home was to marry a Catholic and keep the faith.

24. The records say I left Nazareth House on 16th December 1960 when I was eighteen but I am sure I left in the summer of 1959 when I was seventeen as I remember celebrating my 18th birthday on the outside. When I left the home, I was sent up to two old biddies on the **██████████** Road with another girl called **██████████**. All we were given was a bus number and an address and we had to ask

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remedial class. I went to St. Monica's Secondary School on the Ravenhill Road. On my first day of secondary school I woke up and there was a brown sticky mess on my sheets. I had no idea what it was; I thought I had soiled myself. I was terrified of being called 'messy bum'. I hid the sheets under the mattress and got dressed for school as normal. On the way to school a woman tapped me on the shoulder and asked if I wanted to come in to her house for a cup of tea. I said no as I was late for school but she insisted. She said "you've had an accident dear" – I was bleeding all down my leg on to my white socks. I had no idea what it was; I thought I was injured. This woman and her husband took me back to the convent then and I was put into the isolation room and given a book to read called 'My Dear Daughter'. I couldn't understand all the big words in it like menstruation.

18. We used to be sent out to people during the school holidays and I was taken out by a family called the [REDACTED] outside Lurgan. I spent the whole summer picking peas and potatoes but I enjoyed it. It was hard work but I liked being out in the sunshine. I went there every summer for three or four years. Apparently the [REDACTED] wanted to adopt me. I found this out later when I was almost 16. I went to visit the [REDACTED] to thank them for taking me out and [REDACTED] told me they had wanted to adopt me but I wouldn't go without my sister.

19. I remember adoption days in the home. Every Sunday, people from outside in fancy clothes would come round the garden, look at all the children and point certain children out. If you were pointed out the nun told you to go wash your face and go up to the parlour. I remember seeing the fruit in the parlour; we never got fruit in the home except an orange at Christmas. There were various efforts made to adopt me out. I would be brought up to the parlour with my sister [REDACTED] and these people would sit there saying they had a television and they wanted us to come live with them. It was a scary thought for me to go somewhere with people I didn't know and even though the home was bad, I didn't know any different. I preferred the home to going somewhere different that could be even worse. Some of the people scared me. There was one woman with a fox head on her fur coat and I remember thinking if she did

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1 say you were number 10 and your sister was number 9.

2 You say that was particularly humiliating around puberty
3 time.

4 **A. Yes.**

5 Q. At paragraph 17 here you talk about when you did have
6 your period and having to go upstairs and asking the
7 nun, and you name the nun there as SR116, whom you would
8 have had to go and ask for a sanitary towel. You said:

9 "You had to wait for a quiet, convenient time to ask
10 and she would count how many you had used. She would
11 note when she last gave you one and refuse if it had
12 been that morning, even if you did need one."

13 You describe the effect that that had. You were too
14 afraid to ask for more sanitary towels. You said you
15 never had any privacy in the home.

16 I was asking if you had any preparation for the
17 onset of puberty in the home. You were saying that in
18 Sister -- you were in SR116's group. Isn't that right?

19 **A. Yes, yes.**

20 Q. She did do something.

21 **A. She did. She had a little book called "My Dear**
22 **Daughter" or something, and she would have taken some of**
23 **us individually into her cell, as they called it, where**
24 **she slept, and she did go through it. Now it was very**
25 **much from a religious, holy attitude, but you did have**

1 **an understanding of it.**

2 **Outside of that it would have been in school and it**
3 **was very much part of your biology, science teaching.**

4 Q. But certainly SR116 in her group did try to give some
5 instruction --

6 **A. She did. She did, yes.**

7 Q. -- to the girls about what was happening?

8 **A. Uh-huh.**

9 Q. You go on to say about the lack of privacy here and say
10 you all had to change in -- when you changed clothes, it
11 was in one room. SR31 would stand on a bench watching
12 you changing in and out of your uniforms. You think you
13 were 11 to 15 -- 11 and a half to 15.

14 **A. Up to then, yes.**

15 Q. You also talk about a doctor coming to the home you say
16 once a week or fortnight. You thought his name was
17 He also would examine all the new children
18 who came into the home.

19 **A. Yes, that's right.**

20 Q. You thought he was a privately contracted daughter --
21 doctor. Sorry. The Congregation would say he was
22 actually the local NHS doctor and he was not private,
23 but certainly that was the impression you had?

24 **A. Yes, it is.**

25 Q. I mean, you make the point that you thought that they

1 whatever reason in those early days, nobody seems to
2 know why it was done. It was done, but certainly we
3 don't -- certainly don't think it was done to humiliate
4 children. As I say, why it was done nobody seems to
5 know. Just custom and practice or something. I really
6 don't know.

7 Sex education, as you know, even my own mother, she
8 wouldn't even talk about sex, an old Irish woman, and,
9 you know, it was a taboo subject. If you think in
10 relation to the church and their view of women -- and
11 I hope I don't start a row here -- but anyway women had
12 to go into church before they could go back to the
13 sacraments and everything after they had a baby. So
14 there was a suppression here of women and sex and the
15 whole idea of sex and sex education.

16 In those days, yes, Sisters would be very shy to
17 talk about sex, because it wasn't really understood in
18 the purity that it's meant to be. It was shunned as
19 a bad thing. So in latter years then it would have been
20 the key workers that spoke to the children or they were
21 given "My Dear Daughter" books and things like that,
22 yes.

23 As for Sisters in the nursing wing, we were very --
24 especially in days gone by, you just minded your own
25 unit, and there was a great -- I won't say secret --

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caught hunched over the radio listening to the Top 20 when I should have been at Mass and I was punished for that.

14. Saturday mornings were spent cleaning the church. We were given an empty biscuit tin with tea leaves in it and we had to sprinkle the tea leaves on the wooden floor. Then we went round with a big broom and the tea leaves took the dust off the floor. On Saturday afternoons after dinner we would be back in the church on our hands and knees polishing the floors and the pews. It was just relentless work. We also worked in the laundry using the scrubbing boards to try to get the black marks off our white socks. The glass rollers would hurt our knuckles. We had to put the big sheets through the big rollers and in to the driers.
15. There was a big hall with a stage in the home and occasionally we would stage a play or a musical. I got the lead role one year because I was a good singer. When it came to the dress rehearsal, I absolutely froze on stage. I was dragged off the stage by my hair and I was beaten black and blue because they would have to find someone else to do it instead of me. I don't remember who it was who beat me. For a month after that I had to go straight to bed after school with no supper as punishment.
16. A woman called [REDACTED] came in to the home to teach us Irish dancing once a week and we would enter competitions. We were in serious trouble if we didn't come back with medals and cups; it was expected of us. We must have been quite good as I remember winning a lot of medals and cups for Irish dancing. The nuns used to bring us to Ormeau Park the odd time and I remember once we spent a week at the beach in Glenariff.
17. We all wore hand me down clothes in the home. At the start of winter, we would go down to this cubby hole in the basement and the nun would pick out shoes for us. She would say "they look like they would fit you". You would be wearing a pair of shoes somebody else wore the year before. We had one skirt and two jumpers for the winter. Once a fortnight you could change the

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jumper but you kept the skirt on for six months. In the summer we only had two dresses which we changed once a fortnight.

18. I never even knew I had a mother until I was ten. One day a nun told me I had a visitor and I had never had visitors. They gave me a bath and dressed me in nice clean clothes. I was taken to the parlour then and my mother was sitting there with a little boy. I had no clue who she was. The boy turned out to be my half brother [REDACTED]. We had about an hour together and then she left for England with my brother. I didn't see her again until I was fifteen when she brought me to England for a two week holiday. She would have written to me once or twice and she sent me parcels at Christmas. I was one of the lucky ones because most of the other girls didn't get parcels but I didn't feel lucky at the time. Once or twice, the nuns refused to give me these parcels as punishment.
19. I once secretly wrote to my mother asking her to buy me bell bottom jeans. All our letters were supposed to go through the nuns but I managed to sneak a letter into the post box without the nuns knowing. She must have told them though because I got a bad hiding for it. I was yanked out of bed by my hair and they said "how dare you write to your mother". I don't remember who it was who gave me this beating. It never occurred to me to write to my mother to ask her to take me out of the home. I was a child and I didn't know any different.
20. I don't remember ever seeing any inspectors in the home. Nobody ever asked me how I was getting on and if I liked it there. The only visitors I remember are benefactors. They would come in with boxes of Mars bars and we would crowd around them like vultures to get the chocolate. We never really got sweets like that so it was a real luxury. I remember we did have pocket money for sweets like penny chews. We got about half a crown or two shillings. There was a tuck shop and the nuns would keep a record of what you got.
21. I left school when I was fifteen but I stayed on working for the nuns for a year. That decision was made for me. I was just told this is where you'll be working

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Nazareth House Belfast (18th July 1960 – 19th December 1965)

6. The day we were brought into Nazareth House, we were taken into a big room while my mother talked to [SR 176], the Mother Superior. Then my mother said goodbye to us and we all started crying. We were taken to the sewing room by [SR 122] and changed out of our clothes into old clothes. We were brought to the canteen and given our supper and then just put to bed. We were just thrown in, we weren't introduced to anyone.
7. My sisters and I were kept in the same group – Our Lady's. [SR 31] was in charge of our group. There were three groups – Our Lady's, Sacred Heart and St. Anne's. We all wore different colours to Mass on Sunday. Our Lady's were blue, Sacred Heart was red and St. Anne's was green. I didn't know I had a younger sister in the home until one day [SR 31] asked us if we wanted to see our sister. I looked at her and asked what she meant and she said 'you know you have a sister in the baby section'. They brought her down to the railings then which separated the baby section from the children's part. We didn't have much contact with [NHB 69] after this as the two sections were completely separate.
8. A normal day in Nazareth House began with the nuns clapping to wake us up. If it was our group's turn to go to Mass, we would get up at 5am. We washed and dressed then after Mass we went down to get our breakfast. We got porridge or dipping bread. The food was terrible but you had to eat it. I hated the bread pudding, it made me sick but [SR 134] would stand over me and make me eat it even while I was retching. We wore pinafores to school which the nuns made themselves and we weren't allowed have our sleeves down. If you were caught with your sleeves down, you got a knuckle on your head from [SR 116]
9. We were punished for every little thing in the home. You would be brought into the sewing room and slapped with a bamboo cane on the knuckles. If you pulled your hand away, you would get an extra slap. [SR 134] used to beat me with a wooden walking stick like a shillelagh. She used to hide it under her clothes if she saw anybody coming, like the priest. [SR 116] had the

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7. Nazareth House was divided into three groups – Sacred Heart, Our Lady's and St. Anne's. I was in Our Lady's group and **SR 31** was in charge. **SR 116** and **SR 134** were in charge of the other two groups.
8. I have no good memories of my time in Nazareth House, only bad ones.
9. I went to primary school onsite in Nazareth House and I remember the beatings I got there. It was the same three nuns who taught there – **SR 31**, **SR 116** and **SR 134**. Then I went to St. Monica's secondary school on the Ravenhill Road which was ok. **SR 192** was the principal. I made some friends there but they used to have a party just for the girls from Nazareth House and all the other girls would look at us like we were different.
10. The food in Nazareth House wasn't very good but you didn't go hungry. We got fries but they were really greasy and the porridge was thick with a skin on top of it. If you didn't eat the food, the nuns would beat you.
11. The clothes were alright. They used to put aprons on us over our clothes to keep our clothes clean and if you ripped your apron you would have gotten smacked. **SR 122** did all the sewing in Nazareth House and every week you got your apron changed. If **SR 122** saw a rip in your apron, she would hit you over the head. We changed our vest and underwear once a week.
12. We slept in big dormitories in Nazareth House when we were little. There were about twenty or thirty girls in each dormitory. In the older girls' section there were smaller rooms with four beds in each room. The beds were iron framed and they were comfortable and warm enough.
13. A typical day in Nazareth House was you got up when the nuns rang the bell, you'd kneel down at the bed and say your morning prayers and then go down and get washed. The nuns made us strip off and they stood and watched us as we washed ourselves at the sinks in the bathroom. It made me feel

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Nazareth House, Belfast (21/10/1952 – 10/01/1967)

3. When I was two I was transferred to the nursery in Nazareth House and then I was transferred to the children's department when I was five.
4. I remember there were two dormitories; the senior dormitory and the junior dormitory. Shortly after I arrived the two dormitories were divided into three groups which were called Our Lady's, Saint Anne's and Sacred Hearts. There were about 30 children in each group ranging in age from 5 to 16. There was a nun in charge of each group and she slept in a cell at the end of the dormitory. I was in the Sacred Heart group and **SR 134** was in charge of my group.
5. We were all dressed in similar clothes. We all had to wear pinafores. We were given shoes to wear and if they did not fit we had to squeeze our feet in to them. The older girls were in charge of handing out the shoes and you were too afraid to say that they did not fit.
6. We went to Mass first thing most mornings and went to benediction in the evening. I tried to avoid sitting in front **SR 134** in chapel because if she thought you were doing anything wrong she would reach over and nip your neck or pull your hair. I was also made to pump the church organ which was hard work. Services lasted over an hour and I had to pump for the entire time. Sister **SR 134** also had a terrible habit of grabbing you by your wrists and making you hit yourself and then say "see I didn't touch you".
7. After Mass we had breakfast which consisted of porridge, bread and butter. Until I was about eleven, meals were eaten in complete silence. I do not know why. If you did not eat your dinner you were made to sit until it was finished or Sister **SR 116** would make you come up and get more. The food could have been better. We seemed to live on bread and butter and any meat was very grisly. It felt like we were always being given the butcher's scraps. I was always hungry. We had to say the Rosary before bed every night. The juniors went to bed between 6.30pm and 7pm and the seniors had to be in bed for 9pm.

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side. I felt there would have been more freedom in the children's part. The front part of the convent was reserved for the nuns. There was a beautiful garden with flowers at the front of it. Children were only allowed in there on certain occasions but we weren't totally isolated from it. In the earlier days, around the 1960's, we would only have been allowed into the nuns' garden during the month of May to say prayers, but that all changed and the gardens were more open to both the old people as well as the children. Beside the nun's garden was the nursery garden and then the children's garden, which had swings and climbers. These were used constantly. The garden was used for skipping, netball and many other activities.

5. There were three groups, St Anne's, Sacred Heart and Our Lady's. In the early days, we were all dressed in the same clothes, a tweed skirt and a jumper. The nuns must have got one roll of material for each group, and made skirts with a matching jumper for each child. Our Lady's wore blue uniforms, Sacred Heart wore red, and St Anne's wore green. It was an easy way of identifying which group each child belonged to. This form of dress changed over the years.
6. I was in St Anne's group. There were thirty children in our group. I don't remember being a number at all. We each had our own hand-made cloth toiletry bag, with our names written on them in marker pen. I still have my toiletry bag. We kept our toothbrush and our gibbs toothpaste in it, which were renewed when necessary. In the 1970's the house mother of St Anne's was a lady named **NL 143** who then became **NL 143**. Our whole group were taken to her wedding. She passed away a year ago.
7. Our life in the convent was basic, which you would expect. We were fed and given a roof over our heads. Our basic needs were met, but there was no emotional side to it, there couldn't be. Who were we to get that off? In my view that was just a product of society in the fifties – who did care? My family did not. To me, it was worse on the outside than it was on the inside. Every child had a different background, circumstances, genetics. Some people who came

1 **A. Yes. Uh-huh.**

2 Q. But that was true of the early days, the '60s, as well
3 as later on?

4 **A. Yes.**

5 Q. You say the form of dress changed over the years.

6 **A. It did. It became -- well, actually, to be honest with**
7 **you, I think at one stage we were dressed in gingham,**
8 **wee check dresses which they wear to primary school now.**
9 **We wore them. I would have wore one of them as a child,**
10 **but then in the '70s they didn't have to wear them. We**
11 **weren't -- the younger ones weren't all dressed the**
12 **same, if that makes sense, yes.**

13 Q. So then, as I say -- there were thirty -- initially
14 thirty children in your group, in St. Anne's group.

15 **A. Yes.**

16 Q. You don't remember ever being called by a number. The
17 congregation have said, HIA250, that numbers were used
18 for laundry, for handing girls back their little gingham
19 dress or whatever. Do you remember that, sort of
20 a number being used in that way?

21 **A. I really don't, no.**

22 Q. You do remember, though, having your own handmade cloth
23 toiletry bag with your name written on it in a pen
24 marker, which you still have.

25 **A. Which I have with me, yes, indeed.**

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██████████ and I was worried that she was going to open her eyes when I was kissing her.

21. At the age of eleven years, I went to St Monica's secondary school. We wore the same school uniform as the other girls but we were marked out as Nazareth House girls because we all had a bowl haircut.
22. A couple of years before I left Nazareth House, the dormitories were reduced, and smaller bedrooms were provided. They were more private. A few years after I left, I went back to Nazareth House to visit my younger sister ██████████ and I was shocked to see her get up and make herself a piece of toast. I couldn't believe it. She seemed to have a lot more freedom than we were given.
23. I was in St Monica's for approximately three years before I was moved to Derry. I started to run away, but it was only a bit of excitement, for something different to do. ██████████ SR 31 ██████████ called me in one night and told me that she couldn't control me. She told me I was being moved to a children's home in Derry. My sisters ██████████ and ██████████ were left behind.

Good Shepherd Convent, Derry, 1971 - 1973

24.

25.

book I hope you read this. Had I known what the contents of your book were going to be you know what I would have told you. You say your book is a true story, You say you taught yourself to read and write. You were in the same class as me and I passed the 11+. You say xmas was purely a religious event. You know about the parties we went to. You know about the tuck shop. films we watched etc. You even spoke to me about these things. Why did you have to write things that you know are not true. You make things bad for those who are genuinely affected by their childhood. In your book you were out to get at one nun in particular. The bit about girls on their period, blood dripping down their legs that is disgusting. No one was so hungry they had to eat grass. Your book has offended quite a lot of people. No one person was singled out. Good luck to anyone who writes but why not write the truth. This book would have been better as fiction.

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41. The children were provided with a school uniform and they had the best clothing available at the time. At no point do the Sisters accept that the children were dressed differently or any worse than other children. In later years the older children would have been consulted and allowed to buy their own clothes within a budget.

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4. I was placed in Nazareth House on 1st March 1935 when I was four and a half years old. [REDACTED] was three and [REDACTED] was only a baby. I remained there for nine years and seven months until I was fourteen.
5. The first day we went into Nazareth House, my parents brought us into this big room and just left us there. My sisters and I were separated shortly after entering. I was placed in the baby's section at first and then when I was five, I was moved up to the big girls' dormitory. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] remained in the babies section. For a while I didn't know they were my sisters.
6. My mind seemed to go blank when I went into Nazareth House. I felt numb for the first couple of years. It took me a while to get used to it, being surrounded by all the other children. There were 160 children altogether. We were always called by a number in Nazareth House, not our name. My number was 28. The odd time we would be called by our surname [REDACTED] and that's how I realised [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were my sisters. The nuns never bothered telling us.
7. The age range in the older girls group would have been from five to fourteen. There were four dormitories in Nazareth House. [REDACTED] SR 112 [REDACTED] was in charge of my dormitory and she had a cell in the dormitory.
8. A typical day in Nazareth House started at 5am when we were woken by the nuns with a whistle. My sister [REDACTED] used to wet the bed so I would run up and take the wet sheet off her bed and try to pinch a new one from the cupboard. [REDACTED] would have got a hiding if they found out she had wet the bed.
9. I and five other girls had to go down to the chapel. We only had our nightdresses on and we were in our bare feet. The six of us got into a line and polished the aisles and floors with cloths. I was only about seven or eight at this stage.
10. After we had polished the chapel, we went back up to make our beds, get washed and ready for school. We had to line up to be inspected by the nuns

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5. In my eyes the early stages in the home were not the worst but as we got older the head nun [REDACTED] SR 112 was very bad to us. She battered us stupid, she couldn't hit me hard enough so she would make me take my shoes off and she would hit me on the feet. [REDACTED] SR 112 used a cane and she would hold the sleeve of her habit so she could get a good whack at you. In the home we were only ever known as a number never called by our name.
6. In the morning we cleaned the dormitories they were massive they might have had fifty two beds. I was in Our Lady's Dormitory. We had to sleep with our hands crossed over our chests. The nuns would go around and check that our hands were neat beneath the covers fearing we were interfering with ourselves. They would hit us really hard if they discovered our hands were not where they should be.
7. The floors had to be shining and we cleaned them with a cloth under our feet going up and down until they were glittering. I remember us scrubbing a big passage that ran the length of the convent. We would have been on our knees.
8. On occasion we were sent to the laundry and there was a lady there called [REDACTED] who was in charge she had been reared in the convent. She was a cross old woman with a double chin. We had to scrub when washing the boards in the sink; we thought it was great because she would give us bread and jam.
9. I ran away from the home on one occasion with three or four others. We did not know Belfast and the police found us and brought us back. The nuns shaved our hair when we returned so that we could be identified and known as the runaways. We were hit and punished but the punishment was not too bad. I was made kneel in the Church with the old people. I liked doing it because the old people were nice and they would bring in biscuits and sweets. This didn't last too long as one of the nuns seen us and we hadn't eaten our sweets in time so she took us back.

1 **A. It would be SR112.**

2 Q. SR112?

3 **A. Uh-huh.**

4 Q. Thanks very much, HIA439.

5 MR LANE: I'd just like to make sure I've understood things
6 properly about the way you dealt with the children who
7 wet the bed. Are you saying you only dried the sheets;
8 you didn't wash them at all?

9 **A. No, we dried them out and put them back on their beds**
10 **again.**

11 Q. Right. So how often would sheets be changed normally?

12 **A. I wouldn't know that --**

13 Q. No. Right.

14 **A. -- how often they changed.**

15 Q. You mentioned about using numbers and not names.

16 **A. Oh, yes. You were called by number.**

17 Q. Was that all the time that you were called by number?

18 **A. No, all the time. 142 I was called.**

19 Q. So what were -- that would be, what, when you got clean
20 clothes or what --

21 **A. Your number was on your clothes.**

22 Q. Uh-huh.

23 **A. You have everything in your number.**

24 Q. If the nuns wanted to speak to you, would they call out
25 your number or call out your name?

1 **A. Call out, "142, come up here, please".**

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

3 **A. All right.**

4 CHAIRMAN: Well, HIA439, you'll be pleased I'm sure to hear
5 those are the last questions we want to ask you. Thank
6 you very much indeed for coming to speak to us today.

7 **A. You're welcome.**

8 Q. Thank you.

9 **A. Thank you.**

10 **(Witness withdrew)**

11 MR AIKEN: Chairman, Members of the Panel, Ms Smith will be
12 taking the next witness. Perhaps if we take a short
13 break for that to be readied.

14 CHAIRMAN: Yes. Very well. Thank you.

15 (11.10 am)

16 (Short break)

17 (11.20 am)

18 WITNESS SR46 (called)

19 MS SMITH: Morning, Chairman, Panel Members. The next
20 witness today is "SR46". That's SR46. She wishes to
21 take the religious oath and she also wishes to maintain
22 the anonymity afforded by the Inquiry.

23 WITNESS SR46 (sworn)

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

25

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18. If you had done anything wrong in Nazareth House, you would be called into the hall with the rest of the girls, your number would be called out and you would be asked to come up to the stage. Once there, you would be told to lie down and one nun would hold both your legs in the air, whilst another nun would hit you repeatedly across the bottom with a stick, a hairbrush, or whatever implement they could get their hands on. They would also ask you to bend over a low bench or chair and again hit you repeatedly. This happened to me once and I saw it happen to other girls on numerous occasions. It was so degrading. **SR 189** usually carried out these beatings with the help of whatever nun she could get.
19. The most traumatic times for me in the home were when I was subjected to sexual abuse by the older girls. This would happen at night time or in some cases during the day, if they got the chance to get us on our own. The girls would take us to the bathroom, and make us kneel down and perform oral sex on them. They would force us to do this and push our heads towards their genital area. I was in my teens when this happened and I experienced this several times. I cannot say with certainty who these older girls were. There was one particular older girl called **NHB 41** who was a bully and physically abused me but I couldn't say if it was her who sexually abused me.
20. **NHB 41** used to pull the hair out of my head and one time I ran into the church where the nuns were praying to get away from **NHB 41**. In front of all the nuns, she grabbed me from the altar and dragged me by the hair out of there. I was screaming for help but the nuns just sat there and did nothing. I believe **NHB 41** was sent to the Good Shepherd and when you go there your name is changed. At the time I thought I was the only one this was happening to but from speaking to girls in later years I found out this was not the case. A lot of girls were sexually abused by older girls in the home. We just couldn't talk about it at the time. I don't know if the nuns were aware of the sexual abuse going on but I later heard that an older girl was caught sexually abusing a younger girl and she was sent to the Good

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nursery until she was aged about five years. We didn't have any contact with her other than when we were in the garden. I remember being pulled away from her on one occasion by a nun, **SR 31** I think.

4. There were three groups, St Ann's Group, Sacred Heart Group and Our Lady's Group, and there was one nun in charge of each, **SR 116** **SR 134** and **SR 31**. Each group had approximately thirty three children. Each group was on a different floor in the home and had its' own dormitory. We were all given numbers which the nuns would use to identify us, but at a later stage they started to use our surnames. ^{HIA 63} remembers being called by a number because she is older than me. I would be more familiar being referred to as **SR 116**.
5. We were in St Ann's Group of which **SR 116** was in charge. She had a cell in our dormitory so that she could keep watch on us and make sure we were in bed. The dormitories were like hospitals, with about thirty wee iron beds. We had to paint our beds cream every summer. **SR 116** taught the infants. I was in her class.
6. We got up at 6.45am. In the morning we had to pull our bed sheets back and the nuns would come round to inspect our beds. I only ever wet my bed once, at a time when I was in **SR 134** group. I remember sweating, hoping **SR 134** would pass me by. She pushed me out of the way and felt my bed. She grabbed me by the back of the head and stuck my nose in the bed sheets, and rubbed my face in it, then pulled me back by my hair. If we wet the bed, we had to take our sheets off and leave them on the floor. It was as if we were being marked out, so everyone would know what we had done, and we would be teased by the other girls. We had to make our beds after they were inspected.
7. After our beds were inspected, we had to wash, and then **SR 134** would inspect us. She would point at us and we would have to put out our hands, turn them over so she could look at our arms, and then show our necks. If I had a mark on my neck **SR 134** would scrub it again, but she would use a

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and they more or less bowed down to them. There was one particular priest who would slap the girls across the face if they did not say Amen in a loud voice. I remember being in the sacristy with a priest and it is unclear to me why but I have a vivid memory of him being dressed in black and offering me sweets. It was a real novelty as we were not given sweets too often.

8. All the children in the home had to know the catechism or they risked being caned by the nuns. I was personally never caned as I knew it but I did witness other girls being whipped and the nuns just would not stop.
9. We never got called by our name we were addressed by our number. I distinctly remember being number four in the baby home and number nine in Nazareth House. Our number was sewn into our clothes and rather than call me **HIA 161** it was always **HIA 161** **[REDACTED]** was in the home at that time and she had speech problems. The nuns gave her number sixty-six and she had difficulty pronouncing the s each time she tried to pronounce it and it wasn't clear the nuns would wallop her.
10. The nuns discovered that I had not been baptised when I was due to make my Holy Communion. I was punched, kicked and put in a room away from everybody else because **HIA 161** was a pagan". **SR 116** pulled me up by the hair and lifted me off the floor and she said "your mother is nothing but a prostitute anyway, a drunk and a prostitute and that's how you're going to turn out". That kind of thing was said to me on a daily basis and that was normal for me. I grew up to not expect any more than that. I was never called **HIA 161** and never shown any love or affection.
11. A lot of the abuse would have been hidden away. It happened in a store room, it was used as a cleaning cupboard and it stank of jeyes fluid and it held wooden items like brushes that **SR 116** used to batter you with. She had a bunch of keys that would rattle as she opened the door and she would get you in there and punish you. **SR 116** did this regularly and when you heard those keys jangling you knew that she was taking you to that room and you knew what you were in for. I prayed just to die.

4. As soon as the social workers went away we were all taken down and put in a bath of jeyes fluid, our heads were shaved and a uniform was put on each of us. At this time we did not speak, we just looked at each other whilst it was happening and it was very frightening. They then took us outside to the other girls. I remember a girl approached me, she asked me if I was the new girl and if I had any sweets. I can then recall the thud she got as she was not allowed to be talking or asking for sweets.
5. We got up each morning at seven, kneeled down beside our bed to say our prayers, made our bed and then went to mass. When we came back from mass we had our breakfast and nobody was allowed to talk at meal times. After this we did our cleaning before going to school. Anybody who could clean cleaned, your age did not matter. Everything was timed and followed a strict routine. We each were given a number and there was a hundred odd of us in the home and I was number [REDACTED]. We were also divided into groups, Our Lady's, **SR19** **SR194** and **SR134** group. There was a garden with swings and climbing frames in it. We got to be outside for one hour each day. That was when you got to speak to other children and a nun would have walked around the garden with her prayer book watching you. I like to read a lot but there was nothing to read. The TV was very limited. You had to watch mostly what the nuns wanted to watch. We were made to watch Paul Durnigan on a Saturday night. Everything was for them and not for us.
6. We attended a primary school inside the building. Outsiders attended the primary school but they were treated differently. They were not allowed to be slapped; however they did get shouted at. The number was printed on our clothes and this was embarrassing when you were outside of the home. When I attended the secondary school if I heard my name being called I also would have heard the number ninety three. I recall hearing my sister's numbers also being called. It used to annoy me and you would think that you would have got used to it. Even now you know that prisoners wouldn't even be treated like that.

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13. We were sent to bed at about 5pm but we used to sneak out at twelve o'clock to steal apples and pears from the Holy Rosary next door. If I was caught stealing fruit from the Holy Rosary, I would be made to kneel outside **SR 112** **SR 112** cell all night. One morning at about 6am, I was coming back across the wall from the Holy Rosary carrying loads of apples and pears to share with the other girls. The washer woman, **NHB 35** caught me and walloped me with a big stick with nails on it. I still have two scars on my thigh from when this happened. **NHB 35** was a cruel woman, and she kept an eye on everything. **NHB 36** was the other cook but she was a nice woman. She kept to herself and she would never have hit you. We called her fatty **NHB 36** which she thought was funny.

14. The food in Nazareth House wasn't great so we were hungry pretty often. If we were in time for breakfast, were given a cup of cocoa and one round of bread dipped in lard. For dinner, we got one potato and stewed onions. We didn't know what meat was. It was the same thing every day. For tea at 4pm, it was lumpy porridge which I could never eat so I got nothing. We were so hungry we used to stand in this small porch waiting on the woman, **[REDACTED]** with the slops from the nursing home. It might have been stew or something similar. We used to lift up the slops with our hands, put it in our drawers and run off to the cellar to eat it, so we wouldn't be caught. We were like animals. We also used to hang out the toilet windows and ask a man we called 'Button' for the turnip skins and we ate them raw. On one occasion I stole some tins to feed the girls. I put the tins up my dress. I didn't even think about how I was going to get them open. It turned out to be tins of baking powder which we couldn't eat anyway. I used to steal sweets for all the younger girls. There was a big jar of sweets in a cupboard in the classroom and I used to steal them and share them out amongst the girls. The sweets must have been for the nuns because we never received any. I only stole food because of starvation, not devilment.

15. The nuns made us wash our own socks and clothes. We had to dry them over our shoulders – one over each shoulder so they would dry with the heat of your body. There was no other way of drying them. If we washed our clothes

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packet of sweets or bath cubes. I only went to one or two of these parties because the nuns always excluded me from them on purpose. They would come into the classroom and pick children out in front of you to go to the parties. It was rare that I got chosen to go. The nuns made differences and gave certain children preferential treatment and that is something that has always stuck with me.

14. The food in Nazareth House was awful; it wasn't fit for a pig. On a Saturday we used to get boiled eggs which were black and sausages full of gristle. The worst thing was the fried bread which was covered in dark brown, thick grease. It was sickening. I used to be so hungry I would be out in the gutter looking for something to eat. I would wait under the windows of the kitchen in the hope of finding some scraps of food. I even ate used chewing gum off the ground. One time I ate a rotten apple with a worm in it and it made me sick. I later found out that the nuns were getting lots of food donations from places like Marks & Spencer but we never saw any of it; they obviously kept it to feed themselves.
15. The clothing wasn't much better. In the older girls' section, we wore a bib over our dresses. The dresses were raggy old things and it didn't matter what size you were or whether they fit you or not. The same applied to shoes – you just put them on, it didn't matter what size they were. I still have a bunion from years of wearing ill-fitting shoes.
16. The front of the house was where they took the visitors like priests and benefactors. It was beautifully decorated with flowers and smelled fantastic but if you walked to the back part you'd see where we were kept – it was like a dungeon. There was an old people's part in the convent and the nuns used the girls to look after the old people. The nuns also used the girls to look after the babies and the youngsters, as well as doing all the cleaning, scrubbing, maintenance and upkeep of the convent. I remember having to wash the high walls in the dormitory with Flash in the later years. I had to stand on beds and chairs; the nuns didn't care about our safety.

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They tried to say it was ringworm or something and I was given cream to deal with it. I still have problems with my scalp.

10. The bath water was never changed and we shared towels. We were given old dirty shoes to wear that didn't fit.
11. **HIA 430** was older than me and my bed was next to hers in my dormitory. She pretended to tell us stories and got us to lean around her bed. She took our hands and she tried to get us to touch her. This happened a few times and I always pulled my hand away.
12. On one occasion I was crying and I told **SR 134** about what had happened. **SR 134** beat me on the head with keys. She moved me out of the dormitory and put me in a store room on the landing which had a small camp bed. She then moved me to outside her cell where my bed was near the fire escape.
13. **HIA 430** continued to hit me after this as she knew I told **SR 134** I was bullied by **HIA 430** and other older girls. If I received anything, the bullies would have stolen it from me. They would thump and kick me. For example, if I had a ball they would take it off me and thump me.
14. There was no one to tell. The nuns wouldn't have been believed you and they would have beaten you.
15. I was starving with hunger all the time. The stew was water with bits of grizzled fat in it. We got dipped bread from a dirty oven and we were given black pudding. The nuns probably got the good meat. I remember climbing the wall at back of Holy Rosary Chapel to get to the pear trees. We were constantly starving. On one occasion I remember someone brought in greasy apples and we were given them to eat.
16. There was a doctor, Dr Hunter I think, who came in and gave injections for measles and children's illnesses. I got a BCG injection. **SR 134** knew this

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years old at the time. The nuns used to say it was a privilege but if it was why didn't they do it themselves? The other girls and I were treated like slaves.

11. Every Friday night, we had to scrub the long corridors after school. The floors were made of stone and we worked in pairs on our hands and knees with a scrubbing brush and soap. We used to chant "left, right, Peggy's right". We wore a pinafore over our clothes and our pinafore, shoes and socks would be saturated. Our hands would be red and raw. On a Saturday we had to do the same to the floors in the chapel. We had to shine them until you could see your face in the floor. I never once saw the nuns do any physical work, it was always the children.

12. We had to work in the laundry sometimes as well. It was hard, severe work for a child but I didn't really mind because it broke the monotony. The standard the nuns expected of us children was exceptional. A nun would always be standing over you watching you and if you didn't do your chores to their standards, you had to do them again. This very much depended on the mood of the nuns on a particular day. They used to go out collecting on a Saturday and if they had a bad day they would take it out on us when they got back. They used to tell us they would be spat on and verbally abused while out collecting for us.

13. The food in Nazareth House wasn't great but food wasn't top of my list. It didn't bother me to be hungry. I remember going to bed hungry. In the morning we would get porridge and sometimes it would have big lumps in it and you wouldn't want to eat it but you had to eat what was on your plate. A nun and a couple of the older girls did the cooking. Mealtimes were in silence and the supervising nun would single out me and other girls who were whispering. We would have been taken to the front of the dining room and slapped with a cane, ruler, spoon or strap.

14. On one occasion before we were due to go on holiday to Glenariff, we had mutton stew but the mutton was gone off. The smell was horrendous but the nuns made us eat it. All the girls were vomiting including me but the nuns kept

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saying if everybody didn't eat it, nobody would get to go on holidays. We were literally eating our own vomit; even children as young as five. The stew was eaten in the end but it seemed to go on for hours and hours. If you didn't eat your stew, somebody ate it for you because we all wanted to go on holidays. We went on holiday once a year either to Glenariff or Ballyhornan. Christmas in the home was nothing special. I remember we got a tin of Gibbs toothpaste, an apple and an orange.

15. We got bathed once or twice a week and the nuns made us all strip to the waist and it was embarrassing when you were starting to develop physically. We were all bathed in Jeyes fluid and it was so strong smelling. It stung your skin and itched like mad. When you got up out of the bath you would have a brown ring around your waist from the Jeyes fluid. It clearly said on the tin not to be used on skin. All the girls from the home were brunettes and I used to think it was from the Jeyes fluid because they washed our hair in it as well. The water was never changed or topped up so if you were last in it would be freezing cold. Even if you had your period you still had to get in the same bath and a girl would have to get in after you.

16. At bath time, our underwear would be examined by a nun. You had to line up and show the crotch of your underwear calling out your number. I was number 10 and my sister NHB 72 was number 9. This was humiliating especially if it was around puberty.

17. When you took your period, you had to go upstairs and ask SR 116 for a sanitary towel. You had to wait for a quiet, convenient time to ask and she would count how many you used. She would note when she last gave you one and refuse if it had been that morning even if you needed one. I was often sore, chaffed and raw but I was too afraid to ask for more sanitary towels. You never had any privacy in the home. Even when we changed clothes, it was all in one room and SR 31 would stand on a bench watching us changing in and out of our uniforms. We were all aged between eleven and a half and fifteen years of age.

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10. We all wore the same clothes, it was like a uniform. There was one nun who was very cruel, **SR 122**. She was in charge of the sewing room. We had to wear an apron, and we would call them pinnies. We had one pinnie to wear for a whole week, and then every Saturday morning it was inspected. If the pinnie was torn or had even the tiniest bit of dirt, we would get it from **SR 122**. On one occasion I tore my pinnie and my sister **NHB 52** hid it for me, by rolling it up in her own pinnie, but when it was discovered, she was hit by **SR 122**.
11. We were bathed twice a week. I remember the nuns would put Jeyes fluid in the bath, and it would sting really badly if we had any cuts. Sometimes ten other children would be in the bath before it was my turn so the water wasn't fresh. Older girls would sometimes supervise bath time, and they could be just as bad as the nuns. They were always rough and pulling at us.
12. The food in the home was terrible, but we were always hungry so we just had to eat it. We weren't starved but we still weren't fed a proper nutritional diet. The food was very bland and stodgy. We had lumpy porridge for breakfast. We were given pork pies that were just full of jelly and fat. The nuns would walk up and down the tables and stand behind us, always watching to make sure we ate our meals. I was physically sick at times. Sometimes I tried to hide my food, put it down my knickers. I remember being hungry quite a few times and going to steal apples and rhubarb out of the nun's part. I wouldn't say we ever felt full. On feast days, and at Christmas, a bottle of HP sauce and a bowl of sugar would have been put on the table. I don't remember being cold in the home.
13. **SR 31** had a massive bunch of keys, like jailers keys, and she had a habit of digging them into our heads. If we were talking at the table at mealtimes, she would come behind us and hit us with the keys. They are what I remember most about **SR 31**. We called her **SR 31** because we could hear her coming a mile away with the jingle of her keys. We very rarely saw her smile or laugh. **SR 31** had her favourite children. On one

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the springs and if we cried in pain we were dragged out leaving our hair entangled behind us. The beds were old fashioned iron beds with coils.

5. The routine in the home was we got up at 6am, washed and dressed and polished under the beds. Then we went to Mass every day. After Mass we went down for breakfast which was porridge and bread. The porridge was always either too lumpy or too thick. We used to melt the margarine on the radiators and it would go black from the dirt. Lunch was potatoes, half cooked cabbage or stew. It was always terrible and I was slapped for not eating it. I always hated bacon rind and I couldn't swallow it. The nun on duty would watch me to make sure I ate it. If you didn't finish your food it would be left there until the next meal and you would be in the nun's bad books for the rest of the day. There was a different nun supervising mealtimes every day. My mother came from a farm and she used to send me up half a dozen eggs once a year or so. The nuns would single me out because of this and make sure I wasn't getting any ideas above my station just because I was getting a fried egg and nobody else was.
6. I went to primary school onsite but I have no memory of learning anything. All I remember is religion and an atmosphere of fear. I had a very bad lisp and I spat a lot when I spoke. Because of this if I was asked a question in class I wouldn't answer – I preferred to go over to the dunce's corner. I couldn't participate in class because of my lisp. When I did tests, I just wrote my name at the top of the page and nothing else. There were no children from outside so it was just us; we were completely cut off from the outside world. School went on until 3pm and then we had half an hour to play. We played in a small square yard all year round. It had half a dozen swings, an area for hopscotch and later they added a climbing frame. Tea was bread and jam.
7. The only relief was when two lay teachers came in – **NHB 43** and another woman whose name I can't recall. Practising for concerts or competitions gave us a break from the constant abuse and the fear of being beaten. We used to go to the local feis and we would put on concerts for the Reverend Mother's feast day. The Mother Provincial came to visit every four

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4. We had to get up at 6.00am every morning and say prayers at the end of the bed. We stripped the bed and dusted the bed frame and the nun who was in charge of the dormitory would have come round to inspect the beds afterwards. After the inspection we could remake them, but if she found fault, we had to clean the bed all over again. When we got dressed we had to put on our clothes underneath our nightdress, in the way we were taught. We weren't allowed to strip. We then went to Chapel for Mass. When we came back we were given breakfast.
5. We had mealtimes in the big dining room, and meals were supervised by the nuns. At breakfast we were only ever given one slice of bread and dripping and a cup of tea. I didn't know what porridge was and I didn't see an egg until I was about ten or eleven years of age. They introduced meat as well but it was usually bits of fat. If we didn't eat the food the first time, it would be placed in front of us again at dinner time, and if we didn't eat it at dinner, it would be there for us at supper. We tried to find different ways of hiding the food that we didn't want to eat. We tried to put it into serviettes, but the nuns soon realised. I always tried to sneak mine into the bin but if I was caught, the nun would make me take it out of the bin and eat it, even if I was sick. This happened quite regularly. To this day, I hate fat on my meat.
6. We were all trained in cleaning. We started our chores at the age of five and these would have been lighter chores. At the age of seven we would have been given something harder to do, and again a few years later, the chores would have got worse. I would work three months in the dining room, where I was responsible for six or seven tables, cleaning the tables, the legs of the furniture and the floors around the tables. I then worked three months in the kitchen, cleaning the pots and pans and floors, and then three months in the dormitories, cleaning the whole room. Then there was three months polishing the wooden floors and the marble corridors. We had to polish it on our knees. There would have been rows of girls, with pads on their knees, and by the time the last row finished, the floor would be spotless. Although we wore pads, our knees would still hurt. These chores had to be done every day

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- considered shameful to have your period. I am riddled with arthritis and I believe that this process is part of the cause.
15. The food in the convent was awful you couldn't eat it, it wasn't a bit healthy. The bread would be spread with dripping lard. I was used to good country food. Once a year on Easter Sunday we got an egg, most days it was porridge. **SR 183** was an old nun from Derry and if we dropped any porridge back onto our plates she would spoon it up and force it into us.
16. **SR 184** was in charge of the store and that's where all the good stuff stayed, she kept jam and other things. There was always a supply of apples and when we were out in the garden she came out and threw them at us but they were always half rotten.
17. A girl that worked in the old people's part of the Convent used to bring down the bread cuttings for us. We got to know what time this would be and we would run to get the bread crusts from her. There was an old nun called Sister **SR 185** who was half blind we used to run up and open the door for her with the intention of grabbing something from her plate. I know it was a terrible thing to do but we were very hungry.
18. There were bullies in the home as well. I am not sure that the nuns knew of them but they controlled us. In one instance we were outside and the Holy Rosary Chapel was next door to us **SR 186** was in charge. After the last bell rang which was known as the Jesus, Mary and Joseph bell the nuns would go to their cells. The bullies would send me over the wall to get pears and apples because I was a great tom boy and good at climbing. We were caught by one of the nuns that night she shouted at us from her cell. I threw myself over the wall I was all cut with glass because the top of it was surrounded with glass but I never let on and hid it because I knew that they would punish me.
19. Part of my job included looking after the children who wet the beds. Those children were routinely slapped. I would have to ensure that the beds would be dry for the following night but the sheets never got cleaned. I had to get up

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up in a row outside the nun's cell. I wet the bed a lot. We had to take our sheets and wash them in the bath. If you wet the bed the first night, you got four whacks with a cane. If you wet the bed two nights in a row, you got eight whacks and so on.

6. **SR 116** used to shout at me that my mother didn't want me and they were stuck with me and they didn't want me either. I remember the swish of the roly poly bamboo cane as it went through the air. **SR 116** would lose control and hit me on the head and the hands. She would always hit me on the knuckles where it hurt the most. We would have to hold out our knuckles, we never got hit on the palm. I used to have black and blue knuckles all the time; they were always swollen.
7. Every morning I woke up terrified my bed would be wet, especially if it was the fifth night in a row. I knew then I would be getting twenty whacks. I used to lie and say I hadn't wet the bed to save myself from a beating. I would just sleep in the wet sheets night after night. We must have smelled terrible when we went out to school. I wet the bed up until I was 13. They got a special device which set off a buzzer if you wet the bed and it must have worked.
8. We went to Mass every morning and we also had to say the Rosary and Benedictions throughout the day. The priests I remember are **NHB 84** and Canon Daly. Canon Daly had a relative in the old ladies part of the home. I remember one night I woke up in the middle of the night and **NHB 84** was standing at the edge of my bed. He was quite young at the time. I was about 7 or 8. My nightdress was around my waist. I don't remember anything sexual happening but when I look back as an adult I wonder if I was sexually abused. As soon as I woke up **NHB 84** moved away. That is the only time I remember anything like that happening but it has really stuck in my mind. We would never have seen the priest in the dormitory.
9. After Mass we went down for breakfast which was usually porridge. The food wasn't great but it kept us alive. For dinner we would have meatballs, beans

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and potatoes. I don't remember ever being starving in the home. We got a fried egg once a year at Christmas and we would be so excited.

10. I went to primary school onsite in Nazareth House. The nuns were the teachers. I remember **SR 116** and **SR 134** and there were other nuns whose names I can't recall. I was excellent at English and whenever we had to write stories mine would be chosen to go up on the wall. I was always reading books in the library. It wasn't really a library; it was just one large bookshelf. I was terrible at Maths so I never got any qualifications in school.

11. When I was eleven I went to St. Monica's Secondary School on the Ravenhill Road. Getting out to school was a great escape but I never told anyone what was going on in the home. Even though I had friends at St. Monica's I didn't really enjoy it as there was a stigma of being from the home. It was like being from another planet. Other girls would point us out and laugh at us.

12. I went out to a family called the **[REDACTED]** in **[REDACTED]** for three months every summer. I never told them anything either. They had known my mother growing up but they weren't relatives. They didn't have much – no electricity, toilets or running water but I had happy times there. I was lucky to get out for the whole summer. In the car on the way back to Belfast I would always be sobbing my heart out but nobody ever asked why.

13. My main memories of Nazareth House are being beaten every morning for wetting the bed, scrubbing the floors and being forced to write hundreds of lines as punishment. Another punishment was being made to scrub the corridors on our hands and knees as soon as we got in from school at half 3. It took hours because they were really long corridors. We were also sent to bed without any supper at about 5pm every day for a month as punishment. These punishments were for doing something minor like talking when you shouldn't be or mitching off Mass. I felt like I was picked on because it always seemed like as soon as one month of punishment was over, I was back down on my hands and knees again. I definitely wasn't one of the pets but I would never have answered back. I was quite shy as a child. I remember once being

5. With regard to paragraph 8, the food was always the best standard we could provide; In the interests of the child, the Sisters would encourage them to eat the meals provided as there may not have been another option. We do not accept that any child was force fed under the care of the Sisters. Further to this, the sisters did not eat better food than the children; the sisters would have eaten the same, if not less than the children, to ensure each child had enough food.
6. It is difficult to speculate on each child's period within the home without any regard for the context of the time. Ann has referred to a lot of corporal punishment from Sr [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The physical chastisement discussed by [REDACTED] is incomprehensible in today's society and is not accepted by the Congregation as a tolerable approach in dealing with children. It must be accepted that corporal punishment did exist and was widely used within family homes, schools and institutions in Northern Ireland. With regret, the Sisters believe that, on occasion, the policy of 'no physical punishment' may not have been adhered to.
7. In respect of paragraph 12, the sisters ensured all children attended primary school and secondary school. As [REDACTED] left our care at the age of fifteen years old, we are unable to establish whether she left school at this age also. We believe the Department of Education may be able to assist in this matter as we did not maintain the educational records even for the schools run by us. These records would have been kept by the schools.
8. We are aware from many applicants' statements that the children would have been given chores to do throughout the home and, as identified in [REDACTED] statement, would have cleaned the floor in the home. While the congregation do accept that the children were given chores to do, we do not accept that these chores were excessive and would have been appropriate to their age.
9. With regard to paragraph 14, it is clear a number of allegations have been made regarding bed wetting in Nazareth House. We accept that there were failings in the understanding of the causes of and treating of bedwetting. Medical advice was later sought by the Congregation to help the children and the Congregation do accept that their earlier methods were not acceptable.
10. With regard to paragraph 18, the Congregation has considered the quality of the children's clothing. The children were provided with the best clothing available to the congregation at the time. Clothing from outside sources and 'hand me downs' were

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8. The food in Nazareth House was a mixed bag – some of it would have been alright, some of it was horrible. I always remember eating horrible, lumpy porridge and you had to finish it or it would be spoon fed to you. The nuns took turns in supervising mealtimes. There were three main nuns – SR 116 SR 116 SR 134 and SR 31. Sometimes we would get what we called slop for dinner – I don't know if it was leftovers or what. I wouldn't say we were starved in the home but there were times I remember being hungry. It wasn't like you could get yourself a biscuit if you were hungry. You were fed when you were fed and that was it. At Christmas we would get an orange and a fried egg at breakfast – that was a big deal. I know the nuns ate better food than us because I worked in the kitchen for a short time and I saw their food. They ate very well – there was no fat on any of their food and they ate omelettes and things like that.
9. We used to go to Christmas parties outside the home which was one of the few things we had to look forward to. You would be waiting to see if your name was called and it was exciting getting out of Nazareth House. I remember we would be given presents like talc sets or something and that was nice.
10. People used to come up to the convent wanting to take children out for the day. and I were taken out by this woman called who lived on the She was a lovely woman and she was good to us. She was very wealthy and she used to bring us somewhere for the day and then back to her house for tea before dropping us back to the home.
11. The bedding in the home was basic. We slept in rows of little iron beds. When we first went in and I had to top and tail in the same bed because there weren't enough beds. There was a heating system in Nazareth House and it was always warm enough inside. The only time we were really cold was when we were forced to play outside in the garden on cold days and we had to keep our sleeves rolled up to our elbows.

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wet the bed had to take their bed sheets down to the laundry to be washed. It only happened to me twice but I remember feeling embarrassed by this.

7. The food was absolutely rotten. We were starving. We used to eat the grass in the garden. I recall one girl, **HIA 430** asking for more bread. It was the first time we had ever seen a full loaf of bread as we were only ever used to seeing it in slices. **SR 134** was very sarcastic. She grabbed a loaf of bread and set it down in front of **HIA 430** and said "there's your bread". We were all starving and staring at the bread, but **SR 134** took the bread back into the kitchen and we never saw bread again.
8. We spent a lot of time in the garden when the nuns wanted rid of us. We were freezing. We had climbing frames to play on. When children came in who weren't in the home since birth, they would teach us new games so we were able to make our own fun. We had our good times. We all supported each other. We were all innocent. We just made our own fun. The nuns didn't like to see us make friends and they couldn't handle it. They always tried to split us up.
9. I had one particular friend, **NHB 52** whom **SR 31** didn't like. Her family weren't that well off but we didn't know about things like that at that stage. **SR 31** noticed that had I became good friends with **NHB 52** **NHB 52** On one occasion whilst we were getting ready for bed, Sister **SR 31** told me to stand outside her cell. I didn't know what she meant so she came back, pulled me from my bed and made me wait outside the storeroom. She then brought me into the storeroom where she slapped me and told me that she wanted to me stay away from **NHB 52** She slapped me a couple of times. **NHB 52** was my friend and I didn't know why **SR 31** wanted me to stay away from her. The next day we went to school together as normal. That night, I was pulled out of bed again and slapped and reminded not to go near **NHB 52** I took no heed of **SR 31** and I was beaten for a third night. I was told that I didn't need to go to school the next day and I believe this was because my hands were black and blue. I wanted to get out so I went anyway, and I think **SR 192** who was in charge of St

1 I was put up to the top kitchen, and the first time
2 I went up to the kitchen I couldn't believe what was
3 going through the wee square shelf. All the food that
4 was going in for the nuns, I couldn't believe it, and
5 there was the kids starving, including myself.

6 I couldn't believe what the nuns were eating. I just
7 couldn't believe it.

8 Q. What kind of things were they eating that you weren't
9 eating?

10 A. Oh, they were eating lovely bread. No, potatoes. We
11 got potatoes. They were eating lovely meat. They were
12 eating big pots of lovely mashed potatoes, lovely
13 vegetables, trifles. I didn't even though what a trifle
14 was or cake. When I went up to the kitchen, I thought,
15 "Jeez, what's all this?" and the nuns were getting all
16 this and we were barely getting anything. We were
17 starving, Christine. I don't care.

18 Q. The congregation have said that they tried to do their
19 best to provide food for the children in their care and
20 that they regret that any child ever went hungry.

21 A. Well, why didn't they think of that?

22 Q. Paragraph 8 here, coming back to your statement, HIA223,
23 you say that:

24 "You spent a lot of time in the garden when the nuns
25 wanted rid of us. We were freezing. We had climbing

1 frames to play on. When children came in who weren't in
2 the home from birth, they would teach us new games. So
3 we were able to make our own fun and we had good times."

4 **A. Well, we -- Christine, we had brilliant times with all**
5 **the children. The girls that weren't in the home when**
6 **they were -- they came in about 10 or 11, they taught us**
7 **games that really kept us happy. They were our best**
8 **friends. They were friends with us and we were friends.**
9 **We learnt so many games with the new girls coming in.**
10 **We loved it. That's what kept us happy.**

11 Q. You say:

12 "We all supported each other."

13 **A. Oh, yes.**

14 Q. "We were all innocent. We just made our own fun",
15 but you say:

16 "The nuns didn't like to see us make friends and
17 they couldn't handle it and they tried to split us up."

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

19 Q. You go on in paragraph 9 here to say that you had one
20 particular friend, whom you name there, and I am just
21 going to give her first name, which is NHB
52

22 **A. Yes.**

23 Q. You said that SR31 didn't like the fact that you made
24 friends with this child. You say:

25 "Her family weren't that well off, but we didn't

1 know about things like that at that stage."

2 You say:

3 "SR31 noticed I had become good friends with her and
4 on one occasion whilst we were getting ready for bed
5 SR31 told me to stand outside her cell."

6 You didn't know what she meant. So she came back,
7 pulled you from your bed and made you wait outside the
8 storeroom. She then brought you into the storeroom,
9 where she slapped you and told you she wanted you to
10 stay away from NHB and she slapped you a couple of
11 times.
52

12 **A. Yes.**

13 Q. You said NHB was your friend and you didn't know why
14 SR31 wanted you to stay away from her. The next day you
15 went to school together as normal and that night you
16 were again pulled out of your bed and slapped and
17 reminded not to go near NHB, but you took no heed of
18 SR31 and you were beaten for a third night. You were
19 told that you needn't go to school the next day and you
20 believe this was because your hands were black and blue,
21 but you wanted to get out, so you went to school anyway.
22 You think the nun who was then in charge of St. Monica's
23 knew that there was something wrong with you, and you
24 were late into school, and instead of making you stand
25 at the front of the assembly hall, as was normal when

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we didn't give our food to anybody else. We would also have been given custard, which had a skin on it. The fatty meat would turn my stomach. We never saw sweets, biscuits or crisps. When we were at St Monica's we would see the other girls bring in things that we weren't used to. The girls also had pocket money to buy sweets in the tuck shop. We never had money to spend.

13. I remember one girl asking were there no toys or dolls and she was pushed up against a wall by a nun. There were swings outside at the front of the garden and as I got older I realised they were only there for show. People going past in the buses would have been able to see the climbers and the swings, and probably presumed it was a lovely place to live in, but there wasn't a toy or a book inside the convent. The only books we ever saw were the Bible and prayer books. We were only allowed out to play now and again, and it only seemed to be when it was cold. I don't remember being outside playing in the sun. The climbers were a bit dangerous. When we were allowed out to play, the nuns had a habit of keeping us out there for what seemed like forever. We weren't allowed back in until the nuns clapped or rang a bell. When the weather was really bad, our fingers would be freezing, and we would just be waiting on the bell. When autumn came and the leaves fell off the trees, we were made to keep clearing up the leaves. This went on every day for a couple of weeks. I remember when the drains became clogged up, we had to clear them out with our bare hands.

14. At Christmas time, I don't remember any gifts or even a Christmas tree in the home. As I got older, parties were thrown for the orphans by people outside of the home, such as Mackey's. They gave us food and small gifts. Our birthdays were never recognised. We didn't get birthday cards, and in all the time I was at Nazareth House, I don't remember singing Happy Birthday. It would have cost them nothing to get us to sing Happy Birthday to each other. I didn't know my birthday and I didn't even know my age until it was time go to the big school. We never even knew the time of day or the day of the week generally because most days were the same.

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10. We all wore the same clothes, it was like a uniform. There was one nun who was very cruel, **SR 122**. She was in charge of the sewing room. We had to wear an apron, and we would call them pinnies. We had one pinnie to wear for a whole week, and then every Saturday morning it was inspected. If the pinnie was torn or had even the tiniest bit of dirt, we would get it from **SR 122**. On one occasion I tore my pinnie and my sister **NHB 52** hid it for me, by rolling it up in her own pinnie, but when it was discovered, she was hit by **SR 122**.
11. We were bathed twice a week. I remember the nuns would put Jeyes fluid in the bath, and it would sting really badly if we had any cuts. Sometimes ten other children would be in the bath before it was my turn so the water wasn't fresh. Older girls would sometimes supervise bath time, and they could be just as bad as the nuns. They were always rough and pulling at us.
12. The food in the home was terrible, but we were always hungry so we just had to eat it. We weren't starved but we still weren't fed a proper nutritional diet. The food was very bland and stodgy. We had lumpy porridge for breakfast. We were given pork pies that were just full of jelly and fat. The nuns would walk up and down the tables and stand behind us, always watching to make sure we ate our meals. I was physically sick at times. Sometimes I tried to hide my food, put it down my knickers. I remember being hungry quite a few times and going to steal apples and rhubarb out of the nun's part. I wouldn't say we ever felt full. On feast days, and at Christmas, a bottle of HP sauce and a bowl of sugar would have been put on the table. I don't remember being cold in the home.
13. **SR 31** had a massive bunch of keys, like jailers keys, and she had a habit of digging them into our heads. If we were talking at the table at mealtimes, she would come behind us and hit us with the keys. They are what I remember most about **SR 31**. We called her **SR 31** because we could hear her coming a mile away with the jingle of her keys. We very rarely saw her smile or laugh. **SR 31** had her favourite children. On one

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19. Part of my job included looking after the children who wet the beds. Those children were routinely slapped. I would have to ensure that the beds would be dry for the following night but the sheets never got cleaned. I had to get up

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9. I went to primary school in the grounds of Nazareth House. I remember being called a dunce and being made to stand in the corner with my hands on my head. You were always put down and told you were good for nothing. You were always told you were stupid, your mother never wanted you and you were left on the doorstep.
10. The food in Nazareth House was very basic. There had to be silence at mealtimes; we couldn't even talk to each other. We got lumpy porridge in the morning and a lot of the time it was inedible but you had to eat it. If you didn't eat your meal you were made to sit there until you ate it and if you didn't eat it, it would be put back in front of you for your next meal. You could be vomiting and retching but if you vomited the food up you had to pick it up and eat it. The nuns did not care.
11. If you misbehaved during meal times you had to stand in the passageway outside the door way to the dining room. I remember that happened to me many times if I shared my food or if I was talking. I was often hungry; I used to eat grass and it was actually quite nice. If you were bad they never told you what you had done wrong. We never got any luxuries like cake or sweets. I remember once when the nuns were on retreat one of the girls got the keys to the pantry and we raided it. We knew we would get in trouble but we didn't care; we hid apples and other food down our pants. We had fun times when we got into mischief.
12. I didn't really make friends in the home because you could never get too close to someone. You were not allowed to have friendships. We never knew anything about love or comfort. If you saw another child crying, your instinct would be to go put your arm around them but if the nuns saw that, you would get a hiding. We were never shown any love. You were completely on your own. There were no social connections at all; it was just work, work, work.
13. We were made to do hard work in the home. We had to start out chores from 6.00 every morning. I must have scrubbed the whole of that building. We used to have to scrub the big corridors on our hands and knees. They would

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4. We had to get up at 6.00am every morning and say prayers at the end of the bed. We stripped the bed and dusted the bed frame and the nun who was in charge of the dormitory would have come round to inspect the beds afterwards. After the inspection we could remake them, but if she found fault, we had to clean the bed all over again. When we got dressed we had to put on our clothes underneath our nightdress, in the way we were taught. We weren't allowed to strip. We then went to Chapel for Mass. When we came back we were given breakfast.
5. We had mealtimes in the big dining room, and meals were supervised by the nuns. At breakfast we were only ever given one slice of bread and dripping and a cup of tea. I didn't know what porridge was and I didn't see an egg until I was about ten or eleven years of age. They introduced meat as well but it was usually bits of fat. If we didn't eat the food the first time, it would be placed in front of us again at dinner time, and if we didn't eat it at dinner, it would be there for us at supper. We tried to find different ways of hiding the food that we didn't want to eat. We tried to put it into serviettes, but the nuns soon realised. I always tried to sneak mine into the bin but if I was caught, the nun would make me take it out of the bin and eat it, even if I was sick. This happened quite regularly. To this day, I hate fat on my meat.
6. We were all trained in cleaning. We started our chores at the age of five and these would have been lighter chores. At the age of seven we would have been given something harder to do, and again a few years later, the chores would have got worse. I would work three months in the dining room, where I was responsible for six or seven tables, cleaning the tables, the legs of the furniture and the floors around the tables. I then worked three months in the kitchen, cleaning the pots and pans and floors, and then three months in the dormitories, cleaning the whole room. Then there was three months polishing the wooden floors and the marble corridors. We had to polish it on our knees. There would have been rows of girls, with pads on their knees, and by the time the last row finished, the floor would be spotless. Although we wore pads, our knees would still hurt. These chores had to be done every day

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don't recall what happened after that. I think HIA 331 was put somewhere different as she was younger than me.

3. I wasn't allowed to sit with the other children when they were having lessons in Nazareth House because they were Catholics. I had to sit in the corner by myself. When a question came up which I thought I knew the answer to I had to bite my tongue and not say anything. I believe I was treated differently because of my religion.
4. I remember a lady visiting HIA 331 and I about three times. I now know that was my mother as she told me when I finally met her. She brought HIA 331 and I little gifts including a bat with a ball attached on elastic.
5. There was a nun who had a long thick wooden stick. I don't recall her name. I think she used it as a threat. If anyone played up they would have got it however I did not see her hit anyone and she did not hit me.
6. One day I was in the dining room. We were not allowed to leave the table until we had eaten every single thing that was on our plate. I was unfortunate enough to have a big piece of fat which I didn't eat. I was made to sit in the dark in the dining room. There was a little light in the kitchen and when the nun left a lady came out and grabbed the plate and told me to go to bed. I haven't forgotten that act of kindness. I do not know that lady's name but she was a civilian worker in the home.
7. On one occasion I wet my bed. I had never wet my bed before. I think it was after my mother stopped visiting us in the home. If you wet the bed you were not allowed to go to bed until the nun in charge gave you permission. On this particular night the nuns were having some sort of feast and a senior girl who was supervising us said I wasn't allowed to go to bed as I had to wait on the nun to come. I remember standing in a very dark corridor absolutely petrified. I think I was falling asleep standing up when I received a thump on my head and the words 'go to bed you stupid girl' from a nun. When you wet the bed you received

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13. My oldest sister [REDACTED] had special needs but at the time she was just called the slow one; she was never diagnosed with anything. She probably had autism or Asperger's. [REDACTED] had a club foot as well and I was very protective of her. The other girls in the home would have looked out for [REDACTED] as well. She was too slow for [REDACTED] SR 31 movements. I think [REDACTED] SR 31 took a dislike to me because I stood up for my sisters. I was never cheeky; I was too afraid to be but I was always quick to stand up for [REDACTED].
14. The food in Nazareth House was terrible. [REDACTED] SR 31, [REDACTED] SR 134 and [REDACTED] SR 116 used to supervise mealtimes in the dining room. I hated the porridge – it was watery and salty but they forced me to eat it. I hated carrots as well and this infuriated the nuns. [REDACTED] SR 31 used to come over and pull the back of my hair and say "you are going to eat that". She would lift a fork and put it into my mouth and I would be trying to spit it out. Then [REDACTED] SR 134 would come over and hold your nose while [REDACTED] SR 31 held your head. [REDACTED] SR 31 would be shoving carrots in my mouth and holding my chin until I swallowed them. This happened very regularly; if you weren't getting force fed somebody else was. I believe this force feeding caused me to develop anorexia later on in life. Mealtimes were just a nightmare. The dining room would be packed with children but the silence was eerie – nobody dared to speak.
15. Contact with my sisters was not encouraged in the home. Although [REDACTED] was the oldest, because she had special needs I felt like I was the oldest. I wouldn't have seen [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] very often; only out in the playground. It wasn't like you could go over and say hello at mealtimes. I was just in survival mode every day. If you didn't get hit, it was a good day.
16. My maternal aunt [REDACTED] would have come to visit us sometimes. She was a really funny woman but she soon learned not to laugh or tell jokes because [REDACTED] SR 31 sat in the room with us during the visits. I think they were afraid of us telling people what was going on. [REDACTED] was a lovely woman but she

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up in a row outside the nun's cell. I wet the bed a lot. We had to take our sheets and wash them in the bath. If you wet the bed the first night, you got four whacks with a cane. If you wet the bed two nights in a row, you got eight whacks and so on.

6. **SR 116** used to shout at me that my mother didn't want me and they were stuck with me and they didn't want me either. I remember the swish of the roly poly bamboo cane as it went through the air. **SR 116** would lose control and hit me on the head and the hands. She would always hit me on the knuckles where it hurt the most. We would have to hold out our knuckles, we never got hit on the palm. I used to have black and blue knuckles all the time; they were always swollen.
7. Every morning I woke up terrified my bed would be wet, especially if it was the fifth night in a row. I knew then I would be getting twenty whacks. I used to lie and say I hadn't wet the bed to save myself from a beating. I would just sleep in the wet sheets night after night. We must have smelled terrible when we went out to school. I wet the bed up until I was 13. They got a special device which set off a buzzer if you wet the bed and it must have worked.
8. We went to Mass every morning and we also had to say the Rosary and Benedictions throughout the day. The priests I remember are **NHB 84** and Canon Daly. Canon Daly had a relative in the old ladies part of the home. I remember one night I woke up in the middle of the night and **NHB 84** was standing at the edge of my bed. He was quite young at the time. I was about 7 or 8. My nightdress was around my waist. I don't remember anything sexual happening but when I look back as an adult I wonder if I was sexually abused. As soon as I woke up **NHB 84** moved away. That is the only time I remember anything like that happening but it has really stuck in my mind. We would never have seen the priest in the dormitory.
9. After Mass we went down for breakfast which was usually porridge. The food wasn't great but it kept us alive. For dinner we would have meatballs, beans

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and potatoes. I don't remember ever being starving in the home. We got a fried egg once a year at Christmas and we would be so excited.

10. I went to primary school onsite in Nazareth House. The nuns were the teachers. I remember **SR 116** and **SR 134** and there were other nuns whose names I can't recall. I was excellent at English and whenever we had to write stories mine would be chosen to go up on the wall. I was always reading books in the library. It wasn't really a library; it was just one large bookshelf. I was terrible at Maths so I never got any qualifications in school.

11. When I was eleven I went to St. Monica's Secondary School on the Ravenhill Road. Getting out to school was a great escape but I never told anyone what was going on in the home. Even though I had friends at St. Monica's I didn't really enjoy it as there was a stigma of being from the home. It was like being from another planet. Other girls would point us out and laugh at us.

12. I went out to a family called the **[REDACTED]** in **[REDACTED]** for three months every summer. I never told them anything either. They had known my mother growing up but they weren't relatives. They didn't have much – no electricity, toilets or running water but I had happy times there. I was lucky to get out for the whole summer. In the car on the way back to Belfast I would always be sobbing my heart out but nobody ever asked why.

13. My main memories of Nazareth House are being beaten every morning for wetting the bed, scrubbing the floors and being forced to write hundreds of lines as punishment. Another punishment was being made to scrub the corridors on our hands and knees as soon as we got in from school at half 3. It took hours because they were really long corridors. We were also sent to bed without any supper at about 5pm every day for a month as punishment. These punishments were for doing something minor like talking when you shouldn't be or mitching off Mass. I felt like I was picked on because it always seemed like as soon as one month of punishment was over, I was back down on my hands and knees again. I definitely wasn't one of the pets but I would never have answered back. I was quite shy as a child. I remember once being

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10. We all wore the same clothes, it was like a uniform. There was one nun who was very cruel, **SR 122**. She was in charge of the sewing room. We had to wear an apron, and we would call them pinnies. We had one pinnie to wear for a whole week, and then every Saturday morning it was inspected. If the pinnie was torn or had even the tiniest bit of dirt, we would get it from **SR 122**. On one occasion I tore my pinnie and my sister **NHB 52** hid it for me, by rolling it up in her own pinnie, but when it was discovered, she was hit by **SR 122**.
11. We were bathed twice a week. I remember the nuns would put Jeyes fluid in the bath, and it would sting really badly if we had any cuts. Sometimes ten other children would be in the bath before it was my turn so the water wasn't fresh. Older girls would sometimes supervise bath time, and they could be just as bad as the nuns. They were always rough and pulling at us.
12. The food in the home was terrible, but we were always hungry so we just had to eat it. We weren't starved but we still weren't fed a proper nutritional diet. The food was very bland and stodgy. We had lumpy porridge for breakfast. We were given pork pies that were just full of jelly and fat. The nuns would walk up and down the tables and stand behind us, always watching to make sure we ate our meals. I was physically sick at times. Sometimes I tried to hide my food, put it down my knickers. I remember being hungry quite a few times and going to steal apples and rhubarb out of the nun's part. I wouldn't say we ever felt full. On feast days, and at Christmas, a bottle of HP sauce and a bowl of sugar would have been put on the table. I don't remember being cold in the home.
13. **SR 31** had a massive bunch of keys, like jailers keys, and she had a habit of digging them into our heads. If we were talking at the table at mealtimes, she would come behind us and hit us with the keys. They are what I remember most about **SR 31**. We called her **SR 31** because we could hear her coming a mile away with the jingle of her keys. We very rarely saw her smile or laugh. **SR 31** had her favourite children. On one

1 particular floor in the house.

2 **A. That's right.**

3 Q. There were two other groups at the same time as you.

4 **A. Yes.**

5 Q. SR31 or SR31 was in charge of another group --

6 **A. Yes.**

7 Q. -- and SR199 --

8 **A. Uh-huh.**

9 Q. -- was in charge of the third group.

10 **A. That's right.**

11 Q. The way the building was set up was you had a dining
12 area where your group of children would eat --

13 **A. Yes.**

14 Q. -- and they didn't any longer eat with the other
15 children.

16 **A. That's right.**

17 Q. Your recollection is that you ate the same food as your
18 children that you were responsible for were eating --

19 **A. Yes.**

20 Q. -- and that you regarded the food in the home as of good
21 quality --

22 **A. I did, yes.**

23 Q. -- and that there was plenty of food to eat.

24 **A. There was, yes.**

25 Q. At the time that you were in Nazareth House you've got

1 different ages or whatever, over silly things, over
2 things that are important, and we were -- we were like
3 any other family except a very large family. We fought
4 the bit out. So -- you know, the housemother would have
5 tried to stop any -- I don't remember the housemother,
6 NL143, ever lifting her hand to anyone. In fact, NL143,
7 because I knew her from the Lodge, she would have taken
8 me out at weekends. When things went pear-shaped with
9 the [REDACTED], I also was taken out by different families.
10 Hers was one of them.

11 Q. Yes. In paragraph 12 of your statement you talk about
12 the positive recollections you have of the food in the
13 home.

14 A. Yes, absolutely.

15 Q. The point you make is about the bread and the jam and
16 the vinegar, salt and pepper and then at a later stage
17 sauce being on the table.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. You describe in the last sentence how an arrangement at
20 some stage was arrived at with Marks & Spencer's where
21 they would allow the nuns to have the food that was --
22 that they weren't going to sell anymore, but it was
23 still good to eat.

24 A. Yes, absolutely. I still look for that food today.

25 Q. Yes. You remember chocolate eclairs, crisps and

retired to bed she would have ensured the child was called and taken to the toilet. Also the child would not be allowed a late night drink before bed time. Occasionally during the night the Sister would also have wakened children to go to the toilet. Medical advice was sought and this led to the introduction of 'buzzer alarms'. This approach was not always successful. Gradually, through training and experience, bedwetting was dealt with according to the standards of the day.

Food

37. Over the years, the sisters endeavoured to provide the best quality and nutritious food available to the children. Meals were shared equally amongst the children and the same food was provided to the Sisters who ate after the children. It is noted in the General Chapter of 1916, the Sister's efforts to provide essential food to the children; *"As little or no bread is got from the food begging in Belfast, it was decided to convert the kitchen at Fox Lodge and adjoining apartments into a bakery and have the bread baked to supply the two institutions."* The Inquiry will be aware of a similar arrangement in the two houses in Derry.

38. The Sisters accept that not all of the children would have liked the food provided to them; however the Sisters cannot accept that the children were force fed when they did not eat. Nor do the Sisters accept that children would have been forced to eat an unfinished meal from a previous occasion as a few applicants have alleged. They also deny that mouldy food or food contaminated by rodents or other insects or larvae was retained or fed to the children. We would also maintain the position previously stated that the Sisters ate the same food as the children.

39. In reference to the issue of food we recently saw an online debate concerning the book written by HIA 161. In this blog a commentator called HIA 14 whom we believe to be HIA 14 objects to elements of the book but in particular the reference to children eating grass. I attach the comment here;

HIA 161 As you havent responded to my request asking for my name to be removed from your

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we didn't give our food to anybody else. We would also have been given custard, which had a skin on it. The fatty meat would turn my stomach. We never saw sweets, biscuits or crisps. When we were at St Monica's we would see the other girls bring in things that we weren't used to. The girls also had pocket money to buy sweets in the tuck shop. We never had money to spend.

13. I remember one girl asking were there no toys or dolls and she was pushed up against a wall by a nun. There were swings outside at the front of the garden and as I got older I realised they were only there for show. People going past in the buses would have been able to see the climbers and the swings, and probably presumed it was a lovely place to live in, but there wasn't a toy or a book inside the convent. The only books we ever saw were the Bible and prayer books. We were only allowed out to play now and again, and it only seemed to be when it was cold. I don't remember being outside playing in the sun. The climbers were a bit dangerous. When we were allowed out to play, the nuns had a habit of keeping us out there for what seemed like forever. We weren't allowed back in until the nuns clapped or rang a bell. When the weather was really bad, our fingers would be freezing, and we would just be waiting on the bell. When autumn came and the leaves fell off the trees, we were made to keep clearing up the leaves. This went on every day for a couple of weeks. I remember when the drains became clogged up, we had to clear them out with our bare hands.

14. At Christmas time, I don't remember any gifts or even a Christmas tree in the home. As I got older, parties were thrown for the orphans by people outside of the home, such as Mackey's. They gave us food and small gifts. Our birthdays were never recognised. We didn't get birthday cards, and in all the time I was at Nazareth House, I don't remember singing Happy Birthday. It would have cost them nothing to get us to sing Happy Birthday to each other. I didn't know my birthday and I didn't even know my age until it was time go to the big school. We never even knew the time of day or the day of the week generally because most days were the same.

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her hands to get everybody up. The nuns would pull the bedding back to inspect the beds. Thank goodness, neither I nor my sisters ever wet the bed. The children who wet their beds had the worst time. They had to walk with their wet sheets over their heads, down to the laundry and the washroom. They were shouted at and humiliated. We had to pray as soon as we got up, then have breakfast and then go to Mass.

8. After Mass, we went to primary school in the grounds of the convent. There were pupils from outside the home who also came in to this school. In primary school, **SR 31** was the teaching nun. I was in her class until I moved to secondary school, so I had her through from getting up in the morning, prayers, breakfast, mass, in school, and then when we went home where she was in charge again. There was no escape from her. I think she acted different when the pupils from outside the home were around. She was two different people, and definitely not as harsh when they were there, so they probably thought she was nice. **SR 134** also taught in the primary school. **SR 134** used to dig her fingernails into our wrists, but we didn't have much to do with her because we were always in **SR 31** class. **SR 31** wasn't a bad teacher. She was strict so we had to listen to her. We were taught how to read and write, but they didn't teach us anything which was going to be of any value in the real world. When I left the home I didn't know how to get on a bus or do other normal things.

9. After school, we had to clean the classrooms, wash the desks and then there was general cleaning and tidying up. The cleaning could be quite heavy. We were always scrubbing. We only ever seemed to be either scrubbing or praying. They might have let us watch a little TV, maybe once a week, on a Saturday. We used to go out to the garden sometimes, but even on a cold day, we weren't allowed back in until the bell rang and I remember being freezing at times. There were a couple of old swings and a climbing frame. I can't remember doing a lot of playing. In the evening we had more prayers and the Benediction Rosary before tea. The system in the home was brutal. All we did was clean and pray. We always seemed to be on our hands and knees. I don't know what good all that praying did for us.

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9. My sister was in Primary Five and I just sat and cuddled her all the time. She didn't learn and I didn't learn. I don't recall ever lifting a pencil. I always felt a sense of rejection be it in the home or in the school.
10. On the way to and from school we had to pass the Nursery. My wee brother was in the Nursery and I pined for him. I wanted to see him but we were never allowed to be together. I could see him playing outside and wanted to be near him. I would have done anything to get out of P1.
11. The nuns did not have any child care skills or understanding of children. They did not know how to show us love or comfort us. I found out in later years that they were being paid to care for us. I am still angry with Social Services as it was their duty to make sure our physical, emotional and educational needs were being met by the Sisters of Nazareth but they didn't do this.
12. The care worker in charge of my group in Nazareth Lodge was called **NL 155** I don't know how she ever came to work with children. I can only describe her as an animal who should never have been allowed to work with children. We were petrified of her. I don't recall playing very much in the home. We just sat and watched TV afraid to move from our chairs. I always felt frightened and to this day I am still frightened of authority.
13. **NL 155** was a very lazy woman. I recall an occasion when a fruit man came into the home. He had a big box of fruit and we all jumped up to greet him. She was ever so nice to him and when he left she made us get down and polish the floors before we would get any of the fruit. She said to us, "You are not getting any fruit until you polish that floor."
14. The routine in the home was very strict. We were like robots. We were afraid to speak and we were told where to sit and what to do. We had to make our beds and stand until they were inspected. I remember being sick all the time and nobody comforting me. I always felt nervous and anxious and as a result I soiled myself a lot. I have suffered with IBS all of my life and I believe it is as a result of the conditions in the home.

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were always activities ongoing and the nuns supported us and encouraged us in whatever we were good at. We got pocket money every week. In the early days we had to spend it in the tuck shop, but later on we were taken out every Saturday. We would go swimming or to the cinema. The nuns would take us to the beach, and **NL 143** would take us on long walks with picnics, or to the museum. Parties were held for us at Christmas and Mackies was one of the biggest. As we got older we were granted a lot more freedom. The older girls could go out to dances, and were given a key to get back into the house.

14. The nuns who looked after the children, **SR 31** **SR 134** **SR 116** all worked as teachers during the day. After school we had to study and we saw the nuns at tea time to serve the food and always grace before and after meals and when we ate our tea the nun went to prayer then their own tea so we didn't see them until after 8pm which by that stage was my bedtime.

15. I think it was when I moved to primary two that **SR 116** was replaced by **SR 45** and **SR 134** by **SR 153** **SR 31** remained through my whole stay at Nazareth. On Friday nights the classrooms had to be polished and dusted. Someone would polish the floors, then we all lined up across the room and had a race on our hands and knees polishing the floor, then someone machined it. On Saturday we were all assigned jobs to clean intensively then we had to check each others hair for nits and we were bathed before lunch. We were never bathed by the nuns and we learnt to undress and dress at the same time, never showing any part of the naked body. There was a large industrial laundry but we were never allowed into it. There were smaller laundries which had twin tub washing machines, and these were the only laundries we were permitted to enter.

16 **SR 45** only stayed about a year and was replaced by **SR 199** Up to this point I had still been seeing the **[REDACTED]** but then suddenly it all went pear shaped. The home visits to **[REDACTED]** house stopped and I sporadically seen her in the parlour which was at the front of the house. When you are a child you don't ask the questions why or how but my name at this time was changed on my clothing from **[REDACTED]** to **HIA 257** also about this time I remember

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handyman, dressed up as Santa Claus. We put on performances every year. I remember performing Snow White and the Seven Dwarves. I was the voice of Snow White. Wonderful times. Times when you could be forget about finding out who you were and so on.

20. We had violin lessons and drama classes. We could also go to the scouts or the Girl Guides. A priest got us all second hand bikes and on Sundays we would have cycled to Holywood or Ballyhornan. The bikes were shared between the groups so we would have taken turns going out on them at the weekend. As we got older we were allowed a lot more freedom, an abundance of freedom. We were able to go to the Ormeau Park and the Ormeau baths. We were allowed to go out to the Starlight when we got a bit older. When we were sixteen years, we got a key and we would meet at the back door. We were given six pence for our pocket money every week, which we were able to spend in **SR 134** tuck shop. Some children would buy a Woodbine and a match, but if we got caught smoking, we were punished. The shopkeeper would sometimes tell the nuns what we were buying and the nun would ask us which one of us had been smoking but we would never tout. The punishment was very severe but it was our own fault because we broke the rules. The terminology used in those days does not suit today's language. We got walloped with a stick. We would get punished for stealing pears and for jumping over the wall in the Canon's house. To progress in life, we needed to take risks, to know where the boundaries were. I believe that the punishments that we were getting were mild compared to what was happening on the outside. I felt that the punishment in the school was as severe as the convent.

21. We would have gone out to families at holiday time. We were put in touch with pen friends and then we were often put out to the same families. When I was eleven years of age, I was put up for adoption. It was quite traumatic. Of course you cannot describe this in two lines. I had been sent out to visit the **██████████** family, who lived on a farm in **██████████**. Afterwards I was brought up to the parlour and the nun asked me how I would like to go and live with them. I cried and sobbed. I said no, they're not my mummy and daddy. I didn't fit in with them, being brought up in a Convent and put on a farm. That was the end

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caught hunched over the radio listening to the Top 20 when I should have been at Mass and I was punished for that.

14. Saturday mornings were spent cleaning the church. We were given an empty biscuit tin with tea leaves in it and we had to sprinkle the tea leaves on the wooden floor. Then we went round with a big broom and the tea leaves took the dust off the floor. On Saturday afternoons after dinner we would be back in the church on our hands and knees polishing the floors and the pews. It was just relentless work. We also worked in the laundry using the scrubbing boards to try to get the black marks off our white socks. The glass rollers would hurt our knuckles. We had to put the big sheets through the big rollers and in to the driers.
15. There was a big hall with a stage in the home and occasionally we would stage a play or a musical. I got the lead role one year because I was a good singer. When it came to the dress rehearsal, I absolutely froze on stage. I was dragged off the stage by my hair and I was beaten black and blue because they would have to find someone else to do it instead of me. I don't remember who it was who beat me. For a month after that I had to go straight to bed after school with no supper as punishment.
16. A woman called [REDACTED] came in to the home to teach us Irish dancing once a week and we would enter competitions. We were in serious trouble if we didn't come back with medals and cups; it was expected of us. We must have been quite good as I remember winning a lot of medals and cups for Irish dancing. The nuns used to bring us to Ormeau Park the odd time and I remember once we spent a week at the beach in Glenariff.
17. We all wore hand me down clothes in the home. At the start of winter, we would go down to this cubby hole in the basement and the nun would pick out shoes for us. She would say "they look like they would fit you". You would be wearing a pair of shoes somebody else wore the year before. We had one skirt and two jumpers for the winter. Once a fortnight you could change the

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having willies to wear to school if it was raining which were both left feet and were different sizes.

8. Once a week after school I went to an Irish dancing class in the home which I really enjoyed as it was an escape from the routine of the home. The costumes were beautiful and we won cups and medals.
9. We always had chores to do. We had to clean the convent, the dormitories and the big corridor. We had to polish the floors on our knees and we would get splinters in our knees from the wooden floorboards. One day when I was putting the wax on the floor [SR 31] fell. I unintentionally laughed. She came straight over to me and hit me over the head with a bunch of keys. My nose bled and I started crying. When I got a bit older we I had to work in the laundry. I worked in the laundry with [HIA 29] Our clothes would get soaking wet but we were never given a change of clothes
10. We used to play leapfrog in the playground. When [SR 122] saw us playing leapfrog she would come out and grab us by the hair. One day when I was playing in the yard with [HIA 28] and [HIA 29] [SR 31] called us over and took us to the fence that separated our part from the nursery. There was a girl with glasses coming down from the nursery holding a nun's hand. [SR 31] told us "that's your sister". We did not know we had a sister. She was called [REDACTED] As she was in the nursery she was kept separate from us. We were taken over to the nursery once or twice to see her but I only got to know her properly when we left the home.
11. The three of us were in the choir. [HIA 28] also had to pump the organ at masss in the morning. I used to sit beside her. There was one morning she fell asleep as it was very early in the morning and she was still tired. [SR 31] was playing the organ and the music stopped. [SR 31] came over and whacked [HIA 28] on the face. [HIA 28] started crying. I asked [SR 31] "why did you do that?". She grabbed me by the hair and said "don't you dare talk balk to me" and hit me.

1 yogurts. So the food quality was high, because this
2 Marks & Spencer's facility was there. There was no set
3 pattern as to what you got. It was just whatever
4 happened to be coming.

5 **A. With regards to the extras, the Marks & Spencer's was**
6 **the extras as in the yogurt, the chocolate eclairs,**
7 **crisps. They always had -- you know, it wasn't even**
8 **the small bag of crisps. It was the large bag of crisps**
9 **we would have got each. There was always fruit**
10 **available.**

11 The food itself was cooked not just by one of the
12 nuns in charge of the kitchen but also it was ex-girls
13 who were employed then at that stage. So there's no way
14 that they were sending us down rubbish.

15 Q. In paragraph 13 you describe generally events and
16 activities that you got the opportunity to do. You talk
17 about Irish dancing. In fact, you --

18 **A. I was a champion at it, yes.**

19 Q. -- you were a champion at the Irish dancing. You also
20 talk about the violin and accordion classes and taking
21 part in the choir.

22 **A. Yes.**

23 Q. You entertained the old people.

24 **A. There was also elocution lessons as well.**

25 Q. You make the point that you didn't get on those, because

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and thumped my arm when I got the injection. The wound became infected and swollen and SR 122 treated it.

17. My father bought us things, for example, my sister got a yellow jumper but it was taken off her by the nuns. When my dad asked about it they said it was lost or something. I remember my sister having a bruise on her arm. My father complained to the nuns but nothing was done about it.
18. At Christmas parties we were given presents when we went to Hughes Bakery and Mackies. I got a doll called Rosebud and it was taken off me by the nuns when I returned to the home. I think they sold the presents that were given to children in the home.
19. I remember an inspector coming in and we were told to be on our best behaviour. We were warned not to be telling anything to the inspector. I remember a slide was brought out for a picture with the inspector beside it. This was just for show as we never got to use it and I never saw the slide again.
20. We weren't really educated. I was picked to play the violin and they brought in a music teacher called Mr Bell to teach it.
21. I attended St Monica's Secondary School on the Ravenhill Road. I had a couple of lovely teachers there. Miss Hill and Miss McCabe were particularly nice.
22. We had to mend old skirts the nuns gave us for our uniform and we had to borrow PE gear because we didn't have our own. Any time I had a hole in my uniform I was mortified.
23. I was ashamed about walking back from school to Nazareth House and I didn't tell people where I lived. I told no-one I was in care.
24. I left Nazareth House when I was about 11 or 12 years old. I was returned to my father's care because he got a house. I went back first because I was eldest. It

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than half a term. I remember getting ready to go to St Monica's with the other girls when I was taken into the sewing room by [REDACTED] SR 122 and given a different uniform to the one I was wearing. That is how I was told that I was going to a different school. When I came out of the room I saw four other girls in that uniform and we were all sent to a school in [REDACTED] called [REDACTED] which was for educationally subnormal children. We were taken there every day by bus. I remember sitting looking out over Belfast Lough day after day thinking to myself if you are not going to educate me I am going to go into a world of my own. I ended up leaving there with no qualifications at all. I kept in touch with some of the teachers from that school. [REDACTED] who sadly passed away about five years ago, told me that the Mother Superior of the convent had contacted her before I started and told her that I was extremely backward and would not do well in life but to see what she could do with me.

19. I also remember one day [REDACTED] SR 134 took me and scrubbed me in from head to toe, put a green dress on me and took me to one of the classrooms where one of my teachers [REDACTED] was standing. She was a kind woman and wanted to see how I was. She gave me sweets. [REDACTED] SR 134 did not know who she was and when I came out and told her it was my teacher the dress was taken away from me and I never saw it again. I wrote to [REDACTED] SR 134 when I left the home as I was looking for answers. When I was in my forties I started to work out from her letters that the dress was from my mother. [REDACTED] SR 134 had thought that Mrs [REDACTED] was my mother and had put me in the dress she knew she had sent. I understand from the letters that my mother had sent me clothes but they had been taken away because the other children were asking questions. My mother had been asked to send money instead. I do not know what was done with the money.
20. During the summer we were taken out in black taxis to a beach party at Tyrella beach. We called them black taxi parties. There were six to eight children in each taxi and we sung the whole way to Tyrella beach. I have fond memories of the taxi drivers taking us out and I am thankful for their generosity.

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years and we put on a concert for her. We did Irish dancing and we often won but we never got our medals. At Christmas time, we used to go out to parties in Mackies on the Falls Road. If we brought any sweets or anything back we would never see them again. I remember once the American Navy brought us out to see a submarine. We used to go to Glenariff for two weeks in the summer to a house owned by the Christian Brothers. It was an escape for us. We used to sing "this time next week, where shall we be – outside the gates of misery".

8. We all wore the same dresses and under slips in the home. There was never any individuality. I have seen photos of girls wearing different clothes and I think they must have been taken when the girls were going out to families and the nuns wanted them to look good. When a nun died we would all march in a procession from Nazareth House to the graveyard in Nazareth Lodge. We were all dressed in black from top to toe including these lovely black coats that we never saw again. There was three days of mourning whenever a nun died – we weren't allowed to go into the nuns' garden and the death knell rang continuously.
9. After tea we went to the bathroom where we queued up for washing and examination. We lined up and the nuns would examine our hands - back and front, our arms, ears and feet. Then we had to line up and show our underwear for stains. If your underwear was stained you were sent to the queue with the 'wet beds'. These girls were singled out and put in a separate line every evening. They were slapped regularly, roused in the middle of the night and their wet sheets were put over their heads. They would be lined up inhaling their own urine in the freezing cold. Everybody lived in fear of being associated with the 'wet beds'.
10. The main nuns I remember are **SR 189**, **SR 134** and **SR 183**. **SR 189** and **SR 134** were in charge of the children and **SR 183** was in the workroom. **SR 190** worked in the top kitchen and Sister **SR 145** looked after the older girls. We knew of **SR 145** reputation from a young age. The older girls spoke harshly of her and we knew about her

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small presents, but they were always taken away by the nuns afterwards. I would see my brothers [REDACTED] and HIA 388 at parties but I didn't know they were my brothers. I didn't get to know them until after I left care. We never celebrated our birthdays and didn't know when our birthdays were. When I was aged around ten or eleven years, a teacher by the name of Mrs Hennessy said happy birthday to me, but I didn't even know it was my birthday.

18. Sometimes we were sent out on holidays with families, but they were strangers and I never felt part of the family. I knew I was the odd one out. Sometimes I felt as if I was being used as a skivvy by the family I was sent out to stay with. I was sent out to stay with a lady called [REDACTED] who made me eat bread with mould on it. I was sent to one lovely family in Dublin, the [REDACTED] for three years in a row, at summer time and at Christmas. It broke my heart every time I had to come back to the home. They were the first normal family I had seen. On occasions they also took [REDACTED] out at the same time as me, but I didn't like that because I was used to getting all the attention.
19. The nuns seemed to know in advance when people were coming to see the home, and then we could always tell. Suddenly a lot of dolls would appear, and then there would be a lot of people walking around. As soon as the people left, the dolls would disappear again. The people never asked us anything. I remember a TV crew coming up one time to do a documentary, and I was pictured standing on the steps with a doll in my arms. I think I was aged eleven years at the time. I remember watching the documentary whilst I was out on a foster placement with the [REDACTED] family. I was given the doll to hold whilst the filming was going on. I had never seen it before, and never saw it again afterwards. Other than these times, we weren't even allowed a teddy bear. If a child came into the home with a toy, it was taken off them. The nuns seemed to enjoy being cruel.
20. Every time a nun passed away, all of the girls were made to kiss her body. I dreaded it when I heard that a nun had died and the smell of the bodies made me feel sick. I remember one nun in particular who passed away, Sister

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to be perfect. If we were taken out for a walk, we had to walk in pairs in a straight line. If we weren't in a straight line, we found out about it when we got home as we would get slapped. On one occasion we were out walking and we saw a dog. We weren't used to seeing animals and all the girls started to scream. We all got slapped as soon as we got back to the home. It always struck me that there were women who would come into the home to do little jobs, sewing and mending things, and they were bound to have seen what was happening in the home but never did anything about it. They must have been afraid to speak up. We weren't allowed to speak to these women.

15. There were high walls around the Convent as if the nuns wanted to keep us hemmed in. There was an orchard at the side of the Convent. I remember trying to get into it to steal some pears and apples, but I was caught. I was put in the corner of the classroom. From where I stood in the corner, I could see the big cupboard which had a row of canes at the back of it. They were all different thicknesses. The fine canes were the worst. On one occasion I knew I was going to be slapped. The nun had a stick which was worse than the cane, so I grabbed it off her and threw it out the fire escape. I had to go get it and she hit me anyway.
16. I don't remember there ever being any birthday celebrations in Nazareth House. I didn't know there was such a thing as birthday parties. When I was approximately seven years of age, we saw Santa Claus for the first time and it scared the life out of us. We didn't know who it was supposed to be. On one Christmas Day, we woke up and found an orange and two sweets on our beds. I wanted to savour the orange so I kept it but it went mouldy.
17. The Convent had two days that were begging days, a Wednesday and Saturday. There were a lot of children in the home, and the relatives generally didn't contribute to our upkeep. There were old people as well, but we rarely saw them.

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very hurtful. There was another couple, [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] who would take me out from the home, however those visits were stopped by the same nun. I think she just did this out of badness.

19. Sometimes the other children would receive visits from their family members.

[REDACTED] NHB 52 mum, would come up to the home and give us sweets but the nuns hated her because she wasn't well off. There was another girl, [REDACTED] whose mother would visit, but the nuns would send [REDACTED] away so that her mother couldn't see her. Her mother wore a headscarf and brought a little blue basket which had perfumes in it. Once in a while [REDACTED] would get to see her mother, and we would all crowd round her because we all wanted some perfume.

20. I never had any visitors the entire time I was at Nazareth House. The nuns didn't like male visitors. My father advised me when I met him years later that he tried to visit me in Nazareth House but the nuns told him I was adopted. I was annoyed when I heard that. I believe that he was intending on taking me to live with the rest of the family. I think that the nuns must have been in touch with my mother because she told me years later that she always knew when I was missing school.

21. There were never any Social Workers so the nuns could do what they wanted. I didn't even know what a Social Worker was. I think the nuns were frustrated because they didn't know how to handle all of the kids. They were young themselves. We were told that in the old days, one person from each family had to become a Priest or a nun, so they might not have been chosen to end up where they did.

22. I never got to know my birthday until I was about ten years of age. We had a crib and [REDACTED] SR 31 asked who wanted to put baby Jesus in the crib. We all put our hands up. [REDACTED] SR 31 let me do it because it was my birthday, and that was the first time I found out when it was. None of the other girls knew their birthdays. I don't remember ever singing Happy Birthday or celebrating birthdays. I was never given any birthday treats but I didn't mind. At Christmas

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time we were often taken out of the home to attend parties in places like Mackey's. We would be given presents, but they were taken off us as soon as we got back to the home and they would never be seen again.

Nazareth House, Portadown, 13th February 1965 - 1967

23. I left Nazareth House when I was sixteen. I was brought to [REDACTED] on the train by a woman named [REDACTED] who had grown up in the home and still lived there. I just knew I was going to [REDACTED] to work. I cried for days and days because I didn't know why I was put there. I was put in the kitchen first and then I worked with the babies. I'm not sure if I was getting paid but I worked very hard there. I stayed there for approximately two years. I had to go up to Nazareth House for holidays because I had nowhere else to go. I didn't know anybody. The girls in the same age group as me looked after me. They then sent me out to work with a family for about four months. The family were very good to me. The nuns then got me a job working in a cafe in [REDACTED]. I worked there along with another girl but the man tried to make a pass at us so we ran away.

Life after care

24. There was a house in [REDACTED] Belfast, that some of the girls from Nazareth House would go into when they left the home so I stayed there for a while. I didn't want to stay long. The girls there had nothing. I met up with [REDACTED] **NHB 40** [REDACTED]. We were living on the streets and we eventually made our way to London, but we lost contact. I was caught sleeping in a Church on one occasion by a Priest. He took me in and then I was brought down to the Irish Centre, where they got me a job. I stayed there for approximately two years. They were good to me. I stayed in London for about ten years.

25. I had a child, [REDACTED] when I was aged twenty-two years. I had been living in a rented flat with my friend [REDACTED] but as soon as the landlady found out I was pregnant, she put me out. A priest helped me get into a mothering care home. I was forced to give my son up for adoption because I couldn't

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years and we put on a concert for her. We did Irish dancing and we often won but we never got our medals. At Christmas time, we used to go out to parties in Mackies on the Falls Road. If we brought any sweets or anything back we would never see them again. I remember once the American Navy brought us out to see a submarine. We used to go to Glenariff for two weeks in the summer to a house owned by the Christian Brothers. It was an escape for us. We used to sing "this time next week, where shall we be – outside the gates of misery".

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occasion I ran away with another girl. As punishment, I was made to kneel all night outside **SR 31** cell. She kept looking out the window to check that I was still awake and if I was falling asleep, she would throw things out at me. She must have kept herself awake to check up on me. The other girl that I ran away with was just sent to bed, and wasn't punished at all.

14. **SR 31** could be very cruel. If I did something wrong, she would say "what do you expect, you're only from the back streets of Belfast". She called us "a pack of tramps". I know that when we were first taken into care, we weren't very clean and she was always bringing it up and reminding me of it. Her comments hurt me more sometimes than being beaten. That's what stuck in my head more than the beatings. She was always humiliating us.
15. My mother came to visit us in Nazareth House at the beginning. The nuns weren't particularly nice to her, in the way they looked at her and spoke to her. They made fun of her and said she was living in sin. I recall on one occasion, my mum wrote a letter and she was complaining about the way we were being treated. **SR 31** read the letter out in front of everybody during breakfast in the big main dining room. She pointed out all the spelling mistakes and the fact that my mother was so ignorant that she had written in red ink. It was humiliating and all the kids were sniggering. Once I got a bit older, and started to answer back, I would threaten to tell my mother what **SR 31** was doing and she would say "you should never have been born, none of you should ever have been born, your mother wasn't even married".
16. There was a brutal regime in the home. Nothing was ever different. I don't remember kids fighting, telling tales or making fun of each other. We all had to stick together. I don't remember anybody really crying, because there was no point.
17. Sometimes we were taken out for parties at Christmas time to places like Mackey's. I always remember feeling embarrassed. The people meant well but I felt like a charity case. I never liked going to them. They would give us

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small presents, but they were always taken away by the nuns afterwards. I would see my brothers [REDACTED] and HIA 388 at parties but I didn't know they were my brothers. I didn't get to know them until after I left care. We never celebrated our birthdays and didn't know when our birthdays were. When I was aged around ten or eleven years, a teacher by the name of Mrs Hennessy said happy birthday to me, but I didn't even know it was my birthday.

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19. The nuns seemed to know in advance when people were coming to see the home, and then we could always tell. Suddenly a lot of dolls would appear, and then there would be a lot of people walking around. As soon as the people left, the dolls would disappear again. The people never asked us anything. I remember a TV crew coming up one time to do a documentary, and I was pictured standing on the steps with a doll in my arms. I think I was aged eleven years at the time. I remember watching the documentary whilst I was out on a foster placement with the [REDACTED] family. I was given the doll to hold whilst the filming was going on. I had never seen it before, and never saw it again afterwards. Other than these times, we weren't even allowed a teddy bear. If a child came into the home with a toy, it was taken off them. The nuns seemed to enjoy being cruel.
20. Every time a nun passed away, all of the girls were made to kiss her body. I dreaded it when I heard that a nun had died and the smell of the bodies made me feel sick. I remember one nun in particular who passed away, Sister

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uncomfortable. We washed with carbolic soap. We had to go to Mass every morning. If we didn't go [SR 31] would call us pagans. After our breakfast, we would wash the dishes and then go to school.

14. At Christmas we used to get a nice dinner and we went to parties in Mackies and other places. We got sweets and presents but we were never allowed to keep the presents; the nuns took them off us. The Nazareth House céilí band used to come from Derry and put on a show for us. We also put on plays like Snow White and the Seven Dwarves. A man called [REDACTED] came in to organise the plays.

15. [SR 31] used to beat me. I believe she has changed her name to [SR 31] now and is living in Nazareth House in Derry. I have terrible dreams about her. If I didn't do what I was told, she used to make me kneel outside her bedroom while she was doing the nightshift at the gate. Then when her shift was finished, she would hit me over the head with a mop or a bunch of keys.

16. A civilian woman called [NHB 24] worked in Nazareth House. She did all the washing and ironing and she used to look after us if [SR 31] was away on retreat. If I was misbehaving, she would tell [SR 31] when she came back and [SR 31] would beat me. [NHB 24] saw what was going on. Any time I didn't do what I was told [SR 31] would beat me with a mop or her bunch of keys. I was beaten with the shaft of a mop across the legs. She wouldn't hit me every day; these beatings would happen every week or every two weeks.

17. On one occasion when I was about eleven or twelve, [SR 31] locked me in the sitting room all night with a blackbird we had called Bobby. It was a punishment for disobedience. We girls used to get into fights a lot, as young girls do. I couldn't get up to go to the toilet so I wet the bed. I had never wet the bed before. The next morning, [SR 31] beat me for wetting the bed. I was terrified of [SR 31]. She always picked on the same ones. She never called me by my first name; she always called me [HIA 9]

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11. My only good memory of my time in Nazareth House is being taken to the pantomime at Christmas time one year and getting sweets.
12. I have no recollection of any inspections in the home or of receiving any medical attention when I was in the home.
13. I left Nazareth House along with my sisters on 23rd September 1950 when I was fourteen years old. I was told a week before we left that our mother would be coming to get us. The day we left the home's clothes were taken off us and we were dressed in clothes our mother had brought for us. I remember I had a pink coat. We put our arms around each other and our mother. She really loved us but there was nothing she could do about her health.
14. Mum took us back home to [REDACTED] and I remember she gave us all the food we could eat. I could never tell my mother what I went through in Nazareth House because of her health. My relationship with my mother was always good even though we had been separated for so long. I could not have wished for a better mother. However, the separation from my sisters did have an affect on our relationship and we never had the same sisterly bond that we should have had if we had remained together. We remained in [REDACTED] during my childhood. My mother did different bits of work but we were always poor.

Life After Care

15. When I was fifteen I met a man called [REDACTED] who lived with his grandmother in [REDACTED]. His mother lived in England. When I was fifteen and a half we moved to England and his mother looked after me. My mother missed me so much that after about a year she moved over to England with my other sisters. I got married to [REDACTED] when I was eighteen and we had two sons. Our relationship ended and I met another man called [REDACTED] and had another son and a daughter.
16. I gave a video interview to Blackburn police about my time in care in or around the beginning of 2012.

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17. At Christmas, we would put on a show like Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs for the Mother Superior and all the staff. Christmas was the only time the nuns were good to you and the only time you got a decent dinner. We might have got a pair of slippers in a Christmas box and maybe an apple and an orange. We thought that was brilliant; it was such a treat. I remember one Christmas two black women from South Africa came in to see [REDACTED] NHB 48 [REDACTED] a wee black girl. We had to scrub the floors before they came and we were all dressed in our best clothes. Whenever there were visitors, we were told to clap for them and smile. If they came over to talk to you you had to tell them everything was great. You would have loved to have said to them 'can you help us' but you couldn't. I don't ever remember anybody visiting from the St Vincent de Paul or any senior nuns from Hammersmith.
18. In St. Monica's, the other children were always asking us questions about the home like what we got for breakfast and if we could watch television. We couldn't tell them anything though because the nuns always told us not to be talking about anything outside the walls of the home. Some of the children picked on us in St. Monica's because we were from the home but there were two lovely girls called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who always stood up for us.
19. My mother came up to visit us every other week and my older sister [REDACTED] visited regularly too. My father only came up about twice the whole time we were in there. I don't remember anyone else ever coming to visit or inspect the home. A doctor came every other Monday but you only saw him if you were poorly. I only went to see him once in the five years I was there. You weren't allowed to be sick anyway. I remember once I was ill and throwing up and the nuns kept me in a wee room for two days but then on the third day they made me get up and go to school. You didn't get any special care when you were sick. A girl brought your breakfast and dinner up on a tray but apart from that you were just left in the room on your own and saw nobody. I remember there was a girl there with a disability – [REDACTED] and she was just treated the same as the rest of us, she got no special care. She used to lie in bed and rock and her bed would move across the dormitory. There was

1 a pantomime. They were marched in and the nuns marched
2 up and down watching the children. They daren't as much
3 as sneeze."

4 HIA55 says one Christmas Day she was given a boys'
5 game called Smugglers. Her sister HIA27, HIA27, which
6 is the youngest that I previously summarised, was given
7 a black doll with one eye and an apple and an orange,
8 and her sister was given a bag. They were
9 overjoyed that they had actually got a present, but the
10 day after Christmas Day the nuns took the toys off them
11 and they never saw them again.

12 The purpose for drawing that to the Panel's
13 attention is this would appear to suggest that at
14 certain times or at least Christmas the siblings were
15 together in that it is clear to HIA55 what her siblings
16 had received by way of a gift, albeit she says it was
17 taken off them at a later stage.

18 If we look, please, at the next page of the
19 interview at 61473, if you just scroll down a little
20 further, please, she is describing how they were all put
21 in separate dormitories and not allowed any physical
22 contact with each other at all. Then she says this:

23 "She would see her sisters when they were let
24 outside into the yards."

25 So that's different from what was said to the

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to be perfect. If we were taken out for a walk, we had to walk in pairs in a straight line. If we weren't in a straight line, we found out about it when we got home as we would get slapped. On one occasion we were out walking and we saw a dog. We weren't used to seeing animals and all the girls started to scream. We all got slapped as soon as we got back to the home. It always struck me that there were women who would come into the home to do little jobs, sewing and mending things, and they were bound to have seen what was happening in the home but never did anything about it. They must have been afraid to speak up. We weren't allowed to speak to these women.

15. There were high walls around the Convent as if the nuns wanted to keep us hemmed in. There was an orchard at the side of the Convent. I remember trying to get into it to steal some pears and apples, but I was caught. I was put in the corner of the classroom. From where I stood in the corner, I could see the big cupboard which had a row of canes at the back of it. They were all different thicknesses. The fine canes were the worst. On one occasion I knew I was going to be slapped. The nun had a stick which was worse than the cane, so I grabbed it off her and threw it out the fire escape. I had to go get it and she hit me anyway.
16. I don't remember there ever being any birthday celebrations in Nazareth House. I didn't know there was such a thing as birthday parties. When I was approximately seven years of age, we saw Santa Claus for the first time and it scared the life out of us. We didn't know who it was supposed to be. On one Christmas Day, we woke up and found an orange and two sweets on our beds. I wanted to savour the orange so I kept it but it went mouldy.
17. The Convent had two days that were begging days, a Wednesday and Saturday. There were a lot of children in the home, and the relatives generally didn't contribute to our upkeep. There were old people as well, but we rarely saw them.

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19. I went to school on site at Nazareth House and I recall being taught by SR 31 and SR 31 taught the more advanced pupils and SR 134 taught the more remedial pupils. We used to be sent out of class to do cleaning jobs around the home but we always went back to the class and were not away for a long time. In general I found the education to be good and I passed the Eleven Plus.
20. We used to go to my Aunt and Uncle's house in [REDACTED] for holidays. I remember my Auntie leaving NHB 63 and me back to Nazareth House. We got off at the bus stop and my Auntie crossed the road to rush back for the next train. I just stood on the pavement crying and crying as I wanted to go back with my Auntie. A lady stopped with me as she thought I was crying because I couldn't cross the road. My Auntie gave in and took me back home with her. NHB 63 went back to Nazareth House and had to tell the nuns I could not return as I was ill. I think I got to stay an extra week with my Auntie. I do not know how my Auntie did not know something was wrong in the home when I did not want to go back but she never asked and I never told her. We also used to go there at Christmas, Easter and for summer holidays. If we came back with any presents the nuns would take them away from us. I remember my Auntie making me clothes which were taken off me by the nuns as soon as I returned to Nazareth House. We had nothing we could call our own. The only other time I remember staying away from the home is when NHB 63 and I spent a week with a family in Newry.
21. At Christmas time a man called NHB 102 who was a handyman at the home dressed up as Santa and we got presents of second hand things that people had donated. I received an umbrella with holes in it once.
22. A doctor would come occasionally but the nuns would decide who saw him. I think his name was Dr Hunter. I do not ever remember seeing the doctor while I was there. I remember getting an injection in my arm from a nurse once. I remember going to the dentist.

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17. At Christmas, we would put on a show like Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs for the Mother Superior and all the staff. Christmas was the only time the nuns were good to you and the only time you got a decent dinner. We might have got a pair of slippers in a Christmas box and maybe an apple and an orange. We thought that was brilliant; it was such a treat. I remember one Christmas two black women from South Africa came in to see [REDACTED] NHB 48 [REDACTED] a wee black girl. We had to scrub the floors before they came and we were all dressed in our best clothes. Whenever there were visitors, we were told to clap for them and smile. If they came over to talk to you you had to tell them everything was great. You would have loved to have said to them 'can you help us' but you couldn't. I don't ever remember anybody visiting from the St Vincent de Paul or any senior nuns from Hammersmith.
18. In St. Monica's, the other children were always asking us questions about the home like what we got for breakfast and if we could watch television. We couldn't tell them anything though because the nuns always told us not to be talking about anything outside the walls of the home. Some of the children picked on us in St. Monica's because we were from the home but there were two lovely girls called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who always stood up for us.
19. My mother came up to visit us every other week and my older sister [REDACTED] visited regularly too. My father only came up about twice the whole time we were in there. I don't remember anyone else ever coming to visit or inspect the home. A doctor came every other Monday but you only saw him if you were poorly. I only went to see him once in the five years I was there. You weren't allowed to be sick anyway. I remember once I was ill and throwing up and the nuns kept me in a wee room for two days but then on the third day they made me get up and go to school. You didn't get any special care when you were sick. A girl brought your breakfast and dinner up on a tray but apart from that you were just left in the room on your own and saw nobody. I remember there was a girl there with a disability – [REDACTED] and she was just treated the same as the rest of us, she got no special care. She used to lie in bed and rock and her bed would move across the dormitory. There was

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her hands to get everybody up. The nuns would pull the bedding back to inspect the beds. Thank goodness, neither I nor my sisters ever wet the bed. The children who wet their beds had the worst time. They had to walk with their wet sheets over their heads, down to the laundry and the washroom. They were shouted at and humiliated. We had to pray as soon as we got up, then have breakfast and then go to Mass.

8. After Mass, we went to primary school in the grounds of the convent. There were pupils from outside the home who also came in to this school. In primary school, **SR 31** was the teaching nun. I was in her class until I moved to secondary school, so I had her through from getting up in the morning, prayers, breakfast, mass, in school, and then when we went home where she was in charge again. There was no escape from her. I think she acted different when the pupils from outside the home were around. She was two different people, and definitely not as harsh when they were there, so they probably thought she was nice. **SR 134** also taught in the primary school. **SR 134** used to dig her fingernails into our wrists, but we didn't have much to do with her because we were always in **SR 31** class. **SR 31** wasn't a bad teacher. She was strict so we had to listen to her. We were taught how to read and write, but they didn't teach us anything which was going to be of any value in the real world. When I left the home I didn't know how to get on a bus or do other normal things.
9. After school, we had to clean the classrooms, wash the desks and then there was general cleaning and tidying up. The cleaning could be quite heavy. We were always scrubbing. We only ever seemed to be either scrubbing or praying. They might have let us watch a little TV, maybe once a week, on a Saturday. We used to go out to the garden sometimes, but even on a cold day, we weren't allowed back in until the bell rang and I remember being freezing at times. There were a couple of old swings and a climbing frame. I can't remember doing a lot of playing. In the evening we had more prayers and the Benediction Rosary before tea. The system in the home was brutal. All we did was clean and pray. We always seemed to be on our hands and knees. I don't know what good all that praying did for us.

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before school, and even if we had to redo the chores, we still had to be in school on time.

7. We went to the primary school in the grounds of Nazareth House. We had to be in school every morning at 9.00am, with our uniform and hair spotless. Every child had a partner. My partner would be responsible for my hair and clothes, making sure they were right, and I was responsible for hers. We had to clean each other's shoes. We had to make sure our socks were darned. If there was a hole, we had to darn it with a hair clip instead of a needle. The nuns broke one half off a clip and bent the bit at the end to make the eye. We would line up and the nun would examine our darning. If she could put her finger through the hole we had to start again. We had a horrible uniform, made of very hard rough material which made our skin red. From the age of about ten or eleven years, we were given a dress for the summer. We thought they were beautiful because they were all flowery and we had never seen anything like it before. We weren't allowed to change our clothes after school. We had to wear the same dress all day, and we had to keep it clean. We were allowed out to play for an hour. There were four swings for four hundred children. I was never once on the swings. I was always a loner. I don't think I made one friend the entire time that I was at Nazareth House. I was going into my own shell. I used to stand in the corner. I didn't want anyone to notice me, particularly the nuns. On cold days, all the girls would stand beside the radiator and they would get chilblains. I never stood beside the radiator, because I wanted to stay in the corner, unnoticed by the nuns. I knew that if the nuns paid no attention to me, I wouldn't get slapped.
8. There were two teachers who came in from outside of the Convent, but I was always taught by nuns. I felt that they paid more attention to the girls that they thought were brighter. They didn't teach us anything other than religion. It was religion morning, noon and night. There was constant praying. We had to pray when we woke up, before meals, after meals, at the start of school, and before we went to bed. When I later went to school in England, I couldn't believe how much I knew about religion. My hand was always up, but it was the only subject I knew. I could barely read and I couldn't count. I could write

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9. I recall being taken to the Royal Victoria Hospital because of my bed wetting and they stuck pins in my bum or used an electric shock. I think the purpose of it was to probe the reasons for the bed wetting.
10. The school was on site and there were both teachers and nuns. The teachers were **NHB 43** **NHB 44** and **NHB 45** The nuns were Sister **SR 189** **SR 134** **SR 177** who taught me when I was very young and **SR 112** who taught the higher classes. The education was very basic, there was no such thing as special attention, and rather those with difficulties were ignored or made an example of.
11. I liked school although I wasn't very good at maths I was able to get by at other subjects. I remember them teaching us pounds, shilling and pence and it was known as L.S.D. In the summer holidays we would get six weeks off school. The nuns would find jobs for us to do dependent on our size. I was small so I always had to stay in the lower section and hence I had to scrub the floors.
12. After school if it was a nice day we were allowed to play in the garden it was more akin to a recreation hall. After school we would get tea and jam then we would go to church for our prayers and then we would have to come back to do some cleaning. At about 6pm we had supper.
13. At the weekends particularly on a Saturday we would spend the day cleaning. We would change our beds, sweep and scrub the dormitory, and then we would have to scrub and polish the wooden floors in the recreation hall. All the children in the home had to do the cleaning. From the age of seven or as soon as you could kneel down you'd be scrubbing.
14. There was always someone supervising the cleaning it was either a nun or one of the older girls. If we were not doing the cleaning correctly we would be clipped across the ear or maybe hit with a fist or kick. Both the nuns and the older girls would have hit us.

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to make sure that we had got washed properly. We stretched out our hands and turned them over, then bent over so our ears and necks could be checked. If we weren't clean, we were sent back to get washed again. We then set the tables for breakfast. If we weren't in time for breakfast because we hadn't finished our chores, we got nothing and we were told it was our own fault.

11. I went to school onsite in Nazareth House. We wore a uniform to school – a little grey pinafore. I remember two teachers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were both nice women. I think they realised that we got a hard time from the nuns. We were also taught by [REDACTED] SR 112 and SR 114. SR 114 [REDACTED] SR 114 was a nice enough nun but [REDACTED] SR 112 hated her because she was English. On St. Patrick's Day, [REDACTED] SR 112 used to make us sing 'for they are true Irish' at the top of our voices just to hurt her feelings. We weren't really taught. I don't think they cared about our education. [REDACTED] SR 112 made me spend a lot of time in the corner with a sheet of paper pinned to my back with either 'dunce' or 'thief' written on. If I made I mistake I got a thump. I wasn't very good at drawing and on one occasion I copied [REDACTED] NHB 37 drawing of a leaf. When [REDACTED] SR 112 realised this, she caned me. On one occasion I was late finishing my chores and I wasn't able to get to the toilet before school. I put my hand up and asked permission to go to the toilet, but [REDACTED] SR 112 refused and told me I should have gone before school. I could not help but wet myself. [REDACTED] SR 112 made me walk through all of the other classrooms to get the mop and bucket, so all of the girls knew that I had wet myself. I believe that she did this on purpose to humiliate me.

12. After school we just played in the big recreation room but there were no toys or anything. We used to just throw ourselves up against the walls. There would be nobody minding us in the recreation room in the evenings after school. There were swings outside but we were never allowed out to play unless the nuns wanted rid of us.

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9. I went to primary school in the grounds of Nazareth House. I remember being called a dunce and being made to stand in the corner with my hands on my head. You were always put down and told you were good for nothing. You were always told you were stupid, your mother never wanted you and you were left on the doorstep.
10. The food in Nazareth House was very basic. There had to be silence at mealtimes; we couldn't even talk to each other. We got lumpy porridge in the morning and a lot of the time it was inedible but you had to eat it. If you didn't eat your meal you were made to sit there until you ate it and if you didn't eat it, it would be put back in front of you for your next meal. You could be vomiting and retching but if you vomited the food up you had to pick it up and eat it. The nuns did not care.
11. If you misbehaved during meal times you had to stand in the passageway outside the door way to the dining room. I remember that happened to me many times if I shared my food or if I was talking. I was often hungry; I used to eat grass and it was actually quite nice. If you were bad they never told you what you had done wrong. We never got any luxuries like cake or sweets. I remember once when the nuns were on retreat one of the girls got the keys to the pantry and we raided it. We knew we would get in trouble but we didn't care; we hid apples and other food down our pants. We had fun times when we got into mischief.
12. I didn't really make friends in the home because you could never get too close to someone. You were not allowed to have friendships. We never knew anything about love or comfort. If you saw another child crying, your instinct would be to go put your arm around them but if the nuns saw that, you would get a hiding. We were never shown any love. You were completely on your own. There were no social connections at all; it was just work, work, work.
13. We were made to do hard work in the home. We had to start out chores from 6.00 every morning. I must have scrubbed the whole of that building. We used to have to scrub the big corridors on our hands and knees. They would

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before school, and even if we had to redo the chores, we still had to be in school on time.

7. We went to the primary school in the grounds of Nazareth House. We had to be in school every morning at 9.00am, with our uniform and hair spotless. Every child had a partner. My partner would be responsible for my hair and clothes, making sure they were right, and I was responsible for hers. We had to clean each other's shoes. We had to make sure our socks were darned. If there was a hole, we had to darn it with a hair clip instead of a needle. The nuns broke one half off a clip and bent the bit at the end to make the eye. We would line up and the nun would examine our darning. If she could put her finger through the hole we had to start again. We had a horrible uniform, made of very hard rough material which made our skin red. From the age of about ten or eleven years, we were given a dress for the summer. We thought they were beautiful because they were all flowery and we had never seen anything like it before. We weren't allowed to change our clothes after school. We had to wear the same dress all day, and we had to keep it clean. We were allowed out to play for an hour. There were four swings for four hundred children. I was never once on the swings. I was always a loner. I don't think I made one friend the entire time that I was at Nazareth House. I was going into my own shell. I used to stand in the corner. I didn't want anyone to notice me, particularly the nuns. On cold days, all the girls would stand beside the radiator and they would get chilblains. I never stood beside the radiator, because I wanted to stay in the corner, unnoticed by the nuns. I knew that if the nuns paid no attention to me, I wouldn't get slapped.
8. There were two teachers who came in from outside of the Convent, but I was always taught by nuns. I felt that they paid more attention to the girls that they thought were brighter. They didn't teach us anything other than religion. It was religion morning, noon and night. There was constant praying. We had to pray when we woke up, before meals, after meals, at the start of school, and before we went to bed. When I later went to school in England, I couldn't believe how much I knew about religion. My hand was always up, but it was the only subject I knew. I could barely read and I couldn't count. I could write

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but I wasn't good at it. I couldn't tell the time. Anything I learned after the Convent, I taught myself. I just listened to everything around me and learned.

9. Each class had a certain time during which we were allowed to use the toilet. No sooner was I back at my desk and I would need to use the toilet again. I think it was my nerves. I was always running to the toilet. When I asked to go to the toilet, the nun would say "no, you've already been". I wet the floor dozens of times and I would be sent to get the mop and bucket. This involved me walking through all of the classrooms so all the girls would know what I had done and that was even more embarrassing. And then I had to bring the mop and bucket back and rinse it and wring it, before going back to class. I would be mortified. I think I was just living on my nerves all the time. None of the girls ever made fun of each other, because we all knew what each other was going through. We all stood up for each other.
10. At bath time, we all had to queue up and wait our turn. We were washed in the first bath and then we were but into a second bath that had Jeyes Fluid in it. The nuns would dunk our heads to make sure that the Jeyes Fluid got everywhere and we would be crying with the stinging in our eyes. We were all washed in the same bath water.
11. I always had a very swarthy neck and my teeth were a different colour. In later years my doctor told me that it was a lack of vitamins in my diet. After we got washed we had a routine of showing our hands and arms, turning them round so they could be inspected by the nuns, and putting our heads down so they could check our neck and ears. **SR 145** would make me go back to rewash my neck repeatedly because my skin was slightly darker than the other girls. On one occasion she made me wash my neck eight times. I was a bit older at this stage and I lost my temper with her. I grabbed her and pulled her habit off, and I could see she had ginger hair. The other girls couldn't believe it because I was always so quiet. They were chanting but I told them to stop. I was made to stand on the marble corridor in my bare feet, with only a nightdress on. I had to stand there for hours with my hands on my head. If I was caught taking my hands off my head, I would be made to stand there for

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no interaction encouraged between us.

5. I went to primary school onsite in Nazareth House. The nuns taught us but it was more Religion than anything else. We had to say the catechisms. There were some clever girls and the nuns picked them out and sent them to night school but they didn't bother with the rest of us. I always loved music and I used to sit under the stairs playing a mouth organ. I wish the nuns did more to encourage my passion for music. I then went to secondary school in St. Monica's on the Ravenhill Road. It was a huge school that had just opened. I felt so lost there – it was so big and different and I was used to our small class in the home. I think I only spent a year in St. Monica's.
6. I recall bath-time every Saturday night and the washing of our hair. We lined up and went into the bath one after the other. One girl would sit at the taps washing her feet while another girl was in the bath washing her body. When that girl got out, the first girl got into the bath. We were wrapped in a sheet when we got out. The water was often cold; we were afraid to ask for warm water. I remember once we asked for warm water and the nun gave it to us; it depended what kind of mood they were in. The nuns put Jeyes Fluid in the bath, which was very unpleasant and stung the skin, and would make the skin smart. Whichever nun was on duty would bathe us. When getting out of the bath our skin would be red and inflamed due to the harshness of the fluid. This continued until we reached puberty and began our period. From that time onwards we were permitted to bathe ourselves, using normal soap.
7. During bath-time our hair would be washed by the older girls in the home, as instructed by the nuns. This would consist of the girls using the same Jeyes Fluid to wash our hair. On one occasion an older girl in the home put the Jeyes Fluid directly into my ear. This resulted in my ear-drum bursting and severe pain. After the incident one of the nuns took me to the Mater Hospital in Dublin and we were told that they could not do anything for me as they were afraid of me going deaf. As a result my ear has been

1 Q. "They would make us squeeze our knuckles into a fist and
2 then they would hit us on our knuckles with the side of
3 the ruler."

4 **A. Yes.**

5 Q. You recall all of those three nuns whom you have named
6 before --

7 **A. Yes.**

8 Q. -- doing that to you at one stage or another.

9 **A. Yes.**

10 Q. Now the congregation have said a couple of things, and
11 I should have said that they also said that you didn't
12 have to go to mass every day, that you would have been
13 encouraged to go to daily mass during Lent, but mass
14 wasn't a daily event.

15 **A. I didn't actually say we went to mass every day.**
16 **I think I was referring that we went to mass on a rota**
17 **basis, but I know we would go to Benediction and Rosary**
18 **in the afternoon maybe about 4 o'clock before our**
19 **supper. I mean, this is only what I remember, but**
20 **I didn't say mass every day, but it seemed to be the**
21 **church was like the centre in our lives.**

22 Q. Well, the other thing that they have said about the
23 school is that they tried to provide an adequate
24 education. They are disappointed that you believe the
25 nuns were not interested in your education and they do

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19. I went to school on site at Nazareth House and I recall being taught by SR 31 and SR 31 taught the more advanced pupils and SR 134 taught the more remedial pupils. We used to be sent out of class to do cleaning jobs around the home but we always went back to the class and were not away for a long time. In general I found the education to be good and I passed the Eleven Plus.
20. We used to go to my Aunt and Uncle's house in [REDACTED] for holidays. I remember my Auntie leaving NHB 63 and me back to Nazareth House. We got off at the bus stop and my Auntie crossed the road to rush back for the next train. I just stood on the pavement crying and crying as I wanted to go back with my Auntie. A lady stopped with me as she thought I was crying because I couldn't cross the road. My Auntie gave in and took me back home with her. NHB 63 went back to Nazareth House and had to tell the nuns I could not return as I was ill. I think I got to stay an extra week with my Auntie. I do not know how my Auntie did not know something was wrong in the home when I did not want to go back but she never asked and I never told her. We also used to go there at Christmas, Easter and for summer holidays. If we came back with any presents the nuns would take them away from us. I remember my Auntie making me clothes which were taken off me by the nuns as soon as I returned to Nazareth House. We had nothing we could call our own. The only other time I remember staying away from the home is when NHB 63 and I spent a week with a family in Newry.
21. At Christmas time a man called NHB 102 who was a handyman at the home dressed up as Santa and we got presents of second hand things that people had donated. I received an umbrella with holes in it once.
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iron the blouses in a room off the sewing room. I found an easier way of ironing the shirts but because I was not doing it the way NHB 32 had told me to she slapped me across the face.

14. I remember when I was about nine years old there was a girl called [REDACTED] who died. I heard that she had gone out to stay with a family but she wanted to go back to the nuns and on her way back she got lost in the snow and she was found dead. We were never told what happened to her. I remember seeing her in her coffin at the front of the chapel and thinking that she was sleeping. The nuns had not told us that she was dead.
15. I remember a night when some of the girls in my dormitory sneaked out to the fire escape to watch fireworks. SR 134 caught them and brought all of us to the sitting room and made us kneel with our hands behind our heads all night. I heard the next day that some of the girls from the other dormitories were made to sleep on the fire escape steps.
16. I remember one occasion when I was about twelve or thirteen and we were clearing out an old storage building called "the loft". We were bringing the old heavy school benches down the fire escape and the rusted iron steps collapsed and I fell on my back. I saw stars. I went to the toilets because I was bleeding from my groin. A nun put a plaster on me. No sympathy was shown. I do not think we should have been moving those things as they were very heavy. It was a job for a strong man not a small child.
17. My education was very poor. We went to school in Nazareth House. There were classes for each year but I was placed in the class for the educationally subnormal children. The class had children from five to eleven years old. The younger ones were placed at one side of the room and the older ones at the other side. I seemed to spend my primary education drawing, knitting or sitting in silence.
18. When the girls reached secondary school age they were sent to St Monica's. I missed the first number of weeks as I had been ill with measles and another illness. When I was able to go back to school I attended St Monica's for less

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than half a term. I remember getting ready to go to St Monica's with the other girls when I was taken into the sewing room by [REDACTED] SR 122 and given a different uniform to the one I was wearing. That is how I was told that I was going to a different school. When I came out of the room I saw four other girls in that uniform and we were all sent to a school in [REDACTED] called [REDACTED] which was for educationally subnormal children. We were taken there every day by bus. I remember sitting looking out over Belfast Lough day after day thinking to myself if you are not going to educate me I am going to go into a world of my own. I ended up leaving there with no qualifications at all. I kept in touch with some of the teachers from that school. [REDACTED] who sadly passed away about five years ago, told me that the Mother Superior of the convent had contacted her before I started and told her that I was extremely backward and would not do well in life but to see what she could do with me.

19. I also remember one day [REDACTED] SR 134 took me and scrubbed me in from head to toe, put a green dress on me and took me to one of the classrooms where one of my teachers [REDACTED] was standing. She was a kind woman and wanted to see how I was. She gave me sweets. [REDACTED] SR 134 did not know who she was and when I came out and told her it was my teacher the dress was taken away from me and I never saw it again. I wrote to [REDACTED] SR 134 when I left the home as I was looking for answers. When I was in my forties I started to work out from her letters that the dress was from my mother. [REDACTED] SR 134 had thought that Mrs [REDACTED] was my mother and had put me in the dress she knew she had sent. I understand from the letters that my mother had sent me clothes but they had been taken away because the other children were asking questions. My mother had been asked to send money instead. I do not know what was done with the money.
20. During the summer we were taken out in black taxis to a beach party at Tyrella beach. We called them black taxi parties. There were six to eight children in each taxi and we sung the whole way to Tyrella beach. I have fond memories of the taxi drivers taking us out and I am thankful for their generosity.

1 **A. Uh-huh.**

2 Q. You say you seemed to spend your primary education
3 drawing, knitting or sitting in silence.

4 **A. Yes.**

5 Q. Now we were talking about this. I wondered if, you
6 know, there was -- did girls move between classrooms?
7 Did they move from SR134's classroom to somebody else's?

8 **A. Oh, no, no. Once you were in SR134's class you were in**
9 **it, but other girls moved from -- there was four**
10 **classrooms I think. There was two lay teachers and SR31**
11 **and SR116. They moved from class to class as they got**
12 **a bit older, but once we were in SR134's class, that was**
13 **it.**

14 Q. She has -- I will come back to what she has said when
15 she was interviewed by police --

16 **A. Uh-huh.**

17 Q. -- back in the mid-'90s --

18 **A. Yes.**

19 Q. -- but she did say that she had what she described as
20 the backward class, the class for backward children.
21 That is consistent with what you are saying about it
22 being the --

23 **A. Yes, yes, yes.**

24 Q. -- ESN class, as it used to be known.

25 **A. You know, Christine, we did know it was for the backward**

1 **children, because children are cruel. Children used to**
2 **slag us off about, "Oh, you are in the backward class,**
3 **SR 134 class", and you knew it.**

4 Q. You say that -- I mean, you have since gone on and
5 achieved in your life and achieved qualifications in
6 your life, HIA20, but when we were talking earlier, the
7 reason that you sort of feel so badly about this is you
8 felt this was a label that was attached to you.

9 A. **Yes, yes.**

10 Q. It was something that you feel affected you badly over
11 the years.

12 A. **I think it has had a very bad effect on me**
13 **psychologically and emotionally. To be labelled as**
14 **a bedwetter, to be labelled as a typical orphan with no**
15 **visitors and now to be labelled as ESN is pretty hard to**
16 **take on board.**

17 Q. Well, the Congregation would say and have said in their
18 response statement that they did their best to ensure
19 there was a proper education of children. They pointed
20 out that the responsibility for education was not just
21 theirs, that the Department of Education and the Council
22 of Catholic Maintained Schools were responsible for
23 educating children. They do not accept that they failed
24 in respect of your education. In paragraph 12 of their
25 response statement they say that they learned that the

1 records for children with educational difficulties were
2 destroyed once the child reached 20 -- sorry -- 23 or
3 26. You yourself did try to obtain your records. Isn't
4 that right?

5 **A. Yes, I did. I wrote to the -- the school that I was**
6 **sent to was in It is since**
7 **demolished. It was demolished in the '90s. It was**
8 **a big boarding school for children all over Northern**
9 **Ireland with special needs. I wish I had boarded at it.**
10 **Anyway that was demolished. It was run by I think it**
11 **was the Convent of Mercy Order. I contacted them.**
12 **I contacted the Education Board. Anybody I could**
13 **I contacted them. I couldn't get any records.**

14 **Q. You do talk about when girls reached secondary school,**
15 **they went to St. Monica's, but you had been ill --**

16 **A. Yes.**

17 **Q. -- and you missed the first few weeks of the term in**
18 **St Monica's.**

19 **A. Yes. Uh-huh.**

20 **Q. Then when you did go, you were only there for a short**
21 **time --**

22 **A. Very short.**

23 **Q. -- before you were actually moved to**

24 **A. Yes.**

25 **Q. You talk about this in paragraph 18 of your statement,**

1 if we can just scroll on down, please. You remember how
2 you were actually sent. You say you were taken into the
3 sewing room by SR122, given a different uniform to the
4 one you had been wearing, and that's how you learned you
5 were going to a different school. When you came out of
6 the room, you saw four other girls in that uniform.

7 **A. Uh-huh.**

8 Q. Then you were sent to You were taken there
9 every day by bus. You remember sitting, looking out
10 over Belfast Lough, thinking to yourself, "If they are
11 not going to educate me, I am not going to go into
12 a world of my own -- I am going to go into a world of my
13 own". I beg your pardon. You left without
14 qualifications --

15 **A. Uh-huh.**

16 Q. -- but you have kept in touch with teachers from that
17 school.

18 **A. Yes, yes.**

19 Q. One of them told you that the Mother Superior of the
20 convent --

21 **A. Uh-huh.**

22 Q. -- had contacted you (sic) and said that you were
23 extremely backward and would not do well in life, but to
24 see what they could do with you --

25 **A. Uh-huh.**

1 **A. Uh-huh.**

2 **Q.** You feel that having labelled you as an educationally
3 subnormal person, the nuns should have had more care --

4 **A. Yes.**

5 **Q.** -- over what happened to you afterwards.

6 **A. Yes.** Well, can I please add to that? The lady that
7 I went to that I think was mentally unstable had already
8 had five girls with her, who had all left her, and yet
9 I was sent to her as somebody that was ESN to this lady,
10 who was just not right. I thought that was unfair.

11 When I was in the factory and the solicitor came to
12 tell me I had a mother, two total strangers -- the
13 manager was a total stranger, didn't know anything about
14 me -- he had to bring me into the room. There was
15 a solicitor there. She said, "I am here to tell you
16 about your mother". I said, "I don't have a mother",
17 because my nun had said as a child, "Don't be silly.
18 You don't have a mummy". So I took that on board, and
19 there was this lady. So that was partly part of the
20 reason of the mental breakdown.

21 **Q.** Well, you go on, as I say, to go on about the rest of
22 your time. If we look at paragraph 39, please, here you
23 say that the experiences of your childhood made you feel
24 worthless.

25 **A. Uh-huh.**

1 Q. "Having no parents, attending a special school, wetting
2 the bed, having an alarm placed on your bed and being
3 told you were going to be sent to a mental institution
4 for breaking the handle of a mop. I have so many
5 questions about how these nuns were allowed to bring us
6 up. What did they know about the physical, emotional
7 and educational well-being of children? What training
8 did they have to work with children? We were all crying
9 out for affection and I felt that all I received in
10 return was punishment for the sin of my mother. I do
11 not feel that we had done anything to deserve that kind
12 of existence. I cannot forget about my childhood as it
13 has shaped who I am and the memories will stay with me
14 forever."

15 You go on in paragraph 40 to say that not all nuns
16 should be tarred with the same brush and you did meet
17 some good nuns.

18 **A. Yes.**

19 Q. I was wondering if you can remember any of the names of
20 any of them?

21 **A. There was a SR190 in the kitchen, because I was often**
22 **sent to the kitchen to peel the potatoes and wash the**
23 **big pots and pans or whatever -- not alone; other girls.**
24 **She was quite nice. SR122 was harmless, the one that**
25 **called you "girly". She was harmless. It was very**

1 educationally subnormal.

2 **A. Yes. That's right.**

3 Q. Is that your memory, that those children went into her
4 class?

5 **A. Uh-huh.**

6 Q. "The idea of writing a book sounds very interesting and
7 will pose no problem for you, HIA37. Your English was
8 always excellent, followed by a very good second in
9 drama.

10 I receive letters from girls all over the world and
11 it is good to hear how well they are doing despite
12 unfortunate family circumstances (outside their control)
13 which led to their admission to Nazareth House.

14 My main concern, HIA37, was that you should map out
15 a worthwhile career for yourself and do well in life.
16 You had all the potential to do just that.

17 When I think of you, HIA37, I remember our search
18 for accommodation for you. Eventually it was suggested
19 that you should share with 25-year-olds. To my
20 amusement you weren't having any of it. You weren't
21 living with old women.

22 It was good to hear from you, HIA37. Once again my
23 sincere sorry for any pain I have caused.

24 Yours sincerely.

25 SR31."

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1 A. There was one 25-year-old who came on a Monday to
2 Friday. I think she lived away in or
3 something like that there and went home at weekends.
4 After that -- ironically I am older than this woman --
5 the next youngest would have been 56. So ...

6 Q. That's whenever you left the home and went to this
7 accommodation?

8 **A. Yes.**

9 Q. We will come back to that in due course, but if I can
10 just look then at 30152, and again this is a thank you
11 note. It is undated. So it is unclear as to when it
12 would have been written, HIA37:

13 "Thank you, HIA37, for your little note. I can
14 hardly believe that your daughter is preparing for a
15 final reading in October. That was my dream for you,
16 HIA37, and with the minimum of effort you would have
17 read your way through Queen's. Now it is your
18 daughter's turn and I know her name will emerge with
19 flying colours. It is always so good to know that
20 families of past pupils are doing well. Which course is
21 ? taking? There are ..."

22 We need to go now to page 30148 to get the remainder
23 of that note:

24 " ... so many new developments in education --
25 whether for better or otherwise only time will tell.

to sit the 11+ we were all queuing up and the nerves got the better of me. I began to laugh out of nerves and [SR 31] grabbed me, gave me a beating and said I wasn't doing the 11+. We all went to St. Monica's Secondary School – I don't remember anyone ever going to a different school.

13. My mother's family always came to take [NHB 107] out but not me. They'd take her out on a Sunday. The family blamed me for us being taken into care. They used to say if I hadn't gone out and got attacked we wouldn't have been taken but I was only six or seven. My mother should have been looking after me. I believe the man who attacked me was convicted and served time in prison.

14. When I was about nine they made me start looking after the old people in Nazareth House after school and at the weekends. I was the only one sent over to do this. I did it until I was fourteen or fifteen. [SR 31] said it was to get the devil out of me and to keep me away from the other children. I used to have to bathe the old ladies, change their nappies and if they were dying I had to sit up all night with them and then wash their dead bodies. A civilian woman I called 'Matron' and two Scottish girls worked there and they were good to me. They were in their early 20's and they used to buy me sweets with their wages.

15. I continued to wet the bed until I was about eleven. I remember coming home one day and telling [SR 134] I had cut myself because I didn't know I had gotten my period. I lay all night thinking I was dying. I was terrified of getting a hiding. I was put into a dark room and then I was brought out to the canteen and put in front of everyone to tell them I was a woman now. You had to go to [SR 134] to ask for a sanitary towel. They were old-fashioned ones with a belt and you only got one for the day and one for night time.

16. The older girls used to try to bully me but they picked the wrong girl. I got in trouble for standing up for myself. One time a woman who used to look after us when the nuns were away praying got into my bed and tried to touch me but I beat her out of my bed. I was about eight or nine at the time. She was an adult civilian worker the nuns brought in to keep an eye on us when they were at prayer. I don't remember her name – we just knew her as 'Miss'.

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12. I went to primary school onsite in Nazareth House. [SR 116] [SR 31] [SR 31] and [SR 31] all taught in the school. When I was eleven I remember thinking I'd be doing my 11+ soon but then [SR 31] told me I wasn't eleven, I was only ten. That was deliberate on [SR 31] part. She didn't like me and it was about control. I had to stay an extra year in [SR 31] [SR 31] class then and I never did my 11+. I went to St. Monica's Secondary School on the Ravenhill Road but I left when I was fifteen. The nuns never encouraged education. I believe if I had stayed in school longer and got some qualifications it would have been better for my career.
13. We had a lot of chores to do in the home. It wasn't just a bit of cleaning or tidying up after you; it was excessive manual labour. There was a huge hall with parquet flooring and we had to wax and polish that every weekend. There was a line of us and one girl would put the wax on, the next would polish it and so on. That floor was gleaming by the time we were finished with it. In the mornings after breakfast, we had to go and mop and clean the landings. [SR 116] would come along with her finger to see if you missed any dust. It was hard work – too much for small children.
14. A lot of the children in the home wet the bed. I never did but I witnessed the humiliation those girls suffered. Before they got the buzzers for the beds, I remember one nun who I think was [SR 134] putting the wet sheet over a girl's head as punishment for wetting the bed. That happened to a few different girls.
15. We got bathed once a week in Nazareth House. There were three tin baths for washing our hair out in the yard – one for each group. We had to queue up and take our turn. The water was warm but it was never changed so you were lucky if you got washed first you got the clean water but if you got washed last the water was filthy. We were bathed in Jeyes fluid which should never have been used. When it was put into the bath, the water turned white. The Jeyes fluid made my skin red and inflamed. We had to wear a pinafore in the bath to protect our modesty and when you got out you had a sheet put around you.

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through for the next hour in that room. Brendan Smyth would leave and I would have to walk upstairs to my room crying. SR 31 knew exactly what was going on in that room, but she continued to let me suffer every Tuesday. That was the worst bit. It went on for at least eight years.

17. SR 31 wouldn't let me do the 11+ exam because she said I was a dunce. I was sent to St Monica's to do a test, to see what class I would be put into. I got top marks in the exam and was going to be put into the top class, but SR 31 told me that I wasn't going to that school because it was too good for me. I was sent to school, for children with special needs. I got battered there because I was a Catholic. Whilst my mother was Protestant, we were all brought up as Catholics, and I felt that SR 31 resented the fact that I was born from a mixed marriage. So I got battered at school and then when I went home I got battered again. I didn't learn anything at I was given tasks that I had been doing in primary school, and the headmaster would say "I don't know what you're doing in this school pet". At one stage I started to hide under the bed in the mornings after SR 31 went out to school and I managed to get out of school for about three months before the headmaster rang to find out where I was. I believe that if I had have been educated properly, I could have gone to college and become a nurse, something I have always dreamed of.

18. Between what was going on with SR 31 and Brendan Smyth and hating school, my life was in turmoil. I had no one to turn to. was my Social Worker when I was young. I went through a lot of Social Workers. They were always very good to us, but when they visited us in Nazareth House, we weren't allowed to tell them anything. SR 31 sat in the room while we were speaking to them. SR 31 was the only adult in our unit for a while and then a girl called was brought in to help her. She was aged about twenty one years. and I became good friends but I never told her what was going on.

19. I was fed up with the beating and the abuse and because I had no one to turn to, I started to run away. Sometimes I would run to house. Anytime I

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operation on my breast. I told him I had never had surgery on my breast but he said I definitely had and he showed me the scar. I don't recall ever being taken to hospital as a child or having any operation.

22. I went to secondary school in St. Monica's. We stuck out like a sore thumb; everyone knew we were from the home. SR218 was the headmistress. I often got slaps from her at school. Sometimes when the nuns in the home beat you they would really lose their temper. They would get the big bamboo cane and bring it down from above and you could really feel the force of it. SR218 beat me with a strap as well. I was a bit of a rebel in school and I got expelled from St Monica's when I was about thirteen for throwing a snowball at the house of the headmistress. I was put up on the stage in front of everyone and told I was the worst girl in the school. SR116 gave me a bad hiding for getting expelled.

23. You normally got beatings in the room upstairs but I remember once getting a bad beating from SR116 in a room downstairs beside the dining room. She really lost her temper and lashed out at me. I was trying to protect my body so my back ended up black and blue from the hiding. It was extremely painful. I remember one teacher at St Monica's called [REDACTED] who was nice to me. She was the only teacher who would take me back after I was expelled. She kept asking a lot of questions but at that time I wouldn't have told anybody about the abuse no matter how bad it got. I thought nobody cared so why would she care. That was my frame of mind. [REDACTED] was my [REDACTED] teacher and one time I was making a dress and I was supposed to try it on. I refused to try it on because I knew if I did she would see all the marks on my back from the beating.

24. When I was fourteen I ran away to Manchester with three other girls. I cannot remember how we got there. We had no money or anything and we were brought back. I can't really remember how we were brought back; it's all a blur to me. Girls often ran away but they were always brought back to the home. I cried for two weeks after I was brought back.

1 **A. Probably our behaviour, you know, because we didn't know**
2 how to interact with the outside world. Do you know
3 what I mean? We did. We stuck out like sore thumbs.
4 They could tell even by how we were dressed and things
5 like that, you know.

6 Q. You, in fact, got -- as you described it to me earlier,
7 you were a bit of a rebel and you got into trouble in
8 school.

9 **A. Yes.**

10 Q. The nuns in the home would beat you. Were there nuns
11 in -- who cared for you in the home who were also
12 teachers in the school or was that just in the primary
13 school?

14 **A. That was just the primary school.**

15 Q. You, in fact, got expelled from St. Monica's when you
16 were about 13 for throwing a snowball at the house of
17 the headmistress.

18 **A. Correct.**

19 Q. You got told you were the worst girl in the school and
20 you were given a hiding by SR116 when you got back to
21 the home for being expelled.

22 **A. Uh-huh.**

23 Q. You say that you normally were given beatings in a room
24 upstairs, but you once remember getting a bad beating in
25 a room downstairs beside the dining room from SR116, who

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18. My sister and I never met each other in the Convent. I didn't even know I had a sister or brothers. Looking back on it, it feels as if they deliberately kept us apart.
19. On the first Sunday of every month family members were allowed to visit. I never had a visit the entire time I was in Nazareth House. Neither my mother nor my father ever made any attempt to visit. I would stand and pray that somebody would come in to see me.
20. One day my father arrived to take us out, despite the fact that he had never made any attempt to visit us during all the years previous. I was about thirteen years of age. My sister was fifteen. The nun said [REDACTED] "you're wanted". I didn't know where I was going but I had to go up to a posh part of the Convent. My sister was waiting but I didn't know who she was. We weren't introduced. She was on one chair, and I was in another, and in walked my father, saying he was taking us out. Meeting my father was like meeting a stranger. He didn't make any effort to get to know us. This was the first time I ever met my sister. She was a very quiet person whereas I was quite rebellious.

Life after care

21. My father brought us to England, where he had a greengrocer's shop. He was a very hard and strict man, and I had had enough of that in the Convent. I wasn't prepared to go through that again so I rebelled against it. We never agreed about anything. I got the impression he took us out of Nazareth House because he expected us to work in his shop. He didn't want me to go to school but the Authorities in England insisted and I was delighted.
22. I found it very hard when I came out. I found it was actually ten times worse than the Convent. My father and my uncle sold the shop and decided to buy a farm near [REDACTED]. I was always running away, and I always ran back to the Convent in Ballymascanlon. I didn't know anyone else. I wasn't keen on going back to the nuns but they were the only people I knew. They kept returning me to my father but I knew one day I would leave and not go back. Eventually

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having willies to wear to school if it was raining which were both left feet and were different sizes.

8. Once a week after school I went to an Irish dancing class in the home which I really enjoyed as it was an escape from the routine of the home. The costumes were beautiful and we won cups and medals.
9. We always had chores to do. We had to clean the convent, the dormitories and the big corridor. We had to polish the floors on our knees and we would get splinters in our knees from the wooden floorboards. One day when I was putting the wax on the floor [SR 31] fell. I unintentionally laughed. She came straight over to me and hit me over the head with a bunch of keys. My nose bled and I started crying. When I got a bit older we I had to work in the laundry. I worked in the laundry with [HIA 29]. Our clothes would get soaking wet but we were never given a change of clothes.
10. We used to play leapfrog in the playground. When [SR 122] saw us playing leapfrog she would come out and grab us by the hair. One day when I was playing in the yard with [HIA 28] and [HIA 29] [SR 31] called us over and took us to the fence that separated our part from the nursery. There was a girl with glasses coming down from the nursery holding a nun's hand. [SR 31] told us "that's your sister". We did not know we had a sister. She was called [REDACTED]. As she was in the nursery she was kept separate from us. We were taken over to the nursery once or twice to see her but I only got to know her properly when we left the home.
11. The three of us were in the choir. [HIA 28] also had to pump the organ at masss in the morning. I used to sit beside her. There was one morning she fell asleep as it was very early in the morning and she was still tired. [SR 31] was playing the organ and the music stopped. [SR 31] came over and whacked [HIA 28] on the face. [HIA 28] started crying. I asked [SR 31] "why did you do that?". She grabbed me by the hair and said "don't you dare talk balk to me" and hit me.

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Nazareth House Belfast (18th July 1960 – 19th December 1965)

6. The day we were brought into Nazareth House, we were taken into a big room while my mother talked to [SR 176], the Mother Superior. Then my mother said goodbye to us and we all started crying. We were taken to the sewing room by [SR 122] and changed out of our clothes into old clothes. We were brought to the canteen and given our supper and then just put to bed. We were just thrown in, we weren't introduced to anyone.
7. My sisters and I were kept in the same group – Our Lady's. [SR 31] was in charge of our group. There were three groups – Our Lady's, Sacred Heart and St. Anne's. We all wore different colours to Mass on Sunday. Our Lady's were blue, Sacred Heart was red and St. Anne's was green. I didn't know I had a younger sister in the home until one day [SR 31] asked us if we wanted to see our sister. I looked at her and asked what she meant and she said 'you know you have a sister in the baby section'. They brought her down to the railings then which separated the baby section from the children's part. We didn't have much contact with [NHB 69] after this as the two sections were completely separate.
8. A normal day in Nazareth House began with the nuns clapping to wake us up. If it was our group's turn to go to Mass, we would get up at 5am. We washed and dressed then after Mass we went down to get our breakfast. We got porridge or dipping bread. The food was terrible but you had to eat it. I hated the bread pudding, it made me sick but [SR 134] would stand over me and make me eat it even while I was retching. We wore pinafores to school which the nuns made themselves and we weren't allowed have our sleeves down. If you were caught with your sleeves down, you got a knuckle on your head from [SR 116]
9. We were punished for every little thing in the home. You would be brought into the sewing room and slapped with a bamboo cane on the knuckles. If you pulled your hand away, you would get an extra slap. [SR 134] used to beat me with a wooden walking stick like a shillelagh. She used to hide it under her clothes if she saw anybody coming, like the priest. [SR 116] had the

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wouldn't give in so he drove me back to the home. He said I wasn't doing the job I was sent there to do just because he wasn't getting his own way. I was only twelve or thirteen at the time and NHB 6 and NHB 5 weren't there – it was just me. There was nobody I could tell. He said the nuns wouldn't believe me because it was them who sent me out to him.

20. We used to go on holidays to Glenariff during the summer. I loved that; it was an escape for us. We used to sneak out to the village late at night and one night SR 134 was waiting on us when we got back. She shouted at us "you'll know the consequences in nine months time" and gave us a good hiding but we probably deserved it for sneaking out so late. At Christmas time we went to parties at Mackies which I have fond memories of.

21. My brothers were in Nazareth Lodge while we were in Nazareth House and I remember going down once but we only saw one brother - I never saw or any of the younger ones. The nuns used to take down girls who had brothers in the Lodge. I remember seeing a boy called NL 28 who they called the boy because he went round clucking like a hen. went to Kircubbin then and I remember going to visit him after I left when I found out he was there.

22. I never remember any social workers or inspectors visiting the home. The only people I recall are benefactors who would come in and the nuns would put on a big show for them. There was a doctor called Dr Hunter who used to come down to the home. He would examine us all in a line in a room off the classroom and I remember him giving us injections but we were never told what they were for. Dr Hunter had a practice on the Ormeau Road and I brought a girl I was in charge of down there once because she was tongue tied and he nipped it.

23. I went to school onsite in Nazareth House. SR 134 taught there and she would beat you on the knuckles with a ruler if you got something wrong. Your hand would be so sore for days afterwards you were sure you had broken a bone. SR 134 used to cane us as well – she would keep at you until you

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had no power to take us out of the home. I made my First Communion in the home along with my sister [REDACTED]. That was a good day because [REDACTED] and I got out together with my aunt [REDACTED]. We were given money by a neighbour in the street and we had big plans to bring back something for the girls in the home but as soon as we walked through the door it was taken off us.

17. I was very close to [REDACTED]; we were Irish twins – we were the same age for a couple of days in the year. She died of leukaemia in June 1968. We weren't in Nazareth House at the time, we were back at home. It was actually me who brought [REDACTED] to the doctor. He told me to bring her to the hospital so I brought her up to the Royal. The doctor there came out and told me to go home and tell my mother and father to come up as soon as they could. I never saw [REDACTED] again after that – I wasn't allowed to visit her in hospital. I brought her to the hospital on 24th May and she died on 28th June. One day I was talking to her and the next nothing. I wasn't even allowed to go to her funeral. I didn't really accept that [REDACTED] was dead until 1993.

18. All the girls were taken from the family home after that and we were put into foster care with a family in Turf Lodge. [REDACTED] stayed at home as she was only a baby. I don't know how long we were there. I hated the foster home because they treated us so differently to their own children. We were brought home again and the sexual abuse continued. I couldn't take any more of it so I ran away. I tried to find the foster home but I couldn't. I ended up sleeping on the doorstep of my friend's house and her mother found me the next morning. She contacted Social Services and I was brought to the Good Shepherd.

Good Shepherd, Belfast (18th June 1971 – 14th March 1974)

19. Good Shepherd wasn't as severe as Nazareth House. The people I remember from Good Shepherd are [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I asked [REDACTED] once why I was in Good Shepherd and why none of my family visited me. She told me it was because I was a bold girl and I believed that. I used to go out to my [REDACTED] house on a

RESTRICTED (when complete)

Continuation of Statement of: HIA 124

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hospital because she was so ill. That was the last time I saw [REDACTED]. I knew she was in hospital for four weeks before she died, but during this time I was not allowed to see her by my parents and worse still I wasn't allowed to attend her funeral. There were periods of time when I was sent back to Nazareth House. I do not know when this was or for how often but I never had any choice in the matter. No matter how many times I went back I was never treated any better. At the age of ten I never went back to live in Nazareth House, I went on to live in the Good Shepherd, but looking back now I feel that I was robbed of my childhood and left with deep feelings of insecurity and for a long time, self loathing. I still live with irrational thoughts of myself and can't help but wonder why these things ever happened to me. This experience in my life has had a deep impact on my mental health and I take medication for depression. At no time has anybody ever acknowledged what I went through, nor has anyone taken responsibility for not protecting me as a vulnerable child.

Certified a true copy of an original signed document

Signature of witness:	HIA 124
Signature witnessed by: (Appropriate Adult)	

5. With regard to paragraph 8, we are aware of allegations that the children's underwear would have been checked; however we do not accept that this was a common practice.
6. With regard to paragraph 9, the children would not have been given extensive chores to do before school but may have assisted in clearing and setting the table for the next meal. The Congregation has accepted that the children were given chores to do within the home; however these chores were not excessive. It is difficult to see that disputes would not arise in a setting where many children of different ages are together. We are pleased that HIA [REDACTED] was treated well by the older girls.

7. With regard to paragraphs 10 - 13, HIA 124 states that she was put in the drier however the Congregation refutes that any Sister would have done such a thing to a child. The physical chastisement discussed by HIA 124 [REDACTED] is not accepted by the Congregation as a tolerable approach in dealing with children. With regret, the Sisters believe that, on occasion, the policy of 'no physical punishment' was not adhered to.
8. With regard to paragraph 14, the food was always the best standard we could provide. In the interests of the child, the Sisters would encourage them to eat the meals provided as there may not have been another option; however we cannot accept that the children would be force fed by the Sisters.
9. With regard to paragraph 16, the Sister in charge of the children would bring them to the visitor's room but would not have stayed with them during the visit. We are pleased that [REDACTED] has such fond memories of her First Communion; however we do not accept that their communion money was taken from them except perhaps to keep it safe.
10. With regard to paragraph 17, the Congregation offer HIA [REDACTED] sincere condolences on the loss of her sister [REDACTED] and cannot understand why she was unable to attend her funeral.
11. With regard to paragraph 18, the same checks and balances were not in place as in today's society, the Sisters would try to ensure that foster families who were responsible for the children were pleasant and good-natured people. We apologise if [REDACTED] believes she was not cared for correctly or treated the same as the other children.

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HIA REF: 103

Witness Name: HIA 103

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 103

I, HIA 103 will say as follows:-

Personal Details

1. I was born on [REDACTED]. I lived at home with my father, two brothers NL 25 and HIA 128 and my sister HIA 43. I am the eldest in the family. My mother left us in 1959.

Nazareth House

2. I was in Nazareth House from 22nd January 1960 until 8th May 1965. I was sent there when I was 7 years old along with my sister who was put in the nursery as she was 3. My brothers were sent to Nazareth Lodge.
3. I had regular contact with my father when I was in Nazareth House. He came and took us all out at weekends. He was traumatised when he was leaving us back. In the summer we all went to my granny's house in the country for a week or so.
4. My father would come to the wall at the side of Good Shepherd Chapel and would hand us over a bag of oranges. He was never made to feel welcome at the home by the nuns. Anytime we came back from seeing our father the nuns

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would ask 'did he give you an envelope?' 'Did he give you money?' My father paid regularly for us to be kept at the home.

5. A normal day consisted of getting out of bed and getting down on our knees to pray. We had to go to early morning mass every day. Afterwards we got breakfast which consisted of fried bread. After breakfast the work would start. We had to polish the chapel floors and wax the benches.
6. If we were caught carrying on, like sliding on cloths, the nuns would come down shouting and roaring and would often thump you on the head with a bunch of keys or their fists. The nuns used to grab us by the hair on the side of our heads when we were being disciplined. They would also use a pointer cane on occasion or their fists if you did anything wrong. **SR 134** was the worst one to me and **SR 31** **SR 31** was a teacher. **SR 134** was in charge of my dormitory. **SR 122** was wicked too but if you had sores she would have bathed you in Jeyes Fluid and iodine.
7. The beds were always checked to see if you wet the bed. If you wet the bed you had to wash it yourself in the laundry. This did not happen to me but I recall it happening to other children in the home of all ages.
8. Before having a bath on a Saturday we had to go into big hall and take our knickers off and stand in a line. We had to stand naked in front of everyone and show our knickers front and back. We wore the same pants and socks all week. Like most girls I washed them and then tied them in a towel and put them in my bed to dry.
9. Our hair was washed in Jeyes Fluid, nit shampoo and boiling water. If you tried to jump out of the bath they trailed you by the hair and dragged you back in and poured the water over you. **SR 134** would scrub the hair and then put a fine comb through it. The skin on my head was burned from the boiling water. I developed sores on my head and I was taken to a clinic on the Antrim Road.

1 criticising him. I am saying you would understand the
2 nun, if they saw a man coming over the wall, might be
3 concerned about that, but that's the only thing that
4 they did in connection with your dad that you felt made
5 your dad unwelcome?

6 **A. Uh-huh.**

7 Q. They didn't stop you going out to stay with him?

8 **A. No.**

9 Q. No. You mention that, if we just move -- yes. We can
10 see it now. You mention being asked for an envelope and
11 money. That was when you came back after staying with
12 him for the weekend.

13 **A. Uh-huh.**

14 Q. Am I right in saying -- I think you mention this in your
15 police statement -- that he would have given you
16 an envelope to give to the nuns --

17 **A. Uh-huh. Yes.**

18 Q. -- and you would have done that.

19 **A. Yes.**

20 Q. Did he ever tell you why he was doing that?

21 **A. It was just to help with our keep, you know --**

22 Q. Because presumably if he'd made --

23 **A. -- because he was working at the time.**

24 Q. If he had made this arrangement for you to stay there --

25 **A. Uh-huh.**

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the nuns told me that she was an alcoholic. My oldest sister said she sent it to us due to the guilt she felt for not looking after us. It was the only time of year when my sisters and I were actually called together as sisters. SR 116 SR 116 would open the box and show us everything. I recall everything being taken out of the box so that we could see it and we were all given dolls but then we were told to go and the nuns retained the contents of the box and said it was going to a better cause. I know that my older sister [REDACTED] wrote letters to my mother after we would have received the tea chest. But it was never her own words; the nuns controlled what was written.

16. My sister started to make up stories about our parents. She would tell people that our father was John Wayne and that he could not visit us as he was off filming and I believed her up until I was fifteen. We were trying to invent a family, trying to invent some love and to make excuses to explain why no-one ever came to visit us. Those children who had visitors were treated differently because they had somebody on the outside that they could tell or report to if they were treated badly by any of the nuns. The nuns knew this and treated the children with parents differently.
17. The nuns also had favourites, we called them their pets. When they became more senior they acted like the nuns and they would bully you as much as the nuns had done and the nuns would turn a blind eye to their behaviour. SR 116 SR 116 for some reason used to walk around with fruit and she would give this fruit to her favourite's right in front of you knowing that you were not going to get any fruit. I knew where I stood in the pecking order. There were also Christmas parties and some companies would invite the children in the home and SR 116 also attended. Your number had to be on the list to be able to attend and I just always knew my name wasn't going to be called out. I did however get to one of these parties. I recall being on the bus and SR 116 SR 116 sat behind me and slapped me around my head for no reason. That treatment has left me to this day nervous of anyone coming up behind me or walking behind me. Some of the girls loved to see my sisters and I being picked on. They would laugh because it wasn't them.

1 like that in the thing and they'd be taken away except
2 for one year when we were allowed to actually take the
3 dolls with us, but we weren't allowed to keep them for
4 very long. So, you know, eventually they were taken off
5 us as well. So ...

6 Q. The nuns have said in their response statement that they
7 don't -- none of the nuns can remember this tea chest
8 coming. Now that may be because the nuns who were there
9 when you were there either are no longer with us or are
10 so ill that they can't remember that, but they would
11 have said the toys and presents were tidied up but they
12 were never taken maliciously from children.

13 A. No, they were. They were. There was always a better
14 cause than us. We weren't allowed to have them, but we
15 were allowed to see them, because my older sister would
16 have to copy a letter down saying, "Thank you for ..."
17 the things that we saw and then we'd be told to go, and
18 that was -- that was worse than not getting a present at
19 all really, because we would see everything my mother
20 put in there, but we weren't allowed to have any of it,
21 because we weren't valued as people to have them.

22 Q. You talk -- you make no mention in your Inquiry
23 statement about your father, but in your book you devote
24 a chapter to a visit by him.

25 A. Uh-huh.

Name: Sister Brenda McCall

Date: 12 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 HIA 161 [REDACTED] and can confirm she was a resident within Nazareth House. [REDACTED] was admitted to Nazareth House on 20 September 1958 and discharged on 10 August 1967.
2. With regard to paragraphs 2-5, the Congregation can only apologise for the separation in [REDACTED] family. The Congregation endeavoured to maintain sibling relationships and it was a common occurrence for the children to visit their siblings whenever possible.
3. With regard to paragraph 6, the children were not made to go to Mass every day. The children would have been given the option to go every day during lent, however this would have been their own decision to attend. The children would not attend confession and have to do the Stations of the Cross every Friday.
4. With regard to paragraph 9, [REDACTED] has discussed the use of numbers within the home. We confirm that clothes and belongings were marked with a number to keep them together. However the children were known and called by their first names, not the number marked on their belongings and not by their surname. Numbering was used for practical laundry purposes only and not to degrade or humiliate the children.
5. With regard to paragraph 15, it is unfortunate that no Sister recalls [REDACTED] receiving the [REDACTED] 'tea chest' every Christmas. We are aware of similar allegations in relation to toys being taken away from children however we do not accept this. Children's toys and presents may have been tidied up and put away but these were not maliciously taken from the children.

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home with her. I was always frightened and missed my parents. My bed was not beside any of my sisters so I just lay and cried on my own quietly. I still have a fear of the dark because we were never allowed any lights on.

19. My parents would have sent wee presents up to us. It was their way of showing love, but we didn't get to keep them. On one occasion we were told to put them in our lockers but they disappeared. The other children did not take them or we would have known.

20. Mummy and Daddy were allowed to come up and see us. It was bitter sweet as it was great to see them but also very painful. We would sit at a big mahogany table similar to a board table and my sisters and brothers would be there as well but nothing was ever explained to us. We didn't understand why we were there.

21. My mummy was very bad with her nerves and depression although she loved her boys she found it very hard to love her girls. One day Mummy found out that **NL 155** had cut my sister's curly hair. Mummy attacked **NL 155** so Mummy was put out of the home. Due to her nerves we had witnessed a lot of violence at home and became very nervous children. The Sisters would have been informed about this and should have known we came from that environment.

22. On one visit my parents were taking my brother home and leaving us in the home. We were there when they were leaving and I started screaming out for my mummy and daddy to take me with them. I was so disturbed I had to be restrained by two nuns and I kicked out at them really hard. **NL 155** lifted me and said your mummy and daddy don't want you anymore because you cry all the time. In later years my sister told me that I had to be sedated that day. It turned out that my brother was not part of the Court Order and was allowed home but as a small child I was told nothing and nothing was explained to me. I thought that my parents didn't want me and I remember feeling very scared being left behind in that horrible place.

23. Bath time was very stressful. We were lined up naked, like robots. Clothes were trailed off us and we stepped into a shower like basin where we were

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and thumped my arm when I got the injection. The wound became infected and swollen and SR 122 treated it.

17. My father bought us things, for example, my sister got a yellow jumper but it was taken off her by the nuns. When my dad asked about it they said it was lost or something. I remember my sister having a bruise on her arm. My father complained to the nuns but nothing was done about it.
18. At Christmas parties we were given presents when we went to Hughes Bakery and Mackies. I got a doll called Rosebud and it was taken off me by the nuns when I returned to the home. I think they sold the presents that were given to children in the home.
19. I remember an inspector coming in and we were told to be on our best behaviour. We were warned not to be telling anything to the inspector. I remember a slide was brought out for a picture with the inspector beside it. This was just for show as we never got to use it and I never saw the slide again.
20. We weren't really educated. I was picked to play the violin and they brought in a music teacher called Mr Bell to teach it.
21. I attended St Monica's Secondary School on the Ravenhill Road. I had a couple of lovely teachers there. Miss Hill and Miss McCabe were particularly nice.
22. We had to mend old skirts the nuns gave us for our uniform and we had to borrow PE gear because we didn't have our own. Any time I had a hole in my uniform I was mortified.
23. I was ashamed about walking back from school to Nazareth House and I didn't tell people where I lived. I told no-one I was in care.
24. I left Nazareth House when I was about 11 or 12 years old. I was returned to my father's care because he got a house. I went back first because I was eldest. It

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oddball in the group. I don't know if that's because I was being financially supported by my stepfather in America which I didn't know at the time. There were times I got dresses and dolls sent to me but they were never given to me. We dared not to question it.

7. There was an older girl in the home called **NHB 76** who sexually molested me. It happened more than one time. She made me smack her and made me touch her breast. She touched my breasts too. After our bath she would dry me but she wasn't drying me right. She made me touch her below the waist. It was tough - I didn't want to do it but she was a big girl and I had to do what she told me. She used to bring us to bed and one night I told my best friend **NHB 103** that **NHB 76** made me feel her bum. All of a sudden the door barged open and **NHB 76** said **HIA 134** get out of bed and stand outside **SR 199** office now". I was never so scared in all my life standing there in the dark.
8. **SR 199** came then and told me to repeat what I had said to **NHB 103** so I did. Of course I was made out to be a liar. **SR 199** said I was just making it up for attention. It was really humiliating. Even when I spoke the truth she didn't believe me. This has affected my faith in the authorities to this day. I went back to bed and cried myself to sleep. I was about eight or nine at the time. That left me feeling really dirty and ashamed. Then telling **SR 199** the truth and not being believed left me devastated.
9. I had chores to do in the home and after this **SR 199** made me do even more. I was in charge of the bathtubs. There were about five or six baths and they were never clean enough because she wouldn't let me use Ajax; she would only let me use carbolic soap. One of the older girls gave me Ajax once and I had the baths sparkling but then I got whacked by **SR 199** for using Ajax. I also had to clean everybody's shoes and this cubby hole where they kept brooms and things. I was scared of the cubby hole because it was so small and dark. It got smaller the further you walked into it. It was really dark but I had to clean it every day. I was only seven or eight years old. **SR 199** was very cold and I felt much neglected in the home.

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16. We were forced to do chores in the home. We would be down on our knees in rows of two scrubbing a long marble corridor. We did this about twice a week. We also had to polish the parquet floors with a big heavy polisher we called a 'ronuk'. Every one of us home girls has 'housemaid's knees' – we all have the same problem with our knees. If you didn't do the cleaning properly SR 134 SR 134 would dump you in the cubby hole. This was a cupboard where all the cleaning materials were kept. I was kept in the isolation room for months when I was between nine and eleven years old because the nuns told me I had had rheumatic fever as a child. We used to get pocket money in the home if you were good but I never got any because I was a bit of a minx – the girls used to call me [REDACTED] I was a spirited child. There was a little tuck shop onsite where you could buy sweets but I never got any.
17. We used to run away to escape what was happening to us in Nazareth House. I ran away numerous times. Every time, the police would bring us back and not once did they ask us why we had run away.
18. My mother never once came back for us once we were put into care; it was my father who came. He used to come up to visit us in the home. At one stage he was coming every week but I think the nuns told him then he couldn't come up so often so he came about once a month. All the other girls from the home remember my father coming up visiting because a lot of them had nobody. My father used to bring us sweets and things but the nuns would always take them from us. The nuns were always hovering nearby during these visits so you couldn't say anything. My father used to bring us girls out to an aunt in [REDACTED] during holidays but she made us do loads of chores. One day we decided to get our own back by sweeping the stairs with the black brush you used to clean the range. She sent us back to the home then and never asked us out again.
19. During holidays, we were sent out to different families. The nuns basically farmed us out when we were only kids. I was sent to this family with a newborn baby. I was supposed to help look after the baby but the father of the family tried it on with me during the night while his wife was in the next room. I

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small presents, but they were always taken away by the nuns afterwards. I would see my brothers [REDACTED] and HIA 388 at parties but I didn't know they were my brothers. I didn't get to know them until after I left care. We never celebrated our birthdays and didn't know when our birthdays were. When I was aged around ten or eleven years, a teacher by the name of Mrs Hennessy said happy birthday to me, but I didn't even know it was my birthday.

18. Sometimes we were sent out on holidays with families, but they were strangers and I never felt part of the family. I knew I was the odd one out. Sometimes I felt as if I was being used as a skivvy by the family I was sent out to stay with. I was sent out to stay with a lady called [REDACTED] who made me eat bread with mould on it. I was sent to one lovely family in Dublin, the [REDACTED] for three years in a row, at summer time and at Christmas. It broke my heart every time I had to come back to the home. They were the first normal family I had seen. On occasions they also took [REDACTED] out at the same time as me, but I didn't like that because I was used to getting all the attention.
19. The nuns seemed to know in advance when people were coming to see the home, and then we could always tell. Suddenly a lot of dolls would appear, and then there would be a lot of people walking around. As soon as the people left, the dolls would disappear again. The people never asked us anything. I remember a TV crew coming up one time to do a documentary, and I was pictured standing on the steps with a doll in my arms. I think I was aged eleven years at the time. I remember watching the documentary whilst I was out on a foster placement with the [REDACTED] family. I was given the doll to hold whilst the filming was going on. I had never seen it before, and never saw it again afterwards. Other than these times, we weren't even allowed a teddy bear. If a child came into the home with a toy, it was taken off them. The nuns seemed to enjoy being cruel.
20. Every time a nun passed away, all of the girls were made to kiss her body. I dreaded it when I heard that a nun had died and the smell of the bodies made me feel sick. I remember one nun in particular who passed away, Sister

Anthony Russell

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he stayed for about six months. [REDACTED] wasn't taken into care because he would have been about eighteen. He went to live with his paternal granny.

4. The intention was that I would be put into Nazareth Lodge, but apparently I refused to leave [HIA 175] so agreement was reached that I would stay in Nazareth House.
5. I was in the same group as [HIA 175] I slept with the rest of the girls in the dormitory. I would have wet the bed a lot. Sometimes I would wake up with the nun hitting me because she knew I had wet the bed. I was made to stand out in the hallway with a wet sheet over my head. If she could, [HIA 175] would try to hide the sheets and change them before the nuns found out that I had wet the bed.
6. I was made to bath with the older girls because there were no separate facilities for boys. We were all put in the same bath at the same time. The nuns used to put a bowl over my head to cut my hair.
7. I remember that I never liked butter, probably because we didn't have butter when I lived with my mother and I wasn't used to it. They would plaster the food with it. I hated vegetables because we were forced to eat them. We weren't allowed to leave the table until we had finished everything that was in front of us.
8. The nuns gave us hidings for nothing. There are very few good memories that I have of my time in Nazareth House. I don't remember going to school.
9. Some of the older girls used to sexually abuse me. This would have taken place when I was aged between eight and eleven years, and they would have been in their mid teens. They made me climb up their nightdress and touch them intimately. It happened in the dormitory, and there would have been a few girls present at the time.
10. Somebody from Social Services would take us out to buy clothes and whatever else we needed, but as soon as we went back into the home, the

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stuff we were bought was taken off us and was never seen again. HIA 175 said that she tried to tell the Social Workers what was happening to us, but they still took us back to the home. I think that HIA 175 eventually went to the Good Shepherd Convent to work.

Foster placement

11. In or around the summer of 1972, I was being fostered out from Nazareth House and went to a family in [REDACTED] I can't remember their names. They were brutal. They had an outside toilet and an inside toilet, but I wasn't allowed to use the inside toilet. I had to use the outside toilet or they would put a bowl under my bed at night. I got beatings for nothing. They had their own children, who were allowed to treat me bad as well. I remember playing with a family called the [REDACTED]

Nazareth Lodge, 3rd September 1971 – 11th August 1972

12. After my foster placement I was returned to Nazareth Lodge. The woman in charge of us there was good. We stayed in one big dormitory. There was a lot of fighting between the boys, so we had to be able to look after ourselves. I remember us all playing outside in a big field.

13. I remember trying to run away a couple of times. On one occasion I ran away with two other boys. We ended up at the family home of one of the boys, and were returned to Nazareth Lodge. When we got back the nuns removed the wire from a net curtain, and beat us with it.

Foster placement, 11th August 1972 - 1979

14. I was told that I would be fostered out to the same family in [REDACTED] I cried and said I wasn't going to go, and I ended up going out to [REDACTED] instead, and was fostered by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] They had four sons of their own, and they had also adopted a girl, [REDACTED] when she was a baby. They were strict but good people. That's when my life changed. I got

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19. I went to school on site at Nazareth House and I recall being taught by SR 31 and SR 31 taught the more advanced pupils and SR 134 taught the more remedial pupils. We used to be sent out of class to do cleaning jobs around the home but we always went back to the class and were not away for a long time. In general I found the education to be good and I passed the Eleven Plus.
20. We used to go to my Aunt and Uncle's house in for holidays. I remember my Auntie leaving NHB 63 and me back to Nazareth House. We got off at the bus stop and my Auntie crossed the road to rush back for the next train. I just stood on the pavement crying and crying as I wanted to go back with my Auntie. A lady stopped with me as she thought I was crying because I couldn't cross the road. My Auntie gave in and took me back home with her. NHB 63 went back to Nazareth House and had to tell the nuns I could not return as I was ill. I think I got to stay an extra week with my Auntie. I do not know how my Auntie did not know something was wrong in the home when I did not want to go back but she never asked and I never told her. We also used to go there at Christmas, Easter and for summer holidays. If we came back with any presents the nuns would take them away from us. I remember my Auntie making me clothes which were taken off me by the nuns as soon as I returned to Nazareth House. We had nothing we could call our own. The only other time I remember staying away from the home is when NHB 63 and I spent a week with a family in Newry.
21. At Christmas time a man called NHB 102 who was a handyman at the home dressed up as Santa and we got presents of second hand things that people had donated. I received an umbrella with holes in it once.
22. A doctor would come occasionally but the nuns would decide who saw him. I think his name was Dr Hunter. I do not ever remember seeing the doctor while I was there. I remember getting an injection in my arm from a nurse once. I remember going to the dentist.

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18. I recall that one day my sister came and brought HIA 368 and I to Newcastle. We went to a football game and she had entered my name in a competition. This man arrived at the home with the prize and it was a signed ball with the Down team signatures on it, I was presented with it but I never got to see the ball again and I don't know where it went.
19. One day my mum took us on a day trip to Newcastle and we were so excited. We were away all day and when we got back we were about half an hour late. SR 31 was waiting on us and when mum left she hit me and HIA 368 I think I was about fourteen at that stage. I always told my mum what was happening to us but I would tell her not to say anything for fear of the repercussions.
20. In the home HIA 368 and I used to be sent to a family in Rostrevor on holidays. I remember it because the man was disabled and had a wee blue disability car that only held one person. They used to make us eat porridge both in the morning and at night. HIA 368 didn't like porridge. I remember one morning the woman was making HIA 368 eat the porridge, which was the same bowl that he hadn't eaten over the previous few days and I had enough, I got him by the hand and told her he is not eating your porridge and we are going. We took off through the fields and they were shouting at us. They called the welfare and they came down. I told them that we were not staying as HIA 368 didn't like porridge and he was not eating it. I was always protecting him and I think that came from our family situation and carried right through into the home. We were brought back to Nazareth House.

St Joseph's Baby Home

21. When I was fifteen I left school and went to work in St Joseph's baby home. I am not sure how long I actually spent there. I was in the toddler section where we had to get the toddlers up out of bed, put them onto potties. I had some training from Nurse [REDACTED] on one occasion. It was in order to deal with one particular little boy. He had a medical condition and when he had a dirty bum something came down his back passage. We would have to lift him off the potty, put him on the worktop beside the sink and make sure our hands

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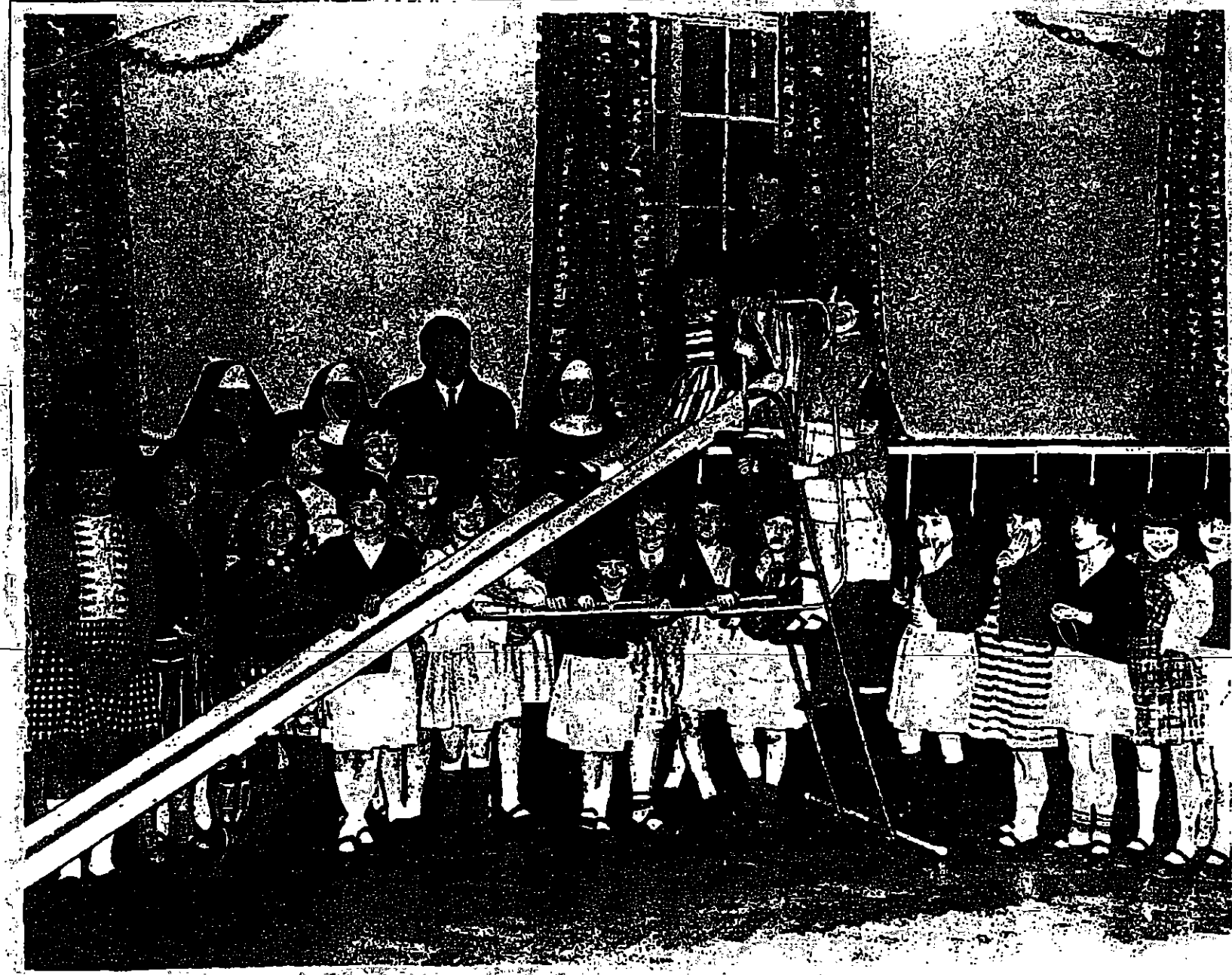
on you that stung to death; I think it was iodine. That was their answer to everything.

25. Whenever benefactors used to visit the home the nuns would warn us to be on our best behaviour. We had to do silly dances for them and act like poor little orphans with our smiles painted on. I'd like to know where the money went. [REDACTED] the amount of people who told me they had donated money, clothes and toys to the home was shocking. We never saw any of it. There is a photograph of us children standing in front of a slide with a benefactor but that was just a performance for him. That was a slide that was donated and we never saw it again. All we had to play with was small navy dusty beanbags.

26. One day out of the blue when I was almost eleven I was told I had to leave Nazareth House. At that stage my father had a house in [REDACTED] and my sister [REDACTED] HIA 103 was out living with him. I was told to go just the way I stood – no suitcase, no belongings, no money, and no goodbyes. I was just left to walk the whole way there by myself. To me this was a further form of rejection after believing I had been disowned by my mother. Years later when I met my mother she told me she had come to the home numerous times to try to get me out but the nuns wouldn't let her. They closed the door on her. It meant more to the nuns to have beds filled. I often wonder if things would be different if they had let me go with my mother. Before I walked out the back wooden gate, I dared to go into the sewing room and ask if I could have a dress. They looked at me in disbelief and grudgingly gave me an old dress I used to wear on outings – it was pink and white check. I left Nazareth House on 18th October 1967 and went to live with my father.

Life after care

27. When I landed on my father's doorstep I could tell from his expression that I was the last person he wanted to see. My brothers and sister had been out with him a couple of years at that stage. The last thing he needed was another mouth to feed. He was too proud to ask for assistance.



She mentioned a recent incident at her church group. One of the leaders has a similar accent to one of the nuns who abused her, "I can't get it out of my mind".

HIA 43 [REDACTED] recalled one of the nuns, [REDACTED] beating her with her with a strap or stick or a bunch of keys. Recently a friend happened to squeeze her wrist innocently. [REDACTED] had a sudden recollection of the nun pressing her nails into her skin on the wrist in an attempt to hurt her when a child.

She recalled a nun [REDACTED] "grabbing my hair and pulling my ears, it was painful and she pulled my hair out".

[REDACTED] recalled having her hair washed in very hot water. She could be put in a bath of cold water often after other children and the water had disinfectant in it. It caused stinging to her eyes and stinging around her genitalia. She was often scrubbed with a brush in and around her genitalia and it was painful.

HIA 43 [REDACTED] recalled being left outside with inadequate clothing in cold weather.

[REDACTED] recalls [REDACTED] teaching when she was in the children's home. She remembers trying to read an old book. She had a thirst for knowledge.

She left the children's home at the age of 11.

Secondary education was at St Monica's school in Ravenshill. She was put in a special class for disturbed delinquents. "We were labelled. Everybody knew where I came from, I had a great sense of shame, I felt inadequate. I pretended not to know other girls from the home to disguise my past, I have awful guilt" (about rejecting a fellow resident at the home).

[REDACTED] recalled blushing terribly.

[REDACTED] recalled having her hair cut with black scissors, "it made a mess, they deliberately cut the girls with nice hair, they tried to sell the hair, it was a business. Our clothes and toys were taken sold at jamborees to raise money for the poor sisters of Nazareth".

[REDACTED] recalls being at a hair dresser. When scissors touched her neck she suddenly flinched and felt anxious with memories of her hair being cut in the home and she was screaming.

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had no power to take us out of the home. I made my First Communion in the home along with my sister [REDACTED]. That was a good day because [REDACTED] and I got out together with my aunt [REDACTED]. We were given money by a neighbour in the street and we had big plans to bring back something for the girls in the home but as soon as we walked through the door it was taken off us.

17. I was very close to [REDACTED]; we were Irish twins – we were the same age for a couple of days in the year. She died of leukaemia in June 1968. We weren't in Nazareth House at the time, we were back at home. It was actually me who brought [REDACTED] to the doctor. He told me to bring her to the hospital so I brought her up to the Royal. The doctor there came out and told me to go home and tell my mother and father to come up as soon as they could. I never saw [REDACTED] again after that – I wasn't allowed to visit her in hospital. I brought her to the hospital on 24th May and she died on 28th June. One day I was talking to her and the next nothing. I wasn't even allowed to go to her funeral. I didn't really accept that [REDACTED] was dead until 1993.

18. All the girls were taken from the family home after that and we were put into foster care with a family in Turf Lodge. [REDACTED] stayed at home as she was only a baby. I don't know how long we were there. I hated the foster home because they treated us so differently to their own children. We were brought home again and the sexual abuse continued. I couldn't take any more of it so I ran away. I tried to find the foster home but I couldn't. I ended up sleeping on the doorstep of my friend's house and her mother found me the next morning. She contacted Social Services and I was brought to the Good Shepherd.

Good Shepherd, Belfast (18th June 1971 – 14th March 1974)

19. Good Shepherd wasn't as severe as Nazareth House. The people I remember from Good Shepherd are [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I asked [REDACTED] once why I was in Good Shepherd and why none of my family visited me. She told me it was because I was a bold girl and I believed that. I used to go out to my [REDACTED] house on a

5. With regard to paragraph 8, we are aware of allegations that the children's underwear would have been checked; however we do not accept that this was a common practice.
6. With regard to paragraph 9, the children would not have been given extensive chores to do before school but may have assisted in clearing and setting the table for the next meal. The Congregation has accepted that the children were given chores to do within the home; however these chores were not excessive. It is difficult to see that disputes would not arise in a setting where many children of different ages are together. We are pleased that [REDACTED] was treated well by the older girls.

7. With regard to paragraphs 10 - 13, [REDACTED] states that she was put in the drier however the Congregation refutes that any Sister would have done such a thing to a child. The physical chastisement discussed by [REDACTED] is not accepted by the Congregation as a tolerable approach in dealing with children. With regret, the Sisters believe that, on occasion, the policy of 'no physical punishment' was not adhered to.
8. With regard to paragraph 14, the food was always the best standard we could provide. In the interests of the child, the Sisters would encourage them to eat the meals provided as there may not have been another option; however we cannot accept that the children would be force fed by the Sisters.
9. With regard to paragraph 16, the Sister in charge of the children would bring them to the visitor's room but would not have stayed with them during the visit. We are pleased that [REDACTED] has such fond memories of her First Communion; however we do not accept that their communion money was taken from them except perhaps to keep it safe.
10. With regard to paragraph 17, the Congregation offer [REDACTED] sincere condolences on the loss of her sister [REDACTED] and cannot understand why she was unable to attend her funeral.
11. With regard to paragraph 18, the same checks and balances were not in place as in today's society, the Sisters would try to ensure that foster families who were responsible for the children were pleasant and good-natured people. We apologise if [REDACTED] believes she was not cared for correctly or treated the same as the other children.

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because he was very vicious. Everyone was terrified of him. He never hit me but he shouted and I saw him hit others by punching and kicking them.

33. I was abused by [REDACTED] He was an American and he died on 1st January 1970 from a blood clot at the home. He got me in a lock with his hands and he did it a couple of times.
34. I was involved in communal masturbation with boys of all ages in Rubane. I didn't know any better. I thought it was a normal thing to do. It seemed that everyone was doing it and it became a regular thing. It happened all over the premises from the farm, in the fields, the woods and the dormitories. It was mutually acceptable behaviour and went on throughout my time in Rubane.
35. Two boys called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were both sent to Rubane from Scotland. [REDACTED] was very sexually active and engaged in mutual sexual relations with other boys.
36. In Rubane there was a shop where we could spend our pocket money which we received from the Brothers every Sunday. We got twenty or twenty five pence a week for pocket money. The shop sold cigarettes and the Brothers sold them to us. All my money was spent on cigarettes. I would then sell the cigarettes to the other boys for five pence each. There was even a designated smoking area which was the cinema room in one of the outbuildings on the farm. You weren't allowed to smoke in the house, chalet's or school. Everyone smoked. The Brother's were selling cigarettes to children and that's why most of us smoke today. It wasn't right.
37. [REDACTED] was the only Brother that ever gave me a bad beating. There was a boy called [REDACTED] who had just turned thirteen. He was sent under a court order to Rubane. He asked me where he could go to smoke and I said he could go to the toilets upstairs. I showed him where to go and we were both in a cubicle smoking when the toilet door was kicked in by [REDACTED] Brother [REDACTED] grabbed me by the hair and said 'he's only in the place and you're at him'. I asked him what he was talking about and he grabbed me by the hair and

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10. I recall as a very young child in the infant wing being singled out and humiliated for having soiled underwear. I came back to the infants' wing late one evening after being out with my father and realised my pants were soiled. Out of sheer fear and panic, I hid my pants under another child's bed but I didn't realise my number was sewn into the pants so the next morning it all began again. I was trailed out in front of all the other children and made a laugh of and degraded. It was so humiliating.
11. My father tried to come visit us when he could but he lost his house and had a breakdown. There was a big gap in his visits because he had nowhere to take us as he was in lodgings himself. Even when he did visit and he'd try to give me an orange or a sweet, [SR 31] deliberately wouldn't let me out to see him. He would hang over the wall at the Holy Rosary Church to try to get my attention and [SR 31] would stand there and laugh at me. During some holiday periods, my father would take my siblings and me down to my granny's cottage in the country. She hadn't much but they were the happiest times of my life. It was heartbreaking having to go back to Nazareth House; we would all be screaming, wailing and crying. It was worse for me mentally having to go back.
12. When I came back into the home the nuns never checked that everything was alright while you were out. They should have checked where children were going and who was going to be there. They never gave you a once over or asked if you were ok. They should have detected from my behaviour that something was wrong. I couldn't have talked to the nuns anyway because you were constantly being shunned and shushed in there.
13. I remember my father buying me a yellow jumper with a teddy bear on it when I was a little girl but it was taken off me and I never saw it again. This was incredibly cruel as it was the only reminder I had that somebody cared for me. This happened on numerous occasions. Personal items were taken away from me and I wasn't allowed to look at photos of my sister and brothers. At Christmas we would go to parties but any toys or presents we got were whisked away. The only thing we would be allowed to keep was the odd

1 Q. -- discussion with these people?

2 **A. Yes, and various discussions with people in country**
3 **towns and villages.**

4 Q. You give a particular item in paragraph 13 of your
5 statement at 712 that your dad gave you that you
6 remember being taken away that you found very difficult
7 and that was a yellow jumper with a teddy bear on it --
8 if we just scroll down a bit further -- thank you --
9 that was taken off you and you never saw it again.

10 **A. Uh-huh.**

11 Q. Was any explanation given to you as to why it was being
12 taken away?

13 **A. No, no. I think it was in a side locker at one stage,**
14 **you know. Maybe -- that memory goes that I think it was**
15 **actually just taken off me and I remember maybe the next**
16 **day it disappearing and I tried -- I know I cried a lot**
17 **looking for it and I never seen it again, though, and**
18 **also photographs were taken, photographs of my family,**
19 **my brothers and sisters.**

20 Q. That's another item that you mentioned to me when we
21 were speaking earlier --

22 **A. Yes.**

23 Q. -- that you had photographs of your family --

24 **A. Yes.**

25 Q. -- and those -- do you remember who took those away?

1 **A. They did. They were in my possession one minute and**
2 **I know my father had given me them, you know, just as**
3 **a keepsake and then they are just taken off you. So ...**

4 Q. Was that a nun did that?

5 **A. Oh, that would be the nuns, yes, absolutely.**

6 Q. The Sisters have said to the Inquiry that -- and this is
7 in paragraph 9 of the replying statement, 2098 -- that
8 they don't accept that toys were and items were
9 confiscated from children, and I assume they will
10 suggest to us that they didn't take children's items and
11 then sell them at jamborees or anywhere else, but your
12 experience was that things were taken from you --

13 **A. Absolutely.**

14 Q. -- and you didn't get them back.

15 **A. Absolutely. Sure, they took them at Christmas time.**
16 **You got something maybe at Christmas and they all**
17 **disappeared that night. That's something maybe was in**
18 **your locker there, just like the jumper or your**
19 **photographs, and they were away in the middle --**
20 **spirited off in the middle of the night, Christmas.**

21 Q. Those are particular memories you have of them doing
22 this activity.

23 **A. Absolutely.**

24 Q. Was it ever explained to you -- perhaps there was some
25 reason for it, but was it ever explained to you what

1 that reason was?

2 **A.** No, nothing was explained to you, because nobody ever
3 spoke to you. The only time we got spoken to was spoken
4 down to, shouted at. Nobody wanted to talk to us. You
5 know, you were told not to -- keep your mouth shut and
6 don't each speak. You know, I'm lucky I'm talking now.
7 You know what I mean? I don't know how we've got on in
8 life, but it took me to educate myself to be able to
9 speak now, and it's only recently I've been speaking up
10 for myself, because I had a life then that I didn't
11 speak at all to people. I isolated myself when I got
12 out there. Then I was told I spoke gibberish, you know.
13 So there you go. Sorry.

14 **Q.** It's all right. In paragraph 11 of your statement at
15 712 you speak of an occasion whenever your dad would
16 come to visit you and there was then a gap in his
17 visits. On one occasion SR31 deliberately wouldn't let
18 him visit you. How did you come to know that?

19 **A.** Well, she used to, as I said earlier, deliberately taunt
20 me, and I could see her even laughing through the veil
21 or that white thing on her head and chin, and that's all
22 I can see, them laughing eyes, you know, deliberately
23 not letting you out and -- you know, and then other ones
24 in the playground would have said, "Your father's
25 ..." -- he would have tried to put sweets over the wall

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remedial class. I went to St. Monica's Secondary School on the Ravenhill Road. On my first day of secondary school I woke up and there was a brown sticky mess on my sheets. I had no idea what it was; I thought I had soiled myself. I was terrified of being called 'messy bum'. I hid the sheets under the mattress and got dressed for school as normal. On the way to school a woman tapped me on the shoulder and asked if I wanted to come in to her house for a cup of tea. I said no as I was late for school but she insisted. She said "you've had an accident dear" – I was bleeding all down my leg on to my white socks. I had no idea what it was; I thought I was injured. This woman and her husband took me back to the convent then and I was put into the isolation room and given a book to read called 'My Dear Daughter'. I couldn't understand all the big words in it like menstruation.

18. We used to be sent out to people during the school holidays and I was taken out by a family called the [REDACTED] outside Lurgan. I spent the whole summer picking peas and potatoes but I enjoyed it. It was hard work but I liked being out in the sunshine. I went there every summer for three or four years. Apparently the [REDACTED] wanted to adopt me. I found this out later when I was almost 16. I went to visit the [REDACTED] to thank them for taking me out and [REDACTED] told me they had wanted to adopt me but I wouldn't go without my sister.

19. I remember adoption days in the home. Every Sunday, people from outside in fancy clothes would come round the garden, look at all the children and point certain children out. If you were pointed out the nun told you to go wash your face and go up to the parlour. I remember seeing the fruit in the parlour; we never got fruit in the home except an orange at Christmas. There were various efforts made to adopt me out. I would be brought up to the parlour with my sister [REDACTED] and these people would sit there saying they had a television and they wanted us to come live with them. It was a scary thought for me to go somewhere with people I didn't know and even though the home was bad, I didn't know any different. I preferred the home to going somewhere different that could be even worse. Some of the people scared me. There was one woman with a fox head on her fur coat and I remember thinking if she did

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that to a fox what would she do to me. When I came out of the room I would be hit on the head by [SR 134] with a bunch of keys and a crucifix because I would never agree to go away.

20. [REDACTED] and I went out to stay with a woman called [REDACTED] in Newry whose brother was a monk called [REDACTED]. He wore a long brown robe and [REDACTED] used to take us to visit him in the monastery. She would then leave us with him and go off somewhere. We used to go walking in the fields with him hand in hand. [REDACTED] says he used to feel my leg but I don't remember that. I don't know if he touched me anywhere else. As a child starved of love and affection I doubt I'd have even known if I was being abused. Apparently it was in the papers that [REDACTED] was convicted of paedophilia.
21. Then I went out to a family called [REDACTED] on [REDACTED]. They had eighteen children – the mother was very devout and didn't believe in contraception. They were lovely people. I went there for about three or four years and it was a great experience for me. It was an escape from life in the home.
22. When I was out with the [REDACTED] during holidays, the mother used to send me and her daughter [REDACTED] to the shop. She would give us empty glass coke bottles to take back so I knew these bottles were of value. About a year later when I was back in the home, there were workmen in Nazareth House and they left a few coke bottles behind. I said to my friend [REDACTED] that if we took those bottles to the shop we could get sweets for them. We climbed over the wall and brought the bottles to a post office. We got loads of penny sweets and chews and we couldn't wait to bring them back to share with the girls. As we were coming over the wall in Nazareth House, [SR 134] was waiting for us. She marched us up the fire escape, got all the children around us and shaved our heads. While she was doing this, she made us repeat "I am guilty of greed and gluttony". I was about ten years old at the time and it was a traumatic thing for me to go around with a bald head.