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married for a second time and I am in contact with her second husband and I have met one of my half brothers.

**St Joseph's Babies' Home, Nazareth House (8<sup>th</sup> Aug 1963 – 30<sup>th</sup> June 1967)**

4. The first memory I have in the Nursery is just crying. I had a terrible tendency to rock back and forth and cry at night. The first clear incident I remember was being in a small room with one other young lad. I think there may have been other children in the room but I'm not sure. A nun wearing all white sat behind a glass partition; I remember her knocking on the glass and then coming in to shout at me. This happened almost every night. I remember at the time being afraid. I don't ever remember being held by anybody, it never happened.
5. On most Sundays we were dressed up and lined up for people to come look and take us out for the day if they chose us. I was chosen once with a young man called [REDACTED]. We were taken to a caravan and we were playing ball and I burned myself so the young couple panicked and we ended up in Casualty. I didn't seem to get taken out after that.
6. There was a member of staff in the home called [REDACTED]. She was kind to me and I was very attached to her. She used to take me and another young man, [REDACTED] to visit her older brother and his wife. [REDACTED] was mixed race as well and we were very close.
7. I remember having all my hair shaved off because I had nits and having oil put on.  
I
8. I remember being called [REDACTED]. I believe this was because I am mixed race. My Foster Mother told me that when she went to the home to finalise my foster placement she was told by a Nun not to pick me, to pick a nice blond haired, blue eyed child instead. My Foster Mother, [REDACTED] was a lovely woman, a great woman. She told the Nun that she wanted me even though the Nun told her I was wild.

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10. I was terrified of SR 31. No matter what you said or did you got hit so it got to the point where I was so subdued I never said anything. The only time I spoke up was when she hit my younger sister. On one occasion Sister SR 31 was coming down the stairs and was in front of her. SR 31 grabbed by the scruff of the neck and I said "don't hit my wee sister". She let go then and grabbed me. She grabbed me and slapped me on the head, telling me not to answer back. She dragged me to the dryer then and threw me in. The dryers had a line of big doors and when you pulled out the door there were racks inside with steel bars to hold sheets. There was a gap big enough for a child to fit. SR 31 slid the door back and left me there. It was pitch black and I couldn't move. I don't know how long I was there but I was afraid to come out. I wet myself in there. When I eventually did come out I realised dinner was over. SR 31 came over and started hitting me saying not to answer her back. She put me back into the dryer and the heat in there was unbearable.
11. Anything that you said or did was an excuse to hit you. If you talked about your family the nuns would say "sure nobody loves you". I loved my granny but I soon learned to stop talking about her. The nuns used to send us out with different people every Sunday. I went out with a policewoman and her husband and they were quite well-off. They would give me lots of stuff coming back like sweets or a teddy bear but as soon as they left everything was taken from you. It was never explained to you that you couldn't have something because the other children didn't have anything.
12. SR 134 beat me as well. I remember one occasion I was playing in the leaves outside and SR 134 shouted something down at me. I didn't realise she was shouting at me. She came down and started thumping me over the head with her keys. This was a big bunch of keys with about fifteen or twenty keys on it. One of the girls told me afterwards that SR 134 didn't like the sound of leaves crunching but I had no idea. The nuns would always hit you in the temple with their keys or their knuckle; just whatever was handy. You don't bruise on the temple which is why they hit us there but it was very sensitive.

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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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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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could do I couldn't go near her. I got to see my brothers maybe once or twice a year in the summer. We would walk down to the Lodge the boys never wore shoes and kicked football with their bare feet.

25. Some of the priests were equally as bad as the nuns but there was an exception. There were two brothers [REDACTED] NHB 18 and his brother [REDACTED] NHB 18 was the only one that really cared about us. He always brought us in a present when he knew it was our birthday. He was always for the children and the nuns did not like that. If he thought one of the nuns was going to use a cane he would have grabbed their arm to stop them.

26. At the age of fourteen they sent me to St John of God in Newry I think it was a hospital, I never unpacked my case and when they were all at mass the next morning I lifted my case and headed for the train station, nobody ever looked for me. I headed back to Belfast and to [REDACTED] NHB 18 house because I knew he lived near the convent in [REDACTED]. He phoned another girl and said that I was with him and he got me a job.

27. I then started working for [REDACTED] who was the Presbyterian Minister on [REDACTED]. His wife was a doctor and I answered the phone and tidied up for her. I couldn't have asked for nicer people. They treated me like their daughter the wife made me clothes and gave me money to get a pair of shoes from McIlroy's shop on the Ormeau Road. On a Holy day of obligation [REDACTED] would drive me to Holy Rosary and pick me up again. The Reverend then got moved to [REDACTED]. I had some friends in Belfast so I didn't want to move. That family were so good to me they were genuinely good people.

28. After the Reverend left I went down to [REDACTED] to my father but he was a drunk and when he got drunk he would have touched us, we were not daughters to him.

29. At that stage I discovered my mother was living in [REDACTED] and I made contact but she was never great. I met my husband in [REDACTED].

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27. On the day that I was leaving, I didn't even know. I would have been about fifteen years of age. The nuns told me out of the blue that I was going and that was that. They gave me a suitcase with a set of clothes, nothing much. I wasn't even allowed an opportunity to say goodbye to my little sisters. I was just told to get in the car. [SR 31] took me with a lady called [NHB 24] [NHB 24] who came in from outside the home to help [SR 31] I was just left at my mother's door and I was given a black book for one of my parents to sign to say that I had been received home.

### Life after care

28. On leaving the home I felt lost. After living a military lifestyle for eleven years, and then simply being put out of the home, I didn't know where to turn. Everything was strange. It was awful. I didn't know how to get a bus, or ask for anything in a shop. They didn't prepare us for the outside world at all.

29. I went back home to live with my parents. They were living on the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] but their home was really overcrowded. When I left the home [HIA 388] was already out of Nazareth Lodge but he was a stranger to me. [REDACTED] came out of Nazareth Lodge about a year after I came home.

30. I got a job in a sack factory. Any jobs I got were generally cleaning ones. I didn't have any qualifications and I didn't know how to do anything else. At one stage I wanted to be a nun, but I wasn't long forgetting about that idea. I think it was because their life seemed nice compared to ours. I then started to work with old people and I retired about ten years ago as I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia.

31. I have three children, two sons and a daughter. My husband left me when my youngest was only a baby so I reared them all by myself. I've always stayed on my own since. I'm used to being on my own. I have difficulties mixing with people of my own age group.

32. I never spoke about the home, and my husband didn't even know I was in a convent until it slipped out. I didn't realise that my childhood wasn't normal

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allowed to speak if spoken to. We had to have silence at meals, and anybody caught talking would have been hit.

19. I remember being out to stay with families at holiday times. The first time I went, along with HIA 327 to the [REDACTED] family in Portadown and they were alright. They didn't have any electricity and I remember getting bathed in a tin bath in the living room. The husband would have been in the same room reading his newspaper, and I wasn't used to that. I then went out to a family on the Malone Road, but I didn't feel comfortable there. One Christmas I went to the [REDACTED] family in Dublin. They were a lovely homely family. On another occasion I went to Ballycastle but I refused to stay and they had to bring me back to Nazareth House. It upset me having to go out to stay with strangers. It wasn't because I loved Nazareth House, but because I wasn't used to being part of a family. I always felt that I didn't fit in. We only stayed for two weeks so there was no chance to settle in, and I was always sent to a different family so I could never get used to them. We weren't given any choice about holidays. We were told that we were going out and that was that.

20. My sister HIA 171 was always running away. I went with her sometimes but we would just end up walking the streets. On one occasion we stopped at a house because we were thirsty. The people must have realised that we had run away, and the police arrived to take us back to Nazareth House. They told us that the nuns would be glad to see us. The nuns waited until the police left and then SR 195 beat us the whole way back down to the children's part, for bringing the police to the door. We got punished again the next morning by SR 31

21. I looked after my sister HIA 171 even though she was older than me. People always say I am a mother hen. I always felt that I had to look after the others even though they were older. When I left the home at fifteen years, HIA 327 and HIA 329 would still have been there, but I wasn't allowed back to visit them. We just knew as soon as we left the home, that we weren't welcome back. When HIA 171 left, I didn't see her again until I left the home, a full eighteen months. It was very cruel.

had never heard that word before and I did not know why she was saying it. Nuns never even said things like that; she hated me all my life, not just me she also put down my relations. Years later I have thought about why she said this, was she afraid and I think she thought that she had pushed me too far. The home was changing a woman called [REDACTED] NHB24 [REDACTED] had started to work there. She was a wee bit like the nuns.

22. There was a woman who came up from the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. She was a [REDACTED]. She wanted someone to clean and look after her child. I think that is was more cleaning. She took me out and showed me where she lived on the [REDACTED] or somewhere. The nuns must have given me a reference. She had me taking down curtains and washing. I don't mind cleaning but I think that she was shoving it on. I also had to mind her baby. I did not know much about babies but I knew how to love him. I became very attached to the child. The cleaning became more extreme and I wasn't getting to bed. Sometimes she was away out and I was left with the child crying. She would come in at all hours. God knows where she was, dances or dinner parties. She would then bang on my door at 6.30 in the morning. I was there two months and I did not know how much I was going to be paid. She would not discuss wages with me. When I got my wages there was £4.00 in it and I thought that maybe there had been a mistake and when I went to her she wanted to know what the problem with this was. I was not scared of people anymore and I stuck up for myself and told her that I was up at seven every morning and that I did not get to bed until midnight some nights. I asked for a decent wage. I was then told that I would not be there long and that was all the money she was willing to give me. I stuck it out for three months as I had then had enough. She then had to advertise for someone and pay them a wage. I didn't know that then. She was just using me until she got someone permanent. I was probably recommended by someone who thought we were good cleaners and would not say anything.

Good Shepherd (1969-07.06.1969)

23. I then was admitted to Good Shepherd as I was underage. This was in Belfast. It was a laundry. I saw old women there who were about ninety and I did not

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cruel to degrade me like that in front of a P7 class when I was sixteen. I remember after I left the home I saw the Nazareth House children down the town and I went over to speak to them but [REDACTED] SR 31 ushered the children away and would not let them speak to me.

25. I do not remember inspectors or social workers visiting the home. There was a doctor visited the home regularly to do check-ups on us all. I used to suffer badly with boils in my ears. I remember one of the nuns used to try to burst them. The boils led to me having a perforated ear drum. I suffered terrible earache and headaches from a young age. I used to cry under the bedclothes at night because I knew there was nobody to turn to for comfort or help.

26. I remember a girl called [REDACTED] who would complain of headaches and even walked into the wall on occasions. The nuns did not listen to her and even scolded her for acting silly. [REDACTED] was eventually hospitalised and it was discovered that she had a brain tumour. I remember being made to get out of bed to say the rosary while she was in hospital. Thankfully, she recovered but her mobility and eyesight were left permanently affected. She returned to the home but I never saw her as she was taken to another part.

27. I remember the day I left I was told to go to the sewing room. [REDACTED] SR 122 was there. She could never remember anyone's name so she called everyone "girly". There was a suitcase and she told me to take it to the parlour. I went to the parlour and there was a lady called [REDACTED] waiting for me. Mrs [REDACTED] used to do messages for the nuns.

### Life After Care

28. [REDACTED] took me to a family who lived outside [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I was their "skivvy". I got up every morning at five o'clock and worked all day until I went to bed at ten o'clock. I was not prepared in any way for the outside world. No one ever came to see how I was. I was working so hard that my menstrual cycle stopped. I went to the doctor and he asked me if I was pregnant. I did not know what he was talking about.



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and I got on with it. I worked in the old people's part of the home with the old ladies. I used to be on duty on my own from 7-9pm two nights a week and I was terrified. I was only fifteen with no experience. I was petrified of the old ladies dying and I used to lock myself in the bathroom so I wouldn't have to touch them or lay them out. They used to drag me out of the bathroom and make me lay out the dead bodies.

22. One day out of the blue the nuns said I couldn't stay in Nazareth House forever and they had written to my mother in England. They had my ticket booked and told me I would be leaving in two or three days. I left the home in 1967 and I went over to my mother in England.

#### Life after care

23. When I first arrived in England, I didn't even stay with my mother. She got me a job as a nanny for three boys in [REDACTED] I worked there for about six months doing the cooking, cleaning and looking after the children. I never got paid any wages. After that I worked in a shop which I loved but I couldn't work out the price per inch of curtains because my Maths was so poor. I left the job rather than admitting I couldn't measure the curtains.
24. My mother is still alive. She is ninety now. I grudgingly go to see every couple of weeks but we are not close. I can't help but resent her for the life I have had. She has never apologised nor explained. I do not have a close relationship with my brother [REDACTED] We acknowledge each other but we are not close.
25. I have been married twice. I have two children, four stepchildren and lots of grandchildren. My first marriage broke down and I raised the children on my own for about twelve years before I met my second husband. I didn't have a clue about marriage. All we were told by the nuns was not to marry a Protestant. I was that gullible I would have married anyone who showed me a bit of affection. I am still with my second husband but he has dementia and it is very difficult. I love being a mother and I am very protective of my children.

15. With regard to paragraph 17, clothing from outside sources and 'hand me downs' were prevalent within Nazareth House and would also have occurred within the community and familial home. We do not accept that the girls skirts were only washed every six months and jumpers once a fortnight. We do not accept that the girls had two dresses which were changed once a fortnight.
16. With regard to paragraph 18, we do not accept that the Sisters refused to give HIA 316 the parcels sent from her mother.
17. With regard to paragraph 20, the Congregation has accepted that benefactors would have visited the home and this would be an enjoyable experience for both the visitors and the children.
18. With regard to paragraph 21, the children would have been expected to secure employment when they were no longer in full time education. At the age of fifteen, HIA 316 would not have been expected to lay out the dead bodies of the elderly residents.
19. In respect of her statement, the Congregation offer HIA 316 an unreserved and most sincere apology for any treatment she 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 5 January 2014.

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25. I left school when I was fifteen and I worked full-time for the nuns until I was eighteen. I worked in the old people's home and in the kitchen. I never saw any wages; I didn't even know I should be getting paid. The nuns never gave us any encouragement. They just said we were good for nothing; we were only good for scrubbing. They used to threaten us with the Good Shepherd across the road. We were petrified of going there; we knew that was a terrible place. We were told that if we were sent there we would die there. They also threatened us with Muckamore and Purdysburn.

26. We never had birthdays. We were told if it was our birthday but we never received any presents. We never owned anything. At Christmas, some of us were picked to go to parties. We were given a present from Santa and then it was taken away from us. I think that the nuns then gave out these presents on Christmas morning. We were taken to Glenariff forest park on holidays but we had to wash and clean the beds. I remember being very hungry and freezing during these trips.

27. I left Nazareth House on 10<sup>th</sup> May 1968 when I was eighteen. A girl had come up to visit and she said she was going to London so I decided to go with her. I told the nuns I was going to London and they just gave me rosary beads, a mantilla and a Bible. I had a little case with a few pieces of clothing but I lost it at the train station my first day in London.

### Life after care

28. I ended up homeless in London. There was a very anti-Belfast feeling because the Troubles had just started and I couldn't get a place to live. I was homeless for six years, just roaming the streets. I became a professional shoplifter and I got in trouble with the police. I ended up in prison when I was nineteen. I was in [REDACTED] and it was just like being in the home again. I began drinking a lot and taking drugs. I was very low; my head was all over the place. I used to think if the ground was to open up and swallow me up nobody would even know I had been on this earth. I was so alone. I got lots of beatings from men trying to force me into prostitution but I never gave in.

the home unless local benefactors could be found to take the children on trips or at weekends.

14. With regard to paragraph 18, the Congregation accepts that benefactors would have visited the home and this would be an enjoyable experience for both the visitors and the children. We do not believe pretence was given to the benefactors in regards to the care of the children.
15. With regard to paragraph 20, the Congregation apologise that Geraldine did not feel comfortable to ask a Sister for a sanitary towel. We are aware of similar allegations that the girls were not given a sufficient supply of sanitary towels and we regret that any child suffered because of this.
16. With regard to paragraph 21, we do not hold the medical records for [REDACTED] and therefore cannot comment on this.
17. With regard to paragraph 24, we have no record of [REDACTED] running away to Manchester and do not understand how she would have the means to get there.
18. With regard to paragraph 25, the children would be expected to achieve employment when they were no longer in full time education. [REDACTED] would have received payment for working in the elderly home and in the kitchen; however money would have been deducted for her keep.
19. With regard to paragraph 26, the children would have celebrated their birthday but this may not have been to the grand scale in which birthdays are celebrated in today's society. The children would have attended Christmas parties, receiving gifts and presents. These presents were not redistributed on Christmas day; nor were they taken off the children after Christmas. We regret that [REDACTED] does not have fond memories of the trips to Glenarriff Forest Park as many children thoroughly enjoyed themselves.
20. In respect of her statement, the Congregation offer [REDACTED] an unreserved and most sincere apology for any treatment she received by any Sister which fell below the acceptable standard.



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22. My friend **NHB 27** who has since passed away from cancer witnessed **SR 31** beating me on a number of occasions. She was in the same group as me and she gave a statement to my solicitor before she died about the beatings.
23. When I was about fifteen, my mother got in contact with me. She phoned Nazareth House and **SR 31** told me my mother was on the phone. This was a huge shock to me because I thought my parents were dead, I thought I was an orphan. I didn't know what to say because she was like a stranger to me. I could never bring myself to call her 'Mother'. She came to visit me and took me out to her house where she lived with my aunt and my stepbrother. I told her I didn't want to go back there. I called her names for putting me in care. I blamed her for all the things that happened to me but I have since found out she only put me in the home because she had no other option. Maggie McSorley from the Diocese of Down and Connor told me that she didn't want to put me in care but her aunt made her.
24. I don't remember anybody from Welfare ever speaking to us children at Nazareth House. There was a social worker called **NHB 59** and she would come to see the nuns but she never spoke to me. I think she knew what was going on in Nazareth House. She knew what the nuns were doing to us but she never reported it to the police or anything. I never reported the abuse to anyone because I was too frightened. I was terrified of **SR 31**
25. I left secondary school when I was fifteen and I got a job in the bank buildings stitching nurses uniforms and doctors overcoats. I worked there for four years and every week **SR 31** took all my wages off me to pay for my keep in Nazareth House.
26. The beatings lasted up until I was nineteen when I ran away from Nazareth House. I got the train to Wexford because I knew Father **[REDACTED]** from Nazareth House was there. He was the only person I thought would help me but he said I would have to go back to Nazareth House and let the nuns know where I was. I told him about **SR 31** beating me but he didn't want to



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devious. She wanted an excuse to get rid of us older girls so she could mould the younger children.

31. We were absolutely devastated because this was the highlight of our life so we decided we were going to go anyway. The three of us – NHB 22 and me snuck out the fire escape, climbed over the wall and went to the disco. As we were climbing over the wall on the way back, somebody stood on someone's hand and there was a loud scream. All these little lights started to come on and when we got to the bottom of the fire escape SR 18 was standing there with her arms folded. She didn't punish us. She just said "I'm not talking to you but let me tell you this – the three of you will be out of here by the end of the week".

32. SR 18 kept her word and the three of us were out of Nazareth House by the end of the week. We all left on the same day but I never saw the girls again. I left Nazareth House on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1974 when I was sixteen. A social worker called brought me to a hostel with a massive Union Jack on the wall and people with Red Hand of Ulster tattoos. I was terrified to be in a Protestant hostel and I had to lie about my name, my identity and what school I went to. This was the height of the Troubles and I was really scared. I ended up staying in the hostel for three weeks and then I moved in with my sister HIA 63 in

### Life after care

33. I enrolled in College when I left the home but I didn't finish my course. I ended up getting a job as a typist with a civil engineering firm in . A good friend of mine from the home called convinced me to get a job waitressing in the Hotel on in the evenings so I did and we had great fun there together.

34. I was very naive when I came out of Nazareth House. It was a big culture shock for me. I remember the bullets flying overhead and all the talk of the

at Nazareth House by the Sisters. I was not accompanied by the Sisters and would have eaten my breakfast alone. I did not enter the convent proper itself and I did not have any of my meals with the Sisters. I also had my main meals at my home address and I did not at any time eat with the children. The normal day would have involved Mass, breakfast in the parlour and then I would have gone to visit the elderly residents and spent some time just visiting with them, talking to them and generally spending time with them. Those that were seriously ill I anointed and I also brought Holy Communion to some who could not attend Mass and I may also have taken confessions or other sacramental duties with the elderly. That would have been fitted in to my normal day and would not have been unusual for me. I would go home for my lunch and in the afternoon I would have visited former residents of Nazareth who wanted to see me. Many of the girls left and had obtained jobs in domestic service and I may have visited them during the day.

5. In the evenings I had various duties but out of the convent my duties would have involved assisting and helping out at a club in [REDACTED]. That club had been set up by [REDACTED] **NHB 18** [REDACTED] for the former girls. This meant that there was a focal point for the girls after they had finished work or, as in some cases, if they had gone to England or further afield and had returned to Ireland they could have a point of contact to meet up and find some friends. This also allowed the girls to maintain some of the friendships and relationships they had built up in Nazareth House. This was a very worthwhile venture and I was happy to assist in that.
6. I would also have on occasions assisted with visits to Foster Green TB hospital. I was not appointed to Foster Green as a Chaplain in any form but would have gone up to visit in a pastoral capacity to assist the chaplain, Fr Michael Kelly.
7. My religious duties with the Sisters meant that on Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays I would have said the Rosary and celebrated Benediction in the evening. The religious services would also have taken place on a number of feast days during the year. After the Service I would have returned to [REDACTED] before going to the club or to other duties.
8. My memories of the children are fairly limited. I did not spend time directly with the children on many occasions. From my understanding the Sisters would have arranged for the children to get up in the morning, get washed

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. Dr. Cathal Daly lived in [REDACTED] 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,

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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 **[REDACTED]**. 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 **[REDACTED]** 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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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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taken in to a big room with a big shiny table where we were met by **SR 176**  
**SR 176** the Mother Superior.

4. **SR 31** then took us to another room where she put white stuff on our heads that burnt, then she cut our hair in a bowl cut and then I think we were stripped and bathed. We were then taken to our dormitory. We were in the Our Lady's dormitory. It was a big dormitory with thirty or forty girls. **SR 31** was in charge of our group. I think she would have been in her forties. **SR 134** was in charge of the Sacred Heart group and **SR 116** was in charge of the St Anne's group. The three of them also taught at the school. They were all wicked.
5. I think my sister **NHB 69** who was five years younger than me, was placed in the nursery part of Nazareth House when she was a baby. I did not know her or anything about her. I did not know that she was in Nazareth House until one day, shortly after I went in, when I was out playing. There was a gate that separated us from the infants and I was standing beside it when a girl came over to stand on the other side of it. I asked her what her name was and she said **NHB 69** was an unusual name so I knew she was my sister.
6. The three groups had a morning routine which rotated. Our group went to morning Mass one day, another group the next, and the other group the day after that and then it was back to our group. On Mass mornings we got up at about 6am to go to chapel. The other mornings we got up about 6.30am. If we wet the bed we were beaten. I remember being beaten for wetting the bed once by **SR 31** with her keys. Watching other girls being punished for wetting the bed was a common occurrence. They were beaten and on Mass mornings they were made to stand with the wet sheet over their heads until everyone came back from Mass. On non Mass mornings they could have been made to stand there for over an hour. The bed wetter's were made to put their dirty sheets in the laundry and make their beds again with fresh sheets. We then went for breakfast. On our way out from breakfast **SR 116** gave us cod liver oil by grabbing us by the hair pulling our heads back and forcing it into our mouths with a big massive spoon. We then went to school. We had to wash

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during the night and make sure they hadn't wet the bed. We had to have their beds dry so we dried them wherever we could be that us lying on top of them at night. On occasion we had to check for dirty heads if the girls had nits. If that was the case we would have to clean some of their hairs.

20. The older girls bullied us when confessions were on. Once they told me that I had to say "Please father I confess, please father I stole a white dress, please father I gave it back, please father I let a big fart." NHB 34 was hearing confessions and he came out and slapped me, grabbed me by the back of the neck and brought me up the front of the aisle where benediction was being held. The nun's choir was nearly at the altar and they were shaking their fists at me. I knew what I was going to get when we got back to the class room.

21. The girls in the home often didn't have shoes either. I remember it snowing at times and they took our shoes off us and put us out in the snow. They were evil. They said that I would end up being a street walker like my mother. I knew then that they must have known something about my mother. In later life when I got out and met her I discovered that she didn't live that far from the Convent. She told me that she visited on one occasion and she told me the nuns told her not to come back. Whether or not it was true I don't know.

22. Part of my work in the home included caring for the old people in their part of the convent. I quite liked that work.

23. I don't recall inspectors ever visiting the home and the quality of education was very poor. If you were slow you were moved to the back of the class.

24. I only remember him visiting us in the home once that was when he was putting [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] into the home. I remember it because it was Holy Saturday and I must have looked desperately thin but I remember him saying I will never see her again. That was very hard as [REDACTED] was in the baby part of Nazareth House and there was a toilet that we could see out of and there was a big fence round it. [REDACTED] used to cry wanting me but there was nothing I

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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 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.

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10. We had retreats at the home where you couldn't talk for three days. We had to just sit there and read or knit. I was caught talking once and [SR 31] beat me on the hands and made me kneel and pray for three hours. I used to have to pump the organ on weekdays and one morning I fell asleep. Sister [SR 31] pulled me by the hair, beat me and shouted at me to keep my eyes open. My nose used to bleed when I got hit in the head.

11. One night my sister [NHB 65] nose was bleeding. She had a problem with her nose bleeding but this night [SR 31] had hit her and her nose would not stop bleeding. [SR 31] was shouting at me to stop it bleeding but I couldn't and she hit me over the head with a bunch of keys. I used to have to get [SR 31] hot water bottle for her and one night the kettle broke. I went to tell her the kettle was broken and she beat me over the head with the lead of the kettle.

12. I went to school onsite in Nazareth House until I was 11. Then I went to St. Monica's on the Ravenhill Road. The nuns didn't bother with you if you were stupid. I couldn't spell and they would always call me stupid. [SR 31] would hit me on the head with a bunch of keys if I made a spelling mistake.

13. When we got home from school, we got our tea at about 5 o'clock and then we went to bed at 6 or 7 o'clock. Tea would be semolina pudding or a bit of bacon and bread. On Tuesdays we got two cubes of cheese and bread. I always went to bed hungry. My sister [HIA 29] was so hungry she used to eat dog food. The nuns got us a pup once and it was [HIA 29] job to feed it but she was so hungry she ate the dog food. They took the pup off us then because we all got too attached to it.



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8. We had to pray morning, noon and night. We were on our knees first thing in the morning. We prayed before and after meals. It was constant. We couldn't let our minds wander at Mass, because if we slouched, we got a dig in the back to make us straighten up. We had to go to Confession once a week, but we didn't have anything to tell. We were only children and we weren't really sinning, so we just had to make our sins up. The Holy statues were a bit frightening when we were young. I remember having to walk around the statues in the garden, singing, around May time. That might have been quite a nice experience if we weren't being forced to go to Mass every day. There was a big organ in the church, which we had to pump up and down during all of the hymns. We ended up doing it quite a lot because there was Mass every day and there were a lot of hymns so the pumping seemed to go on forever. We would regularly take the lift up to the Church if we were going to clean it. There would sometimes be dead bodies lying in a room, as we got out of the lift. I also remember being made to kiss a dead nun on one occasion. All the girls were in a line and we had to kiss her one by one. I was too small to reach her so somebody lifted me up. Seeing all those dead bodies was quite disturbing for a child. There was a sweet smell from whatever substance they put on the bodies and it would stick in your nose.
9. At bath time, each nun supervised their own group. As soon as one child got out of the bath, the next child got in to the same water. The nuns put Jeyes fluid in the water and we were washed with carbolic soap. If we got the Jeyes fluid in our eyes, it would sting. We just thought this was normal. The water was always cold. As soon as we got out of the water we had to get dried in the corner. It was very military like. We weren't allowed to sit and soak in the water. We had big tin baths and we had to go out to the garden to get our hair washed. I think we only got bathed once a week. I didn't wet the bed, nor did my sisters. Looking back this was a good thing, as the girls who wet the bed were always humiliated. There was one girl, **NHB 54** who wet the bed quite regularly. I remember her being hit by either **SR 134** or Sister **SR 116** **SR 31** was not supervising on this occasion. The nun pushed her the whole way down the room telling her to get to the bathroom. There

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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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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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16. I had no experience of a mother or father. As a child, I just lived each day as it came, however when I got older I started to ask questions about my identity. I didn't know where I belonged. Of course you cannot put this information into two lines. It goes a lot deeper. I would have been around eleven years at the time. I started secondary school, and would have heard the girls talking about their parents. This was my first experience of knowing that we were all born of two parents, so I started to ask questions about my own. **SR 134**

brought me into a room with a huge cupboard, and was able to tell me that I was put up for adoption by my grandparents. She was also able to tell me the real date of my birthday, which I used to think was 17<sup>th</sup> March, because we always celebrated on that date every year. I don't remember celebrating birthdays. I can't remember getting a cake. Maybe we did and I cannot remember.

17. As a senior girl, I tried to look after the younger children in an emotional sense. I tried to do everything for them. I felt as if I was an older sister to them. When they prayed I would tell them to pray for something special. Even after I left, the children would come to my house to seek advice and guidance and I would help them whenever I could and go to meetings with them with the governing bodies. That role has stayed with me throughout my life. I was always a giver. I respect old people, and I always try to look out for those less fortunate than myself.

18. When I was around thirteen years of age, I decided I was going to live my life through music. I used to buy myself LPs or a music book, with pop songs, for sixpenny. The nuns would tell me to pray and I would say, "no, I'll sing my songs". I wanted to interpret life through music, and I think I got my inner strength from music. It was my survival mechanism. Religion was a large part of the culture in Nazareth House and I needed something for myself. I found religion gave me a spiritual aspect to life.

19. At Christmas time, there was an abundance of parties. Mackey's held brilliant parties for us, and we would have got a wee gift set of soaps or powder. There would have been a Christmas tree in the hall, and **[REDACTED]** the

The boys in Nazareth Lodge would all have played in the play area and field behind Nazareth Lodge. This meant older and younger siblings, if boys, would all have been playing in the same place. Many of the families came in together and so would have known each other from before they arrived and so would have mixed. There is also reference to the girls from Nazareth House coming to visit Nazareth Lodge when they would have met their brothers. Over the years, the Sisters were able to accommodate families of different genders and, ultimately, all children were admitted to Nazareth Lodge.

48. Although siblings were separated into different groups within the homes, there was the opportunity for sibling contact during recreational times in the home. Some siblings may not have played together as their preference was to mix with their own age groups. This would not have been due to the influence or instruction of the sisters.

#### **Record keeping**

49. The paucity of detailed records available is a matter of regret to the Sisters. We know some official documents did exist but they are not found in our records or archives. In particular the reference at paragraph 29 of this statement to inspection of the punishment book in 1947 would suggest such a book was maintained but it cannot be located now. There are many reasons for the limited records and we have discussed these in regard to the houses in Derry. Over the years the five houses operated by the Sisters of Nazareth in Northern Ireland have now all gone. Termonbacca was passed to another Congregation, Bishop Street ceased to act as a child care facility with part taken over by the school and the rest remaining with the care of the elderly, Portadown was only open for a short period and both of the Belfast houses were demolished with Nazareth Care Village now open on part of the site of Nazareth Lodge. As a result of this the available storage space for old records diminished and many documents must have been destroyed as the purpose for them to be retained had disappeared. We cannot find any records of destruction and so this is speculation to some degree. It is supported by the stories from Module 1 of documents being burned by a member of staff.
50. We have located some of the punishment books and incident books which have been provided to the Inquiry. We also have a very limited number of the records for

PRIVATE

being in primary three and I couldn't hear what the teacher Mrs Hennesy was saying. It was like being under water and then all of a sudden the noise was extremely loud. I don't remember having the problem on a one to one basis only in the classroom, also around this time **NL 143** talked me back in from standing on the outside of the window ledge which was at the highest level in the convent. I then recall being sent to psychologists and there was one I visited on the **██████████** as I went past the park which I played in close to **██████████** house. I remember looking out the window to see if I could see my mum, it was awful.

17. One day it was requested for me to go to the parlour. I was so excited I ran all the way and I remember when I opened the door how disappointed I was to find that it was a priest who had called to see me and not my mum. I remember this priest had sweets and made me sit on his knee. I do remember I felt something around my pants area where now I know he was trying to put his finger but everytime I felt it happen, I jumped up and he became very annoyed for me, I also remember he had tried several times but I wouldn't sit at peace for him and I have just remembered he told me to go and tell another girl that he wanted to see her but I am not sure who it was but I have a sneaking suspicion it was **HIA 195** I believe this priest was Brendan Smith but the pictures I have seen of him on the tv are of an old man that I don't recognise.

18. A time came when I never saw **██████████** family at all. I was eight years of age. Although I was a very intelligent child I lost my education and was sent to board at a special school as glue ear went undiagnosed. Because of boredom any devilment and I was in the middle. Eventually I was expelled from being a boarder and eventually expelled from the entire school at the age of 14 but still residing always at the convent throughout. Mr Ivan Davidson was the principal. He was a very kind man. I remember looking up an old street directory and finding my mum's address. I wrote a letter to her asking her why she didn't love me anymore and I asked the secretary to post it for me. I was called to the principal's office and **██████████** had the letter in his hand. He explained that it wasn't a good idea to send a letter as I might bring back

PRIVATE

all the hurt of the past but I know it was him who organised staff to take me out at weekends to their own houses and although there was never any name added to the presents which would be waiting for me to start a new term after Christmas, I know they came from him and his children. He was a good man who was forced due to my behaviour to cane me. He told me once that he had been advised that there was no need for me to be in a special school but that the alternative was to send me to Scotland, and that's why he had accepted me into the school.

19. The children who went to this school had learning difficulties. Most of the children leaving at the age of 16 went to work in factories, well there was no way I was going in that direction and I remember being asked what I wanted to do and I replied a secretary. It was organised that some of pupils went for two periods of typing every week and I was like a duck to water, a pure natural. Again this was all organised by him and his staff. Looking back now I can see that God was good as he sent me a lot of angels to help me, Nuns who were nice to me, a secretary who bought me sweets, staff in the convent and in school who took me for breaks to their own homes, I just thought all these people were just feeling sorry for me as I pitied myself.

20. When I was twelve and about the same time I was expelled from boarding at the school, a social worker named [REDACTED] came to see me and asked me why I was misbehaving and was there anything she could do for me. I told her I wanted to know whether my birth mother was alive or dead, when I was fourteen about the time I was learning to type, she came back with an album of a family. All the information went over my head, all I heard was that my real mother was going to see me.

21. I remember **SR 199** walking me up to the parlour, knocked the door, opened it and explained **HIA 257** this is your mother, then she closed the door and I was left with this complete stranger. I was approximately thirteen or fourteen years at the time. When she opened her mouth, I wanted the floor to swallow me up, this wasn't the woman I had been expecting, even though I had seen photos of her, in my mind It was some fairy God mother who was



PRIVATE

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.


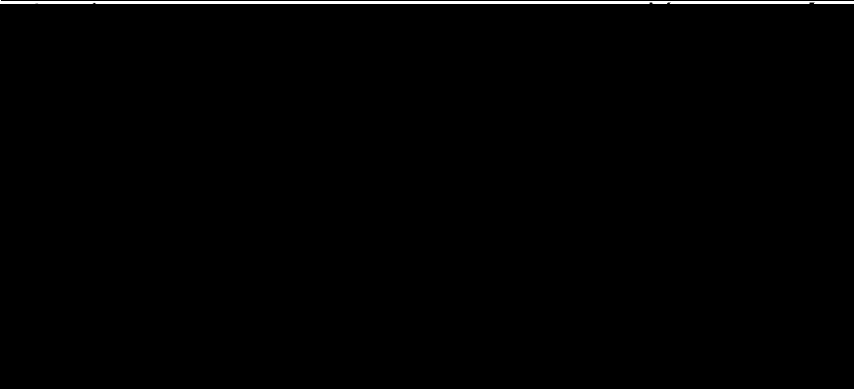
18. Between what was going on with SR 31 and Brendan Smyth and hating school, my life was in turmoil. I had no one to turn to. was my Social Worker when I was young. I went through a lot of Social Workers. They were always very good to us, but when they visited us in Nazareth House, we weren't allowed 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



406

Nazareth Lodge, Belfast, 1950.

  
  
Infants.  
Boys.

Church.

Refectory

Linen Room.

Children's Work

Boys.

Infants

Infants.  
~~Senior Nursery~~

Infants.

Junior Boys.

Kitchen.

Boys.

Boys.

Teaching 2-5.

Children's Workroom

Senior Nursery.

Boys.

215

Nazareth Lodge - 1957.

18

1st L.C. Parlours.

2nd L.C. Boys.

Church

Community R. Garden

Linen Room

Blackwork &amp; Farm

~~Refectory Blackwork~~

Men Laundry

Boys

Workroom Housework

Babies' House

Nursery

~~Babies' House~~

" "

Kitchen

Boys

"

"

Kitchen

Babies.

Chickens.

89

Belfast Lodge 1952.

Superior.

1st L.C. Parlours.

2nd L.C. Boys.

Church

Com Room + Garden

Sisters' Refectory

Linen Room.

Farm + Blackwork

Kitchen

Old men Laundry

Boys.

Workroom

~~Babies Home~~

" "

" "

Nursery 2-5. Poultry

School

"

Babies Home.

~~W. Room.~~

152

Belfast Lodge 1953.

1st L.C. Parlours.

2nd L.C. Boys

Church.

Community Room.

Refectory

Linen Room.

Black work.

Men Laundry.

Boys.

Kitchen

Nursery.

Boys.

Work Rooms.

Nursery

Nursery.

Boys.

Nursery.

Men Laundry.

Nursery.

"

"

22 2

Nazareth Lodge. Belfast 1954.

Superior.

1st L.C. Parlours.

2nd L.C. Boys.

Sacristans.

Community Room.

Refectory.

Linen Room.

Bursar. Black work

Men. Laundry. Collect.

Work Room.

Boys.

Kitchen.

Nursery Boys.

Nursery.

Baby Home

" "

Nursery School Boys.

Baby Home.

" "

" "

Nursery Training

" "

Babies.



Nazareth Lodge 1955.

84.

Parlours

Boys

Church

Community Rm.

men

Wash, men, collecting

Linen room

Kitchen

Boys

Babies

"

Boys

Nursery Trainee

"

"

Toddlers

Nursery Trainee

"

"

Boys.

Nazareth Lodge 1956.

154.

Sacristan

Parlours

Boys

Refectory

Writing

Laundry &amp; Men

Kitchen

Nurseryschool, Boys

Babies' Home

"

"

Boys

Boys

Babies' Home

Linen Room

Nursery 2-5 yrs

Nursery trainee

"

"

Babies' Home, Girl

205.

Nazareth Lodge 1957  
Lodge

Parlours

Boys - School.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Men, laundry.

Linen Room

Baby Home

Kitchen

Nursery School

Baby Home

Boys - School

" "

Baby Home

Nursery

Baby Home

Nursery School

Baby Home

235.

Nazareth Lodge. 1958

Sacristan

~~Parlour~~

Boys

—

—

—

—

collecting

~~collecting~~

Linen room

Kitchen

Babies' Home

Nursery school parlour

" " , boys.

Babies' Home.

Boys

"

Nursery Trainee

{ Nursery school.  
NurseryNursery Trainee)  
Parlours

29~

Nazareth Lodge 1959

Books, Church.

Babies' Home.

Children

Refectory

Collecting

Parlours.

Linen Room.

Kitchen

Nursery School.

Babies' Home.

Children

Children

Children

Babies' Home.

Babies' Home.



(1960)

20

Nazareth Lodge. 1960

Superior, Books, Church.

1st L.C. Babies' Home

2nd L.C. Children

Refectory.

Collecting.

Parlours.

Linen Room.

Kitchen

Nursery School.

Babies' Home.

Nursery.

Children.

Children.

Babies' Home.

Babies' Home.

Nursery.

1961

88

Nazareth Lodge.

Chapel

Babies' Home

Primary School

Refectory

Collecting

Parlours

Linen Room

Kitchen

Nursery

Nursery School

Babies' Home

Primary School

Babies' Home

7

Nazareth Lodge 1962

Babies' Home . . . to Lasswade

Primary School.

Refectory.

Collecting.

Parlours.

Linen Room.

Kitchen.

Nursery School.

Babies' Home.

Boys.

Primary School.

Babies' Home.

Babies.

Babies' Home.

Primary School.

Babies' Home.

Nursery

Nazareth Lodge, 1963

Chapel.

Nursery + Nursery School.

Charge of Boys + Primary School.

Refectory.

Collecting

Parlours.

Linen Room, Infirmary

Kitchen

Babies' Home

Boys.

Babies' Home.

Boys. Primary School

Babies' Home

Babies' Home.

Nursery.

Children

'63

Nazareth Lodge 1964

Nursery School

Primary "

Invalid R. 9. P.

"

"

"

Refectory

Parlours

Linen Room

Kitchen

Babies' Home

Boys

Babies' Home

Primary School

Babies Home

Babies Home

Primary School

Nursery

18 P. V. 1 Emp.

1965 7 SUNDAY 5th after Epiphany NAZARETH LODGE WEEK 1893

Sacristy  
Nursery; Nursery School  
Baby Home  
Refectory  
+ Collecting

Parlour  
Linen Room  
Catering  
Teacher + Group  
Black work  
Baby Home  
School + Group  
Baby Home  
Group of Boys  
School + Group  
Nursery

Baby Home

Collecting



1966

108

WEEK 18  
(107-258)

## NAZARETH LODGE SATURDAY 17

Superior

1st L.C.

2nd L.C.

School. Nursery.

St. Joseph's Baby Home.  
Refectory.

Parlours.

Linen-room.

Kitchen

School. Group of Boys.

Chapel. Blackwork.

School. Group of Boys.

St. Joseph's Baby Home.

St. Joseph's Baby Home.

Collecting. Group of Boys.

School. Group ..

Nursery. Collecting.

1967

WEEK 26  
(177-188)

NAZARETH LODGE

R 4 44 S 9 21

SATURDAY

26

176

Superior Blackwork.  
1st L.G. Nursing School.  
2nd L.G. Baby Home

Parlours.

Linen room.

Caterer.

Baby Home.

Bursar School & Group.  
6 weeks. Prof. 2 days collecting  
School & Group  
Baby Home.  
School & Group.  
Nursing & collecting

246

1968

WEEK 36  
(247-118)

NAZARETH

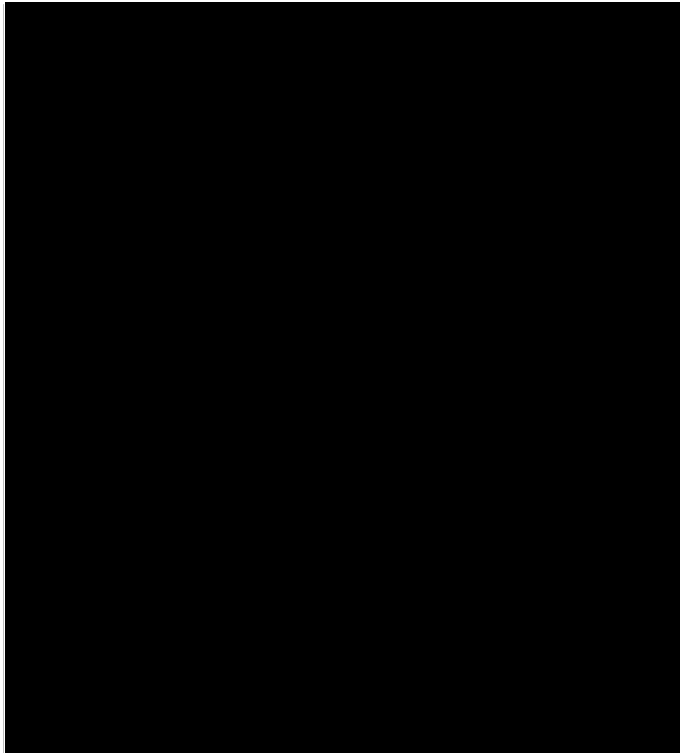
R  
6 17S  
7 41

LODGE

SATURDAY

4

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.



Superior. Black work  
1st L. L. Nursery School + Nursery  
2nd L. L. Baby Home

Parlour  
Linen Room.  
Butsar Caterer.  
Baby Home  
Primary School + Group.  
Church, Refectory, Collecting  
Primary School + Group.  
Baby Home.  
Primary School + Group.  
Nursery + Collecting.

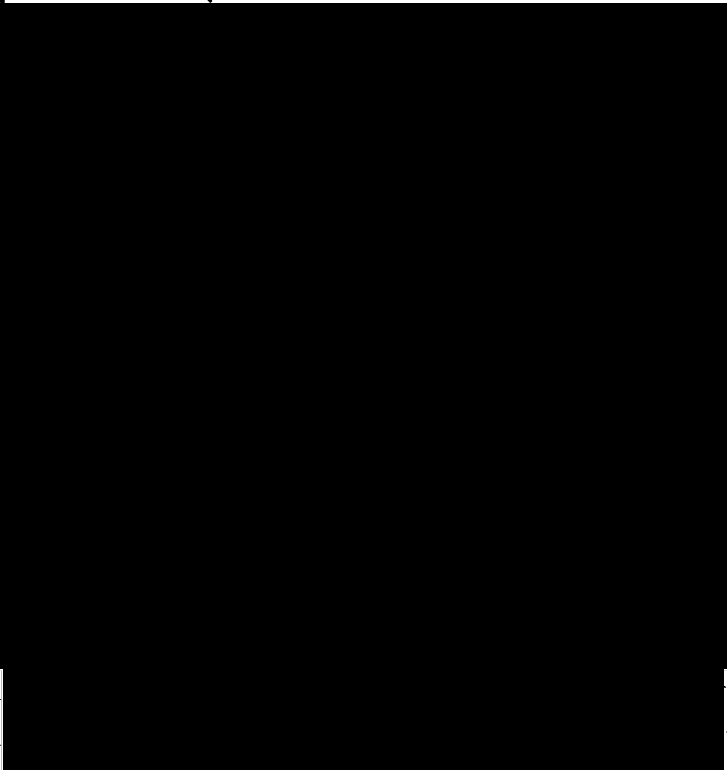
316

1969 WEEK 46  
(317-48)

NAZARETH LODGE

SATURDAY

13

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16Superior  
1st L.C.  
2nd L.C.Black Work.  
Nursery <sup>nursery</sup> Schools.  
Babies' home.

Bursar

Parlours.  
Linen Room.  
Catering.  
Babies' home.  
Primary school <sup>group</sup> +  
Church, collecting <sup>ref.</sup> +  
Primary school <sup>group</sup> +  
Babies' home.  
Primary school <sup>group</sup> +  
Nursery + collecting

73

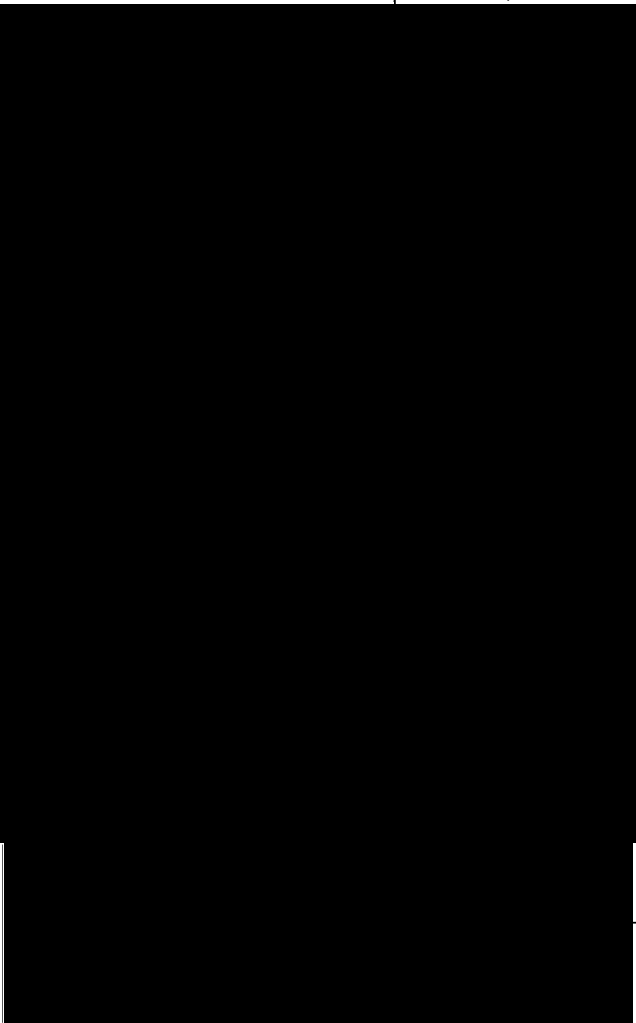
1970

## NAZARETH LODGE

  
*Superior**1st L. L. Nursery**2nd L. L. Babies' Home**~~Parlours.~~**Linew Room, Church.**Bursar. Caterer.**Babies' Home.**Teaching. Group of children**Collecting. Refectory.**Teaching. Group of children.**Babies' Home.**School. Group.**Nursery. Collecting.*

1971

## NAZARETH LODGE

- |     |  |                               |
|-----|--|-------------------------------|
| 1.  |  | Superior                      |
| 2.  |  | L. b. Nursery School.         |
| 3.  |  | Bursar. School. Group.        |
| 4.  |  | Retired R. G. P.              |
| 5.  |  | Retired R. G. P.              |
| 6.  |  | Retired                       |
| 7.  |  | Church. Linen Room.           |
| 8.  |  | Caterer.                      |
| 9.  |  | St. Joseph's Nursery.         |
| 10. |  | St. Joseph's Nursery.         |
| 11. |  | Refectory. Collecting 2 days. |
| 12. |  | School. Group.                |
| 13. |  | St. Joseph's Nursery.         |
| 14. |  | Group and Collecting 2 days.  |
| 15. |  | Group Children                |
| 16. |  | School and Group.             |



185

1972

## BELFAST (LODGE)

1.		Superior.
2		Group Councillor .. Nursery school
3		Bursar .. headmistress, gro
4		Retired
5		Linen room .. church
6		Caterer.
7.		St. Joseph's Baby Home
8		.. .. .
9		Refectory .. collecting
10		Teaching .. group.
11		Group .. collecting
12		St. Joseph's Baby Home
13		Teaching .. group.

254

1973

## BELFAST (LODGE)



1 Superior  
 2 Councillor, <sup>group.</sup> nursing sch  
 3 Bursar, <sup>group</sup> headmistress,  
 4 Retired  
 5 Church & linen room  
 6 Retired  
 7 Retired  
 8 St. Joseph's Baby Home  
 9 " " " "  
 10 Refectory: part-time collect  
 Teaching & group  
 Group: collecting 2 1/2 day  
 St. Joseph's Baby Home  
 Teaching .. group.  
 Caterer.  
 12 Children  
 13 Group  
 14 Caterer  
 15 St. Joseph's Baby Home

42.

1974

## BELFAST (LODGE)

1.  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5.  
6.  
7.  
8.  
9.  
10.  
11.  
12.  
13.  
14.  
15.

Superior  
Councillor, nursery school, group  
Retired  
Retired  
Refectory.  
Church & linen room  
St. Joseph's Baby Home, N.N.E.B.  
Caterer, Bursar.  
St. Joseph's Baby Home, N.N.E.B.  
Group  
Teaching & group  
St. Joseph's Baby Home, N.N.E.B.  
Teaching & group  
Group  
Teaching & group.

106.

1975

## BELFAST (LODGE)

Superior.

Councillor, nursery school

Retired.

Retired.

Linen room

Retired

St. Joseph's baby home <sup>N.N.E.B.</sup>Busar & cativer

St. Jos. baby home, N.N.E.B.

~~Group of children~~~~School group of chdn.~~

St. Joseph's baby home.

School, group of chdn.

School, group of chdn.

~~Group of children.~~~~School, group of chdn.~~

Principal of School.

170

1976

## BELFAST (Lodge) (34)

- |     |            |  |
|-----|------------|--|
| 1.  | [REDACTED] | .. Superior.                               |
| 2.  | [REDACTED] | .. <u>Councillor</u> & Vocations dict. man |
| 3.  | [REDACTED] | .. Retired.                                |
| 4.  | [REDACTED] | .. Retired                                 |
| 5.  | [REDACTED] | .. Church & linen room.                    |
| 6.  | [REDACTED] | .. Retired                                 |
| 7.  | [REDACTED] | .. St. Joseph's Babies' Home.              |
| 8.  | [REDACTED] | .. <u>Bursar</u> & caterer.                |
| 9.  | [REDACTED] | .. St. Joseph's Babies' Home.              |
| 10. | [REDACTED] | .. School Principal, group.                |
| 11. | [REDACTED] | .. Group of children.                      |
| 12. | [REDACTED] | .. St. Joseph's Babies' Home.              |
| 13. | [REDACTED] | .. Teacher, group of children              |
| 14. | [REDACTED] | .. " " " "                                 |
| 15. | [REDACTED] | .. Group of children.                      |
| 16. | [REDACTED] | .. Nursing School & group.                 |

235

1977

## BELFAST (LODGE)

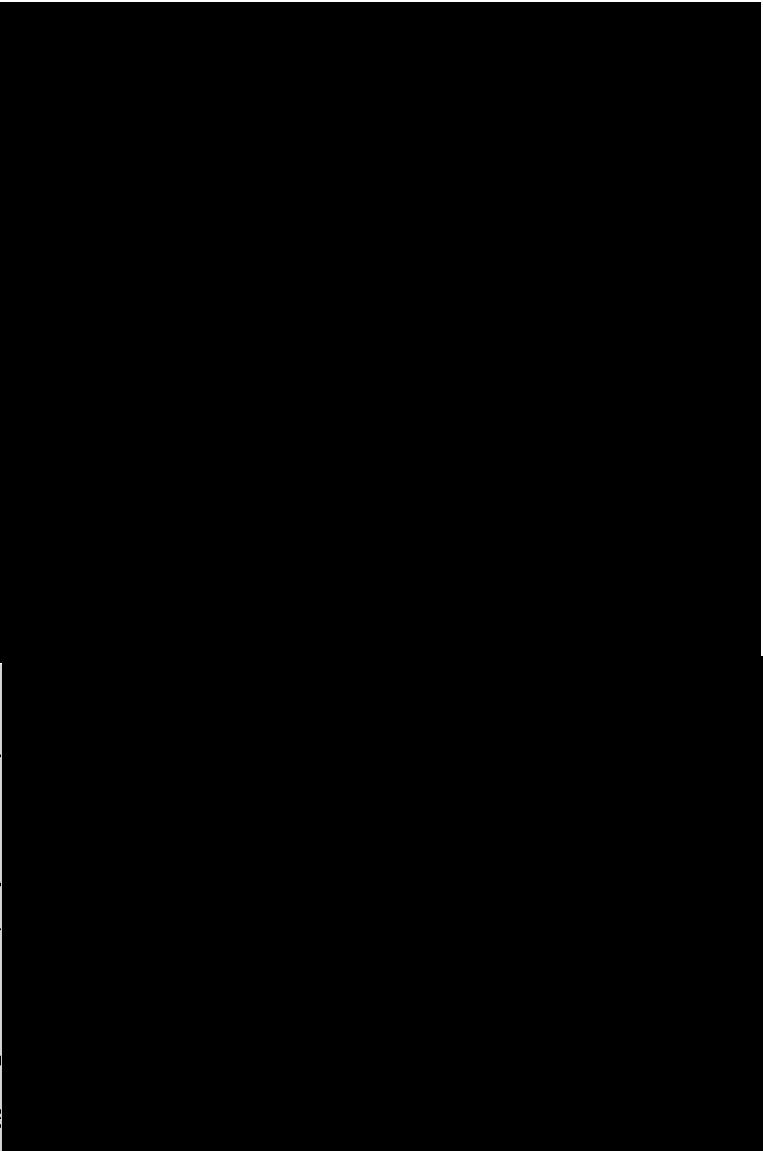
1		Superior, Church
2		School. 1st L. G.
3		Nursery School 2nd. "
4		Caterer - Bursar
5		Vocations Directress
6		Retired
7		"
8		"
9		Refectorian
10		St. Joseph's Baby Home
11		" " " "
12		" " " "
13		Parlours, Linen Room
14		Children
15		School
16		Children
17		"



46

1978

Belfast (Lodge)

1		Superior, Church
2		School, 1st L. C.
3		Nursery School
4		Retired
5		"
6		Refectory
7		Caterer, Bursar
8		Parlours
9		Children
10		"
11		School
12		"
13		Children
14		"
15		Matron Baby Home
16		Babies
17		"
18		Vocation work

05

179

Nazareth Lodge

Superior Church

School 1<sup>st</sup> L.C.Nursery School 2<sup>nd</sup> L.C.

Retired

"

Parlours

Refectorian

St. Joseph's

Caterer Bureau

Child Care

St. Joseph's

Child Care

St. Joseph's

School

"

Child Care

" "

169

1980

Nazareth Lodge

1.

2.

3

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9

10

11.

12.

13

14

15

16

17

1<sup>st</sup> L.C. Headmistress2<sup>nd</sup> L.C. " N. School

Retired

Retired

Sisters' Refectory

Darlours

St. Joseph's Children's Home

Bursar &amp; Caterer

Group of Children

St. Joseph's Children's Home

Group of Children

St. Joseph's Children's Home

Teaching

Teaching

Group of Children

Group of Children

nac

1981

Nazareth Lodge

1		Superior
2		1 <sup>st</sup> C. Children
3		2 <sup>nd</sup> C. Head Nursery Teacher
4		Retired
5		" R. I. P.
6		"
7		Parlours
8		St. Joseph's
9		Group of Children
10		St. Joseph's - Matron
11		St. Joseph's
12		Teacher
13		Children
14		Caterer - Bureau
15		Children - Social Worker

37

1982

Nazareth Lodge

1		Church Superior
2		1 <sup>st</sup> L.C. Group of Children
3.		Nursery School 2 <sup>nd</sup> L.C.
4.		Retired
5.		Seni-Retired
6.		Matron of St. Joseph's
7.		Babies " "
8.		Children " "
9.		Caterer
10.		St. Michael's School
11.		Group of Children
12.		" " "
13.		" " "

iv

1983

Razareth Lodge

1

Superior

2

1st. L.b. children

3

2nd L.b. nursery school

4

Retired

5

Retired

6

Retired

7

Caterer, Bureau

8

Parlours

9

Matron St Joseph's

10

children - St Joseph's

11

School

12

children

13

children

14

children



159

Belfast Lodge

1984

1

Superior

2

2nd h. Nursing School

3

Retired

4

"

5

"

6

Bursar, Bateria

7

Parlours

8

Sister in Charge - St Joseph's

9

Children

10

School

11

Children

12

Children

Belfast. 1950.

Superior.  
 St. L. R.I.P.  
 C. Children.  
 Old Ladies.  
 Linen Rooms.  
 Parlours.  
 Lower Kitchens.  
 Kitchens.  
 Sacristan  
 Collecting Blackwork  
 Children.  
 Collecting

"

Old men.  
 Old Ladies.  
 Work Room Collecting  
 Collecting.  
 Babies.  
 Children.  
 Collecting

"

"

Belfast. 1951.

10

20

r.

Children

Old Ladies

Linen Room

Children's Kitchen

Upper Kitchen

" "

Church.

Collecting

Children

Collecting

"

Old men.

Parlours

Old Ladies

Work room - Girls

Collecting

Nursery

Children

Collecting

"

"

75

Darareth House Belfast 1952.

Superior.

Children.

Upper Infirmary.

Linen Room.

Lower Kitchen

Upper "

Church & Babies

Collecting

Old men.

Collecting.

Children.

Collecting

Portress

Collecting

Old Ladies.

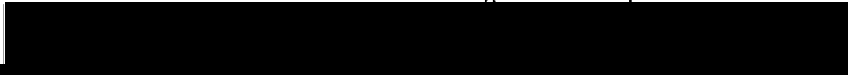
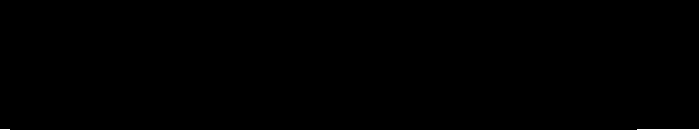
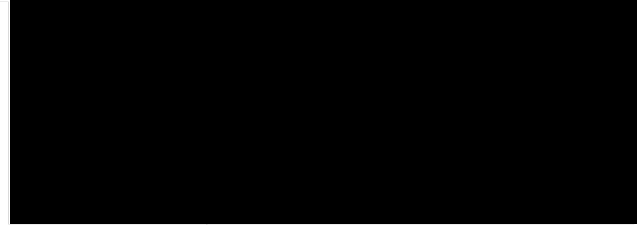
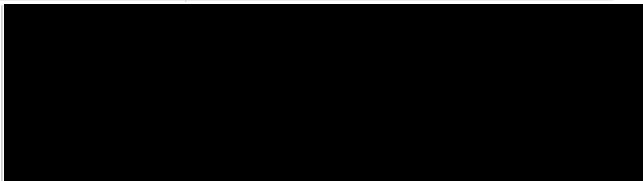

Work room.

C. Collecting

Nursery.

140

Belfast: 1953

  
  
~~Children.~~  
Collecting  
Linen Room.  
Lower Kitchen  
Church  
Teaching  
Collecting  
" Men.  
Collecting  
Old Ladies  
Portress  
CC. Workroom.  
Collecting - Country  
Nursery  
Children  
Kitchen  
Collecting  
"

A1.

Belfast 1954.

1st L.C. Collecting

2nd L.C. Children.

R.I.P.

Linen room.

Lower kitchen

Community Rooms.

Church.

Collecting

"

Nursery.

Old men.

Collecting.

Old Ladies.

Portress.

Work room. Girls.

Collecting

" 16

Kitchen.

Children.

"

Kitchen.

57 P.C. Collecting

73.

Belfast 1955.

20

Collecting.

Children

Linen room

Lower kitchen

Refectory

Church

Children

Collecting

"

Men

Collecting

Old ladies

Workroom

Portress

Collecting

"

Children

Kitchen

Nursery.



137.

1.2

Belfast 1956

collecting

children

Linen room

L. kitchen

Refectory

Church &amp; nursery

children

~~collecting~~

"

Nursery

Men

collecting

women

Parlours

~~workroom~~

collecting

children

Kitchen

collecting

"

Belfast 1957.

194.

Church  
Collecting  
Children  
Kitchen (invalid)

Leinen room

Workroom  
Collecting  
Nurses  
Men

Collecting  
Women  
Parlours  
Collecting


" (Country

Children  
Kitchen

Children  
Collecting Country

263.

Belfast. 1958



Church  
Collecting  
Children  
Kitchen

— — —  
Linen Room  
Collecting

" "  
Workroom  
Collecting  
Nursery  
Men

Women  
Parlours  
Collecting  
Children  
Kitchen  
Children  
Collecting

Belfast 1959

282.

Church.

Collecting.

Children.

Children's Kitchen.

Linen Room.

Collecting.

Collecting.

Work Room.

Collecting.

Nursery.

Old Ladies.

Parlours.

Collecting.

Children.

Kitchen.

Collecting.

Children.

Old Men.

Infirmary.

1

Belfast, 1960

Church.

Collecting

Children

Linen Room

Kitchen (Children)

Collecting

Collecting

Men

Collecting

Ladies

Parlours

Collecting

Ladies

Children

Kitchen

Nursery

Collecting

Children

Children's Work Room

1961

Belfast

Church

City Collecting

Children

Ladies

Linen Room

Invalid

Children's Work - 100

Invalid

Invalid

Men

City Collecting

Ladies

Parlours

Country Collecting

Children

Kitchen

Nursery

Children

Ladies

City Collecting 1

36

Belfast 1962

Church.

Charge of Children.

Senior Collecting Sister.

Helps with Ladies.

Linen Room.

Children's Kitchen

Invalids.

Children's Workroom.

Collecting. Looks after Sr. &amp; Luke.

Men.

Collecting. Refectory.

Charge of Ladies.

Parlours.

Country Collecting. Blackwork.

Country Collecting. Helps in Chris Rita

Children.

Main Kitchen

Nursery.

Children

Collecting. Helps in Nursery.

Ladies.

Men



Belfast 1963

Sacristan

Charge of Children.

Collecting 10<sup>th</sup>.

Helps with Ladies.

Linen Room.

Lower Kitchen.

Children's Workroom. Girls.

Collecting.

Collecting

Old Ladies.

Parlours.

Country Collecting 10<sup>th</sup>.

Collecting.

Children.

Main Kitchen.

Nursery.

Children.

Men.

Collecting.

Helps with Ladies.

Belfast 1964

1		Sacristan
2		School
3		Collecting
4		Helpo Ladies
5		Linen Room
6		Kitchen
7		Chrm's workroom - Girls
8		Collecting
9		"
10		Bursar Postress
11		Collecting (Country)
12		Collecting "
13		School
14	X	Kitchen
15		Nursery
16		School
17		Men
18		Ladies
19		Collecting
20		Ladies 18 P.V. 2 Temp. V.

1965 3 WEDNESDAY BELHASIN		WEEK 8 (34-331)
1		Superior
2		1st L.C.
3		2nd L.C.
4		Headmistress Charge of Children
5		Collecting
6		Retired.
7		"
8		"
9		Work-room. Girls.
10		Linen-room.
11		Collecting.
12		Collecting.
13	Bursar	Parlours. Church.
14		Country Collecting. Black-work.
15		"
16		Children
17		"
18		Men.
19		Ladies
20		Nursery.
21		Caterer.
22		Collecting.
23		Ladies.
24		"
25		Nursery)
26		Men
27		Nursery.
28		"
29		"
30		"
31		"

1966  
WEEK 16  
(103-262)

BEIRFAST

1966 104  
TUESDAY 13

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21

Superior

1st L.C.

2nd L.C.

Headmistress of School. Children

Collecting. Housework.

Retired

Invalid

Retired

Work room. Girls.

Linen-rooms.

Collecting.

Collecting.

Postress. Church.

Collecting. Black work.

Collecting. Refectory

Teaching. Group

Teaching. Group

Ladies.

Men.

Nursery.

Country Collecting. Driver.

Caterer.

Ladies

1967 21 MONDAY BELFAS 1967 WEEK 28  
(172-193)

1		Superior
2		1st L.B. Headmistress + Group
3		2nd L.B. Collecting + Comm. Room
4		Helps with Ladies
5		Invalid.
6		
7		Workroom + Girls
8		Linens room
9		Collecting - House
10		Collecting.
11		Bureau Portress + Lunch
12		Laundry Collecting + Kitchen
13		do do driver
14		Collecting
15		Teaching + Group
16		do do
17		Ladies + Infirmary
18		Nurse
19		Caterer
20		Sick
21		Helps with Ladies
		Ladies
		Ladies
		Caterer
		Collecting

1968 30

MONDAY

BELFAST

WEEK 36  
(242-123)

1.		Superior
2.		1st L. b. Children
3.		2nd L. b. Collecting
4.		R.I.P. A little sewing
5.		Invalid
6.		"
7.		Children
8.		Linen Room
9.		Collecting
10.		Bursar. Church, Parlour.
11.		Countryside Collecting
12.		Collecting
13.		Children. Teaching
14.		Caterer
15.		Linen Room Countryside Collecting
16.		Ladies
17.		Men
18.		Children. Teaching
19.		Ladies. St. Basil's.
20.		" " "
21.		" Old Building
		" <del>St. Basil's</del>
		Collecting
		" Driver
		Ladies. Old Building
		Collecting.
		Ladies (New Wing)
		Ladies (Old Building)
		School

1969	8	MONDAY	BELFAST	WEEK 46 (812-53)
1				Superior.
2				1st L.C. Teaching,
3				2nd L.C. Collecting
4				
5				
6				Linien no
7				Collecting
8				
9				
10				Bursar Parsons & Co
11				Country co
12				
13				Teaching,
14				Catering
15				Ladies
16				" "
17				Men.
18				Children
19				Country
20				Ladies, &
21				" St

69

1970

BELFAST

Superior

1st L. L. Children. School.2nd L. L. collecting

Linen Room

collecting.

collecting.

collecting

Bursar. Parlours.

Country collecting.

Teaching. Children.

Latterer.

Ladies - St. Basil's

Ladies - Old Building

Men

Teaching. Children.

Country collecting.

Ladies - Old Building.

Ladies - St. Basil's.



114

1971

BELFAST

1.	[REDACTED]	Superior
2.	[REDACTED]	L. Co. Children
3.	[REDACTED]	Bursar. Parlours, Church.
4.	[REDACTED]	Retired.
5.	[REDACTED]	Linew Room.
6.	[REDACTED]	Collecting
7.	[REDACTED]	Collecting
8.	[REDACTED]	Collecting
9.	[REDACTED]	Collecting
10.	[REDACTED]	Country Collecting.
11.	[REDACTED]	Children
12.	[REDACTED]	Ladies - St. Basil's.
13.	[REDACTED]	Ladies - Old Building.
14.	[REDACTED]	Men
15.	[REDACTED]	Children
16.	[REDACTED]	Waterer
17.	[REDACTED]	Ladies - Old Building.
18.	[REDACTED]	Country Collecting.
19.	[REDACTED]	Ladies - St. Basil's.

184

1972

BELFAST

1.		
2		Superior
3		Councillor, Headmistress <sup>Group</sup>
4		Bursar, guestmistress, church
5		Retired
6		Linen room
7		Collecting
8		"
9		"
10		"
11		Teaching ... group
12	"	Ladies
13	"	Gents
14	"	Teaching ... group
15	"	Caterer
16	"	Ladies .. St. Basil's
17	"	Collecting
		Ladies .. St. Basil's

253

1973

BELFAST

1

Superior.

2

Councillor, Headmistress, gro.

3

Retired

4

Linen Room

5

Collecting

6

Collecting

7

Busar, parlours, church

8

Collecting

9

~~Teaching, group~~

10

Ladies, Old Building

11

Gents.

12

Ladies, St. Basil's.

13

Teaching, group

14

~~Caters~~

15

~~Collecting, driver~~

16

Ladies, St. Basil's.

17

Caters

18

Collecting

19

Collecting

20

Teaching

41.

1974

## BELFAST

Superior.

Councillor, Headmistress, group

Retired

Linen room

Collecting

"

Ladies, S.E.M. (Old Building  
Men changed to M.B.M. '74

Ladies .. St. Basil's

Collecting

Teacher, group

Caterer

Teacher, group

~~Ladies, St. Basil's.~~Bursar, church, parlours.

Men.

1975

BELFAST:

105.

Superior.

Councillor, school, group

Retired .. invalid.

Linen room

Collecting

Busar, parlours, church

Country collecting.

Collecting, <sup>Sister.</sup> care of invalid

Residents, old unig.

Residents, men's unig.

School .. group.

Country collecting

Caterer.

Residents - St. Basil's unig

School .. group.

169:

1976

BELFAST (ORMEAU ROAD) (38)

1. [REDACTED] ... Supervisor.
2. [REDACTED] ... Councillor, teacher, group.
3. [REDACTED] ... Retired. R.I.P.
4. [REDACTED] ... Linen room.
5. [REDACTED] ... Collector.
6. [REDACTED] ... Bursar, parlours & church.
7. [REDACTED] ... Counting collector.
8. [REDACTED] ... Children.
9. [REDACTED] ... Collector; invalid Sister.
10. [REDACTED] ... Old people. S.E.N.
11. [REDACTED] ... Old people. S.E.N.
12. [REDACTED] ... Teacher; group of children.
13. [REDACTED] ... Counting collector.
14. [REDACTED] ... Canteen.
15. [REDACTED] ... Old people - St. Basil's.
16. [REDACTED] ... Teacher; group of children.

234

1944

## BELFAST

1		Superior
2		School 1st L. C.
3		Residents 2nd " "
4		Linen Room
5		Collecting
6		Parlours, Church, Bursar
7		Country Collecting
8		Children
9		Collecting
10		Residents
11		School, Children
12		Country Collecting
13		Water
14		Residents
15		School, Children

34

1978

Belfast

1	Superior
2	School, 1st L. C.
3	Residents 2nd
4	Linen Room
5	Retired
6	Parlours, Ch. Bursar
7	Collecting
8	Children
9	Residents
10	School, Children
11	Collecting
12	Residents
13	Caterer
14	School



1979

Belfast

1. Superior  
2. School-Children 1<sup>st</sup> L.C.  
3. Residents 2<sup>nd</sup> L.C.  
4. Linen Room  
5. Retired  
6. Bazaar, Parlours, Church  
7. Collecting  
8. Residents S.E.N.  
9. School-Children  
10. Collecting  
11. For School  
12. Residents - St. Basil's St  
13. Children  
14. Caterer

178

1980

Belfast

- |     |            |   |
|-----|------------|---|
| 1.  | [REDACTED] | Superior                                    |
| 2.  | [REDACTED] | 1 <sup>st</sup> L.C. St. Joseph's Residents |
| 3.  | [REDACTED] | 2 <sup>nd</sup> L.C. Teaching Group         |
| 4.  | [REDACTED] | Linen Room                                  |
| 5.  | [REDACTED] | Burial, Parlours, Church                    |
| 6.  | [REDACTED] | Invalid                                     |
| 7.  | [REDACTED] | Collecting; help with aged.                 |
| 8.  | [REDACTED] | Residents Main Building                     |
| 9.  | [REDACTED] | Teaching, group of children                 |
| 10. | [REDACTED] | Caterers                                    |
| 11. | [REDACTED] | Residents - St. Basil's                     |
| 12. | [REDACTED] | Group of children - study                   |
| 13. | [REDACTED] | Collecting, odd jobs                        |

231

1981

Belfast

1. [REDACTED] Superior
2. [REDACTED] 1<sup>st</sup> C. Residente - St. Joseph's
3. [REDACTED] 2<sup>nd</sup> C. Teacher
4. [REDACTED] Linen Room
5. [REDACTED] Bursar, Guest Mistress,  
Church Pensions
6. [REDACTED] Collecting, Refectory
7. [REDACTED] Principal of School
8. [REDACTED] Group of Children
9. [REDACTED] Teacher; help with O. Peoples  
accounts, helps in Convent
10. [REDACTED] Collecting help with refectory
11. [REDACTED] Resident's old building
12. [REDACTED] Residente - St. Basil's
13. [REDACTED] Caterer

36

1982

Belfast

1.		Superior, Books, Accounts.
2.		L.C. Residents
3.		L.C. Teacher, helps correspondents
4.		Linen Room
5.		Group of elderly - new flat
6.		Burns, Church, Parlours, Pensions
7.		Collecting, Refectory
8.		Retired - Helps to feel elderly.
9.		School Principal - Housework
10.		Group of Children
11.		Collecting, Refectory
12.		Caterer
13.		Teacher, Housework
14.		Group of elderly
15.		Group of Children
16.		Group of elderly.

100

1983

Belfast

1		Superior
2		1st L.B. Residents
3		2nd L.B. School
4		Living Room
5		Residents
6		Burton, Church
7		Retired
8		Collecting
9		Retired
10		Children
11		Collecting
12		Children
13		School Principal
14		Caterer
15		Residents
16		Residents

158

1984

Belfast

1		Superior
2		1st b. Residents
3		2nd b. School
4		Semi-invalid
5		Residents
6		Cunson; Chursh; Parloma
7		Invalid
8		collecting
9		collecting
10		Residents
11		School Principal
12		School
13		baterer
14		Residents
15		children

some unsuitable persons being appointed to the home. It is deeply regretted that any member of staff could have abused any child in our care.

33. In the course of Module 1 the Congregation gave a lot of consideration to the levels of staffing and the standard of training of their staff. We accepted then, as we do now, that the staffing levels in early years were not adequate for the numbers of children, or the needs of those children (even if those needs now recognised were not recognised earlier).
34. The Hughes Inquiry, at 9.20 -9.21, refers to the number of trained staff and the steps being taken to increase the number of trained staff and the level of training they receive. Reliance on older children to monitor younger children, whilst well intentioned, was not appropriate.

#### **Activities**

35. The Congregation sought to provide the best possible facilities and activities for the children. Evidence of day trips and holidays have been recorded in the Nazareth Lodge diary which has been provided to the Inquiry. Many of those who are bringing evidence of unhappy experiences do also speak of trips, parties in and out of the houses. Special treats were also available for the children provided by the Sisters and benefactors. Holidays in Glenariffe, Ballyhornan and Killough can be established when reading through the Nazareth Lodge diary. Daytrips to the Aerodrome at Nutts Corner and to Dublin also took place. The Inquiry has heard previously, and again in this module, that many benefactors held parties for the children at Christmas. These parties were clearly a matter of great excitement and enjoyment for the majority of the children.
36. As was seen in the first module music, dance and drama seem to have been prevalent in the houses. Outdoor games, dancing and music would have filled a lot of their time. Children enjoyed opportunities to go to scouts and guides, youth clubs, the cinema, and swimming as illustrated by the following extracts:

“Fifty of the boys were invited to the Majestic Cinema and had very enjoyable entertainment. Two films were shown in the classroom; ‘The Bohemian Girl’ and the

ARMAGH COUNTY WELFARE COMMITTEECHILDREN'S SUB-COMMITTEEMINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

A meeting of the Children's Sub-Committee was held in the Secretary's Office, [REDACTED] on Monday, 11th January, 1960, the following members being present:-

Mrs. R. McGredy (Chairman), Mrs. C.A. Todd, Mrs. E. Walker, Mrs. W. Monroe, Messrs. T.W. Fairley and P.D. Fearon. (6).

Apologies. Apologies for inability to attend were received from Mrs. M.J. Greaves, Mrs. M.A. Bell, Mrs. E. Hinchings and Mrs. M. McLaughlin.

1. MINUTES. The Minutes of the meeting held on 14th December, 1959, which had been circulated to each member, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

2. B.B.C. CHILDREN'S HOUR APPEAL FUND. (Ref. Minute No. 180 of 9.11.59). Read letter, dated 5th January, 1960, from the Secretary of the Northern Ireland Council of Social Service, acknowledging receipt of the Committee's report on the expenditure of the grant in connection with the B.B.C. Children's Hour Appeal Fund.

3. VISIT OF CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL TO CHILDREN'S HOMES AND TRAINING SCHOOLS IN THE PROVINCE. Submitted communication, dated 1st January, 1960, from the Ministry of Home Affairs, advising the Committee that the Child Welfare Council would shortly be visiting Children's Homes and Training Schools in the Province and requesting the Committee to facilitate their Council in this matter.

The Committee agreed to the request and the Secretary was instructed to make the necessary arrangements for the visit of the Council.

4. GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY HOMES. Submitted letter, T.106, dated 4th January, 1960, from the Ministry of Home Affairs, advising the Committee of its proposals regarding grants to Voluntary Homes and expenditure on Training in Child Care for the year 1960/61, as follows:-

<u>1959/60</u> <u>Expenditure</u> <u>as now forecast</u>		<u>1960/61</u> <u>Proposed</u> <u>Provision</u>
£	<u>GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS</u>	£
	(1) <u>Glendun Children's Home, Belfast</u>	
165	(To secure the provision of qualified staff)	200
	(2) <u>Manor House Children's Home, Lisburn</u>	
1,270	(To assist towards the cost incurred on the complete modernisation of the Home. Estimated balance of grant.)	
-	(3) <u>Messureth Lodge Children's Home, Belfast</u>	
-	(To assist towards the cost of the provision of a new nursery home in replacement of Fox Lodge)	12,000
1,435	(4) <u>Contingencies</u>	800
		13,000
1,775	(5) <u>TRAINING IN CHILD CARE</u>	
3,170	(To meet the cost of courses)	500
	Total:	13,500

Noted.

1.



*"The punishment book contained a number of items but these dealt with minor misdemeanours and were dealt with by deprivation of privileges. There were no cases of absence from the school without leave."*

'Recreation' as taken from Report on Inspection. Dated 17<sup>th</sup> December 1950-1952.

*"The boys look healthy and cheerful. Most of the boys were playing energetically, sliding on the frozen surface of the concrete yard. The 2-5 age groups were indoors in their separate quarters in Fox Lodge...This was in good order and the new small dining and scullery annex is proving helpful. These toddlers looked happy and well cared for, but their playroom gives the impression of being overcrowded with children and as a result the atmosphere is stuffy."*

30. In order to maintain good order in each of the children's care homes a voluntary health visitor would inspect and report on the following; Admissions and Discharges (of children), staff changes, changes in practice, record keeping and on any other matters deemed material by the inspector.
31. In addition the Sisters are aware of comments in the Hughes report (at paragraphs 9.22-9.24, that there was evidence given of monthly inspections as required by the statutory regulations. I refer to these in my discussion of record keeping. We can find no record of the reports in the archives.

#### **Staff**

32. Staff in Nazareth House and Nazareth Lodge were employed in the utmost good faith and in particular on their suitability and competence in childcare. Many staff were also former residents and already knew the standard of care expected and demanded. It is accepted that the suitability checks made in these earlier years would not meet the much more detailed requirements of today. Appointment of staff was the sole responsibility of the House Superior who would interview and accept people for the position of child care staff. In the mid 1970's a panel would have been responsible for this section process of staffing appointments. This panel would have comprised of the House Superior, the Sister in the group that had the staff vacancy and also the social worker who could have been either a Sister or a lay person. The limited understanding of the time and probably the trusting nature of the Sisters did result in

PRIVATE

We had a bath once a week. They put Jeyes fluid in the bath. Twenty of us had to line up to be bathed at the same time.

6. I remember that we were called by numbers and not by our names. I was number seventeen. As we were all called by numbers I find it difficult to recollect anyone's name. It was difficult to make friends as the girls were always changing.
7. I remember a girl in the bed beside me who regularly wet her bed. In the morning the nuns would strip her night dress off her, wrap the wet sheet round her and hit her as punishment.
8. I only remember the names of two of the nuns [REDACTED] SR 181 who was in charge of my group who would have been going into her forties and [REDACTED] SR 182 who was the head nun and who would have been in her forties. The nuns were very cruel. They did not seem to have time for us. They were physically and emotionally cruel to us. There was no warmth or affection from them. I did not have a proper childhood in their care. They did not talk to us about growing up. When I got my first period I did not know what to do. When I told a nun all I was given was rags. I then had to ask for rags every month. The nuns used to smack us with their rosary beads on the body with very little provocation.
9. I ran away twice with another girl that I used to clean the floors with. I was trying to go back home to [REDACTED] but the police caught us both times before we made it to the train station in Belfast. We were punished by being locked in separate cupboards for a couple of hours. I was hit when I was put in and when I was let out I was hit again and we got no supper. The day after the first time I ran away a policeman visited the home to warn me not to run away again. There was a nun in the room the whole time. I told the policeman how hungry we were and he said they would have to do something about it but he never did.
10. While I was in Nazareth House one of the girls in another group died. I do not know what happened to her as the nuns kept what happened very quiet.

PRIVATE

longer. This wasn't the first time I had been forced to do this. I just thought it was normal because I didn't know anything else.

12. I would never tell the nuns if I was ill. I recall getting the BCG and having a reaction to it. Dr Hunter ordered a cream to be rubbed onto my skin. In the corner of the sewing room was a medical room where we had to go to receive any medication. Every time I took my top off to get the cream on, **SR 145** would slap me for no reason. She was wicked. The rash continued and I believe it was my nerves that were making it worse. **SR 112** happened to come down one morning past the medical room and heard girls screaming. She walked in on **SR 145** slapping a child and **SR 145** was sent off to Australia after that. We never saw her again.

13. After that I was terrified to tell the nuns if I was sick. There was one occasion when I was aged approximately eight years, I got a splinter on the sole of my foot, but I wouldn't tell anybody. It kept getting worse and I was limping with it. One night I could feel myself getting sick and I couldn't move the next morning. The nun shouted at me to get out of bed. She pulled the bedclothes off me and made me stand up, but I couldn't stand on my foot. I wouldn't tell her what was wrong because I was terrified of being beaten. I eventually passed out and the nuns called an ambulance. I was taken to hospital and again I refused to tell the doctors what was wrong because the nun never left my side. I eventually asked the nurse if the nun had to be there all the time, and I think she was kept out during the next examination. A nurse noticed the lines going up my leg and they had to lance my foot. They said if it had have gone on any longer I might have died. I was in the hospital for approximately two weeks, and I was dreading going back to the Convent. A nun visited me in the hospital at the same time as she was visiting another girl from the Good Shepherd. The nun was giving this girl a really hard time, saying it was about time that she should be out of hospital and back to work, even though the girl was really ill.

14. The nuns were very cruel. They never taught us anything positive. They just criticised us over everything. There was no affection or praise. Everything had

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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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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.

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when I was older. I remember the dormitory was always cold. We did not have enough blankets.

4. I remember the nuns inspecting our beds in the morning to check if anyone had wet their bed. I would have wet the bed often and I remember quickly learning to cover up if I had wet the bed to avoid being beaten by one of the nuns. I would have been wrapped in the wet sheet and hit all over. Other girls in my dormitory would have wet the bed and been punished in the same way.
5. I remember being bathed in a bath of scalding hot water with Jeyes Fluid and carbolic soap in it by older girls who scrubbed us with a big scrubbing. A nun would have supervised. We would have been red raw by the time we got out of the bath.
6. I cannot remember any of the nuns' names. I remember two were kind and the others were not. I remember being hit all over with a belt by the nuns. They would have hit you for lots of reasons for example talking back or not doing your chores properly. I remember having to scrub the floors until you could see your face on them. If we did not scrub them properly we would get beaten. We had to work in the laundry. We were treated like slaves a lot of the time.
7. Our daily routine was to get up in the morning and make our beds. We then had a very meagre breakfast of sloppy porridge. We had chores to do and then we went to school. Our education was very poor as priority was always given to religion and chores. After school we had more chores and then we had dinner which again would have been very minimal and we were always hungry. When we were hungry we used to go and lift scraps out of the bins outside. I only remember getting outside to play sometimes. We were not dressed properly. We were never called by our names. We all had a number. We had no real opportunity to make friends in the home as the nuns did not like us talking to each other.
8. I do not remember having any visitors. My mother was unable to visit as she was unwell. I was never taken out by a family at any time. I remember at



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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

Re: [REDACTED] b. [REDACTED]

Home Address: [REDACTED]

Care Address: Nazareth House.

[REDACTED] HIA 327 is one of 12 children 8 of whom have been, or are, in care. Her parents who have co-habited for 20 years are of low I.Q., and offer no real guidance to any of their children. [REDACTED] and the 3 elder children at home are unemployed. During recent months there have been difficulties with [REDACTED] HIA 327 behaviour both at Nazareth House and at her school, St. Monica's. She has been accused of apathy at school, of distracting other pupils, of petty pilfering and mitching. For some time it has been evident that [REDACTED] HIA 327 is not happy at Nazareth House. The normal adolescent problems have been complicated by feelings of insecurity and by the atmosphere of the home which is not accepting of adolescent rebellion. She resents having to spend yet another year at school. There appears to be no secure mother-figure to whom [REDACTED] HIA 327 can relate at present; her mother is affectionate, but has little understanding of her problems. If a secure and understanding environment could be provided for [REDACTED] with a mother-figure to who she could relate, in a smaller group than at present exists at Nazareth, I feel she would benefit greatly. Contact with [REDACTED] home is still maintained, but she has not displayed any great desire to return to her family. At the present time I feel that Nazareth House has little to offer [REDACTED] HIA 327 indeed it has been suggested by the [REDACTED] that she leave there, but there is no suitable alternative accommodation available.

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21. I went to school in the convent but I was very rarely in the classroom. I would get messages from **SR 116** during class that she wanted me to scrub floors, polish shoes and do chores and **SR 134** would release me from class and tell me to go to her. My IQ test carried out in later life showed that I was intelligent but my education was constantly interrupted. I have always wondered what I would have been capable of given the chance instead of the menial jobs I was made to do in the home and after leaving the home. With my level of education I had to work as a waitress and clean toilets. I had a brain but no confidence or self esteem to use it.

22. I was taught by **SR 31** for a while. She had a blackthorn stick that she used to keep in her classroom and she would whack you with it along your legs and back. I remember once an inspector asked about the stick and **SR 31** called it her pointing stick for pointing to the blackboard. I think that was the first realisation for me about nuns actually lying after telling us that we would go straight to hell if we lied yet there she was in front of this inspector saying that it was her pointing stick. **SR 134** also used big silver serving spoons to whack the back of your knuckles and they would swell up and you couldn't move your hands and that happened regularly.

23. There was another nun who was also vicious; I think she was called **SR 189**. She would get your head and smack it up against the wall. I have had blood pumping from my head following an incident like this with her and she just told me to get up to the dormitory and clean the mess up. I never received medical treatment. It was not just **SR 116** who abused me, it was all of them but as I was in **SR 116** group which **SR 116** was responsible for I had the most abuse from her. She was my nightmare and the one mostly in my head. In my view the other nuns were just as bad. We came from bad people, bad homes, we were the scum of the earth, children of drunks and prostitutes and goodness knows what and so we had our parents sins to answer for and that had to be beaten out of us.

24. There were also occasions of being nearly drowned in the bath, being pushed under the water in the bath. We were bathed in four big baths and one girl

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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.   142.**

2    Q.   142.   In paragraph 5 you explain that SR112 -- to begin  
3           with, it wasn't too bad, but as time went on, then the  
4           head nun, SR112, was bad to you.   You say she battered  
5           you stupid.   She couldn't hit you hard enough.   So she  
6           would take your shoes off and hit you with -- hit you on  
7           the feet.

8    **A.   With the cane.**

9    Q.   And it was always the cane that she used?

10   **A.   She used mostly.   She kept it hung round her big belt.**  
11           **She had a belt on her habit and she always kept the cane**  
12           **hanging.**

13   Q.   When you talk in your statement about slapping, that's  
14           the cane you're talking about --

15   **A.   I'm talking about the cane.**

16   Q.   -- being slapped with the cane?

17   **A.   Uh-huh.**

18   Q.   You talk about how she would have given you a whack with  
19           it.

20   **A.   Uh-huh.**

21   Q.   I'm right in saying it wasn't just on the hands; it  
22           could be on the legs?

23   **A.   Legs, anywhere.**

24   Q.   In fact, if we look at -- you describe a particular  
25           incident in paragraph 32 right at the end of your

1 statement. If we go to 209, please, you describe to the  
2 Panel how one day you were walloped by SR112 with a cane  
3 and there were wallops all over your legs.

4 **A. That's correct.**

5 Q. You met NHB18 , who you have a good word  
6 for.

7 **A. He came in for mass just. He wasn't belonging to the**  
8 **convent, but he came in to say mass and he played with**  
9 **the children.**

10 Q. He is someone you have a good memory of.

11 **A. Great memory.**

12 Q. You mentioned to me you named one of your sons after  
13 him.

14 **A. I did.**

15 Q. On this occasion you came across him after you got the  
16 walloping with the cane --

17 **A. Yes.**

18 Q. -- and you -- he talked to you about it --

19 **A. Uh-huh.**

20 Q. -- and wanted you to go and get the cane that you had  
21 got the walloping with.

22 **A. Yes.**

23 Q. So do you want to just explain to the Panel when you  
24 went back into SR112 what happened?

25 **A. She was sitting doing -- correcting the homeworks or**

1       their sums or what, and when I went in, she looked up  
2       and I said -- I had to tell her what I was in for and  
3       I said, "       NHB18       sent me in to get the cane that  
4       marked my legs". So she brought the cane with her and  
5       out we came, and he asked her why, but she didn't really  
6       give an answer and he said, "I never want to see a child  
7       marked like that", and that was it, and she promised no,  
8       but when she got him away, she dug her knuckles into my  
9       head. She says, "I'll mark you where it will not show".

10    Q. So she told you there'd be a way round walloping you on  
11       the legs and that was the use of her knuckle?

12    A. Oh, she had a terrible habit of banging her knuckles  
13       into your head.

14    Q. So for SR112, she was the worst nun that you remember?

15    A. She was the hardest on us, yes.

16    Q. The two things that you remember her doing most were  
17       using the cane a lot on you --

18    A. I got caned a lot.

19    Q. -- and other children and using her knuckle?

20    A. Uh-huh.

21    Q. You explain in paragraph 6 of your statement, if we go  
22       back to 204, some other examples of things that caused  
23       you to end up getting hit or others getting hit. You  
24       talk about when you were going to sleep at night --

25    A. Uh-huh.

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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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there is in the whole of your body". I think she took a dislike to me because I was feisty. [SR 189] ended up becoming Mother General. She's dead now.

10. I had a tick as a child – my knee used to bounce up and down and [SR 134] [SR 134] hit me so hard in Mass one day for it that I saw stars. She used to stick pins in you as well and crunch you in the back. I always hated her doing that to the little ones but she didn't care how young you were. [SR 134] used to take a blackening brush that was used for polishing shoes and fire it at you - you learned to duck out of the way. I hated porridge and [SR 134] made me sit at the table all day, right through to lunchtime and then dinner to try to make me eat it. I wouldn't eat it, I wouldn't give in to her and I knew I would just vomit it back up. In the end she just pushed my face into the porridge. I still have a mark with a lump from where she pushed me so hard.

11. I lived in constant fear in the home. If you weren't getting hurt yourself, you were watching somebody else being beaten. I remember one girl called [NHB 42] who was paralysed down one side and the nuns brought her up to the stage in the big hall, bent her over and beat her on her bare backside in front of one hundred girls. She couldn't even fight back. I was out playing with a girl called [HIA 85] one day when [SR 134] got us by the ears and gave us such a hiding. [SR 134] would grab you by the hand and batter you with your own hand. Then she would say "I'm not hitting you, you're hitting yourself".

12. The older girls were put in charge of a younger girl and the nuns made you feel like you had to bully the younger girl. Even though I have always tried not to bully anybody, when the girl you were meant to look after didn't do something right, you had to slap them or you'd get in trouble. Looking back now, I know that's wrong. I used to think to myself "you're doing to her what the nuns are doing to you". A lot of the older girls were bullies. There was an older girl called [REDACTED] who worked in the laundry and we were terrified of her. You hated going down to the laundry especially if your pants were soiled.

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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 fifty one 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 **SR 189** to scrub my neck. She was told to do it again and again as I was still dirty. A couple of days later when **SR 189** 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



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three or four girls on the stage in the big recreation room. I can't remember who it was; it might have been **SR 134** or **SR 59** who was there before **SR 116**. I don't know what the girls had done but the nun made them take their pants down and bend over the stage. Then she went at them and whipped them with a cane over and over. They did this in front of everybody else and listening to the screams of the girls was terrible.

30. I remember the same nun did this over a long wooden bench in the bathroom. She made the girls bend over, take down their pants and then caned them with a stick. On another occasion we were forced to watch a girl called **NHB 51** being forced to kneel when being caned when she was about thirteen. We counted each slap and I remember stopping at 100 because it was so distressing.

31. You were known by a number in the home. I was number 10 and my sister **NHB 72** was number 9. Sometimes you were called by your surname but never by your Christian name. You couldn't do right in the home. If you didn't look at the nuns when they spoke to you they would say 'look me in the eye when I'm speaking to you' but if you did look them in the eye they called you defiant and said the devil was in you. There was a wall with glass and barbed wire all around the home. I used to think it was to keep people out but now I think it was to keep us in.

32. **SR 31** was so sarcastic. She was always saying 'we never asked you to come in here'. I was always getting slapped for saying 'is it alright if I go then'. I said that naïvely but after being whacked half a dozen times I realised I wasn't saying the right thing. I used to get one hell of a hiding for answering back. She used to pick on certain families as well and say 'you know we don't get any money for you, we are keeping you for nothing'. She would say that about us **SR 31** and it really stuck with me.

33. **SR 31** would tell me not to get on my high horse because she was keeping me for free. She always said it out publically in front of other children and it was so humiliating. I believe I was treated worse than others in the

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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

6. With regard to paragraph 9, the children may have been warned not to speak to strangers but this would have been a lesson taught to all children and is a lesson taught even today.
7. Further to paragraphs 9 & 10, the Sisters methods in dealing with children who wet themselves was not always the most appropriate; however [REDACTED] does confirm the Sisters attempts to resolve bedwetting. It would have been common practice to bath a child if they had wet themselves and, at this time, there may not have been warm water. The Sisters do not accept that she would have washed her own clothes and sheets.
8. With regard to paragraph 11, many allegations have been brought to the attention of the Sisters regarding children's bath times. Jeyes Fluid may have been used on the girl's hair in order to prevent head lice within the home. The use of numbers was for the purposes of clothing and belongings of the children; the children were known and called by their first names.
9. With regard to paragraphs 12 & 13, the physical chastisement discussed by [REDACTED] is not accepted by the Congregation as a tolerable approach in dealing with children. However, corporal punishment did exist and was widely used within family homes, schools and institutions in Northern Ireland. With regret, the Sisters believe that the policy of 'no physical punishment' may not have been adhered to.
10. Further to paragraph 13, 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 would not accept any abuse, physical or mental, of a child by a member of staff as appropriate or defensible.
11. With regard to paragraph 16, we do not have any record of this incident nor do we have any record of a fire escape collapsing, however we will search our any documentation regarding this.
12. With regard to paragraph 17, the Sisters of Nazareth sought to provide an adequate education for all children. We do not accept that [REDACTED] was placed in a class for educationally subnormal children as all children would have been placed in classes according to their age. Unfortunately we do not hold any educational records for the children and cannot comment further on the allegations stated in paragraph 18.
18. In a recent request from the Department of Education we were advised records

Name: Sister Brenda McCall

Date: 12 December 2014

## THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

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### Witness Statement of Sister Brenda McCall

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

1. I have read through the statement of HIA 95 [REDACTED] and can confirm she was a resident within Nazareth House. HIA 95 [REDACTED] born 21 November 1945 was admitted to Nazareth House on 13 November 1953 and discharged on 19 February 1962.
2. With regard to paragraph 7, it would seem likely that the children would have been bathed and changed when they were admitted to the home. The children's hair would have been checked in order to prevent any head lice within the home. This practice was not created to humiliate or degrade the children in any way.
3. With regard to paragraphs 8 & 21, the Congregation can only apologise for the separation in [REDACTED] family as the facilities in Nazareth House catered only for girls. The Congregation endeavoured to maintain sibling relationships and it was a common occurrence for the children to visit their siblings whenever possible.
4. With regards to paragraphs 8 - 11, the Congregation would like to express their hurt and sadness at the allegations brought forward. The congregation have always endeavoured to provide a safe and loving home for children and, with regret, the Sisters believe that the policy of 'no physical punishment' may not have been adhered to.
5. With regard to paragraph 12, it is difficult to imagine that, when there are so many children of different age's together, disputes would not arise. Bullying is a hazard in all educational environments but this was not accepted, tolerated or encouraged by the Sisters. If [REDACTED] suffered bullying or peer abuse of any sort, we believe this to be wholly unacceptable.

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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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14. I was often taken by surprise by the beatings. On one occasion I don't remember doing anything but I was suddenly slapped violently on the head from behind by **SR 134**. My head jolted onto the desk with metal nibs and I still have an ink mark on my head from it. **SR 134** didn't even ask if I was okay and I had to take out the nibs myself. Another time when I was a teenager I and another girl called **NHB 109** were pulling each other's hair. **NHB 109** was one of the pets. **SR 134** called me over, turned me round and with one snip cut off my ponytail. I pulled **NHB 109** hair out of her head and as punishment **SR 134** made me wear a placard round my neck for a week. **SR 134** stuck **NHB 109** hair onto the placard and wrote "I pulled this hair out of **NHB 109** head". I even had to wear the placard to school and Mass.
15. **SR 190** gave me a terrible beating when I was about fifteen. That is the last beating I remember. I was late and so was another girl but Sister **SR 190** didn't beat the other girl – she had it in for me. She got me to the ground and pulled my hair. Her eyes were blazing with rage and she lunged at me.
16. There was a lot of verbal abuse in the home too. Name calling by the nuns was commonplace. They would call children who wet the bed 'fish', 'limp' or 'stump' if a child was deformed and 'Pickaninny' if a child was mixed race. The nuns called me 'Click' because I had a lisp and 'Cheshire Cat' because I smiled when I was nervous. I remember once **SR 134** came up to me and spat in my face because she thought I was grinning at something. As a result of the mocking I kept quiet and learned nothing. Another girl was called 'monkey' because of her features. The nuns frequently mimicked us and I remember **SR 134** spitting in children's faces a couple of times.
17. We in turn began to use those expressions ourselves without realising the significance of it. There was a girl with a missing hand who we called 'stump' and a girl with two thumbs who we called 'thumb'. The nuns verbally abused our mothers too saying we would end up like them. We didn't understand what that meant as children.

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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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deliver the wimples back to the nuns. I fell and the wimples went into the mud, I knew I would get a hiding. I am not sure who was in charge it was either **SR 189** or **SR 134** I dropped the wimples into the nun's quarters and ran. They found out it was me and I was punished for it.

32. On another occasion we were in the recreation hall it must have been too wet or too cold to play outside. We were doing the usual things that children do and in my group of four or five girls we were singing. With us all singing sometimes the noise was very loud.
33. **SR 145** was in charge one day and asked us to Ssh. She called me out and said that I was disrespectful and needed to be taught a lesson. She took me to the workroom which was empty at the time and got a big stick battering me so hard saying I was a child of the devil and my soul would be damned forever. She rained blow after blow on me eventually knocking me to the floor. I tried to scramble away on my hands and knees but she caught me by the ankle continuing to rain blows on my whole body. I tried to get away and she said don't run away while I'm hitting you. She then told me to remain in the room until I stopped crying. All the other children would have known what had happened.
34. At the age of twelve or thirteen I decided I wanted to be a nun but you needed to be fourteen to join. I read my mass missal even the Latin version and said my favourite prayers. I wasn't the nun's favourite but I thought I'd give it ago. One day in church we were saying the usual prayers and the girl behind me stuck a pin in my bum and I let out a scream. **SR 189** dragged me out of the seat taking me to a side room saying don't you ever shout in a house of god. She then started to hit me with a cane she had tucked under her belt at the back of her habit. She said that no holy order would take me in for screaming in the house of the lord. She said that I would be a disgrace for the rest of my life; I'd probably end up in the gutter with no friends, only the lowlife of the world in the devils clutches. This incident put me off becoming a nun. I later learnt that she became Mother General at the Mother House in Hammersmith.

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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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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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4. I don't really remember my first days in the nursery but my sister **HIA 63** has told me that the older children all went away for two weeks and when she came back I ran to her crying. The nursery was separated from the older children's part by railings. On Saturdays we were allowed to stand and I could hold my sisters' hands through the railings for an hour. Then the bell would go and I didn't want to let them go. I remember searching for them in all the faces. To this day, I don't understand why I wasn't allowed mingle with my sisters. I never got to see my brother **[REDACTED]** even though he was only down the road in Nazareth Lodge. I might have seen him once or twice at a Christmas party when I was in the older children's part but that was just coincidence; that wasn't arranged by the nuns. Children from the nursery didn't go to Christmas parties so I didn't see **[REDACTED]** for years.
5. One of my earliest memories of being in the nursery is looking out the window and then sneezing into my handkerchief. **SR 180** clouted me over the head and told me to never look at the contents of my handkerchief. My head banged off the radiator and there was darkness. The next thing I remember is waking up in the isolation room so she had clearly knocked me unconscious. I was only three or four at the time.
6. The food in the nursery was horrible – it was meat with lots of grisly fat on it. I couldn't eat it. The nuns would try to make you swallow it and if you didn't you had to go and stand outside and not come in until you had swallowed it. I must have been quite a stubborn child because this was always happening to me. I just couldn't swallow the grisly meat. I remember one day, it must have been a Saturday and all the visitors started to come up while I was standing outside so I was allowed to spit the meat out.
7. I was transferred to the children's part when I was six or seven after I made my First Holy Communion. There were three groups in Nazareth House – Sacred Heart, St. Anne's and Our Lady's. The three nuns in charge were **SR 134**, **SR 116** and **SR 31** respectively. I was in **SR 134** group and she would always nip your neck in the church if you were doing anything wrong like scratching your head. Head lice were common

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in the home especially when new girls came in but the nuns would be shamed if their group had nits and were scratching their heads during Mass. It was like a competition between the nuns. You were so afraid to scratch your head in the church because you knew if you did [SR 134] would grab the skin on your neck and twist it.

8. Religion was a big part of life in the home. Every morning we were woken by [SR 134] saying "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, Amen" and woe betide you if you weren't out of bed and on your knees by the "Amen". I remember preparing for First Confession and First Holy Communion and trying to think of sins to confess. One time [SR 134] asked what my penance was and I said it was one Hail Mary. She said I must have done more than that and I remember trying to wrack my brain for something to say in Confession. This was constant – every week we were being told to examine our conscience for sins.
9. After prayers, we went down to wash in the communal sinks. We didn't have baths or hot water in those days. There were tin baths out in the backyard where we bathed once a week on a Saturday. Because of the cold water lots of girls didn't want to wash themselves properly. The nuns would come round checking our ears and neck to see if they were washed properly and if they weren't you would be beaten and punished. My sister [REDACTED] sustained a horrendous injury as punishment for not washing properly. I witnessed this happen. [REDACTED] had her head banged against tiles and I remember there was blood all over the white tiles. [REDACTED] has suffered deafness ever since as a result. I saw many girls getting beaten for not washing themselves properly but it didn't happen to me.
10. I distinctly remember the smell of Jeyes fluid when we were bathed in the tin baths. At some stage over the years, they had baths installed indoors. We had to wear starched gowns in the bath and they became buoyant when you stepped into the water. We had to wash ourselves underneath these gowns. The idea was to protect your modesty and keep yourself covered. This experience has really affected my body image as an adult.



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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.

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11. The food was usually adequate but I remember I was regularly made to go without food for silly reasons like giggling or talking in the dining room. They would take me away from the table and make me stand in the corner with my hands on my head or I would be made to walk around the yard with my hands on my head. If I put my arms down because they were aching I would be hit with the belt. The worst nuns for hitting with the belt were SR 116 SR 31 SR 31 and SR 134. The nuns carried big keys on a chain around their waist and I remember being poked with the end of the keys for all sorts of petty reasons.
12. We just took the beatings and said nothing. There was no one to tell and no one would have believed us. Nobody would have believed that the nuns would have been capable of treating children that way. We also did not know any better and didn't fully appreciate at the time how wrong it was.
13. I remember lots of noise in Nazareth House, lots of shouting and screaming, in the dormitory, in the dining room, in the recreation hall. It was the nuns who did the shouting and screaming. They shouted at us for the smallest things like our socks being down or our laces being undone. Being shouted and screamed at by the nuns and pushed and hit by them was a daily occurrence for all the girls. The only place they did not scream was in church.
14. I felt brain washed by the amount of religion that was forced on us in Nazareth House. We had to go to mass in both the morning and the evening, we had prayers at 12 o'clock, 3 o'clock and 6 o'clock and we had to go to confession every Friday. I think the priest who led mass and confession was called Father Fulton, but lots of priests came and went. I even remember being made to kneel and pray beside the coffins of dead people from the old people's part of the home. I thought that was very frightening. I was sent occasionally to work in the old people's part of the home from I was eight years old. I usually worked in the laundry.
15. I remember when I was about nine years old I ran away with another girl called [REDACTED]. We were going in to the dining room for tea when we ran away.

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We thought that was the best time as no one would notice for a while. It was dark at tea time so it must have been winter. We ran out of the convent and down the Ormeau Road. We were freezing as we had no coats on. We knocked on a lady's door and she took us in and gave us something to eat. A short time later the police came and took us back to Nazareth House. As soon as we got back [SR 31] grabbed me by the hair and dragged me all the way upstairs to a small dark store room on the top floor. She shouted at me to say "sorry Sister, I won't do it again" and she hit me all over my body with a stick, like a walking stick. I was crying. She then locked me in the room in the dark. As I cried and screamed she kept coming back in and hitting me with the stick. It felt like I was there for hours. Eventually she let me out and I was taken straight to bed. I was covered in bruises. I remember seeing one of my sisters when I got back to the dormitory but she was not able to come near me to comfort me.

16. [SR 31] picked on me more after I ran away. She would hit me with her belt if I did anything that she considered to be wrong.
17. [SR 122] was in charge of the sewing room. Her nickname was [REDACTED] because that is what she called us all. I remember being in the sewing room with some other girls to get some clothes. She told me to take my clothes off but I did not want to in front of the other girls. She pulled my clothes off and made me stand naked in front of the other girls. She then grabbed me by the hair and slapped me all over my body. The other girls were all standing in a line watching.
18. As I have previously mentioned I was made to work in the laundry. I worked there every week day and had to do the washing by hand. There was an older girl who worked in the laundry called [NHB 32] who used to hit me round the head and pull my hair if I wasn't doing the washing correctly. We were made to do all the cleaning. We had to clean the kitchen, the hallways, the corridors and the church. If the nuns didn't consider the cleaning good enough they would hit us with their belts. Saturdays were mostly spent cleaning.



1           off the bottom of them. If that wasn't done right, you  
2           were brought in and you were hit.

3    Q.    So it's that type of --

4    A.    Yes.

5    Q.    As long as you remembered and did the things --

6    A.    Yes.

7    Q.    -- that were set --

8    A.    Yes.

9    Q.    -- in terms of the discipline --

10   A.    Uh-huh.

11   Q.    -- then you were okay?

12   A.    Yes.

13   Q.    You mention -- if we can try and get the layout -- the  
14           sewing room --

15   A.    Yes.

16   Q.    -- which is somewhere --

17   A.    Yes.

18   Q.    -- you were taken to be hit.

19   A.    Yes.

20   Q.    Can you just explain to the Panel where that was in the  
21           building?

22   A.    Yes. It was down on the ground floor. You came in the  
23           back into the changing room. That was -- you came in  
24           from the back out of school into the changing room, got  
25           changed. The nun came in and looked at the collar of

1        **your shirt, and if it was -- if it was dirty, you were**  
2        **brought into the sewing room and you were slapped across**  
3        **the knuckles.**

4    Q.    Okay. Let me pause you there, because I will come back  
5        to that part about the uniform, but what you are  
6        explaining is the school classroom was on the ground  
7        floor, and when you came out of school, there was  
8        a changing room --

9    **A.    Yes.**

10   Q.    -- where you changed out of your --

11   **A.    Yes.**

12   Q.    -- uniform that you wore at school.

13   **A.    Yes, but this is when you came out of St. Monica's.**

14   Q.    Out of St. Monica's. Sorry.

15   **A.    You came in the back way.**

16   Q.    You've come home from --

17   **A.    Yes, yes.**

18   Q.    From 11 to 15 you are out at St. Monica's.

19   **A.    Yes, yes.**

20   Q.    You come home. You are changing out of your uniform --

21   **A.    Yes.**

22   Q.    -- on the ground floor in this changing room. Then  
23        there is a sewing room --

24   **A.    Yes.**

25   Q.    -- and that's where you were dealt with.

1     **A.   Yes.**

2     Q.   I will come back to the subject of that.  The other --  
3           just to get the bearings, the dorm that you were part of  
4           --

5     **A.   Yes.**

6     Q.   -- during your time --

7     **A.   Yes.**

8     Q.   -- SR31's, Our Lady's dorm, was on the top floor of the  
9           house.

10    **A.   Was on the very top floor.**

11    Q.   While it was one group --

12    **A.   Yes.**

13    Q.   -- the dormitory was actually segregated.

14    **A.   Yes.**

15    Q.   There was a partition --

16    **A.   Yes.**

17    Q.   -- with a doorway.

18    **A.   Yes.**

19    Q.   Was there a door in?  Was it just an architrave or was  
20           the door --

21    **A.   Just -- just a -- there was no door.**

22    Q.   No door?

23    **A.   No.**

24    Q.   So there's a partition across --

25    **A.   Yes.**

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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.
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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.

13. At Christmas people came and took us out for parties in the Boundary and Mackeys. I remember when I was fifteen or fourteen, I went to the Boundary party and I got a doll. I didn't want this doll because I grew up with nothing and I didn't want a doll at this time. The man told me that I could pick something else, I picked a bar of lux soap and that was me happy. When we got back everyone was made to hand in what they had been given. I said that I left mine on the bus. I couldn't wait to try this soap. Later that night, I sneaked down to the wash room and started putting the soap on like there was no tomorrow. I seen her at the back of me, she had no veil on and she had come out of her cell. She came over to me and asked "what is this?" and I said "it was soap". I was shaking so much and I told her mother gave it to me as I knew that I would get into so much trouble if I said that I had been given it at the party. She started to smell it like she had never smelt it before. She then got me by the hair and ducked my head into the sink of water several times. She then shoved my face against the mirror and said to me look at your face, what you see, you know an evil face. I did not answer her and she then said that I was the most vein girl in here. She indicated that she would deal with me tomorrow but then changed her mind in case I ran away. She made me kneel outside her cell for the rest of the night and she continued to check on me. I was wearing my night dress and the lux soap was still stinging my face.
14. The first time that I ran away from the home I was eleven years of age. I knew that this was dangerous. I think that I was running away to tell people what was happening to me. I didn't even know where I would find the police. I just walked about and then the police would have been sent a description of me but I didn't know all that until I heard a police man call my name and asked that I come with them. I thought this was a chance to tell them what the nuns were doing. I was then told that the nuns were worried about me. That is the way it was, people thought that the nuns were good and that the children were just trouble makers. There were older girls in the home who ran away and they were put into mental asylums and it was made out that they needed psychiatric help. I ran away once on my own and I also ran away with another couple of girls. We did not know where to go, we looked into shops and walked through parks. It was just about having freedom. Each time we were brought back the nuns would ask us what



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we had told the police. I recall them saying to me that I would end up in Whiteabbey, whatever that meant. They then punished us making us kneel outside their cells and you then received a harsher punishment the next morning. We were woken at six and made to scrub the passage twice on our hands and knees. Even though I did not know the dangers of the real world I sometimes thought that there was more danger inside the home than on the outside.

15. There was a nun by the name of SR134 and she was always screaming. You had to go to mass each day and as a child I became so fed up with this. I remember going into trances and shutting myself off and I remember that I would have got this almighty punch if it was my cue to go up for communion. It nearly knocked my teeth out, she was so wicked.
16. SR122 was based in the working room. She said she was some kind of nurse; she probably was as she was able to do stitches. She was a wicked nun and she was in charge of the clothes in the work room. When any of the other nuns were off she would come in with a big wooden spoon, she used to shout and yell and bang the spoon on everybody's fingers and I knew not to put my fingers on the table.
17. I had problems eating during my time in the home. It must have been the terrible trauma of going into the home and then my granny dying. All the nuns ever did was shout at you, open your mouth and pour food down your mouth. Everybody in the home probably had different types of problems but the nuns never sent you anywhere to see what was happening to you.
18. I cannot complain about the food in the home. You realise that in the 1950's and 1960's people did not have that much. I was not a great eater anyway. I do remember how bananas and oranges were delivered in boxes and they would have waited until they went off really bad. The nuns would then say that there was starving children when I would have problems eating and I never understood why they would let the food go off.

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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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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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hierarchy. **SR 31** had the top group for the cleverest children. Sister **SR 116** had the second group. I was in the third group with **SR 134**. I'm not stupid but I was brainwashed into thinking I was stupid. A child in Sister **SR 134** group was presumed to be a dunce and it was put across that we just couldn't be taught. Children who weren't good at school lived in fear. We would be called a dunce and put in the corner, in front of the whole class, with a dunce's hat on. I remember being pulled up in front of the class, feeling so bad, and being made to feel as if I was the most stupid person, while the other children would be laughing. We were punished a lot in school. The nuns would hit us with rulers and pull us by the hair. They would make us squeeze our knuckles into a fist, and then they would hit us on our knuckles with the side of the ruler. I recall all of the nuns, **SR 134**, **SR 31** and **SR 116** **SR 116** doing this to me at one stage or another.

7. I went to St Monica's Secondary School on the Ravenhill Road. That school wasn't much good either. I was put to the back of the class. I believe that the teachers at school were just as bad as the nuns because they knew our background, so they weren't interested in us or our education. We were basically non-existent. I wasn't allowed to contribute in class because it was presumed that I didn't have anything worthwhile to say, so if I put my hand up, I was just told to put it back down. I might as well not have been in the class for all the attention I got. I know a couple of girls from the Convent did well but they were generally the ones who had family, and somebody to give them encouragement. When I left school, I wasn't able to read and write properly.
8. The food was basic, but I can't say that I was hungry. I loathed some of the food, the tapioca pudding in particular. I did witness girls being made to eat food. They were told that they weren't allowed to move from the table until they finished the food in front of them and the girls would be retching trying to eat it.
9. We were all allocated chores which we had to do every day, and again it was the girls who had no families who seemed to be left with all the hard work such as scrubbing floors, whilst the favourite girls might have dusted. We

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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

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called me evil and said I was a liar. I started to cry then thinking it would make her stop but she just battered me harder and told me to stop crying.

21. I lived in absolute terror. Every morning I woke up I didn't know what lay in front of me. Sometimes you'd be told to look at the nuns and then they'd say "don't be looking at me". You were told to tell the truth but when you did you were beaten. You were damned if you did and damned if you didn't.

22. The nuns would emotionally abuse me too. [SR 31] despised me and she let me know it. She was constantly putting me down, degrading me and making me feel stupid and worthless. This feeling of worthlessness has stayed with me my entire life. The nuns had their favourites and I wasn't one of them. They would give sweets to certain children and leave me out. I always seemed to be excluded. Other children got to go to the cinema and out with families but I never did. Looking back now I had it worse because I wasn't an orphan and I had a father. I was always on the outside looking in.

23. Those nuns should never have been involved in the care of children. They seemed to hate children; you could see it in their eyes. Although they had a veil on that didn't make them any way holy. They were supposed to be our role models and they instilled a terrible attitude in me. When they accused me, I accused others. It was survival of the fittest in there. I didn't realise how nasty I was and I didn't realise that's why I had no friends growing up. There was a [redacted] girl in the home called [NHB 48] and I think she was traumatised. She used to rock back and forth all the time – in bed and on chairs. [SR 134] started to call her [redacted] and the children followed suit. The nuns allowed the children to call her that.

24. To get attention and to get out to the dentist, I had one good tooth pulled out that I recall. That's how badly I wanted to get out of there. Afterwards, I was just left to suffer on my own in a room. Nobody ever checked on me. There were never any doctors in Nazareth House unless it was an emergency or we were getting injections. Dr Hunter from the Newtownards Road used to come and give us injections. I remember [SR 122] would put this brown stuff

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1 Q. Do you know what age you were, HIA37, at all?

2 **A. I think I was anything between, say -- I wasn't at the**  
3 **big school, as we would say. So possibly 10.**

4 Q. Again the Congregation have said that this is not  
5 a punishment that they have heard of and they don't  
6 believe that that was -- they felt it was an odd type of  
7 punishment and they don't believe that you would have  
8 been punished in that way.

9 **A. I always thought they were very creative in their**  
10 **punishments actually. I mean, I have been brought up at**  
11 **home and I was chastised by my mother and father, but**  
12 **never to the extreme cruel methods that they used.**

13 Q. You go on to talk here in paragraphs 24 and 25 about the  
14 punishments. You say that:

15 "Other punishments were being forced to kneel with  
16 our hands on our heads for hours. We would be told to  
17 kneel to be caned, as this gave extra force to the  
18 strikes. The nuns would use both hands for extra  
19 strength and cane us until they were exhausted."

20 You were demonstrating to me when you were --  
21 earlier by that you meant that the nun would hold one  
22 hand with the other hand before using the cane.

23 **A. Uh-huh. Yes.**

24 Q. "Your hands would be red raw and swollen and painful for  
25 days and you held them under your arms to try to reduce

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24 Q. "Your hands would be red raw and swollen and painful for  
25 days and you held them under your arms to try to reduce

1 I didn't play with them or anything, but, yes, there was  
2 a family of HIA 28, HIA 29, HIA 39

3 Q. If you just go down to the bottom there, it says:

4 "On a daily basis I would see SR31 and SR116  
5 physically beating other children in the home, often  
6 very badly. I once remember seeing another girl called  
7 HIA37. I was about 12 at the time. HIA37 was grabbed  
8 by her hair by SR31 and dragged physically up a flight  
9 of stairs and into the top room. She was screaming and  
10 crying, but none of us could do anything about it. It  
11 was terrible."

12 Now have you a recollection of SR31 doing that to  
13 you at all, HIA37?

14 A. Oh, yes. Uh-huh, but you had so many punishments you  
15 just sometimes, when you try to recollect it or think  
16 about it, sometimes it was just so, so bad it's like  
17 they all merge into one big, black nightmare, but yes.  
18 I mean, they did like to do this in front of other  
19 children, and then they had other menaces like taking  
20 you into a room and beating you where there weren't  
21 witnesses, but I do remember, but she did this on so  
22 many occasions I couldn't tell you how many. I couldn't  
23 tell you the reason either.

24 Q. Well, the Congregation have said that they had a policy  
25 of no physical punishment for children, although they do



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**Palmerston Reception Centre, Belfast (05/11/1973 – 17/12/1973)**

3. We were only in Palmerston for a short time. There were various issues and a window got broken they said they couldn't control the seven of us. After a short time we were moved to Nazareth House.

**Nazareth House, Belfast (17/12/1973 – 30/08/1974)**

4. I was seven years old when I went into Nazareth House. I remember seeing an old man in a wheel chair. He seemed friendly and I would talk to him and fetch him things. One day he gave me a watch. When I showed it to one of the nuns she slapped my arm, took the watch off me and then slapped me about. My sister asked the nun why she did this and she said it was because I was to keep away from the old people. I don't know if the old man was a priest or whatever.
5. Things went from bad to worse in Nazareth House. One time I was trying to throw a bottle over the wall. I ended up busting my fingers in this incident but the nuns didn't give me any treatment. They just said it was my own fault. I can't remember ever seeing a doctor or dentist. I think I saw an eye specialist once.
6. We became too much for the staff to handle. I had been placed in Nazareth House along with my twin brother **HIA 31** and my sister. My sister only stayed for one day. I think she went back to Nazareth Lodge so then there was just the two of us. As Nazareth Lodge was just around the corner, we tried to escape to get back to the rest of our family. One day we were going down the long drive when one of the nuns stopped and picked us up in a car.
7. We were taken into a room with very little furniture by the nun who caught us. She turned the light off. When the light was turned on again there was another nun in the room with a broom. She started swiping at us and hitting us with the broom. The light was then turned off again. From time to time it was turned on so the nun could see where we were to hit us with the broom. We called this

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room 'the dark room'. After running away, our shoes were taken off us by the nuns and not given back to us until we had to go to school.

8. As I had just lost my father and mother in the previous couple of months, I think the nuns should have understood why I did not want to be separated from my remaining family members. We were only seven at the time. The punishment we received did not deter us and every chance we got we tried to escape from the home. Each time we were caught and given a beating. I either didn't know or I can't remember any of the nuns' names.
9. There was a lot of praying and going to Mass and going to school. We went to school offsite in a yellow bus but I don't remember the name of the school. I think they were trying to hide us away because of our family background, which had been in the papers. The Church wanted to hide us. This is why they split us up into ones and twos.
10. Eventually I think the nuns decided we were too much to handle. We kept escaping and being brought back by the police. On 30<sup>th</sup> August 1974 I was sent to the De La Salle Brothers in Rubane House, Kircubbin.

**Rubane House, Kircubbin (30/08/1974 – 02/04/1980)**

11. While at Rubane House my brother **HIA 31** and I were put in with secondary school boys even though we were just seven years old. My brother **DL 358** had just left Rubane. We were brought to Rubane by a man from the Welfare and we were introduced to the Brothers. I had never seen anyone all dressed in black before and I was quite frightened. As we were being taken to Rubane House, I had a pen and I drew the route on my arm so I could escape and go back to find my family – the route mostly followed the shoreline - Newtownards, Greyabbey, Kircubbin.
12. As we were the youngest in Rubane (me, my twin **HIA 31** and my brother **HIA 18** who was two years older) the beatings and bullying was unreal. We were placed in chalet 2, in which there were two nuns in civilian clothes. One of the nuns was called **SR 32**. She would know of our first two or three

1        would be all right and it was. This girl, I asked her.  
2        She was about, oh, maybe 16. I said, "When I am down at  
3        supper tonight, would you mind just taking the  
4        responsibility of checking the children are all right?"  
5        They were doing their homework, and she did and that was  
6        it. Otherwise they were supervised, yes.

7    Q. I want to ask you, SR153, about punishment. I am going  
8        to show you what you said to the police in 1996 about  
9        this issue.

10   A. Yes.

11   Q. If we can look, please, at 60282, you were being  
12        asked -- having been interviewed about this allegation  
13        that was made by the girl that you don't -- you believe  
14        has mistaken you for a different nun --

15   A. Yes, yes.

16   Q. -- that you were then being asked:

17        "Well, just getting back" -- if we scroll down,  
18        please -- "just getting back there just for a general  
19        thing" --

20   A. Yes.

21   Q. -- "would you ever have hit any of the kids at all and  
22        how would you have chastised them?",

23        and you say:

24        "I used to deprive them of maybe television and  
25        there again sometimes I'd find myself bringing them back

1 in halfway, you know."

2 I was saying to you that's a suggestion of you being  
3 soft, that you punished them by stopping them watching  
4 TV but you relented halfway through.

5 **A. When it came to the time, I probably said, "For goodness**  
6 **sake, it's not that serious. Come on!" Yes.**

7 Q. You used to do that or you say:

8 "... forfeit a little something or other, but it was  
9 mostly -- and that was my belief. Talk to them, you  
10 know" --

11 **A. Yes.**

12 Q. -- "and say 'I'm surprised now that you would do that  
13 sort of thing. Come on!' Yeah. That was how I had --  
14 I didn't touch them at all, though I believe we were" --  
15 if we scroll down, please -- "I believe we were allowed  
16 to give them a slap, but I didn't like to do that ever."

17 Now you go -- you are then asked:

18 "Where did you get the belief from about -- about  
19 the slapping?

20 **A. Well, it was in instructions. I remember**  
21 **reading some instructions, but I would never have**  
22 **touched them.**

23 Q. Right."

24 Then you say:

25 "I wouldn't have wanted to.

1 Q. How long would they have stayed in that unit, Sister?

2 **A. Usually until they were 17 and a half, 18.**

3 Q. Who would have looked after them there?

4 **A. There was a Senior Social Worker, one of the residential**  
5 **social workers who looked after them.**

6 Q. Just talking about the relationships with Sisters and  
7 children, and I was asking, you know, as I asked SR208,  
8 did Sisters have their favourites and, if so, was that  
9 obvious or what was the position?

10 **A. It was never noticeable really, but I'm sure Sisters**  
11 **probably liked one more than the other, but it was never**  
12 **made obvious, nor were they singled out for preferential**  
13 **treatment, but there was one Sister who was supposed to**  
14 **have pets. At least the children perceived that they**  
15 **were the pet, but, I mean, I never saw any -- any reason**  
16 **to believe it, but ...**

17 Q. The other children certainly had that view.

18 **A. Yes.**

19 Q. Obedience was expected from children, Sister --

20 **A. Yes.**

21 Q. -- and I was asking you about what form of discipline  
22 was used in the home if children were disobedient or had  
23 behaved badly in some way.

24 **A. Yes.**

25 Q. You were telling me there was various sanctions.

1     **A.**   Depending on what their misbehaviour had been or what  
2            fault they had committed really, but it was more -- if  
3            it was something very minor, they might have been  
4            deprived of a favourite television programme or  
5            sometimes it could be that they were sent to bed maybe  
6            with the younger children.  Instead of getting --  
7            staying up to 9 o'clock, they went at 8 o'clock, or  
8            sometimes it could be they were kept back from Irish  
9            dancing or from Brownies or football training, but then  
10           if it was something very serious, it might have been  
11           their pocket money not completely taken off them but --

12    Q.   Withheld?

13    **A.**   **Sorry?**

14    Q.   Withheld, Sister?

15    **A.**   **Yes.**

16    Q.   Just on the subject of pocket money, did every child in  
17           the home get pocket money?

18    **A.**   **Every child got pocket money according to their age.**

19    Q.   That was obviously from you went in the mid-'70s.

20    **A.**   **Yes.**

21    Q.   You don't know what the position was before that time.

22    **A.**   **I don't know really.**

23    Q.   You weren't -- as I say, in 1983 at that stage your  
24           responsibility was the nursery school and you weren't  
25           yourself in charge of any group of children.  I think

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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 8<sup>th</sup> 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 (13<sup>th</sup> November 1953 – 19<sup>th</sup> 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

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: 28 November 2014

## THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

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### Witness Statement of [REDACTED]

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I, [REDACTED] will say as follows: -

1. I have checked the records of SR 189 [REDACTED] Sister was born [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] and she died on [REDACTED] in Dublin. Sister entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Nazareth on 8 December 1939 and made her First Profession on 15 August 1942.
2. Sister was in Nazareth Lodge between 1945 and 1948 and her ministry was teaching and care of the boys. Sister was transferred to Nazareth House in 1948 -1959 where she taught in the school and cared for the girls. Sister trained in St Mary's College of education and qualified in 1945. Sister completed a course for Housemothers in 1950 in Belfast. In 1976 at a General Chapter Sister [REDACTED] was elected as Superior General of the Congregation and served for twelve years in this ministry.
3. Allegations have been made against Sister that she hit the children with a cane, dragged a child by the leg, scrubbed a child's neck until it bled and smacked a child's head against a wall. While Sister may have used corporal punishment it is denied that she would have done so excessively.
4. Another allegation against Sister [REDACTED] is that she threatened to bury three children in a sack down a hole because they were bold. This is refuted.
5. Sister [REDACTED] although strict was very straight and direct and was not afraid to confront or challenge a person when appropriate. Sister was an extremely hard worker and would not suffer fools gladly. She was a formidable lady but had a good sense of humour. Sister died ten years ago so therefore we cannot seek her own recollection of the



Name: [REDACTED]

Date: 28 November 2014

**THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995**

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**Witness Statement of Sister [REDACTED]**

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I, Sister [REDACTED] will say as follows: -

1. I have checked the records of [REDACTED]. Sister was born [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] and she died on [REDACTED] in Dublin. Sister entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Nazareth on 8 December 1939 and made her First Profession on 15 August 1942.
2. Sister was in Nazareth Lodge between 1945 and 1948 and her ministry was teaching and care of the boys. Sister was transferred to Nazareth House in 1948 -1959 where she taught in the school and cared for the girls. Sister trained in St Mary's College of education and qualified in 1945. Sister completed a course for Housemothers in 1950 in Belfast. In 1976 at a General Chapter Sister [REDACTED] was elected as Superior General of the Congregation and served for twelve years in this ministry.
3. Allegations have been made against Sister that she hit the children with a cane, dragged a child by the leg, scrubbed a child's neck until it bled and smacked a child's head against a wall. While Sister may have used corporal punishment it is denied that she would have done so excessively.
4. Another allegation against Sister [REDACTED] is that she threatened to bury three children in a sack down a hole because they were bold. This is refuted.
5. Sister [REDACTED] although strict was very straight and direct and was not afraid to confront or challenge a person when appropriate. Sister was an extremely hard worker and would not suffer fools gladly. She was a formidable lady but had a good sense of humour. Sister died ten years ago so therefore we cannot seek her own recollection of the

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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 8<sup>th</sup> 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 (13<sup>th</sup> November 1953 – 19<sup>th</sup> 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

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there is in the whole of your body". I think she took a dislike to me because I was feisty. SR 189 ended up becoming Mother General. She's dead now.

10. I had a tick as a child – my knee used to bounce up and down and SR 134 SR 134 hit me so hard in Mass one day for it that I saw stars. She used to stick pins in you as well and crunch you in the back. I always hated her doing that to the little ones but she didn't care how young you were. SR 134 used to take a blackening brush that was used for polishing shoes and fire it at you - you learned to duck out of the way. I hated porridge and SR 134 made me sit at the table all day, right through to lunchtime and then dinner to try to make me eat it. I wouldn't eat it, I wouldn't give in to her and I knew I would just vomit it back up. In the end she just pushed my face into the porridge. I still have a mark with a lump from where she pushed me so hard.

11. I lived in constant fear in the home. If you weren't getting hurt yourself, you were watching somebody else being beaten. I remember one girl called NHB 42 who was paralysed down one side and the nuns brought her up to the stage in the big hall, bent her over and beat her on her bare backside in front of one hundred girls. She couldn't even fight back. I was out playing with a girl called HIA 85 one day when SR 134 got us by the ears and gave us such a hiding. SR 134 would grab you by the hand and batter you with your own hand. Then she would say "I'm not hitting you, you're hitting yourself".

12. The older girls were put in charge of a younger girl and the nuns made you feel like you had to bully the younger girl. Even though I have always tried not to bully anybody, when the girl you were meant to look after didn't do something right, you had to slap them or you'd get in trouble. Looking back now, I know that's wrong. I used to think to myself "you're doing to her what the nuns are doing to you". A lot of the older girls were bullies. There was an older girl called who worked in the laundry and we were terrified of her. You hated going down to the laundry especially if your pants were soiled.

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before we even met her. The nuns beat us every day. SR 189 was the main perpetrator. Once when I was a very young child, SR 189 threatened me and two friends of mine that she would put the three of us in a sack and bury us in a hole because we were bold. I believed her because you never doubted anything the nuns said – they were like God, they knew everything.

11. We were hit on the wrists, the back of the legs and the knees. The nuns had a belt under their vestment which held a cane and that cane came out every day. We were whacked indiscriminately. If it wasn't you getting beaten, it was somebody else. You would hear the whoosh of the cane and I remember a couple of canes breaking with the force the nuns used. We used to be hit with the sharp end of keys as well – I'm sure our heads are full of dents from it. I don't think a day ever went by that somebody didn't get caned or their hair pulled. We all got it at times, except for the pets who were good at squealing.
12. The pets were put in charge of us if the nuns had to go off somewhere. We hated them because they got the first of everything. If a few apples came in they got the apples first and fruit was rare in those days. Any photographs you found, the pets were always placed at the front. If we were going out for a walk on the Ormeau Road, they always led the way.
13. Even in Mass, the cane was there. The nuns carried it with them under their vestments all day every day. I remember a nun waiting like a vulture for the end of Mass so she could beat another child. She dragged the child from the church into the sacristy and beat the living daylights out of her. The nun beat her so hard her veil and crucifix got tangled up and her veil nearly came off. I think the child had wet herself during Mass because she was too afraid to ask to go to the toilet and that's why she was beaten. There were group beatings too where if we didn't hear a call for silence, the nuns would charge among us. The cane would fall anywhere hitting our heads, shoulders and the back of our knees. We used to have welts on the back of our knees from these beatings and they were very painful when we had to kneel down in church.

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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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deliver the wimples back to the nuns. I fell and the wimples went into the mud, I knew I would get a hiding. I am not sure who was in charge it was either **SR 189** or **SR 134** I dropped the wimples into the nun's quarters and ran. They found out it was me and I was punished for it.

32. On another occasion we were in the recreation hall it must have been too wet or too cold to play outside. We were doing the usual things that children do and in my group of four or five girls we were singing. With us all singing sometimes the noise was very loud.
33. **SR 145** was in charge one day and asked us to Ssh. She called me out and said that I was disrespectful and needed to be taught a lesson. She took me to the workroom which was empty at the time and got a big stick battering me so hard saying I was a child of the devil and my soul would be damned forever. She rained blow after blow on me eventually knocking me to the floor. I tried to scramble away on my hands and knees but she caught me by the ankle continuing to rain blows on my whole body. I tried to get away and she said don't run away while I'm hitting you. She then told me to remain in the room until I stopped crying. All the other children would have known what had happened.
34. At the age of twelve or thirteen I decided I wanted to be a nun but you needed to be fourteen to join. I read my mass missal even the Latin version and said my favourite prayers. I wasn't the nun's favourite but I thought I'd give it ago. One day in church we were saying the usual prayers and the girl behind me stuck a pin in my bum and I let out a scream. **SR 189** dragged me out of the seat taking me to a side room saying don't you ever shout in a house of god. She then started to hit me with a cane she had tucked under her belt at the back of her habit. She said that no holy order would take me in for screaming in the house of the lord. She said that I would be a disgrace for the rest of my life; I'd probably end up in the gutter with no friends, only the lowlife of the world in the devils clutches. This incident put me off becoming a nun. I later learnt that she became Mother General at the Mother House in Hammersmith.

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21. I went to school in the convent but I was very rarely in the classroom. I would get messages from **SR 116** during class that she wanted me to scrub floors, polish shoes and do chores and **SR 134** would release me from class and tell me to go to her. My IQ test carried out in later life showed that I was intelligent but my education was constantly interrupted. I have always wondered what I would have been capable of given the chance instead of the menial jobs I was made to do in the home and after leaving the home. With my level of education I had to work as a waitress and clean toilets. I had a brain but no confidence or self esteem to use it.

22. I was taught by **SR 31** for a while. She had a blackthorn stick that she used to keep in her classroom and she would whack you with it along your legs and back. I remember once an inspector asked about the stick and **SR 31** called it her pointing stick for pointing to the blackboard. I think that was the first realisation for me about nuns actually lying after telling us that we would go straight to hell if we lied yet there she was in front of this inspector saying that it was her pointing stick. **SR 134** also used big silver serving spoons to whack the back of your knuckles and they would swell up and you couldn't move your hands and that happened regularly.

23. There was another nun who was also vicious; I think she was called **SR 189**. She would get your head and smack it up against the wall. I have had blood pumping from my head following an incident like this with her and she just told me to get up to the dormitory and clean the mess up. I never received medical treatment. It was not just **SR 116** who abused me, it was all of them but as I was in **SR 116** group which **SR 116** was responsible for I had the most abuse from her. She was my nightmare and the one mostly in my head. In my view the other nuns were just as bad. We came from bad people, bad homes, we were the scum of the earth, children of drunks and prostitutes and goodness knows what and so we had our parents sins to answer for and that had to be beaten out of us.

24. There were also occasions of being nearly drowned in the bath, being pushed under the water in the bath. We were bathed in four big baths and one girl

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the laundry with all the wet sheets and wash them by hand. There was a civilian worker in the laundry called **NHB 35** and on one occasion she hammered me with her walking stick. I was sobbing my heart out and when I came back to the dining room **SR 189** smirked and said "did you have a hard time down there?" The way I was treated that day has scarred me for life. It made me a very nervous person and even now I don't like people coming up behind me.

12. The nuns would show films, and on one occasion a nun informed us that we were going into the hall to watch a movie – Boys Town. I was very excited at the prospect of this but just as we had all settled down to watch the film, one of the nuns got up and announced that all the girls who had wet the bed the night before would not be allowed to watch the film. I was mortified by this; as were the other girls. Although this may seem petty to some people, it was very harsh and unpleasant for us. Every time Boys Town is on television now I have to watch it or record it. It feels good knowing that nobody can stop me watching what I want anymore.
13. Quite regularly, when out playing in the garden, we would be subjected to having our heads banged repeatedly by the nuns against a red-brick wall. On one particular day **SR 189** was banging my head against the wall so severely that **SR 134** announced that she thought I had had enough and **SR 189** stopped. **SR 134** saved me that day and I am grateful for that. I can't even remember why **SR 189** was banging my head against the wall – she didn't need a reason. The nuns made us feel worthless. We had no self-esteem and walked around with our heads bowed. Even later when we went out to work the nuns would always tell us not to try to get ideas above our station.
14. We were also subjected to the nuns regularly lashing out at us for no particular reason. It would involve them coming up behind us unexpectedly and hitting us on the back of the head, poking us in the back or hitting us across the legs with a cane. We could simply be walking down a corridor



endeavoured to provide a safe and loving home for children and we are distressed that Jean was not given appropriate care and support. The children did have contact with local doctors and may not have attended on their own due to their age. Many of the Sisters were trained nurses therefore it was appropriate for these Sisters to assist in cases of minor illnesses or injuries.

6. With regard to paragraph 10, 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. The Sisters sought to provide nutritious food for the children and regret that any child went hungry under their care.
7. With regard to paragraphs 11 and 12, it is clear that many allegations have been made regarding bedwetting however making the children walk around with nappies on is not an allegation we recognise and do not accept.
8. Further to paragraph 11, the staff were employed by the sisters with the utmost faith in their ability to ensure the needs of the children were met and, on occasion, this was not always upheld. The congregation would not accept any abuse, physical or mental, of a child by a member of staff as appropriate or defensible.
9. With regard to paragraph 13, we do not accept that a child would be subjected to having their head banged repeatedly against a wall.
10. The physical chastisement discussed in paragraphs 14 & 18 is incomprehensible in today's society and is not accepted by the Congregation as a tolerable approach in dealing with children. The use of corporal punishment did exist and was widely used within family homes, schools and institutions in Northern Ireland. The Sisters believe that the policy of 'no physical punishment' was not always adhered to.
11. With regard to paragraph 17, [REDACTED] has discussed the use of numbers within the home. We can 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.
12. With regard to paragraphs 19 & 20, [REDACTED] has discussed the sexual abuse she suffered at the hands of the older girls. At no point were the Sisters aware of any sexual abuse amongst the children and condemn such behaviour. The Sisters are

Name: SR 52

Date: 27 November 2014

## THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

Witness Statement of SR 52

I, SR 52 will say as follows: -

1. I have checked the records of [REDACTED] Sister was born [REDACTED] in Drung, Moville, Co Donegal [REDACTED] Sister entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Nazareth on 30 October 1938 and made her First Profession on 2 February 1941. [REDACTED] reverted back to her Baptismal name and was thereafter known within the Congregation as [REDACTED] in January 2001.
2. Sister was in Nazareth House between 1959 – 1974 and was teaching in the school on the premises and also cared for a group of children.
3. Sister was transferred to Nazareth Lodge in August 1975 when the Nazareth House and Nazareth Lodge schools amalgamated and it became known as St Michael's primary school. [REDACTED] was school Principal. Sister held a Certificate of Education and was respected by the teaching staff whom she encouraged to keep abreast of new teaching methods. St Michael's School was used as a pilot scheme to introduce vertical grouping in the Infant classes in 1975.
4. In 1976 Sister [REDACTED] returned to Nazareth House until she was transferred as Superior to Nazareth House, Southend. England in 1982
5. In 2001 Sister [REDACTED] was transferred to Nazareth House Derry when her health and mobility deteriorated. Sister died on 31 December 2011.
6. An allegation has been made that Sister made children kneel outside her bedroom all night. The Congregation accepts that children may have been made to kneel for

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than me. Growing up, I was led to believe she was my aunt. I have no contact with my older sister or my half brothers.

**Nazareth House, Belfast (3rd August 1965 – 3rd July 1975)**

5. I went into Nazareth House when I was seven years old and I stayed there for ten years. My first memory is of the nuns meeting us at the door. They were so nice when the man and woman dropped us off but as soon as they left they changed. It was a scary place. The nuns told us we would only be staying a little while and as the day went on I remember wanting to go home to see my mummy and daddy. We never saw them again. I recall going to court with the same man and woman who took us away and I think we were all made wards of court until we were 18.
6. NHB 107 and I were put in the girls' section of Nazareth House. NHB 92 and DL 365 were placed in St. Joseph's Babies Home which was part of Nazareth Lodge. I never got to see DL 365 again. NHB 107 has what would now be called special needs – she can't read or write and has learning difficulties.
7. The nuns I remember are SR 31, SR 134, SR 116 and [REDACTED]. I was in Sister Francis' group – we nicknamed her 'Elephant'. She was always knocking you on the head with her knuckles. SR 134 was called SR 134. I can't remember the Mother Superior's name. I had a doll when I went into the home and SR 31 took it off me. She said she would keep it safe but I never saw it again.
8. The daily routine in the home was you got up at about 5am and jumped straight to the side of your bed to say your prayers. I wet the bed so I got beaten regularly and SR 31 or SR 134 would push my face in to my wet sheets. They got alarms then for the 'wet the beds'. Mine always went off first and SR 31 would come out of her cell and give me a terrible hiding. By the time she was done with me she was too tired so the other girls could fall asleep and if they wet the bed all they would get is a smack the next morning. I used to have to wash my sheets in the middle of the night. I had to

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and had to wait until I went to the toilet and the screw came out. **SR 134**

came to ask if I had got the screw so I had to wash it to show it to her. She gave me a clip round the ear.

15. I went to primary school in Nazareth Lodge and then to St Monica's Secondary School on the Ravenhill Road. The other girls at school would call us names because we lived in the home. I remember walking back from school one day with another girl, whose name I cannot remember, and we went into a wee orchard and took some apples. We brought them back and shared them with the other girls. The owner of the orchard phoned the home and said that one of us had taken apples. The nuns told us that if the culprits did not own up that everyone would be punished so we owned up. **SR 31** put me in a big room and hit me on the hands so hard with the cane that I thought she was going to take my hands off. I remember my hands were swollen afterwards.

16. I remember one night when one of the younger children died and we all had to go down to the chapel to pay our last respects. I will never forget seeing her in her coffin. I think she had been out for the weekend with a family and had drowned in Ormeau Park.

17. I remember another occasion when I was cleaning somewhere and had to walk up the stone steps to the dormitory. I fell and chipped my tooth. **SR 116** was walking behind me. She was crying because one of the older nuns had died. She pulled me up the rest of the steps by my hair. The blood was pouring out of my mouth. She did not care at all.

18. **SR 31** was wicked. She used to hit us over the head with the keys she carried. I remember one day at school when I got my sums wrong she hit me on the hands with a big bamboo cane. She used to carry a cane on her person every day. Sometimes she used a black leather strap. I remember going in to the toilet one day and I had to run out immediately because **SR 31** was beating a girl. She was squealing but I could not do anything to help her as I was just a child myself.

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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 elephant 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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7. We went to bed at 6.00pm. The food in Nazareth House was alright, but if we misbehaved we didn't get any. We never got pocket money or sweets. Sister **SR 31** used to make me wear hand me downs, when everybody else was getting new dresses. When I went to Middletown the staff were shocked at what I was wearing and had to take me out and buy me new clothes. I thought it was great.
8. I went to the school that was in Nazareth House, until the new school was built on the Ravenhill Road. **SR 31** was in charge of both schools. I was beaten by **SR 31** for being left-handed. She would hit me on the head in front of all of the classes and tell everyone I was a dunce. When she was hitting me on the head with her keys, I used to think it was no wonder I had no brain. She would also tell the other children not to play with me, so I was always left on my own unless one of the other girls from the home played with me. I had no friends in primary school. I would always try to go into the gym or the hall, to get out of **SR 31** way as she was always marching around the playground, and she would just hit me for nothing. I don't remember ever doing any homework in Nazareth House.
9. Every Friday, I was made to get down on my hands and knees in the three classrooms to scrub, wax and polish the floors. I had to take the wax off the floor with a knife. I was only aged six years at the time. I wasn't allowed to eat or go to bed until all three classrooms were scrubbed, waxed and polished. I had to do this by myself every week. **SR 31** would come in and hit me on the head with her keys while I was on my knees.
10. If I was bad, **SR 31** used to make me kneel outside her cell door at night and pray. I was there from one day until the next. I wasn't given any food and I wasn't allowed to go to bed. I wasn't even allowed to sleep. I had to kneel and pray the entire night. There was a window with a curtain which she would look through to check on me. If I had fallen asleep, she would bang the window and shout **HIA 195** get up". Then she would come out and batter me across the head with a large bunch of keys that she always carried around

1 is such an institutionalised child makes us loathe to  
2 recommend another form of institutional care, but in the  
3 circumstances there seems to be no alternative."

4 If we just scroll down, this is what you and I were  
5 discussing earlier, that:

6 "HIA195's family can offer no solution. Her father  
7 is not interested and her sisters are incapable of  
8 offering HIA195 the stability that she needs. There are  
9 no hopes of fostering this girl.

10 HIA195 is settled, happy and contented here and so,  
11 despite the danger of further institutionalisation, we  
12 feel that there is little alternative but to make  
13 a Training School Order."

14 You explain in your statement that you weren't  
15 always an angel when you were in Middletown --

16 **A. No.**

17 Q. -- but you settled down and found a warmth there that  
18 wasn't your experience in Nazareth House.

19 **A. Yes. That's correct.**

20 Q. I want to go back then to your statement. You stayed in  
21 Middletown until '79, in fact, after your Training  
22 School Order expired, and then ...

23 **A. Yes.**

24 Q. If we go back to your statement, please, at 171, you  
25 talk at various locations in your statement about SR31

1 and her behaviour towards you. You say in paragraph 5  
2 that you were sure to get a slap every day from her.  
3 Was that a slap with the hand or what do you mean by  
4 that when you say --

5 **A. A bunch of keys on the top of the head.**

6 Q. So it was hitting you with a bunch of keys. You say she  
7 had her favourites, but you were her punch bag.

8 **A. Yes.**

9 Q. What do you mean by "favourites"? What -- how did you  
10 become a -- what characterised a favourite?

11 **A. Different girls that she had, you know, that was always**  
12 **with her and then other ones was hit.**

13 Q. And you could see that distinction --

14 **A. Yes.**

15 Q. -- in the group that you were in. The group you were  
16 in, it was about forty girls. Is that -- or were there  
17 less? Can you remember? If you can't, just say.

18 **A. I can't really remember.**

19 Q. You can't remember the size of it, but there are  
20 a number of girls in the group?

21 **A. Yes.**

22 Q. You describe yourself as "her punch bag". Is that just  
23 how you characterise it, reflecting back on -- you know,  
24 were there good times with SR31 as well as the bad times  
25 that you explained? Were there some times when she was



1 left-handed.

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

3 Q. What -- how would she -- was that -- did she use a ruler  
4 or how -- what did she hit you with?

5 **A. A bunch of keys.**

6 Q. So it's the keys that you clearly remember were the  
7 thing?

8 **A. On the head.**

9 Q. You say here that she would hit you on the head in front  
10 of all the classes and tell everyone that you were  
11 a dunce?

12 **A. Yes, that's correct.**

13 Q. Now I did say to you that there is a -- and we will come  
14 back to the record about education slightly later, where  
15 she seemed to be more positive in the social worker's  
16 record about your education, but we will come back to  
17 that. What you are saying is she hit you and you say in  
18 this paragraph she hit you for nothing.

19 Then in paragraph 9 you recount how on a Friday you  
20 were involved in the cleaning of the floors in the  
21 classroom.

22 **A. Yes.**

23 Q. You explain you had a knife to take the --

24 **A. Wax off.**

25 Q. -- wax off the floor and then you had to rewax it.

1     **A.   (Nods.)**

2     Q.   I was asking you can you remember others being involved  
3         in that with you?

4     **A.   Nobody.**

5     Q.   You don't have a recollection of that.  It was just the  
6         classrooms that were done on the Friday?

7     **A.   Yes.**

8     Q.   Then am I right in saying the other parts of the  
9         building then were worked on on the Saturday?

10    **A.   (Nods.)**

11    Q.   Does that mean that while there were some chores during  
12         the week in the mornings, the main chores were this work  
13         on the Friday evening and then on the Saturday?

14    **A.   Yes.**

15    Q.   You mention this a number of times in your statement,  
16         HIA195, that the punish... -- one of the punishments  
17         that she would give you was to kneel outside her cell.

18    **A.   And pray all night.**

19    Q.   The Order has said to the Inquiry that they accept there  
20         may have been some kneeling.  If we just bring up,  
21         please, 2033 and paragraph 9.  Just scroll down, please.  
22         The Order said to the Inquiry:

23                 "Many allegations have been made similar to those  
24         described by HIA195.  Whilst we agree a child may have  
25         been made to kneel outside a Sister's door at night, we

1 don't accept that HIA195 would have been left there all  
2 night without food or sleep."

3 That's how it seemed to you. Whether it was all  
4 night or not, that's how it appeared to you at the time.

5 **A. It was all night.**

6 Q. That's your recollection of it. You mention, if we go  
7 back to paragraph 10 at 173, that you would be hit in  
8 the class for falling asleep.

9 **A. Yes.**

10 Q. Was that with the keys or was that with some --

11 **A. No, keys, bunch of keys.**

12 Q. In paragraph 11 you talk about developing psoriasis on  
13 your head.

14 **A. Yes.**

15 Q. You describe how SR31 dealt with that, and that was  
16 having your hair cut off, and you describe the manner in  
17 which she tried to work on your head and the bleeding  
18 and then being hit with the brush that she was using.  
19 Why did she hit you? Can you remember were you  
20 struggling or --

21 **A. No, I was squealing with the pain, because she was**  
22 **scrubbing my head that much with the Jeyes Fluid it was**  
23 **burning the head off me. I was squealing that much she**  
24 **just whacked me on top of the head with a scrubbing**  
25 **brush.**

1     **A. No, SR31.**

2     Q. In 1995 it appears that that SR31, whose real name was  
3       SR31 or SR31, was the subject of a police investigation.  
4       Just if I make the Panel aware that file, which was  
5       file 30 of 41 of Operation Overview, runs from 60289 to  
6       60408.

7           Now you were one of seven individuals whose various  
8       allegations were put to SR31 and amongst them was  
9       a thread of the use of the keys, and what I am going to  
10      do -- I was discussing this with you earlier -- is just  
11      show the Panel some of the core references in the  
12      interview that relate to what she had to say.

13           If we look at -- the period -- the part that covers  
14      your allegations being put to her are at 60324 through  
15      to 60342. If we just bring up 60324, please, there is  
16      a discussion here that -- she says well, she did carry  
17      keys. She said:

18           "There were two keys."

19           I presume they were for a large door. So they were  
20      --

21     **A. Two keys? There must have been about a hundred keys in**  
22       **the bunch.**

23     Q. Sorry, HIA195. Can you just --

24     **A. It wasn't two keys. It was about a hundred keys in one**  
25       **bunch.**

1 Q. So it was a bunch of keys?

2 **A. Uh-huh.**

3 Q. She is saying to the police there were two keys that she  
4 had. One was the classroom, one to her private room.  
5 She would have carried those at night.

6 "A. Yes."

7 Just scroll down, please.

8 "Q. At all times basically when you were --

9 **A. They were in my pocket, yes.**

10 Q. Certainly you don't know anything about hitting  
11 the child with the --

12 **A. Certainly not.**

13 Q. -- bunch? Certainty not. Right. Okay."

14 Then she goes on to talk about you, and the same  
15 issue is raised. If we just look quickly, please, at  
16 60333, she says very specifically:

17 "No recollection of that at all now, you know. It  
18 didn't happen. I didn't hit any..."

19 Well, I presume "hit" should be in there:

20 "I didn't hit anybody with the keys."

21 So she is saying categorically while she had some  
22 keys, she never used them to hit anyone. What do you  
23 want to say to the Inquiry about that, HIA195?

24 **A. She did hit me with the keys.**

25 Q. She says in the police interview, if we look, please, at

1           60335, that you were considered, she seems to be  
2           implying by others, to be her pet --

3   **A. Never.**

4   Q. -- and that other children in the group used to tease  
5       her that HIA195 could not do any wrong. She says even  
6       to this day, which would have been 1996, she was  
7       receiving letters from other girls stating that you were  
8       her pet.

9           She said -- if we move through on to the next page,  
10       please, 60336, she says that you were -- she was very  
11       kind to you and did -- on 60337 she says she did all she  
12       could to help you. On 60338 she says she was  
13       particularly good to you.

14   **A. No.**

15   Q. Is that how you recall your time with SR31?

16   **A. No. I hated her.**

17   Q. Why did you hate her?

18   **A. Because she was just cruel and rude and ignorant and**  
19       **kept beating me all the time.**

20   Q. What she says about -- the allegation then is put to her  
21       that you told her what Brendan Smyth had done to you  
22       that first occasion, and if we go back, please, to  
23       60328, so the -- what you say in your police statement  
24       about what happened and what you told her is explained  
25       to her and she is asked then:

1           Now did you talk to others about your police  
2           statement in 1995 about talking about the bunch of keys?

3   **A. No, I didn't. I didn't talk to anybody.**

4   Q. Where were you -- can you think back? Where were you  
5       living by 1995?

6   **A. 1995 I would have -- I was [REDACTED].**

7   Q. So you'd moved to the [REDACTED] by then?

8   **A. Yes, yes.**

9   Q. Is it possible that the police got in touch with you as  
10       someone who lived in Nazareth House?

11   **A. I -- I do remember the police coming at one time when**  
12       **I was living in [REDACTED], and it was also to find out**  
13       **where HIA 368 had lived, because of allegations of**  
14       **Father Smyth.**

15   Q. So that might have been --

16   **A. Yes.**

17   Q. -- what led to the --

18   **A. Yes.**

19   Q. -- discussion with the police about it --

20   **A. Yes.**

21   Q. -- and led to the statement, but in any event the  
22       suggestion here is that you have picked up the being hit  
23       with a bunch of keys --

24   **A. No.**

25   Q. -- from others.

1     **A.**   I picked up I was hit with a bunch of keys because I was  
2           hit with bunches of keys.  It wasn't -- it's nobody else  
3           put that into my head.  I never asked anybody else about  
4           it.  This is what happened to me.  This isn't about  
5           seven other people or I don't know about seven other  
6           people.

7     **Q.**   She goes on to deal with each of the allegations in turn  
8           and says, "No, I didn't do those things.  I didn't ..."  
9           -- she says in relation to your mum, for instance, she  
10          didn't even know she was an alcoholic, so she wouldn't  
11          have been saying that about her --

12    **A.**   **She did know.**

13    **Q.**   -- but you are saying that's what happened?

14    **A.**   **Yes.**

15    **Q.**   What we can see is that ultimately a decision -- if we  
16           look at 60295, please, having gathered all this material  
17           together and looked at the totality of it, the decision  
18           was taken in these papers:

19                 "Seven separate complainants make allegations  
20                 against SR31 and there is a common thread of striking  
21                 the girls with a bunch of keys.

22                 However, when one takes into account the mostly  
23                 minor nature of and length of time since the commission  
24                 of the alleged offences, the lack of medical or other  
25                 corroborative evidence and the subsequent denials by the



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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]