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HIA REF: 302

Witness Name: HIA 302

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 302

I, HIA 302 will say as follows:-

Personal Details

1. I was born on [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] County Tyrone. My mother was called [REDACTED] and she was not married when I was born. I do not know who my father was. My mother was unable to care for me and I was placed in Nazareth House in Sligo when I was a baby.

Nazareth House, Sligo (1942 – 1947)

2. I was placed in Nazareth House in Sligo as a baby. I was very young and do not recall my time there. When I was five years old I was taken from Nazareth House in Sligo to St Joseph's Children's Home in Derry.

St Joseph's Children's Home, Termonbacca (1947)

3. I was taken to Termonbacca from Nazareth House in Sligo when I was five years old. I was only in Termonbacca for a number of weeks.
4. As I was so young I just have a few memories of institutional life in Ireland but I am not sure whether my memories are from Termonbacca or Sligo. I remember

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being terrified of loud voices. The nuns were always shouting and I remember cowering in fear and trying to cover my head in bed at night so they couldn't see me. I remember some older boys used to hit me around the head with their hands and fists which made me fall to the ground. Some of the nuns hit me too but I cannot remember the nun's names. The nuns always looked scary to me. It was their harsh voices and shouting that was the worst.

5. After a short time I was taken from Termonbacca to Southampton by train. I do not remember the journey to Southampton because I was so young. I sailed on to Australia on 29th August 1947 on the SS Asturias.

Castledare – (22 September 1947 – 1952 approximately)

6. We arrived in Fremantle in Western Australia on 22nd September 1947 when I was five years old. We were taken by bus to Castledare in the evening and were put to bed. The home was run by the Christian Brothers. On my first morning we were all standing around, taking in our new surroundings. A tall man wearing a black robe told all of us boys to line up. I was slow in doing so and this man grabbed me by the arm and proceeded to belt me with a heavy leather strap across my bare legs. I had dark bruises on my legs for several days.
7. The second incident of abuse that I recall occurred in the shower room. Brother **BAU 9** left two of his favourite boys in charge of the shower room. These boys were bullies and they got other boys to urinate into bottles. They would then force the youngest boys, including me, down on the floor and force the urine down our throats. After this ordeal each of the younger boys was assigned an older boy as a minder.
8. My minder generally looked after me very well except for one occasion. On the first day of the summer season, all the boys were issued a pair of swimming togs. My minder and his friends were so excited to get to the river that they left me behind. An older boy took me by the hand and led me across the oval to the toilet block. Once inside the older boy took off my togs and then took off his own.

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He began to molest me. He had me pinned down. Thankfully my minder arrived just in time. I understand that that older boy was dealt with by my minder and his friends.

9. When I was in third grade I was taught by [BAU 9] He would call me up behind his desk and would put his hand down my shorts. We did not wear underwear and [BAU 9] would fondle my genitals and bottom. It was embarrassing and degrading because all of the boys in the class knew that you were being molested. I was called up to his desk to be molested numerous times during that year. I also recall other boys being called up to his desk and he told them to comb his hair while he molested them.
10. [BAU 9] would prowl around the dormitory at night and I would see him stop at a bed, wake up a boy, and take that boy to his room. I was always relieved when he would walk past my bed and shine his torch at another bed. On one occasion when I was approximately nine years old I made the mistake of leaving the dormitory in the middle of the night because I was terrified by a storm that had woken me up. I jumped out a window and I was hiding under a hedge, when [BAU 9] came out of the dormitory and called me inside. I thought I was going to get a belting from him. However [BAU 9] put his arm around me and led me to his room. He told me to take off my wet pyjamas and he dried me down whilst I was standing in front of him naked. [BAU 9] told me that because I was afraid of the storm, I could stay in his bed until the storm passed. I was still naked at the time. I hopped into bed and fell asleep. I then woke up in fear because [BAU 9] was molesting me. When the storm passed, he gave me dry pyjamas and told me to go back to bed. I realised then why [BAU 9] took boys to his room at night and every now and then I would get picked by him. [BAU 9] was the most vicious and cruel of all of the Brothers.
11. One Sunday morning [BAU 10] told me to report to his room after Mass because I had been talking in Church. When I arrived, [BAU 10] pushed me inside and told me to take off my clothes and to lie over his bed. He belted me across my back and bottom with a harness strap. When he finished belting

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me he told me that under no circumstances was I to turn around. I eventually took a peek and was shocked to see him masturbating. When he had finished he told me to get dressed and as I was leaving the room he gave me a good hard kick up the backside.

12. One day a group of boys took the barge from its moorings without permission. **BAU 11** instructed all of the boys to jump off the barge and swim back to shore, however there was one boy who couldn't swim so **AU 10** and I helped him to the shore. **BAU 11** was furious and kept shouting at us to let the boy go. We refused however and when we reached the shore **BAU 11** instructed us to go to the diving board. He told us to take our togs off, because we would not need them where we were going. He ordered us to walk naked to the end of the diving board and then we each had to jump off one side into the water. **BAU 11** lay on the diving board on his stomach, grabbed each of us by the hair, and pushed us under the water for long periods. He would pull us up for air and then push us under again and again. It seemed to go on for ages and we were both so exhausted that it felt like we would have sank, had he let go of our hair. Finally he grabbed us by our arms and hauled us out of the water onto the diving board. While we lay there recovering he simply walked away.
13. Whilst I did enjoy some fun times with friends in Castledare, I suffered brutality and abuse at the hands of the Brothers and as a result I suffered anxiety and fear throughout my life.

Clontarf Boy's Town - (1952 - 1958)

14. When I was about ten years old I was moved to Clontarf Boys Town.
15. When I was eleven years old. I was abused by a senior boy called **AU 3** **AU 3** who was put in charge of us whilst we were supposed to be weeding. I was messing around and **AU 3** took me into the sports room. He dropped his shorts and made me perform sex acts on him. He threatened to belt me if I didn't comply. Over the next few months he took me up the bakery clock

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tower where I had to perform more sex acts on him and this only stopped when he left Clontarf.

16. On one occasion after standing on a nail [BAU 6] asked me what was wrong with my foot. I was about thirteen years old. Instead of sending me to the infirmary where I would be under the care of the nuns he ordered me to go to my own bed, despite the dormitories being out of bounds to boys during the daytime. He then came and sat on a chair beside my bed. He told me to take off my pyjamas and lay on my stomach. He spent ages running his hand down my back, over my bottom and between my legs. I was too scared to say anything but I knew exactly what he was doing. He then made me turn around and he was looking me up and down. I became so embarrassed that I asked him what he was doing. He looked shocked and finally he told me to report to the infirmary. He never looked at my foot.
17. [BAU 9] was transferred from Castledare to Clontarf. In approximately late 1956 [BAU 6] called to me and said [HIA 299] you have known Brother [BAU 9] for a long time'. I said 'yes Sir, [BAU 9] had been molesting kids for years'. [BAU 6] went as white as a sheet. He told me not to say anything but that [BAU 9] would be punished. About a week later Brother [BAU 9] disappeared from Clontarf. He was transferred to a college in Adelaide.
18. One day during class, [BAU 12] game me the key to his room, and told me to sweep it out. He followed me in and made me sit next to him on the bed. He told me to take my clothes off and lay face down on the bed. He dropped his trousers and lay on top of me and eventually ejaculated. Once he had finished he threw me a towel and told me to clean myself up. He told me to go back to class and say nothing to anyone or else. I wept all the way back to class.
19. In 1957, I was in the last year of my schooling. One evening whilst I was in the classroom I started to mess around out of boredom. I was caught by Brother [BAU 8] He pushed me up against the wall and started punching me in the stomach several times. He then held me by the hair and banged my head

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against the wall a couple of times. He hit me in the groin with his knee a couple of times and I fell to the ground. He then lifted me up and dropped me near the edge of the concrete veranda and pushed his knees into my midriff winding me. He told me to return to my class and kicked me the whole way back. I pleaded with [BAU 8] to stop the whole time.

20. During my time at Clontarf, I witnessed a lot of brutality. I recall [BAU 13] hitting any boy who made the slightest mistake in the classroom with a very thick walking stick. We were all terrified of him. On one occasion I witnessed Brother [BAU 6] hitting [AU 11] a boy in a wheelchair, with a stick. This boy had lost both his legs in a bus accident in 1955 in which [BAU 6] was the driver. One of the worst incidents I ever witnessed happened after [BAU 14] realised that [AU 12] hadn't brushed his teeth properly. [BAU 14] flew into a rage and grabbed [AU 12] by the shirt collar and tipped him upside down and while holding him by the ankles. He then proceeded to bang his head off the concrete landing. [AU 12] was screaming with terror and we all surged forward to rescue him, however thankfully [BAU 14] stopped his attack.
21. When I turned sixteen [BAU 6] told me I was being sent to work on a farm. I knew the area well because I had spent holidays there with [AU 13]. [AU 13] was totally unsuited to farm work but I worked hard to please the farmer. After three weeks the farmer told me I was not a good worker. I completely broke down as a result of the physical exhaustion, severe loneliness and low self esteem. The farmer contacted the [AU 13] and asked them to come out to the farm. When they saw the state I was in they volunteered to take me straight back to Clontarf. I was dreading how [BAU 6] would react because I was terrified of him. When we arrived [BAU 6] put his arm around me and told the [AU 13] that he would give me the love and care that I needed because I wasn't yet ready for the outside world. As soon as the [AU 13] left, [BAU 6] grabbed me by my hair and shirt collar, and dragged me into his office. He punched me again and again and when I fell to the floor, he started kicking me. After I cleaned myself up [BAU 6] told me that because I had caused him so much trouble I had to work in the piggery cleaning out the pens. I did this for nine months without any pay.

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22. I was eventually sent down to [REDACTED] to work on an orchard. I was working six days a week. Two weeks after starting this job I was visited by a state welfare officer who had come to see how I was coping. This was the first welfare officer I had ever seen. He was not satisfied with my working hours and living conditions and remonstrated with the manager of the orchard and told him to improve my working and living conditions or he would take me back to Perth. I was really grateful to him for trying to improve my conditions.

Life after care

23. As a result of the way I was treated I am cynical of the Catholic Church and its teachings. I suffer from anxiety and depression. These conditions have plagued me throughout my life.

24. I was a small boy who was bullied and fearful and could not protect myself. I always tried to disappear and hide away from the bullies and paedophiles but sometimes they caught me. No one in my family gave consent for me to be deported and if that hadn't happened I would have been able to find my mother before we were both too old to be properly reunited.

Statement of Truth

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

HIA 302

Signed _____

Dated 19-12-2013