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HIA REF: 19

Witness Name: HIA 19

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 19

I, HIA 19 will say as follows:-

Personal Details

1. I was born on [REDACTED] and went in to care when I was six months old. I had two brothers and one sister NHB 12 HIA 152 and HIA 64 and all four of us were put in care at the same time. I was the youngest. My parents were not married and they put us in care.

St Joseph's Baby Home (1955)

2. As a baby I was placed in St Joseph's baby home. I think children stayed in the baby home until I was about two or three years old and then I was transferred. I was transferred to Nazareth Lodge where my brothers were and my sister was placed in Nazareth House.

Nazareth Lodge (26/2/1958 – 16/8/1966)

3. There were four groups in the Lodge, The Sacred Hearts, The Marian's, St Joseph's and Our Lady's. I was in Our Lady's.

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[REDACTED]

6. My brothers were in the same home but I don't remember a lot about them. When you got to a certain age you transferred to Rubane House. They were older than me so HIA 64 would have been leaving the home when I was only five. I do have certain memories of them at Nazareth Lodge but not an awful lot.

[REDACTED]

7. There was a nun in the Lodge, SR 47 and I liked her fairly well. I think she is still alive. She was a motherly type and she was very caring.

8. There were two dormitories in our group and about twelve in each dormitory. Our group had two charge boys, DL 280 and DL 209. They were about seventeen, eighteen and they were working boys. I don't know why they didn't let them go to Rubane House. They kept certain boys to be in charge of us when the nuns were down for prayer. They grew up in the Lodge.

9. Night time was scary because when the nuns went off for prayer in the evening we were put to bed early when we were younger. We were told by the charge boys immediately to cover our heads with the blankets and if we were peeping out of the blankets they would thump us on top of the blankets and punch us and really hit us very hard.

10. I remember one Saturday we were allowed a lie in until 9.00am which happened on occasion and one of the charge boys was in a bed next to mine and he called me over to his bed. It was DL 280 and he was about seventeen at the time. I was scared of him so I went over to his single bed. He put me on top of him and sexually assaulted me. He had his hands on my privates trying to arouse me. He had my pyjamas bottoms down. NL 5 came to the dormitory to call

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us and he saw her and he immediately felt guilty and threw me to the other side of the bed and I started crawling up into my bed. I was about seven or eight then. I remember he talked about my grandmother in an attempt to calm me as he was sexually interfering with me. I reported this incident to **SR 47** but she brushed it off and did not believe me.

11. **DL 280** and **DL 209** I am not even sure which one of them did that to me but I think it was **DL 280**
DL 280
DL 280 They were two bad boys.
12. **NL 5** was one of the civilian staff, she wasn't a nun. She is eighty four now but she was wicked herself was not nice to children. She used to hit us with the edge of wooden rulers and stuff like that on the knuckles and back of the hands for no reason. I think she lived in the building and was in St Joseph's group.
13. I remember an incident on a Saturday again when the boys had a pillow fight. **NL 5** came in and told certain boys including me to go to the dining room. I told her I had not been involved in the fight but she beat me badly with six here and six there with a wooden ruler just because I was awake when this was taking place. I was eight or nine at this time.
14. I met **NL 5** at a funeral about one and a half years ago. She told me she was eighty four then. She did not want to talk to me about the home. She just wanted to be left to pray alone.
15. The police told me they had spoken to her but I don't think they are pressing charges as she is in her eighties now.
16. There was a nun in the home, **SR 34** who was very wicked. She is dead now but I used to be so scared of her. She used to lift us up by the cheeks and ears from the floor and throw us up against the wall or on the floor in the classroom. She would get angry for no reason at all. She was a really wicked woman. She was in charge of St Joseph's. I remember **DL 280**

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[REDACTED] a hard back mass book that I was reading and all of a sudden I was pulled from the bench and she trailed me down the passage in the chapel and started kicking me in the face. She thought I was reading a comic book. She battered my face black and blue. She took the book from me and I was crying.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] she said you think you had it worse, well you see the next time it will be worse again. I was living in fear again. It was just basically fear all the time growing up. After that she never beat me as bad as she did in the chapel but she did smack me on the ears an awful lot.

18.


- [REDACTED]
19. On school mornings I would get up and go down to the dining room. There were four groups partitioned off and we had breakfast. I used to get a boiled egg and toast. We went off to school but I don't remember a lot about school. I can't remember the lunches or the dinners very well. I just remember being hungry most of the time.
20. On a Sunday we all wore a brown corduroy suit to mass. They made us work hard on weekends. They cut cloths from blankets and put them on our feet and on Saturdays we cleaned the big passageway from one end of the hallway. We used to polish that with our feet for at least a couple of hours. I was seven or eight at the time.
21. There was a massive copper machine in the laundry in Nazareth Lodge and if you wet the bed they would scare you by saying that if you wet the bed again you would be thrown in with the sheets. Two lay members of staff, **NL 5**


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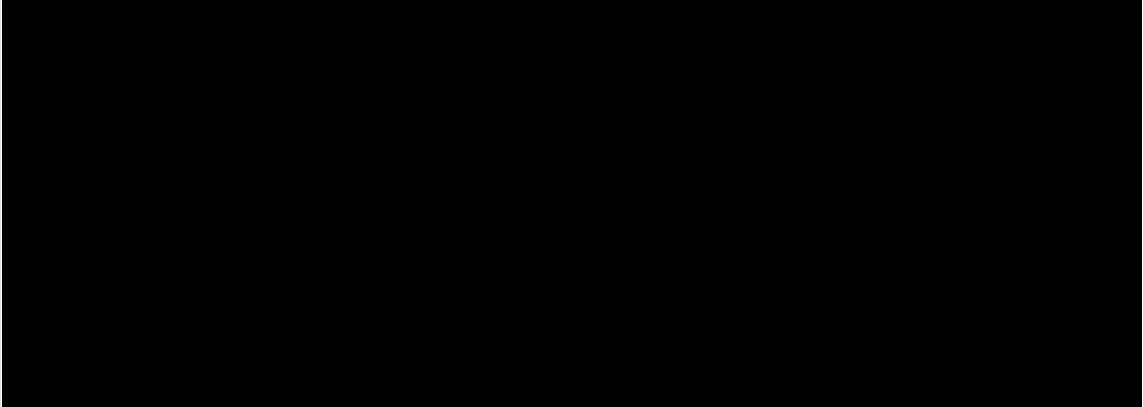
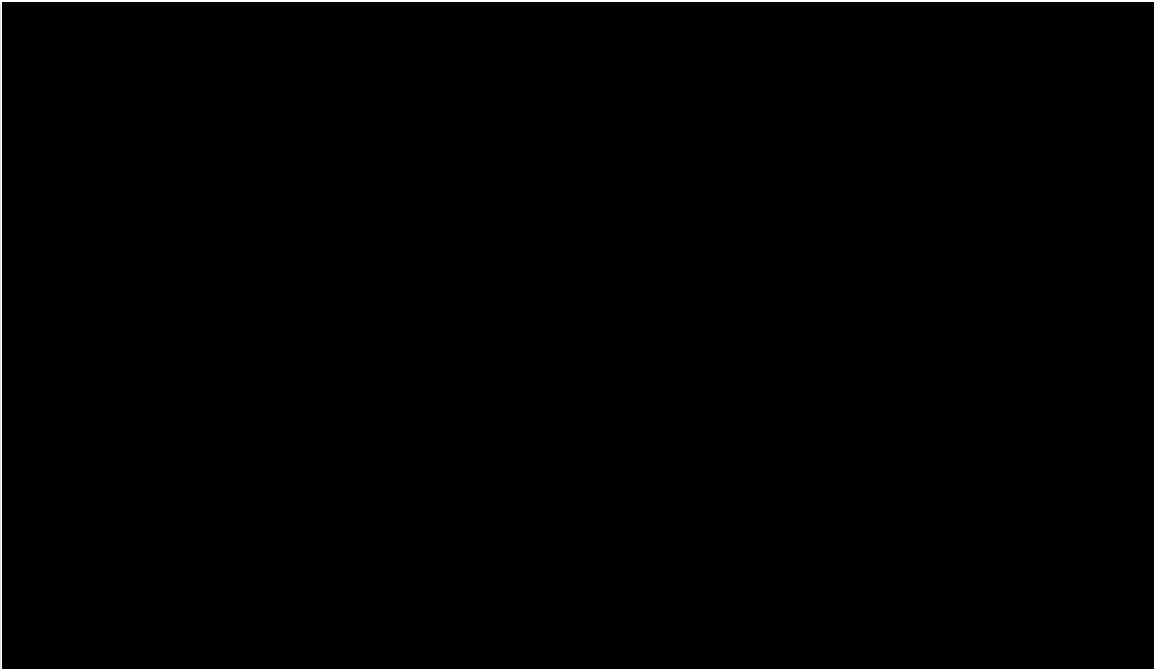
NL 5 and **NL 4** were employed to look after the children. They used to take us into the laundry and they would lift us and put us into the machine and close the lids for a few minutes and say that they were going to turn it on. They obviously never did but it left you in fear and squealing, yelling and crying. It gave us nightmares. I think they did this as a deterrent to those boys who wet the bed so that they would not have to clean their wet sheets.

22. If you wet the bed it would not be changed until the next morning and we got hit and smacked as well because we wet the bed. I remember this from I was about seven but I would say it happened at an earlier age. I can only remember from six or seven.
23. I remember years ago at Nazareth Lodge being taken out once or twice by people who kept us in their homes over Christmas. They kept me for a few weeks and gave me a lot of clothes. I remember they were called **██████████** and **██████████** but I cannot recall their surname. I remember getting a big box of toys and clothes and they were confiscated straight away on my return as we weren't allowed to keep them. I don't know what they did with them and I do not know why we were not allowed to keep them.
24. **SR 47** used to sleep in one of the small cells in the corner of the dormitory and then there was another dorm next door with a door walking right across. I remember when I was about seven or eight telling her about the people who had been doing bad things to us and she used to shout at me. She never hit me but she just said go away and stop telling tales, they're not like that. She didn't listen because we were very young and she knew we didn't like the charge boys and so she thought we were just making up stories.
25. I have been told about these brothers and what they used to do to us in later years. I can't remember this but have been told that they used to line us up as children and mess with our private parts to get an erection. They put flannels on top of our penis to see if our penis was hard. I can't remember that incident at all, I might have blocked it out but a friend of mine, **HIA 56** has told me that.

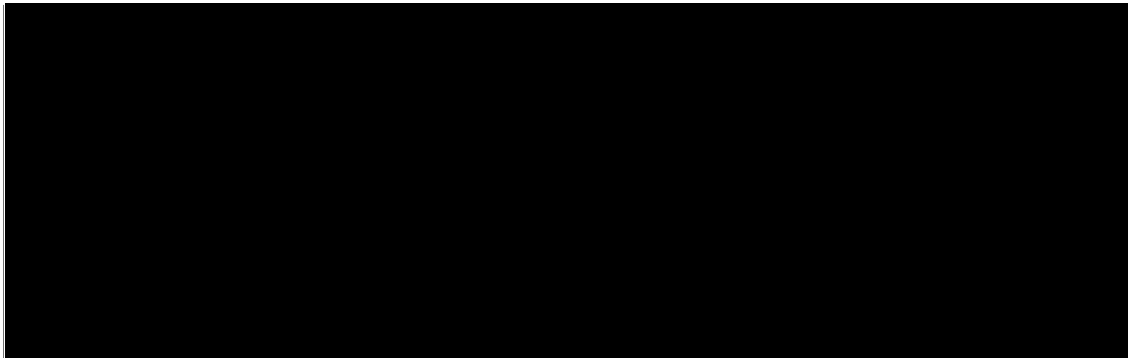
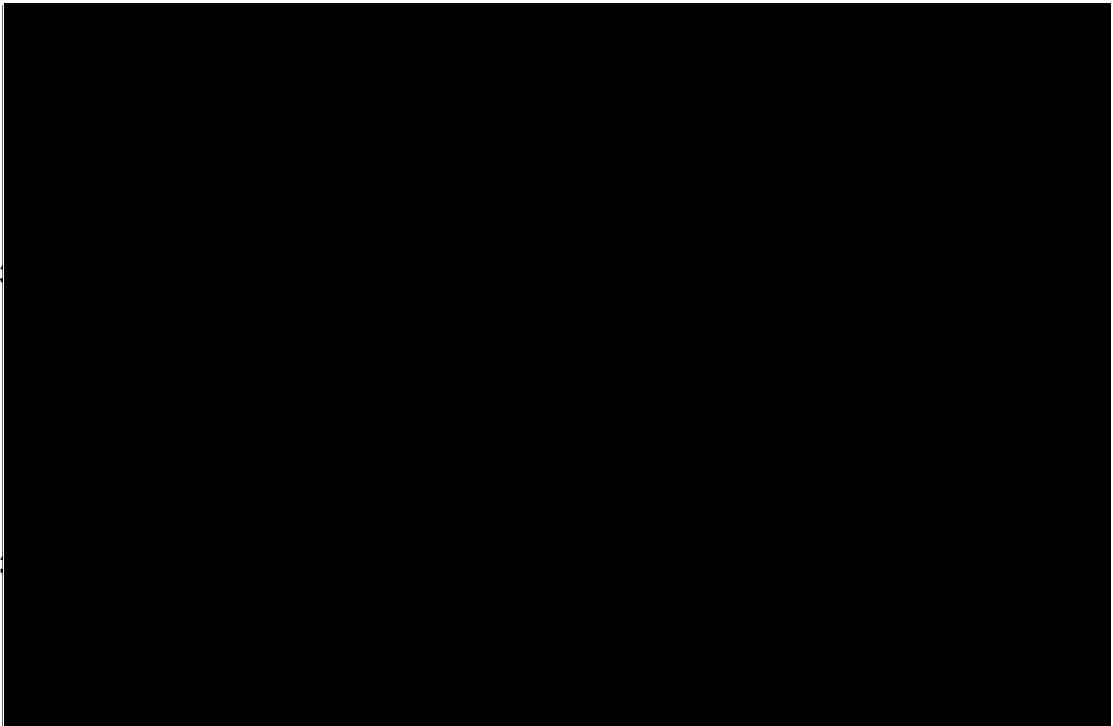
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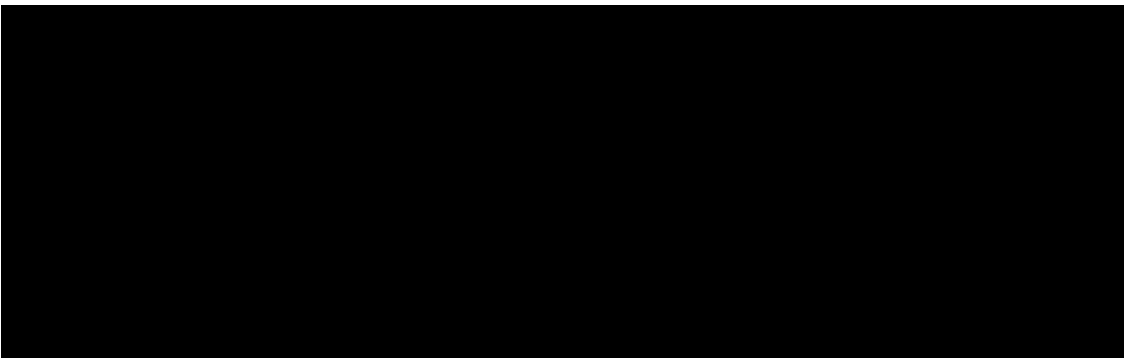
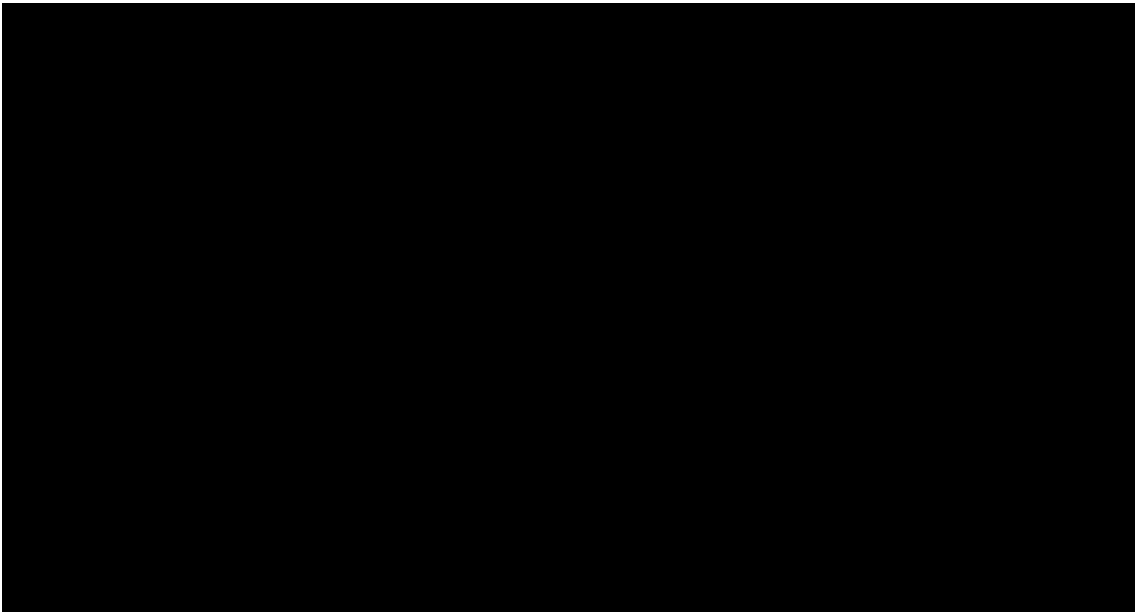
27. I stayed at Nazareth Lodge until I was nearly eleven years old. I thought Nazareth Lodge was scary and rough but I remember being told by a nun, I can't remember her name, but she said you thought we were bad here, just wait until you get to Rubane House. I remember that fear of having it hard then and them telling us that it was going to get worse. I couldn't sleep and I didn't want to go. I can't remember who went with me that time but there would have been a group of us who were moved at that age.  BR 6 picked us up in a mini bus and brought us to Rubane House, Kircubbin.



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Life after care

42. At fifteen they told us they were going to prepare us to go to lodgings. It was a scary time as those of us brought up in orphanages and institutions were odd. They placed me in the [REDACTED] area in [REDACTED]. I remember that day very well. I lived with [REDACTED] HIA 16 [REDACTED] who left Rubane a year after me. We are still very good friends. I got work in a [REDACTED] factory in [REDACTED] where I worked for four years. A minibus was provided to transport us to and from Belfast.

43. We had social workers who helped arrange getting us work. They were [REDACTED] NL 182 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] NL 183 [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] NL 183 [REDACTED] died recently. I did not see much of the social workers during my time at Rubane but I saw them more frequently after I left the home.

44. We were put into a club then on the Falls Road, St Augustin's. It was run by the Catholic Church and [REDACTED] DL 140 [REDACTED] was in charge when I was there. We earned £4 per week and our lodgings cost £4.50 or £5 so we met there every Saturday and got the difference from the Welfare to top up our rent. The welfare authorities took us on holidays as well when we were out of the home as we were still under care until we were eighteen years old and then we were allowed to do what we wanted.

45. We were not supposed to leave the lodgings until we were eighteen but [REDACTED] HIA 16 [REDACTED] and I ran away after a year because although the old landlady was nice, when her children took over we weren't looked after and didn't get enough food. We moved and stayed with another landlady, [REDACTED] DL 283 [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] DL 283 [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] DL 283 [REDACTED] was a very nice lady and she had about ten lodgers, a lot of them from orphanages.

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46. After four years I went to the [REDACTED] to work for about eighteen months, then worked on the railways and then I joined the [REDACTED] when I was nineteen because I couldn't face the outside world. This church was residential and provided accommodation which made me feel a sense of belonging. When I left the orphanage we knew nothing about Protestants and thought they were bad people. It was no fault of ours, it was because we were brought up in a Catholic institution. Then I started meeting Protestants at work, they were lovely people and I was wondering why we were fighting with them. I decided to come away from the Catholic Church and join another Church. I married in that Church but left it again about twenty years ago. I am no longer a member of any one specific church.
47. I have no family. I keep up contact with my brothers in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I keep in contact with [REDACTED] HIA 16 [REDACTED] HIA 110 [REDACTED] HIA 56 [REDACTED] HIA 56 and [REDACTED] DL 133 [REDACTED] We grew up together in Rubane and keep in touch with each other.
48. I have poor mental health. I saw a psychiatrist once about my past and he told me that obviously I'll never be the same again. Growing up in that life really mentally destroyed me because of the way we were treated. I feel very odd at times and when I associate with people I feel different and isolated with some people. I make friends and I am down to earth but I just don't feel happy in my life. I have never felt settled in my life. Even though I've got a house and I know the landlord very well I just don't feel homely.
49. I first went to a counsellor in/around 2011. I have had approximately seventy counselling sessions over two years but I don't think it has done me any good.
50. I am receiving sickness benefit as I have a glaucoma in my eyes and I am losing my sight. It is getting worse and they have told me they can't do anything about it.
51. I have been taking anti-depressant tablets for seven or eight years now. I have disturbed sleep and feel tired during the day.

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52. I worked in Dublin for a while in [REDACTED] It is a home for both boys and girls. I did a bit of [REDACTED] when I lived in Dublin. I met a woman at church and she asked me to teach them how to do [REDACTED] so I did that for about twenty five years. We would take them away on holidays. I am not registered as staff but they call me every year and we go away every summer. I am the only one from Belfast. We went to [REDACTED] in September.

53. I reported this to J McCaw of PSNI on 28 April 2010 and the investigation is still ongoing.

54. I belong to a support group (SAVIA) and we moved solicitors in recent times. We were previously represented by JJ Rice & Co but are now represented by Ciaran McAteer.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

HIA 19

Dated 17 3 2010