

**Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

LBA [REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is LBA [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1961. At the time I was in care my full name was LBA [REDACTED]. I initially changed my name after I was fostered to LBA [REDACTED]. Later on, in adult life, I legally changed my name to LBA [REDACTED]. LBA [REDACTED] My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. I decided to come forward to the Inquiry to tell my story about the institutionalised abuse I suffered in care. My care manifested itself in the form of degrading and inhumane treatment. I needed to tell the story of how my upbringing has affected me in every aspect of my life.

**Life before going into care**

3. I was born in Edinburgh. My mother must have been living in Edinburgh at the time. My dad was an alcoholic. My mother and father used to flit about from place to place. There were eleven children in my family. Amongst them there were [REDACTED] sets of twins. I don't know all the ages of my siblings. I think, in age descending order, there is [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], me and [REDACTED]. I can't remember the name of the other child. I am a twin with my brother [REDACTED]. He is known as [REDACTED]. We aren't identical twins.
4. My sister [REDACTED] has talked at length about my family. I have no recollection of what happened before I went into care but I have learnt what happened from her. I have been told that life was difficult for my mother as she had been coping with my

father's drinking habits. [REDACTED] has told me that my mother took my twin brother and I to my auntie [REDACTED]. I have no idea where my auntie stayed. [REDACTED] has told me that my mother said to my auntie that she wasn't coping and asked her to look after us for a couple of days. My mother then never came back. My auntie then contacted social services. That's when my twin brother and I were put in care. My sister has told me that my brother and I were ten months old when we went to Nazareth House.

5. I know that I had siblings who were placed in care. My sister was already at Nazareth House when I went there with my twin brother. I know my brothers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] also ended up in Nazareth House at some point. I don't know whether they went into care before or after [REDACTED] and I went to Nazareth House.
6. I know that my mother and father kept one other son. I have met him. His name is [REDACTED]. He was the youngest. For whatever reason he stayed with my mother and father. I've often wondered how, given my father was an alcoholic and my parents were flitting about, social services allowed my parents to hold onto a child.

### **Nazareth House, Aberdeen**

7. I was placed in care in 1961 in Nazareth House in Aberdeen. Nazareth House was run by the Poor Sisters of Nazareth. It would become my residence for the next fourteen years. I left there in 1975.
8. Nazareth House was a massive Georgian house. It had loads of windows. For a child it was scary. It had a big concrete area at the back where the children played. There was a maypole in the middle. There was also a green where they used to hang out the clothes. At the very rear of the property was a football pitch.
9. I think the age range was between ten months and fifteen or sixteen. It might have been that my brother and I were the exception to the rule being there that young. I don't remember other children as young as we were when I was there. I only remember there being children from the age of about two upwards.

10. I can honestly say that I can't remember the nuns calling me by my first name. I can't precisely say what they called me but I would say it was just <sup>LBA</sup> [REDACTED]. It was always your surname they used.

*The "sides" of Nazareth House*

11. There were sections in Nazareth House. There was a boys section, a girls section and a section for old people. We called them "sides." Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED] was in charge of the girls side. Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED] was in charge of the boys side.
12. I was originally put in Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED]'s side. I think there were at least sixteen children in there. [REDACTED] has told me that she looked after my twin brother and I in Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED]'s section when we first went there. I think the only reason my brother and I were put there was because my sister was there.
13. Later on I was moved from Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED]'s side to Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED]'s side. There were at least sixteen children on Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED]'s side. I can't remember why I was moved. I don't know whether it was because of puberty or whether it was because my sister was leaving. I do think [REDACTED] left when we were moved over. I think she was sixteen. If we were moved because [REDACTED] was leaving it would mean we were ten when we made the shift. That would make the shift about 1971. Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED]'s side later became Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED]'s side. Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED] took over the side in about 1973.
14. Other than my time spent in Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED]'s side, the boys and girls were initially segregated across the sides. We did get to mix in together when out playing. I believe that later on the sections were mixed between boys and girls. I think that happened after I was moved across.

*Staff - nuns*

15. I can't remember who the mother superiors were. I know it changed at one point whilst I was there. I remember one leaving and another one coming in. You very seldom saw the mother superior.
16. I remember a nun called Sister <sup>FAF</sup> [REDACTED]. She was old. She was senior but she wasn't the mother superior. She was a "god fearing" woman. She was a very strict and angry nun. She was very much a disciplinarian. She was the old guard. You did as you were told by her. You knew that there were consequences if you didn't. You avoided her because you didn't want to make eye contact with her. You would keep your head down when you were near her. She had a pivotal influence on Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED]. I don't know whether she trained up Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED]. I think Sister <sup>FAF</sup> [REDACTED] died whilst I was in Nazareth House.
17. Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED] was quite young when I was in Nazareth House. I felt that Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED] had to follow in Sister <sup>FAF</sup> [REDACTED] shoes. She had to be who Sister <sup>FAF</sup> [REDACTED] had been. She certainly made a good effort at becoming her. I think that Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED] was probably bullied by Sister <sup>FAF</sup> [REDACTED]. I didn't witness the bullying but, as an adult, I can reflect back and see that that might have been happening. I got the impression that Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED] was scared of Sister <sup>FAF</sup> [REDACTED]. Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED] eventually went. I can't remember where or when she went.
18. Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED] was of the same mould as Sister <sup>FAF</sup> [REDACTED]. She wasn't as bad as Sister <sup>FAF</sup> [REDACTED] but you still knew not to step out of line. I distinctly remember Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED] moving on to Bexhill-on-Sea about two years before I left Nazareth House. I would say that was in approximately 1973.
19. Sister <sup>LDX</sup> [REDACTED] took over from Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED]. Her name could have been Sister <sup>LDX</sup> [REDACTED] but I am not sure. She became the head of that section. I remember things being completely different when she came in. The culture completely changed. It was so much more relaxed. The cod liver oil and the malt stopped. There was none of the brylcreem in your hair. Never once did she hurt me

physically. She was a caring nun. I look back and realise she was a younger nun coming through as the old guard was dying off. I wouldn't have a bad word to say about Sister<sup>LDX</sup> [REDACTED]

20. There was a nun called Sister<sup>LFZ</sup> [REDACTED]. She was young when she was at Nazareth House. She came in towards the end when the old guard started leaving. She was a good footballer. [REDACTED]. Another nun I remember was Sister Boromayo. Her name was something like that. She was like the nurse. She was nice.
21. Another nun was called Sister<sup>LGQ</sup> [REDACTED]. She had a group of people on a different floor on Sister<sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED]'s side. I think it was right near the top. She was there for some time before she went away. I'm near sure that happened. I can't be sure when that happened. She came back. I don't know where she went or how long she was away.
22. Sister Paul was another nun. She looked after the kitchen. There was also a nun called Sister<sup>LGN</sup> [REDACTED]. I can't remember what she did in the home but I remember her dying.
23. I do remember two other nuns by the names of Sister<sup>LGR</sup> [REDACTED] and Sister<sup>LKG</sup> [REDACTED]. They went out collecting for Nazareth House. They stayed in the house. Sister<sup>LGR</sup> [REDACTED] looked after the chapel. I am not sure what Sister<sup>LKG</sup> [REDACTED] did. She was old and had a limp. I am not sure what her role was. I do remember that there were homeless people who came to the side of the house. The homeless people were predominantly men. Sister<sup>LGR</sup> [REDACTED] and Sister<sup>LKG</sup> [REDACTED] used to go out and give mugs of tea and sandwiches to them.

*Staff – other staff*

24. The helpers would help out particularly at mealtimes and weekends. It was always a bit of a relief when the helpers were on shift because it was different from the nuns. I don't know whether the helpers covered the nuns when they were at church or when

they were on their time off. I don't know whether it was one of those situations back in the sixties whereby staff turned a blind eye. I think the helpers were only concerned when they were in charge of helping out.

25. FAJ [REDACTED] was a helper on Sister LTX [REDACTED]'s side. She was good and decent. I don't know whether she was employed in the home. She was ok. I can't recollect anything bad happening with her. She used to live [REDACTED] of the home in a house.
26. FAJ [REDACTED]'s husband came in at times and helped out.. I can't remember his name. I don't think he was a helper per se but he was there on occasion. He may have been a volunteer. I have nothing bad to say about him. I do remember that the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] LDU [REDACTED] was another helper. LDU [REDACTED] LDU [REDACTED] wife, LHQ [REDACTED], also worked as a helper in the home. She was a bit more strict.
27. Mr LDS [REDACTED] was [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. He [REDACTED]. He, on occasion, used to smell of drink. I can't remember anything more than that about him.

### **Routine at Nazareth House**

#### *Earliest memory*

28. My first memory of being in Nazareth House is from the time when I was a toddler. I reckon I was about two. I could be wrong about that. I was on a tricycle in the concrete area at the back riding around the maypole.

#### *Daily routine*

29. Almost every day was the same. You got woken up very early at 6am. I remember feeling very numb wondering how the day would go. There was none of this being

gentle when waking you up. You were roused up and you had to be out your bed. You went to the bathroom and got washed. We then got dressed. It was then chapel at about 6:30am. We then went to breakfast. After breakfast you got given malt and cod liver oil. You then got the brylcreem on your hair and had it combed. We then made our way to school after breakfast. To begin with you were taken to school in buses by Nazareth House. When that was the case we waited outside the back door. That changed later on. They gave you money for the local bus and you had to make your own way in. When we came back from school we did our chores. In the evenings you did your homework. If there was any reading that needed to be done it was done then. Dinner was after we did our homework and reading. After that, depending on whether it was light or not, we either got outside to play or watched TV and played in the playroom inside. In later years, on Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED]'s side, we then had supper before we went to bed. Everybody went to bed at the same time in the early years. I'm near sure that, after Sister <sup>LDX</sup> [REDACTED] came in and changed the regime, the timings for going to bed was varied across the ages.

#### *Sleeping arrangements*

30. On Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED]'s side there were about six children to each bedroom. There were five or six bedrooms on her side. On Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED]'s side there were four children to each bedroom. There were four bedrooms on Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED]'s side. The bedrooms on Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED] and Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED]'s sides were on different sides of the building.
31. I remember bedtimes being scary when I moved over to Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED]'s side. She used to come round and say this prayer every night whilst you were in your bed. The prayer would be "I lay myself down to sleep and pray for God my soul to keep. If I die before I wake, I pray to God my soul do take." You had to have your arms crossed across your chest with a hand on each shoulder when she said the prayer. If you didn't have your arms crossed Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED] would tell you to get your hands up. It was freaky. Looking back I wonder whether that was to stop you interfering with yourself. That is my interpretation now, whether that is right or wrong. That's the first thing that has come into my head.

*Washing and bathing*

32. I can't picture in my head what the bathroom looked like on Sister LTX's side. The bathroom had a massive long line of ablutions on Sister LFB's side. There were about fourteen sinks. I can't remember ever having a shower. There were individual cubicles with baths inside of them. I'm near sure that you got a bath on a Sunday night. I think that was it for the week. I can't remember sharing a bath. The nuns washed you up to a certain age. There were also helpers who helped wash you up to a certain age. That stopped when we got older.

*Food*

33. On Sister LTX's side there was a massive dining room with big massive windows. There was a kitchenette next to the room with a serving hatch. The dining room on Sister LFB's side was much smaller. It felt more informal and intimate than Sister LTX's side. It felt less "institutionalised" than where you ate on Sister LTX's side. It could be that I feel that way because Sister LFB's side was taken over by Sister LDX. The regime totally changed when she took over. I remember things like setting tables and peeling potatoes when she took over.
34. You had breakfast, dinner and supper in the home. When you were at school you had school dinners for lunch. You didn't have pack lunches. I can't really remember the food at Nazareth House. We said grace before mealtimes. I remember sago and cabbage but that's about it. You weren't allowed to leave the table until you had finished everything on your plate. It was just a routine. I can't remember being hungry.
35. On Sister LFB's side there was supper. You were lined up for cocoa. The cocoa was burning hot. You had to finish it. She would come and collect the cups. You would near burn your mouth rushing to finish your cocoa. When Sister LDX replaced Sister LFB things were completely different. She brought you in your supper on trays when you were watching TV. I remember Sister LDX



LDX also bringing up a tray of bacon rolls during the weekends. It was all much more relaxed. It felt like a treat.

*Clothes*

36. We had a school uniform for school. In Nazareth House itself we wore our own clothes. It was all hand-me-downs. I can't remember ever being bought new clothes.
37. I remember once that someone had donated a duffle coat. I was given it by one of the nuns. I put it on and thought "yes, winter coat, happy days". I went to school in the coat and one of the kids recognised the coat at school. It was his coat. The coat actually had his name on it on the inside. That was a disaster. Everybody took the mick out of me.

*Possessions and pocket money*

38. I had nothing in the place. I had nothing of mine. It was just a bed and that was it. I can't remember getting pocket money in Sister LTX's time. I do remember in Sister LFB's era that we did get pocket money. They also put money into a post office account. They managed it. We didn't manage it. You could go out and spend your money in the corner shop. You were allowed to walk there.

*Religious instruction*

39. I was bible bashed. It was just constant. You were bombarded with it all. I lived in fear of the catholic church. If you said anything the response was "you will be damned to hell." Religion was all about the devil, being damned to hell and all that. You were scared of making a wrong move. It was a constant living in fear. I never knew anything different so I believed every word they were saying.
40. I remember, very early on, being taken to church in the mornings. You went to mass every day. You went to benediction on a Sunday at four o'clock. You had to give

readings at benediction and you had to get it right. You had to practice and practice and practice. You would sit down and discuss the reading and discuss what the mass was about. I don't remember the actual discussions.

41. I was in the choir. We used to go out to St Mary's Cathedral to sing. We used to sing the mass in Latin. I remember standing for hours practicing. I remember making things up in confession because I didn't know what was going on.

#### *School*

42. We went to St Peter's School on Nelson Street in Aberdeen. That's the only school I remember going to whilst I was at Nazareth House. The teachers were good. I remember a teacher called Miss McAllion. She was really good. She took a lot of the Nazareth House children under her wing. She was a very positive person.

43. There was a lot of bullying went on. I was a very withdrawn child. We were called the "nazzies." The children who weren't in Nazareth House were called the "outsiders."

#### *Chores*

44. There were chores that we had to do after school at teatime. We started doing that at a very early age. I think that happened more when I moved to Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED]'s side. We all had things to do. I can't remember there being a rota. You were just told what you had to do. You didn't question it. You just did what you were told. I can't 100% say for sure whether chores were ever given out as punishment. I'm sure they were.
45. There were different jobs that you were given. I remember I had to polish the shoes. I had to sit and put polish on everybody's shoes. I had to clean them all. What you had to do changed. Sometimes you had to clean the toilets. I remember helping to wash up the dishes in the kitchen. I also remember clearing the tables.

*Leisure time*

46. I remember there was a TV and a TV room. If you had done your jobs you could sit down and watch TV. We would watch Jackanory or whatever was on. As you got older you were allowed to venture out a bit more. There were large grounds. There was a football pitch and I went out there to play.
47. Once a month, or every two months, they put on a film. The film was picked very carefully. They had a place towards the laundry. There was a stage with a screen and a projector.

*Holidays*

48. We used to go on holidays in the summer to a place called Tombay near Tomintoul in Banffshire. We went there for about three weeks. It was the countryside. It was just escapism. It was like a different world. The routine was different when we were there. It was more homely in terms of atmosphere. I loved it.
49. The nuns went with us. It was as if they were different there. I remember Sister **LFB** being totally different there. It was probably escapism for the nuns as well. They were happy times for me. There wasn't that pressure there.
50. I remember going a couple of times with my twin brother to stay with a family in Dumbarton. It was done through the church. A guy called Father Gowans arranged it. The couple were called the **██████████**. They were really nice people. We stayed with them over the Christmas holidays. I remember a Christmas tree being up. I can't remember visiting them in summer time. It was all positive. I think we stopped going because my brother tried to start a fire or something.
51. I can't remember which side of the home this happened on but there was a group of people who came in from an organisation called The Circle of Friends. They would take you out for the day. That was amazing. I remember them bringing in big crates of lemonade. They took us to the beach at Aberdeen. To me it was escapism. I

think I was emotionally detached when I was at the home but when I got taken to the beach I got to be a child. I relished it. It was like freedom.

#### *Birthdays and Christmas*

52. I can't remember my birthday being celebrated and I can't remember getting a gift or a cake for my birthday from the nuns. There may have been but I can't remember.
53. I remember going through with my brother to the nuns quarter when I was seven and being told there was a phone call. There was a big black old fashioned phone. It was apparently my mother. We were two or three minutes on the phone. I can't really remember the conversation. I think it was "happy birthday" and "did you get your gift?" I had. She had sent me a gift for my birthday. It was a little torch with faces on it. That was the first and last time I spoke with my mother.
54. On Christmas Eve you went to midnight mass then came back. You went to bed. You woke up the following morning. You were given one present, a stocking and an apple and an orange. There was a tree and decorations.

#### *Visits*

55. If there were visitors coming we were warned, well in advance, not to speak to anyone. I can't remember the wording the nuns used, or whether they verbalised it, but we were told or understood "anything to do with Nazareth House stays within Nazareth House." You just knew you couldn't say anything. I remember thinking not to open my mouth because I knew there would be repercussions if I did.
56. We would meet visitors in this big fancy parlour. It was all mahogany with beautiful furniture. There was a cake and I remember being told that I could only have one piece of cake by the nuns before I went in. It was just strict. The nuns left the room when we had visitors. They were in there initially but they did leave.

57. I can honestly recall only one visit from a social worker during my earlier years. From Sister LTX's time right up until the end there was nothing like a statutory visit. A once a month visit definitely didn't happen. I can only recall more frequent visits during the latter years before being fostered at the age of fourteen. I can't remember how many visits there were then.
58. I remember being visited by my sisters [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I can't remember whether they had been in Nazareth House and left at that time. They only came up to see me once. On another occasion my brother [REDACTED] came up to see me. That was all the visits I had. I can't remember how old I was when I had these visits.

#### *Inspections*

59. There were definitely groups of visitors who looked around the place. I don't know whether they were inspectors. I think I remember them being St Vincent de Paul groups. They were just visiting the home to see the home "in all its glory." It was all a "look what good the catholic church is doing" kind of thing.
60. I remember we were given brand new bedding to put on our beds if these groups were coming round the place. They were big fancy nice quilt covers. It wasn't the normal bedding that we had. It was completely different. Looking back I know the nuns did that to make the place look presentable.
61. When they came round the place the people would said "hello" and we would give a wee nod of the head. I can't remember anyone taking me aside and asking how I was or how things were going. It wasn't like now when you would be taken to a room and every aspect of your care would be scrutinised. There was absolutely none of that.

#### *Healthcare*

62. Sister Borromayo had a medical room on the middle floor. That's where you went if there was anything wrong with you.

63. We were occasionally taken out to a doctor. His name was Dr Henry. I remember going there and getting a sugar lump for polio. I think we went there annually for a check-up. I can't remember going there when there was anything wrong with me.
64. One summer whilst on holiday in Tombay somebody pushed me off of a small bridge and I cracked my head. I was taken to hospital to get stitches. I can't recall who took me there. The hospital was either in Tomintoul or Dufftown. I assume it was one of those two places.
65. There was a dentist room in the home either on the second or third floor beside Sister LTX's room. The dentist who came in was called Mr LJU. I remember getting the gas.

#### **Abuse at Nazareth House**

66. During my time in Nazareth House I was both physically and emotionally abused by different nuns growing up. Most days involved some form of abuse. There were many occasions where physical abuse was the norm. Some of the nuns were very angry. They dished out punches quite frequently
67. There was never any nurturing. There was no love or genuine care. There was a coldness about your life. There was no hope and I found this difficult. I became a very withdrawn child. I constantly lived in fear. I wasn't allowed to cry as a child as this would make things worse. I often received physical abuse if I was crying.
68. Looking back, I was quite numb to my experiences. Emotionally I closed myself down. On reflection I realise that I emotionally detached myself from what was going on around me. I detached myself from normal everyday feelings of expressing myself. I believe that this was a coping mechanism.

69. I was quite often told by the nuns that the reason I was placed in care was because I wasn't wanted by my parents. This may well have been the case but I feel that being told that psychologically damaged me over the years. I feel that being told that brought about feelings of rejection in my life.
70. I never received any praise when in care. I received constant criticism. I suppose, for many years, I didn't value myself much. I did believe that I was quite useless. The emotional abuse I suffered imbedded that belief into my being and soul. It was very difficult to believe that you were worth much. For years I believed what I had been told.
71. I could talk all day about the abuse I suffered. I could cite probably a hundred more incidents than the ones I set out in this statement. I could cite many other incidents of abuse, both physical and emotional, that to anyone's mind would be viewed as horrific to a child. Some incidents stand out more than others. Some incidents have become imbedded within me.

Sister FAF [REDACTED]

72. Sister FAF [REDACTED] would "knuckle you" on your head if you didn't stand still whilst she was brushing your hair and putting brylcreem in your hair. It was extremely sore and painful. That was deemed as "discipline" back then. It happened on a regular basis. I was no age when that happened. As an adult now I wouldn't dream of doing that to a child. It was fundamentally wrong.
73. Sister FAF [REDACTED] would quite often give me a slap across the face or hit me with a ruler if I got any words wrong when doing reading. I distinctly remember that we were reading aloud a book called "Tip the Dog." It was a very 'early on' reading book. I was definitely very young at that point. I remember that every time I got a word wrong Sister FAF [REDACTED] would hit me with a ruler. It was a big thick ruler and she wrapped my knuckles with it.

74. It wasn't a regular thing but nuns used to die. Two or three nuns died over the time I was in Nazareth House. Sister <sup>FAF</sup> made me go into the chapel and touch the hand of dead nuns. We were made to go into the chapel and touch their hands. As far as I recollect, I remember that happening with Sister <sup>LGN</sup> when she died in the home. It certainly did happen irrespective of remembering who the nuns were that died. I was young when they made me do that. For a young child, who lived in fear on a daily basis, that was a very traumatising thing to do. I think that stopped after Sister <sup>FAF</sup> died.

75. Sister <sup>FAF</sup> used carbolic soap quite often as a punishment. I'm surmising that that was given to you for swearing or answering back. You would be frothing at the mouth.

Sister <sup>LTX</sup>

76. I remember quite clearly on a few occasions Sister <sup>LTX</sup> saying to me "you are in here because your mother and father don't want you." To me that was emotional abuse.

77. Just like Sister <sup>FAF</sup>, Sister <sup>LTX</sup> also used to wrap her knuckles on your head when she was putting brylcreem in your hair.

78. One mealtime Sister <sup>LTX</sup> was in a hurry. I can't remember whether it was because we were going out or something. Everybody had finished. I said something to the effect of "I can't eat it" referring to something on my plate. I don't remember what it was. Whatever it was I didn't like it. Sister <sup>LTX</sup> told me to eat it. The next thing I knew Sister <sup>LTX</sup> had grabbed me by my hair. She pulled my head back and started forcing the food into my face.

79. I remember on several occasions at mealtimes, Sister <sup>LTX</sup> slapping my face because I hadn't eaten everything on my plate. As you can imagine, the way I was treated when I didn't finish my food was very traumatising. I can remember like yesterday the feelings of anger, humiliation and depravation.



80. One of the most humiliating and haunting practices was what happened after you wet the bed. Bed-wetting was frowned upon. Even though they had a massive laundry and the facilities to clean the sheets they still viewed it as an inconvenience. I wet the bed frequently. I think it was out of fear. I ultimately had an orange rubber sheet placed over my mattress.
81. Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED] didn't check you because she didn't need to. You just knew what you had to do when you wet the bed. You knew the routine. You knew you had to take your sheets off and hold them above your head. You then had to stand outside Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED]'s cell. She made you stand outside her cell so that everyone was aware that you had wet your bed. A rage would come across Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED]'s face when she found out you had wet the bed. It was as if you were taking time out of her routine. You were then made to have a cold bath and subjected to more physical abuse. She would subject you to further emotional abuse by saying "how dare you do something like that" and "you're dirty." She called me "stupid." Her words cut deep into me. On one occasion I answered back and carbolic soap was pushed into my mouth. It got to the point that I started believing them. You deserved dignity and respect. I didn't get that.
82. The way I was treated by Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED] after wetting my bed, for me, was not only degrading and traumatising but also a totally humiliating experience. I cried many a long night before I could sleep. I don't know why Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED] was like that when children wet the bed. Maybe it was because it was time consuming for her. I don't know. Looking back, the home had the facilities to clean the sheets and it was easy to get them there.
83. I remember the bed-wetting happening more in the earlier years than the latter years. It did continue in the latter years but I can't remember being treated the same way by Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED] as I had been by Sister <sup>LTX</sup> [REDACTED]. I can't remember being told to put the wet sheets above my head or being made to have the cold baths by her.

84. One time I wet myself during the day. I don't know how old I was but I was young. Sister <sup>LTX</sup> found out and went into a rage. She literally dragged me by one of my ears from a doorway to the concrete yard and onwards to the toilets. She took me down there and took my pants and trousers down. She had a brown plastic sandal. She gave me a beating with that. That was wrong.
85. Sister <sup>LTX</sup> also used carbolic soap quite often as a punishment too. Again, I would surmise that that was given to you for swearing or answering back.
- Sister <sup>LGQ</sup>
86. Sister <sup>LGQ</sup> once locked me in a dark cupboard for no apparent reason. I can't remember that incident in detail or the context of why that happened.
- Sister <sup>LFB</sup>
87. Sister <sup>LFB</sup> would make you stand for hours in the bathroom. This was used as a punishment often. That occurred mostly at weekends. You could be given that punishment any time between the moment you got up in the morning to the time you went to bed.. You would stand there for hours. You would stand there until a time when it was felt you had reflected on your own or anyone else's individual behaviour. Sometimes you would all be made to stand for doing something until somebody admitted to doing something wrong. Making us do that was an abuse of power.
88. Sister <sup>LFB</sup> would hit you with her stick. The stick was about a foot in length. I remember one occasion where the priest had stopped the choir singing and made us start again. When we came back from St Mary's cathedral we got it. Sister <sup>LFB</sup> hit us on the hands with her stick. She hit all the children three or four times on their hands. That happened on a couple of occasions. I do remember that there was another occasion where I got that on my own.
89. Sister <sup>LFB</sup> would punch you if you didn't swallow the malt or the cod liver oil you were given every morning before you went to school.

*Other incidents witnessed where girls were abused*

90. There was no special treatment for anybody at all in Nazareth House. I remember one occasion when I was in the kitchen and one of the girls had wet herself. Sister FAF [REDACTED] and Sister LTX [REDACTED] didn't know who it was. The girls were all brought into the bathroom next to the kitchen. I was asked to leave. The girls were told to take off their underwear so that they could be checked. I heard about the incident because we all talked about it outside after it happened. That was degrading and humiliating treatment for any young girl.
91. The physical abuse happened with the girls as well. Whilst the girls had their hair brushed they got whacked over the head with the brush. I think I got the knuckles because I think my hair was brushed with a comb. Both Sister FAF [REDACTED] and Sister LTX [REDACTED] did that.

**Moving to foster care**

92. I thought I was never going to get out of there. I got used to the way I was being treated being the norm. It was like "it is what it is." I knew no different. I didn't really know what the outside world was.
93. A couple called Mr and Mrs LME/SPO [REDACTED] started coming to Nazareth House to visit me and my twin brother. They took us out to a supermarket by Bridge of Don. We started staying with the LME/SPO [REDACTED] at weekends over a period of time. I don't know how many times we did that.
94. The next thing was that we were told by a social worker that the LME/SPO [REDACTED] would be fostering us. It was a male social worker who told us that. Sister LDX [REDACTED] didn't talk to me at all about it. There was no discussion. I don't know how long after that but we were then fostered. We didn't have a say in the LME/SPO [REDACTED] fostering us. I

wasn't involved in the decision making process of us going there. I remember feeling quite euphoric about it all. It appeared that they were a nurturing family. I was happy to be going there.

95. I think there were goodbyes at Nazareth House. However, even though the regime had changed after Sister <sup>LDX</sup> arriving, there was still "that distance" there. There was none of what you would get now with hugs and people saying "you take care of yourself." There was nothing like that.

**Mr and Mrs** <sup>LME/SPO</sup> **Aberdeen,**

96. I moved with <sup>LME/SPO</sup> to the <sup>LME/SPO</sup> in 1975. The house on <sup>LME/SPO</sup> was just a normal three bedroom house. We were with the <sup>LME/SPO</sup> between the ages of approximately fourteen and sixteen. As far as I am aware we were the first foster kids the <sup>LME/SPO</sup> had taken in.
97. Staying with the <sup>LME/SPO</sup> was completely different to my time in Nazareth House. There was a transitional period. On the surface it all seemed alright and quite nice. It felt as if we were being nurtured. We did normal things like going to the supermarket. I'd never done anything like that when I was in Nazareth House. I enjoyed it.
98. In time I learnt that there was a lot more going on than appeared on the surface. I started to realise that we were being treated differently to how the <sup>LME/SPO</sup> treated their own kids. That's when I started going a wee bit into my shell.

*The <sup>LME/SPO</sup> family*

99. <sup>LME</sup> was an ex-army staff sergeant in the intelligence corps. He is dead now. He did taxi driving during the day. He was also in training to become a Church of Scotland minister. He ultimately got his bachelors in divinity which allowed him to become a reverend in the Methodist church. That happened during

the time that we were there. He had a split personality. He could charm you. On some occasions he was nice. I remember him leaving me pocket money and being as nice as nine pence. On other occasions he could snap. He'd be a completely different person. .

100. Mr LME's wife was called [REDACTED] Initially I got on ok with her. I think she started to change towards us as time went on. I think she started to realise that there was more domestic work for her to do because we were there. She started to turn a bit nasty towards the end.
101. The LME/SPO had three sons called [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were about fourteen. [REDACTED] was younger than us. They also had a daughter called [REDACTED]. I can't remember whether she was older or younger than us. I remember that [REDACTED] was quite intelligent.
102. I got on with the LME/SPO kids most of the time but I do think there was a bit of jealousy going on. I think they resented two extra kids being taken on. The LME/SPO treated us completely differently to their own kids.

#### *Sleeping arrangements*

103. One of the bedrooms had two sets of bunk-beds. I shared that bedroom with my twin brother and the LME/SPO two sons. The LME/SPO daughter stayed in another room with [REDACTED]

#### *Clothing*

104. The LME/SPO children got new clothes when they wanted them.. We didn't. We had hand me downs. When we went to school we were ostracised because we didn't have the same clothes as all of the other kids. It felt like a replay of the past. It wasn't a good time.

105. I remember being good friends with a guy called [REDACTED] I remember going round his house and changing into his clothes because I didn't want to face the embarrassment of going to the youth club in the clothes that the LME/SPO had given me.
106. The first time we received any new clothes was just before my brother and I left to join the army at the age of sixteen.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

107. I can't remember Christmas and birthdays with the LME/SPO They probably were marked but I just can't remember them. Nothing of any significance comes to mind.

*Trips and holidays*

108. We did go on daytrips to the countryside with the LME/SPO We didn't go on an actual holiday though.

*Religion*

109. The bottom line was that Mr LME was training to be a Church of Scotland minister. We had come from a catholic upbringing. There was a lot of confusion within me. Mr LME would have lots of discussions with me about why I shouldn't go to chapel and go to his church instead. We were eventually manipulated into going to his church. There was just no questioning it. We had to go. I don't know why social services put children who had been institutionalised in a catholic institution for fourteen years with a family who were a different religion.

*School*

110. We changed schools when we moved in with the LME/SPO. We went to Kincorth Academy. I don't think it was a roman catholic school. The LME/SPO kids used to go there as well. I used see them around the school.
111. The other kids treated me differently because I stood out. I wasn't confident which meant I was always a target for the bullies. I ended up getting into a fight with one of the other boys at school. I bust his nose. The boy never bullied me after that. That was a turning point in school.
112. I ended up sitting my O Levels at Kincorth Academy. I did English, History, Arithmetic, Accounting, Biology and something else. There was that much chaos in my life at that time that I didn't apply myself. I don't ever remember being helped out with my homework at home. I ended up getting six O Levels though. I think I got my results after I joined the army.

*Visits*

113. My sister, [REDACTED], used to come and visit us and take us out. She took us out for the day. I don't think that happened all that often. I think that happened on only two occasions.
114. I remember a social worker also coming out to visit. I can't remember much about the visits. I think they initially came out more often but towards the end they only came out if there was an incident.

**Abuse whilst in foster care**

115. I remember occasions where Mr LME would get angry very quickly. He would get angry if things weren't going right for him when he was sitting up on a Saturday writing his sermon for the next day. He would also get angry if he had been out in

his taxi and not made any money. I witnessed loads of domestic abuse by Mr LME towards his wife. She got physically assaulted when I was there. She lived in fear of him. I can't tell you how many times I witnessed Mr LME raising his hand to her. I saw her getting hit in the kitchen, on the landing, in the bathroom and in the front room. He also used to emotionally abuse her. He put her down a lot. He was a dominant figure to say the least. I think she absorbed it because of the kids. The police never got involved.

116. Mr LME used to hit me and my twin brother. That started after a few months of us being there. He used to hit his own kids too. He would lose his temper and literally lash out. He would punch and slap you around your head. He did that a few times to my brother and I. I remember got it the most. got it less. I don't know why but maybe it was because he was older. I remember that, just before we left, stood up to Mr LME
117. There was a lot of emotional abuse too. It was a different level of abuse to what we had suffered at Nazareth House. I felt manipulated. It almost felt as if, when Mr LME was saying things to you, you were in debt to him. You were made to feel that you should forever be in debt to him because he was sharing his family with you. He would say things to the effect of "we've done all this for you and this is the way that you treat us." On one side he was a "man of god" and on the other side he was evil personified. He had a split personality.
118. I think Mr LME put a check on himself the closer it got to him becoming a minister. The physical abuse became less. I don't know whether that was because he didn't want anything getting out.

### Leaving foster care

119. After Mr LME got his bachelors and became a qualified minister he got offered a church in near Inverness. Before the LME/SPO moved we decided we were



going to join the army and not stay with them. My interpretation at the time, whether it was right or not, was that we were in the way.

120. My brother and I went down to do the tests to join the army. It might have been in about [REDACTED] 1977. [REDACTED] wasn't as academic as me. He only qualified with enough points to join the infantry with the [REDACTED]. He ended up with the "[REDACTED]" I qualified with enough to join the junior leaders regiment with the [REDACTED]. We left the [LME/SPO] and joined the army on [REDACTED] 1977. That was the point when my brother and I went our separate ways. I've only seen him on a couple of occasions after that.
121. I did visit the [LME/SPO] whilst I was on leave from the army. I did that only once. The [LME/SPO] were very distant with me. I just knew I wasn't wanted there. They hadn't even come to see me passing out. Passing out was a huge thing for me. After that visit to [REDACTED] I chose never to see the [LME/SPO] again.
122. I ask myself to this day how on earth social services placed us with the [LME/SPO]. The reality was that they were a dysfunctional family. Social services must have had to have done background checks. I get annoyed and angry because the system failed me there. I adopted my eldest daughter when she was six. I remember all the hurdles and questioning I had to get through. Clearly the checks that social services had done with the [LME/SPO] hadn't been done properly.

### **Reporting of abuse**

#### *Nazareth House*

123. I have never reported the abuse I suffered at Nazareth House to anybody. I haven't told anybody in authority about it all. I didn't get involved in the [REDACTED] of Sister [REDACTED] LTX [REDACTED]. I was aware of it through my sister, [REDACTED]. I was going through my social work training at the time. It wasn't the right time for me to get involved.

*Foster care with the LME/SPO*

124. I told [REDACTED] that Mr LME [REDACTED] had hit me and my brother during one of her visits. That would have been about a year into staying with the LME/SPO [REDACTED]. I have learnt from [REDACTED] that she then had a go at Mr LME [REDACTED]. I was then visited by my social worker. Mr LME [REDACTED] had given his version of events to social services. I then had to give my version. I can't remember the actual incident. Nothing more was said or done after I spoke with social services. They didn't take me out of there.
125. I recently found out from [REDACTED] that she had gone to social services and said "you need to get my brothers out of there because he is hitting them." Her version of events is that she was told, in no uncertain terms, by social services not to go near the house again. She told me that she was told that she was not allowed to go back to visit us. I ended up not seeing her again for forty years.

*Speaking with family and friends about abuse*

126. I get embarrassed telling people about my past. There's very few people know what has really happened in my upbringing and how it has impacted on me. I have talked about it with my siblings. I have talked about it with [REDACTED] when we met up. I have spoken to my brother [REDACTED] about it. I've also opened up to my friend [REDACTED]

**Life after being in care***Career*

127. I joined the army on [REDACTED] 1977. I was trained in Dover in Kent. I can't remember missing anyone. I didn't have time. I adapted well to the strict regime of the army. I remember other kids who had joined the army crying at night time. They wanted to go home. I didn't. I slotted into army life almost instantly. For me it was just going from one institution to another. I thrived on "the stick" I was given in the army. All

the other boys had come from loving, caring, nurturing families and they couldn't cope. It wasn't anything to me.

128. I initially was with the [REDACTED] as a combat engineer. I decided to change trades to become a [REDACTED] operator. That's how I ended up in [REDACTED] in London. That's where the British Army had their [REDACTED] I later went to Monchengladbach and Dusseldorf. I was promoted to corporal and came back to [REDACTED] I then moved to Northern Ireland. After that I went back to Germany. I also went to the Falklands.
129. In 1993 I took voluntary redundancy from the army under a scheme called "Options for Change". The offer was too good to refuse. The offer was a lump sum and an immediate pension. A lot of my friends were taking the deal and I was swayed. I had thrived in the army. I became a character and I bloomed. I thoroughly enjoyed my time in the army. I have no regrets. However, at that time, I decided I could use the money as a stepping stone. I wanted to start a new chapter.
130. I went to work as a casual residential care worker in [REDACTED]. I worked in the open and secure units. I worked with young people who had either been physically, emotionally or sexually abused. I found that work very rewarding.
131. There was a guy called [REDACTED]. He was a senior social worker. Whilst I was working at [REDACTED] he approached me and said "why don't you go for social work." I told him that I didn't think I could do it because academically I "wasn't there". He told me that I was good. He then helped me to become a social worker. I failed my first dissertation but I went back and qualified as a social worker in 2003. I was a social worker until 2006.
132. After leaving social work I went on to do various jobs. I now work in a school for children with special needs in [REDACTED] I've done that since 2012. It's a challenging job but I enjoy it.

*Marriage and children*

133. I was married to a girl called [REDACTED] during the first time I was in [REDACTED]. That was in 1981. We were together for three years. I was far too young. Looking back I was looking for something that I never had. When I moved to [REDACTED] in Northern Ireland I met my second wife, [REDACTED]. We got married very quickly. I jumped in with both feet. That was in 1987. We ended up being married for seventeen years. I adopted [REDACTED] in 1988 when she was six years of age. Later on my wife went through IVF and it worked. [REDACTED] was born in 1996. I've now got three grandkids.

*Contact with siblings and parents*

134. It was me who kept on looking for my siblings. I would search '[REDACTED]' on Facebook. It was difficult because some of my siblings had married. I did that for years. It was hard. I was sending messages. Out of the blue I got a message saying "my dad is your brother." It was a girl called [REDACTED]. She turned out to be my niece. I then got hold of my brother, my other brother and my sister. I got invited to my sister's son's wedding in Aberdeen. We all went to that. It was quite an emotional reunion. I'm still in touch with [REDACTED]. She calls me every week. I discovered that, strangely, she also had become a social worker.
135. I met [REDACTED] two years ago after a twenty five year gap. I don't really see him much now. I had thought that I was close to my twin brother when we were in care together. However, more recently my brother [REDACTED] has said to me that [REDACTED] thinks that I bullied him. I can't remember that.
136. [REDACTED] has a big chip on his shoulder about being in care. He has massive issues about his time in care. He ended up an alcoholic. He has just managed to secure a house through the army in [REDACTED].
137. I have learnt what happened to some of my other siblings. My brother [REDACTED] ended up in prison for something. [REDACTED] was originally at Nazareth House before he

was shipped out. I can't remember whether he was stealing or running away but he was sent out to St Ninian's. I think he went on a ropey path after that.

138. The only contact I ever had with my parents was that one phone call with my mother in Nazareth House. I never physically met either of them at all. I found out about my father last year. He was very high up in the masons. He was originally from Larbert. He ended up being buried in Falkirk.

### **Impact**

139. I believe the trauma I experienced growing up has had a massive detrimental effect on my mental health. My trauma has contributed to my bouts of depression and anxiety over the years. I suffer from re-active depression as opposed to clinical depression. If I get myself in a crisis the past comes rushing back. I start thinking "I am not good enough" and "I will never feel good enough." I suffer self-loathing. My self-esteem goes out the window.
140. I suffer from attachment disorder and PTSD. From what I know about my condition it is due to the way I was treated in Nazareth House. The absence of nurturing and affection has effected many aspects of my life.
141. I've suffered flashbacks and panic attacks. I have had nightmares for years about dead bodies because of my experience of being made to touch the hands of dead nuns. I was scared of anything to do with death. I would wake up almost smelling the smell of someone who had been embalmed. That has been happening in the last few months. I distinctly smell that same smell that had been haunting me for years. I am sure that that experience contributed to me wetting the bed as a child.
142. I believe that the incidents where I was slapped in the face and force fed by Sister LTX plus others, resulted in me having issues with food and body image over the years. I had several bouts of bulimia in my younger years.

143. I think Sister <sup>LFB</sup> [REDACTED]'s punishment of making us all stand and wait until somebody admitted that they had done something wrong has resulted in me automatically feeling guilt when someone has done something wrong now. I still get that feeling now.
144. I think that I was very materialistic when I left the army. I bought the big house and the car. I think that was because I didn't have anything when I was in Nazareth House. As life has gone on I've realised that life isn't about that. The materialism definitely stems back to Nazareth House.
145. I know that the way I was brought up definitely had a detrimental effect on my relationships because of the way it has affected the way I attach to people. It's affected my trust in people. I don't handle any form of rejection, or what I deem as rejection, well. It's had an effect on my ability to get close to people and trust people. I have had two marriage breakdowns. I don't think my ex-wife understood what I had gone through and where I was coming from. She didn't understand. I think I struggled with that.
146. The switch is still there where I became emotionally detached. I am still like that. On occasions I can come across as quite cold. I don't mean to be its just I need to get things out of the way.
147. I find it difficult to accept praise. I have seen myself become physically overwhelmed when someone has said something positive about me. I don't deal with it very well. An example of this occurred when I was once at a team meeting. During the meeting each person had to write something positive about one another . When it got to my turn I read what the other people in the room had said about me. I handed the piece of paper back and said "you've given me the wrong one." I was told that they hadn't. I didn't realise how good I was at my job.
148. I had to learn to be confident. My confidence was all taken away when I was a child in care. I wasn't allowed to be who I wanted to be as a person. I have become very

good at wearing a mask. However, sometimes, when I am not in a good place, the mask drops. When it drops it drops.

### *Breakdown*

149. I had a massive breakdown in 2006. My marriage was breaking down and the [REDACTED]. About that time I was training to become a social worker. One of the classes involved making a collage about yourself. You had to cut pictures out of magazines and put them all together. In mine I had a picture of a smiling face, a sad face, a soldier and a nun. It just all came out. I had put everything in a box for years and now the box was being opened.
150. I seemed to fall into a gambling addiction. I was filling a void. I had an affair. Things just went downhill. Things got so bad that I was admitted to a psychiatric ward in [REDACTED]. I was out of control. I was in denial of what was going on around me.
151. One day I was in the psychiatric ward in [REDACTED] and they told me that they were discharging me. I told them that I wasn't ready. I then had a panic attack. It was like a slide show started flicking over and over in my head. All I could think was "I need to get out of here. I need to get out of here. I need to get out of here." I wasn't coping.
152. I detached myself from loved ones. I ended up taking all my money out of the bank account, packed a bag and went to the airport. I took the first flight out of there. It happened to be to Edinburgh. I went on a binge for three days. I walked in and out of pubs. I was in such a mess that I overdosed on tablets and alcohol in a hotel. Somehow I ended up in an ambulance. I was taken to a psychiatric ward in the Royal Edinburgh. I was there for three weeks. They drugged me up.
153. Two psychiatric nurses took me back to [REDACTED]. I was then told that there were no beds and that I would be put back in the community. Everything just went downhill again. I had been earning really good money as a social worker but I lost it all because of the gambling. I lost everything.

154. I decided to go back over to Scotland. I had been seeing this girl in Falkirk. I ended up getting a job pretty quickly. The relationship didn't last. ██████ used to come over to visit. One day ██████ said "Daddy will you come home?" She would have been about twelve. I said that I would and I did. I am riddled with guilt that I left my family. It is a horrible feeling. After coming back from Scotland I started to get my act together.
155. Looking back I was using the gambling and alcohol at the time as some form of self-medication. I was just crying out for help. The psychiatrists I have seen have asked me whether I think I was trying to kill myself. I wasn't. I might have had suicidal thoughts but it was all down to being so much in crisis. I didn't know where to turn.
156. Although I was going into the psychiatric wards because of my gambling addiction it was also about the past rushing back. It had all been in the box. I hadn't allowed it all to come out. I didn't show anyone that in the army because it was deemed as weak. I had no time for emotion. It's only really the last ten or fifteen years that the box has been opened.

### **Treatment**

157. Between ██████ 2013 and ██████ 2014 I had some cognitive behavioural treatment (CBT) with a senior behavioural therapist called ██████. That treatment provided me with more adaptive coping strategies to manage my depression. It really helped.
158. In the past if I was walking down the street and shouted hello to somebody and they didn't see me I used to get paranoid. The CBT I have had has helped me with that. I am able to not personalise it and understand that it stems from my feelings and experiences of rejection in the past. I have been told by my psychotherapist that it is a long time since he has met someone who is so insightful into themselves.



159. I occasionally get depressed and suffer anxiety. I take fluoxetine, Lyrica and propanolol to help with that. More recently I have been on sleeping tablets. I am now in a good place. I think I've got everything sorted out.

### **Records**

160. I thought about getting my records a few years ago but I didn't actually apply. I don't think I was ready. I think whatever is in my records won't reflect the way I feel about my upbringing anyway. Somebody could have a complete different opinion in them as to what I remember as happening.

### **Other information**

#### *A nurturing environment*

161. You could question "if I had been brought up in a nurturing family would I have turned out the same way?" I remember reading a book called "Maternal Deprivation." The author of that book said that it doesn't matter the setting or type of family you are raised in. All that matters is that you are being nurtured. For him, there was no reason why you couldn't go on and develop to be a rounded individual in any environment.
162. I think being in care has had a detrimental effect on me as a person. If I had had the nurturing that any young child would be expected to have I think my life would have been completely different. I have these issues because I wasn't brought up in a nurturing environment. It's as simple as that.

#### *General comments about the nuns' behaviour*

163. I got the sense there was a frustration in the nuns. They weren't all like that but certainly the ones I came across had that. None of the nuns were nurturing. There

was a coldness there. There was no room for niceties or engagement. There was a “no nonsense” attitude. It was just like “you were there.” Children were there to be seen and not heard.

164. These nuns had no integrity, love or empathy. They just had a pure lust for abuse. I feel they thought their actions were acceptable and the norm. There was no accountability. The way they acted just wouldn't be allowed to happen nowadays. It annoys me that the nuns behaved in the way they did. They didn't have to be like that. Children thrive in all environments if they are nurtured.
165. Looking back I don't think that the nuns had any training. All they had was “a calling.” There is a difference between having your faith and trying to manage a group of kids with all the pressure involved surrounding that.

*A change in regime*

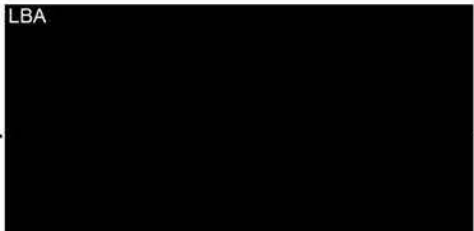
166. In providing this statement I want to be fair. It is pointless me telling the Inquiry things that did not happen. Sister LDX [REDACTED] changed the regime. When she arrived there was “nurturing.” Things were done differently. The difference was night and day . There was a change in the way we were treated after she arrived. It was as if the old guard was being moved out.

*Final thoughts*

167. I have come forward to speak to the Inquiry to tell my story that, sadly, these things did happen. The abuse is not something that happened in anyone's imagination. In the past I think people have thought that people have a tendency to conjure all of this stuff in their mind. The reality is, unless you were there you don't know what people have gone through. Being listened to is the key. It's irrelevant whether what you say is validated or not. I know what happened and what I experienced. I know how it has affected me and how I have got on with my life.

168. Since being in care I have had many dark days. However, I have a resilience in me. I'm definitely not a victim. I have too much self-respect for myself. I don't want pity from anybody. I've made a life for myself. I'm a survivor. As a survivor I will never give up.
169. Although I now manage my depression and anxiety, it has been a long road. It has been a very long journey. I believe that my resilience of being a survivor has kept me going. There have been spells of deep deep sadness that have been held within me. However, I am proud of what I have become. I know that I am a genuine caring person that knows the meaning of empathy. I have many positive things in my life. I have two beautiful girls and three grandchildren.
170. I believe that the Poor Sisters of Charity and Aberdeen City Council have failed in their duty of care and responsibility towards me as a child growing up in the care system. I personally hold both organisations responsible. I don't care what they come back with. I don't care if they say "it was an appropriate level of discipline." It wasn't. It was far beyond acceptability in any normal humane society. I will make both organisations accountable for their actions and failures concerning me and other vulnerable children in their care.
171. I have always wanted someone in authority to acknowledge that children went through hard times in children's homes in the sixties. It was a rough life. It was a regime. I hope that people are listened to and heard by the Inquiry. There are people who have passed away who are responsible for what happened. That doesn't mean that it didn't happen.
172. I hope, through providing this statement to the Inquiry, I have provided some insight into how children were treated. I hope I have provided insight into the systematic abuse which occurred in the care system at that time. I hope I have shown how that systematic abuse has had a detrimental effect on my mental health and wellbeing. I am sure it has also had a detrimental effect on many many others who were in Nazareth House under the care of the Poor Sisters of Nazareth in Aberdeen.

173. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

LBA  


Signed.....

Dated..... 1/2/18 .