

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

MGF

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is MGF. My contact details are known to the inquiry. My date of birth is 1959. I am 57 years old.

Life before Boarding School

2. I was born in where I lived with my family. My dad was not a Catholic but my mother had been brought up a Catholic. They were pre-war generation. They were married for over sixty years. My dad did his war service. My mum and dad never argued. They absolutely loved each other. I had a very happy childhood. I was spoilt by my parents because I had meningitis as a baby, when I was a few months old, and was very lucky to survive. It left me with epilepsy. I had a sister who was eight years older than me. I was never close to my sister.

3. As a young boy, I was crazy about . I would put my cap on and my mum and dad would take me to the to see . My mum's cousin worked on so all the men got to know me. They would take me into the .

4. My mum and dad had shops in and . My mum worked in the shop with my dad. My dad would at home in the evenings. He also had an interest in the business in . My grandparents were elderly and lived nearby so my mum cared for them too.

5. I went to a local authority primary school in [REDACTED] as a day pupil. It was my maternal grandparent's condition that when my mum and dad were married, that my mum should follow her Catholic faith and her children be brought up and educated as Catholics.

6. I started St Joseph's College, Dumfries in 1971 as a first year pupil in high school. There were no secondary Catholic schools in [REDACTED], which is one of the reasons I was sent there. It was a private school and had a really good reputation. I wasn't into football or rugby and my mum wanted me to do more sport, and St Joseph's was a sport orientated school. My mum felt that she wouldn't be able to help with my homework in the evening as she helped my dad with the books. She also didn't want me travelling to Dumfries everyday on the bus so I was to stay there as a full term boarder.

7. I was there for four years and I boarded all the way through as a private fee paying pupil. I would go home for holidays. The school had started to take in local authority pupils before I left. The local authority took over the school many years after I left.

8. Prior to applying for a place, my mother spoke to MYZ [REDACTED] the SNR [REDACTED] and told him I had epilepsy and asked if that would be a problem. I had seizures every day and she told him this. I had medication that I was supposed to take daily. I would be zapped of energy after a seizure and should be put to bed and cared for. He assured her that they had a matron and a recovery room so it wouldn't be a problem.

Life in Boarding School - St Joseph's College, Dumfries

9. My mum and dad took me up to school with my case. Brother MFU met us and I was shown my bed and locker.

10. I was thirteen years old when I went in. I was put into class 1B. I was homesick from the first day. I had not gone to a prep school like other boys so the whole boarding school routine, with everything being so regimented, was a shock to the system for me. There was another boy from in third year, but no other boys from my school had gone to that high school with me.

11. There were different dormitories in the school, which were split up into each year. There were about twenty beds in each of the main dormitories. There were rooms leading off the dormitories, which had about three beds in each room. The dormitories were full. Everybody in my dormitory and connecting rooms were first year pupils. I was in the main dormitory to begin with. I moved into a room in Easter or Christmas of first year with a boy from Annan. Each dormitory had a house master. My house master was Brother MFU in first year.

12. Brother MFU wasn't a teacher. He was in charge of the dormitory and was getting on in years. He didn't tell me what the routine was. He had been there for a long time. He had no compassion. He was brutal.

13. Brother MFU had a room at the end of my dormitory and Brother Damien had one at the end of the second year dormitory, which he looked after. The Brothers weren't rotated at the end of every of year, they stayed in charge of the same year group. Second year was the same set up in a second year dormitory. In third and fourth year, you moved into the building opposite.

14. The following day I was on the phone to my mum telling her I was homesick. I would call her every day and reverse charge the calls telling her I wanted

to come home. My mother spoke to MYZ and asked for his advice on whether I should go home at weekends. He said it was a bad idea because if I started doing that, she would not be able to get me to go back to school.

Schooling

15. The teaching hours at St Joseph's were from 9 am until 5 pm in the evening. We had half days on Wednesdays to play sport in the afternoon. We had school lessons on a Saturday morning and played sport in the afternoon. We would go to church on Sundays.

16. The brothers wore black robes with white down the front. They never smiled and were frightening. They never asked you if you were ok when you cried. Brother Damien was my French teacher in first year. I liked him. He saw that I was homesick. I wasn't good at French and he would ask other boys to pronounce things, but he wouldn't pick on me in front of the class. He would give me a bit more help than other pupils and would help me pronounce things. I liked him more than the other brothers.

Abuse at St Joseph's College

Brother Damien

17. Lights went out in my dormitory at 9 pm and I wasn't used to this. I would cry my eyes out. A couple of weeks passed and I wasn't sleeping at night. One night I felt a hand under my sheets. It was Damien, my French teacher. He put his fingers to his lips and said, "Shhhh it's ok." He then told for me to go with him. I put my dressing

gown and slippers on and followed him. He took me into a room in the second year dormitory, which I realised was his bedroom.

18. The radio was playing and Damien told me to sit down on the bed. I was crying and he asked me why I was upset and enquired if I was homesick. I said I wanted my mum and dad. He asked if I would like a drink of squash. I said yes. He got me a drink of squash and a biscuit. He put the television on for me. It was 'Kojak' or something like that. I thought he was being nice to me and I liked him as a teacher. He was the only brother in the school who was trying to help me. I watched some television and then he took me back to my dormitory door and I went back to my bed. I was still crying because I wanted my mum, but I thought Damien was nice and somehow I felt better.

19. I was still homesick and Damien was still nice to me in class. He would come and get me two or three times in the week and take me to his room. I would be there for thirty to forty-five minutes at a time. He asked what kind of crisps and sweeties I liked and would have them for me the next time I was there. He was really nice. He wouldn't do anything other than sit beside me and watch television. He'd put his arm around me and console me. I looked forward to it because I would get sweeties and crisps. I wasn't getting much pocket money. This was in the first few weeks of me being there. He'd tell me not to tell anybody that I was going into his room or we'd get into trouble. It was a secret right from the start, but he was the only person in the school that I liked.

20. I never saw Damien come into the dormitory to get any other boys. I thought I was special. I don't know if other boys knew he was taking me into his room at night.

21. One night, Brother Damien told me he was going to take me into town on a Saturday for a treat. On Saturday he took me into town. He didn't have his robes on. He was wearing black trousers and a black shirt. He took me to Frisco's down the vennel, which was a café, and I had a milkshake. He took me there a few times and also to Wimpy on a few occasions. It was always just the two of us. Even if he wasn't

coming to get me at night, he would give me sweets during the day. He was nice to me. I liked him because he took me out so I didn't have to do sports on a Saturday.

22. I was still speaking to my mum every day. She'd ask if I had friends. I said I didn't and she asked if anybody was being nice to me. I told her Brother Damien was nice to me. She said that was nice and it put her at ease. I would still tell her I wanted to come home.

23. One night Damien and I were sitting watching television like a normal night. I felt his hand on my leg and he moved it up until it was between my legs. He opened my pyjama jacket and started to feel me. I froze and started to shake. He kept saying, "That's ok." I was still in first year at this time and was pre-pubescent. I went back to bed and I never slept all night after that.

24. I spoke to my mum the following day but didn't tell her what had happened. He didn't come for me the following night, but I couldn't sleep because I dreaded him coming.

25. The second occasion of abuse was three nights later. He took me to his room and stripped my pyjama jacket off. His hands were all over me. He untied my pyjama bottoms and put his hands inside. I kept saying, "No, I want my mum." He kept saying, "It's ok." That was it that night. I got dressed. He had stayed fully dressed.

26. The following time, he threw me onto the bed and took all my clothes off, I was more frightened than before. He played with my penis. I think he was trying to see if I could get an erection but I hadn't gone through puberty and so couldn't. He turned me over and played with my backside. I was terrified and kept saying I wanted my mum. It felt like it lasted an eternity. I said I was going to tell my mum. He said if I started telling tales I wouldn't see my mum again. He grabbed hold of me and asked if I understood. I was crying and shaking and I said I understood.

27. I called my mum the following day and kept saying I wanted home. The same as every other day.

28. Once the abuse started, I wasn't getting sweets and treats anymore. He didn't care that I was homesick anymore and wasn't comforting me. There was no more television then. He would come to get me about once a week, and the time I spent in his room decreased. It was just abuse.

29. When the abuse started, he would threaten me that if I told anybody, I would be in trouble and would never see my mum and dad again. I was absolutely petrified about this. He knew what I always wanted was my mum and dad. He said I would be sent to another school. I believed him. He twisted things and put the guilt on me and I felt I was to blame. From then on, I had my clothes ripped off me regularly and was always petrified and no amount of shouting NO would help. I was like 'a rabbit in the headlights' and always froze.

30. I had no friends and I was scared of all the brothers. My parents were pre-war generation and we never talked about sex. I couldn't tell anybody.

31. I couldn't concentrate in class because I would wonder if he was coming to get me at night. I was having more seizures. I was anxious about him and crying all the time. I was terrified of him.

32. The abuse was going further and further. He started taking his clothes off and rubbing his genitals against me. This was always in his room. He didn't penetrate me. Damien would force me to masturbate him in order to give him an orgasm. This would normally happen in his bedroom. He also took pictures of me when I was naked in his room. I was petrified.

33. Brother MFU used to check the dormitories at night. He must have seen that I was out of my bed but I never got punished for being out of my bed. This all went on between September and the Christmas holidays. I was still in the main dorm.

34. I went home for the Christmas holidays. I hated the holidays because I absolutely dreaded what I was going back to. By that time I was going through puberty.

35. At this time, I had had gone through puberty and the type of abuse changed. That was when Damien started to penetrate me and made me perform oral sex on him. The abuse would take place at different locations around the school and not in his room. Damien's room wasn't somewhere he could take me anymore because I had started to make noises. Damien, like most of the brothers there, had keys to most of the buildings around there. They carried them around their waist. The threats were always the same – "it's our little secret" and that I was in serious trouble if I said anything and would never see my mum and dad again.

36. One Sunday afternoon after lunch, I was taken out the dormitory by Brother Damien. He said I was going out for a run in the car with him. The college had just brought a new J registration plate, Datsun car. Brother **MMK** and another retired brother from the Mount, which is a retirement house in St Joseph's College, were also with us in the car. Brother **MMK** later became **SNR** at St Joseph's College. I don't know what the retired brother's name was. We went in the car through New Abbey Road and Mount Pleasant in Dumfries, and on to a big mansion house called Kinharvie. This was a retirement house for the Marist brothers and was very frightening.

37. I was taken in through the back door and into a kitchen, which had a large wooden table. There were several elderly brothers sitting at this table. **MMK** and the other brother sat down at the table. Damien told me to follow him and he took me around the house.

38. There was a chapel in this house and he explained that a Catholic aristocratic family had opened this house. We went into the chapel and said prayers. The whole house was dilapidated and spooky to me. I was petrified.

39. I was taken to the top of the house, into a wing with a bedroom. It wasn't a room that looked to be in use. Damien took my clothes off and bent me over, he then

sodomised me. I screamed and was crying my eyes out, but nobody came. I don't know if anybody heard. After this I was taken back to the chapel and made to say prayers and hail Mary's. This was because Damian said that I had sinned.

40. I was taken back to the car. I was bleeding. Damien went back in the house and came back with MMK and the other brother. We drove back and I was taken back to school and to my dormitory. I was told to get clean clothes and taken down to the shower. I had a shower. There was blood. I bled for days and I got no treatment. I could hardly sit down but I got no treatment. My bed was blood soaked. There was regular inspection of beds so MFU would have seen my sheets. Shortridges in Dumfries cleaned the sheets for the school and must have seen it too. The sheets got cleaned every week. Nobody asked me anything. I couldn't tell anyone. I was in the worst pain I've ever experienced and constantly cried. I saw Damien again the following day in his room. He didn't say sorry

41. On a Sunday, boys who lived far from Dumfries would write letters home to their family. I didn't write letters because I telephoned my mum every day. I also remember boys going to confession, usually on a weekend, but I was never ever sent to confession. I find this strange when I think about it now because Damien made me say '*hail Marys*' and '*our fathers*' after he abused me. He would tell me to say it and say that I had sinned against god. It was like he was trying to twist it around to put the guilt on me, as if I was sinning against god for my abuse.

42. Damien was my dormitory master in second year. He didn't abuse me in the dormitory but would abuse me in other locations all over the school. He abused me up in the games room, he was a language teacher so he would take me to the language and also the science block. There was no other member of dormitory staff at night. Damien was taking me out of the dormitory to abuse me, so I did not see if any other brother was coming into the dormitory after he took me away. When I was taken back to the dormitory, I never saw another brother in the dormitory. As far as I know there was nobody else supervising the dormitory.

43. Nobody else was ever present when the abuse took place. The only time anybody else was present was when I was taken out in the car to the priest mansion house on two occasions in first year. I was taken to the mansion house three times in total.

44. I lived in fear because I never knew what was going to happen next. As I got older, I had to find a defence mechanism from the abuse. I couldn't run home because I knew I'd just be sent back to the school. I didn't know anybody in Dumfries who I could go to. I didn't have money to get a bus or train. The only place I could think of to go was to the [REDACTED] because I knew the men there and they would give me food. It was survival. I started to disappear and go there as often as I could during the half days on Wednesdays and Saturdays when other pupils were playing sport. This was usually the time when Damien would get a hold of me.

45. I started to run away to the [REDACTED] more and more during the day and during the night. When I started to run away more, Damien tried to control me with physical abuse. I chose to take the physical abuse over the sexual abuse. Whenever I ran away or resisted his abuse, Damien would give me cold showers or lock me in dark rooms for hours on end, or even for the whole night. I was once locked in the games room overnight wearing just my pyjamas in the middle of winter, because I wouldn't do what he wanted me to do. It was a wooden room with games and a pool table in it. I was also locked in cupboards overnight many times. I felt he was taken his frustrations out on me and I was being punished when he didn't get his sexual gratification. I was petrified of dark rooms and especially of cold showers. I am still absolutely and utterly petrified of the dark and showers.

46. The abuse never stopped until I left the school. It was just worse throughout first year and into second year. Towards the end of the second year, it became less frequent. I assume it's because Damien moved onto a younger boy who he could control and manipulate, because I was getting more rebellious and running away more. I never saw him with any other boy. I spent most of my time at the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] around that time. If I returned at night, the door would be locked so I would have to go back to the [REDACTED] I wasn't getting proper sleep because of this. As far as

I know, the brothers did not tell my parents that I had run away. No-one ever spoke to me about running away.

Brother Damien and Brother MMK

47. I was still in first year when I was taken to Kinharvie house again. I was taken to Kinharvie twice in first year. The second time I was taken, the brother from the tuck shop and Brother MMK came with us. Damien took me up to the same room again, Brother MMK was also there, and both pushed me up against the wall and raped me. It was absolute torture, excruciatingly painful and made me bleed. On the way back the three brothers never spoke to me in the car. They only spoke to each other.

48. One Sunday afternoon in first year, just before Easter, Damien took me to the priest's house. The priest's house was set apart from the other buildings on the campus. It was directly opposite the chapel. The priest lived there alone, but I never saw him this time.

49. Damien took me into the front room of the priest's house and disappeared for a few minutes. He returned without his robe on and took me into the bedroom. Damien stripped off from the waist down and sat on the bed. He pushed me to the floor, grabbed my head with both hands and pulled my face against him, trying to force his penis into my mouth. I turned away. He kept trying and I kept turning my face away. I hadn't a clue what was happening and had a total fear. He then dragged me into the bathroom. He was enraged and started to run the cold tap to fill the sink. He pushed my head under the water. I thought I was going to drown. I don't know how many times he did this. I begged and begged him not to do it again. Then he grabbed me and pushed me back into the room. It ended up that he forced his penis into my mouth. Words can't describe the fear I felt. I was only thirteen years old. I didn't know what that was called at the time. The whole experience was over forty years ago, yet my feelings about it are still raw now and I continually relive the abuse every night in my nightmares.

50. This happened after mass so there wouldn't have been a lot of people around. Somebody could have seen me going into the house but I don't suppose they would have suspected anything. The boys would have been playing football. I never saw the priest in the house. We then left the priest's house together.

51. I was on the phone to my mum every morning at 7 am saying I wanted to go home. I'd reverse the charges. Even the operator knew it was me. I went home during Easter for two weeks. I returned after the holidays for the summer term and the abuse carried on into second year.

Father MML or MML

52. Father MML or MML, I can't remember his name, lived in a house on the College grounds. The house was scary, it was a horrible big house with an overgrown garden. At some time between Easter and the Summer Holidays I was taken by Damian to the priest's house and was forced to give the priest a blow job. A few weeks later I was taken back, and the priest raped me. Damian was always present.

Discipline and physical abuse

53. The brothers used their fists or the belt before the verbal. You would be whacked with anything that came to their hand. I think the brothers got as much of a kick out of physically beating us as they did from sexual abuse. All the brothers used physical torture. In my case, it was mostly Damien and MFU. The place had an atmosphere of fear. You didn't know from day to day what was coming.

54. There were four flights of stairs in the school. MFU would make you run up and down the stairs as a punishment. If you hadn't washed your face properly, both Brother MFU and Damien would fill the sink with water and dunk your face

in the sink until you couldn't breathe. They would do this in front of other boys. I saw this happen to other boys too.

55. MFU would line up half a dozen boys in the dormitory and belt them if there was noise that nobody owned up to. He would make a fool of boys in front of the other boys. He would empty out your locker if he thought it was messy instead of telling you to tidy it. If your bed wasn't made properly, all the sheets were ripped off the bed and you were told to make it again. He was vindictive.

56. It was not unusual for MFU or other brothers to bang your head against the wall. It was common practise for them to grab you by the ears or the hair and lift you off the ground. They would also give you the belt across any part of your body.

57. MFU was a brutal animal and he ran that dormitory with brutality. I would also get physical abuse from MFU for running away.

58. The brothers didn't physically abuse the day pupils this way, only the boarders after school hours. There were lay teachers there as well. They didn't use the same discipline as the brothers. The brothers were sadistic and would use any excuse to exact extreme violence against boys, all of the boys lived in constant fear of this happening.

Healthcare

59. I did not get treatment for seizures whilst I was in there. I was never cared for. I received no treatment or sympathy. I should have been allowed to rest after a seizure but instead I was kicked out of the dormitory and made to go to lessons.

60. I did not get my epilepsy medication regularly. I had taken all my medication with me to the school. The matron was supposed to hand it out to me but

some would be missed out or I would go days without it. I was treated brutally when I took seizures and not how I was supposed to be treated. I consider that to be abuse.

61. On some occasions when the matron did give me medication, it was around the time I had been to Kinharvie. I was in agony after the abuse but the matron never asked to examine me. I was petrified to ask for help because of what the consequences would be. My sheets were blood stained for weeks after the abuse. MFU would have seen them because he examined the beds, yet he never asked what was wrong and nobody else realised the sheets were soaked in blood as I always managed to hide this. I was petrified as to what would happen if the blood was discovered. I had to pad my trousers with face cloths, hankies and a hand towel to stop the bleeding and to stop the blood seeping through and be seen by others. The only pain killers I had access to were Disprin which came from home but these didn't dull the pain.

Inspection and supervision

62. The only supervision the school had was from the Bishop of Galloway. He visited the school, but I never spoke to him. The SNR MYZ was supposed to carry out daily inspections of the school, I never saw him do this.

63. There was also supposed to be two brothers supervising the dormitories at night time, I only ever saw one.

Leaving St Joseph's College

64. I was terrified and miserable in that place the whole time I was in there. I wasn't getting proper medication or proper sleep, I didn't have one happy day.

65. My first year results were ok. My second year results were awful and I skived because of my abuse. I couldn't concentrate and wasn't sleeping because of

the abuse. The school told my parents I would be better repeating second year and so I did. I left school without any qualifications at sixteen because I didn't stay on to do my "O" levels. I couldn't get out of there quick enough. My mum was angry with me that I didn't stay on an extra year to do my "O" levels. Even after my mother spent thousands of pounds on my education, I left with no qualifications after four years. I got ear ache from my mum after that.

66. Damien was my French teacher throughout my time there. MFU [REDACTED] was still there when I left in fourth year. He is now dead.

Life after Boarding School

67. I told my mum about the abuse shortly after I left the school because I was having nightmares and other problems. She couldn't accept that I had been sexually abused by a Catholic brother. The Catholic religion was her life and when I finished school, she still expected me to attend mass on a Sunday. My relationship with my mum was never the same again. I battle with loving her on the one hand and hating her for putting me in a place of abuse in the name of religion.

68. My mum was an outgoing person. She would talk to people and did meals on wheels and was in the [REDACTED] When I started having mental health problems, she realised there was something wrong. She became a valium addict and a recluse. I look at it as though she was a victim also. There was not just one victim, there were two.

69. I was never able to tell my dad. My parents had been married sixty years. I didn't want to bring religion between their marriage and I didn't want my dad to die feeling anger towards my mum because of her beliefs.

70. I worked in my dad's [REDACTED] shop after I left the school and lived with my parents. I worked there and lived with them for twenty years. The last thing I wanted was to work in my dad's shop, but I didn't have any qualifications as I couldn't get out of school quick enough.

71. My mother was the first to die. She practised her religion until her dying day. A devout Catholic woman who worked at my dad's [REDACTED] shop used to ask why I didn't go to mass on a Sunday. We were brainwashed as kids because of the Catholic religion. I hate everything to do with it because I was brainwashed, and because of what they've done to me. I hate everything it stands for. It has completely and utterly ruined every aspect of my life. I feel cheated.

72. My dad died fifteen years ago and I sold the business. My dad went into retirement sheltered housing and I got a little flat on my own. It was the first time I had lived on my own. I have not worked since my dad died. I am in a rented house now. I haven't spoken to my sister for fifteen years because of money issues after my dad died. I have thought about moving away from [REDACTED] and away from St Joseph's, but you can't escape your nightmares.

Reporting of abuse

73. Soon after I left the school, two police officers came out to my dad's shop in [REDACTED]. It was a Saturday and the shop was full of kids and I had staff in. They asked me if I had gone to St Joseph's College within certain dates and asked if anything had happened to me. I wasn't ready to talk about it at that time so I didn't tell them anything. That was around the time that other boys must have reported abuse by Damien and he was charged. This was when I was in my early twenties. I don't know how the police knew to talk to me. Damien's health deteriorated when he was due to go to court so he never had his day in court. I learned that he lived in Glasgow for a few years longer in retirement.

74. I went to the Police three years ago and gave a statement in [REDACTED]. I told them about being taken to Kinharvie on three occasions. I was passed on to a family liaison officer, John Lowrie, in Dumfries. I asked him why the police had contacted me at my dad's shop years earlier but he wasn't able to tell me. He told me that Damien had previous history of abusing boys but he couldn't pursue my case because Damien had died. That was the first I knew about his death. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] It upsets me that I can't have my day in court, and that he escaped justice because he wasn't fit to stand trial.

75. John Lowrie phoned me a short time after the documentary on television about the school in Fort Augustus. He told me another boy had come forward about St Joseph's college. This was shortly after I had been to see a psychologist. I found out that brother Damien's name was Thomas McCann. I never knew him by that name.

Records

76. I didn't want to contact the brothers to obtain my records, so I contacted the Education Department of Dumfries and Galloway Council to ask for them. The Council told me they only had to keep the records for five or seven years, so they did not have my records. I think the Council records should have to be kept for longer.

Other action taken

77. John Lowrie told the Marist Brothers what happened to me. He also got in touch with the head of the Catholic Order and told him what had happened to me. I am due to meet him at some stage. This is something I have to set up. He has offered to come up from the Netherlands to see me. There was someone in Glasgow but I said I didn't want to meet him because he had represented one of the brothers up there who had abused a boy. I found this out so didn't want to meet him. I want to meet the one in Netherlands but I don't trust them because they know what happened up there. I want [REDACTED] my support worker, to be there when I meet him.

78. The Catholic Church should pay for my counselling. This was one of the recommendations by the Church of Scotland Minister, Andrew McLellan. They were to pay for counselling for survivors. I contacted the Catholic safeguarding service and they said I had to contact the Marist Brothers for funding. They are the last people I want anything to do with. I told the Catholic Church this but they said it was the Marist Brothers' responsibility because they abused me and it has nothing to do with Catholic Church. I don't want finance but as a principle, the Catholic Church are denying that they abused me. I had to get down on my hands and knees and worship the pope but they are saying it is not the pope's responsibility but the Marist Brothers' responsibility. I would like the inquiry to look at this.

Treatment and Support

79. I had been seeing a psychiatrist for years then I got a younger psychiatrist called [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] and I told him about my abuse. He was the first person I told after telling my mother when I left school. I felt the time was right. The time was never right in my life before.

80. I found the In Care Survivors Service by searching on the internet three years ago, after I went to the Police. I started seeing [REDACTED] who was a lovely girl and helped me immensely. Then I was put in touch with [REDACTED] and have been seeing him. There is no support for survivors in Dumfries, especially male survivors. There is no understanding of people who have been through child abuse.

81. I now see a psychiatrist every two or three months, I have in the past had help from Social Work, a Community Psychiatric Nurse and [REDACTED] at Citizen's Advice in [REDACTED]. I have epilepsy which, although originated from meningitis, has been severely impacted on by the abuse. I also have a good neighbour who I can talk to. I see [REDACTED] my neighbour every day. I cut her grass and do her garden. She's a lovely elderly lady.

Impact of abuse

82. My education suffered because of the abuse. I had to repeat my second year at school and left with no qualifications. They made me feel like a failure in there. I left there with no confidence. I had no self-esteem. I still don't have confidence or self-esteem. I wanted to do something with electronics or another profession. The last thing I wanted to do was go into the family business and sell [REDACTED] but I had to. That ruined my life. I felt ashamed, guilty and dirty. I thought that people were looking at me in the street.

83. I've had no contact with anybody from the school since I left. I hated the place and I was petrified of all of the brothers in the school, especially Damien. I torture myself every day for believing his threats. I had never been taught about sex as a child so the concept of abuse was alien to me. It was shocking and petrifying. I was also petrified of the consequences of resisting. I have carried the guilt and shame my whole life. No matter what my counsellor or psychologist tells me, I still torture myself every day for not shouting and screaming or running out the room when it happened.

84. What really hurts me is that I used to get an erection when I was being sexually abused. I know now that this is physiological and I couldn't control it. It hurts so deeply to this day that I gave him gratification. I still can't get over it to this day, even though I have been told by my counsellor and psychologists that it was not my fault and I couldn't have controlled it.

85. I never made friendships in St Joseph's. I had to learn survival and grow up very quickly in there. I have always had issues with trust in my adult life. I don't trust anybody at all, especially males. I don't trust people in authority. I do not even trust my best friend. My neighbour is a good friend but I can't trust anyone. I can't even let friends kiss or cuddle me. I don't like being examined by doctors or dentists. I don't

like anybody getting too close. I feel shame and guilt. Sometimes I have to put my phone off for weeks on end and have to lock myself away. I find it difficult to cope with the outside world. I don't even answer the door when people knock on the door. I have to work myself up for days to even go to the supermarket. This is because of a lack of trust of people and a sense of detachment.

86. I am 59 years old and I've never have been able to form a relationship with anyone. I can't let people get too close to me in friendship or in a physical way. It is like there is a thick steel door that comes down between me and other people. I've never had sex in my life. I don't know what sexuality I am because the abuse created confusion in my mind as to whether I'm gay or heterosexual. Even though I have tried to form relationships in the past and get close to people a barrier automatically comes up. The person then thinks there is something wrong with them or that they have said something wrong. I then have to make excuses and get asked difficult questions.

87. I have had to hide this thing that's been in my life. It stayed in the closet for all these years. My father always wondered why I hadn't settled down with a girlfriend and given him grandchildren. I felt a failure for not being able to give them grandchildren, so I also had that to contend with. I could have had a wonderful relationship or a marriage but I just can't get over that hurdle. The abuse has totally and utterly ruined every aspect of my life.

88. Over forty years later, I am constantly reliving the abuse in my nightmares which I have most nights. As soon as I came out of the school, the nightmares started. The effect of just one nightmare means that the next day is ruined, I find it difficult to function properly, don't want to go out and I fear going to bed the next night. This made my life very difficult when I worked in the shop. When I had a nightmare, I couldn't face going out and seeing the public in the shop. The last thing I wanted to do was go and put a face on in the shop. Every morning I dreaded going to work. I hate locked doors and the dark.

89. I also worry about the naked photographs that Damien took of me. I worry about who has seen them. I am still petrified of the dark. I find it very difficult to get to sleep and can only sleep with my bedroom door open and the light on in the hall.

90. The abuse still has an effect on me to this day. I am still absolutely petrified of showers to this day. I have to have a bath. Even if I am in a hotel, I have to ask for a bath.

91. The robes the brothers wore in the school always smelled musty. They never seemed clean. Now, if I get on a bus and smell someone unclean, it triggers a panic attack. I also get flashbacks if I see a St. Joseph's school blazer.

92. I was left with complex post-traumatic stress disorder. I have suffered panic attacks, anxiety, flashbacks and depression. I am on a cocktail of medication, but they don't even work. I even went through a stage where I thought I might have AIDS because of the abuse. I thought this when I was still quite young and AIDS was going around. That tortured me for years.

93. I never took to drink and drugs but have tried to buy myself happiness. I would buy myself a new car and the happiness would last for a few months but it doesn't take the pain away. I have tried to commit suicide on a few occasions. I still have suicidal thoughts. I am not afraid of dying and I have days when I wish I had died when my dad did. He was my rock and the only person I trusted, but I couldn't even tell him about my abuse. I have not enjoyed my life and I feel I have been cheated out of my life. I was made to feel like a failure and I will feel like that for the rest of my life. The pain never goes away. I feel angry. I'm frightened of my anger, I have nowhere to channel it. It eats away at me.

94. I have a deep hatred for the Catholic religion as an institution because of the abuse. Damien would tell me I had sinned against god and make me say '*hail Marys*' and '*our fathers*' after he abused me. I feel like I was brainwashed and the religion was used to make me feel like I was in the wrong. Damien was putting the guilt and shame on me. The Catholic Church and the brothers have also tried to cover

the abuse up and deny it, which makes me so angry. I get angry at people, including my mother, for not standing up and holding their church accountable for abuse. They just turn their back and as far as they are concerned, it didn't happen. They were brainwashed. As far as I'm concerned, the Church is a cult.

95. I feel so angry and frustrated because I know I will never get justice because Damien is dead. I am angry because I know that he was charged, but escaped justice because his health deteriorated. My anger builds up every week and it's only when I've had a counselling session that I feel I've had a chance to vent some of this with the help of my counsellor. I am looking for answers that I will never get. I want to know why these things happened to me and why nobody saw it. I am tortured with these thoughts all the time. The abuse has completely destroyed my life.

Final Thoughts

96. I don't want a religious order to be in charge of looking after children without checks and supervision. St. Joseph's was allowed to run without any supervision. I would like to see regular inspections taking place in institutions to consider the welfare of children. These should be carried out by an external body and at a local and national level. I don't think the Marist Brothers should ever be trusted with the care of children again.

97. There should be procedures in place making it much easier for children to report abuse in residential institutions to an external body, so that authorities and police can act on it. I especially don't think that an institution should be run by males only. That should never be allowed again. There should be female members of staff present, especially after school hours and overnight. There should also be non-religious, lay members of staff involved in the running of the school.

98. Personally, I don't think that children should be segregated on religious grounds. I don't think it is good for children. I used to get spat at on in the street by

boys from Dumfries Academy, when I was a St Joseph's pupil. When I used to run away I never wore my blazer to protect myself from other boys. There is also friction in Glasgow between groups that would be lessened if children were brought up together, and taught to tolerate each other.

99. The Catholic Church should be held accountable. They shouldn't be allowed to pass the buck to their orders. I have no faith in the Marist Brothers. The brothers in Glasgow and the body in Europe know what happened because there have been court actions. I know that I will not get justice, but I want closure. That is why I am talking to the Inquiry.

100. 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.

Signed. .....

Dated. 24/5/19.....