

**Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

MFT [REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes

1. My full name is MFT [REDACTED]. As a Marist Brother I was known as Brother MFT [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1938. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

**Summary of education and working life within the Marist Brothers**

2. I was born and brought up in Glasgow. I went to primary school in Glasgow and I remember a Marist Brother came to visit the school and asked if there were any young men who wanted to join the Marist Brothers. I spoke with him and told him I was interested and he said he would need to meet my parents to explain everything. He did that and I left home when I was about twelve.
3. I then went off to a place called Hetland House in Dumfries to start my training to become a Marist Brother. I stayed there for three years and then I did a year in a place called Kinharvie, also in Dumfriesshire. I then went to Glasgow and studied for my highers. I stayed in a Marist Brothers place in Partick Hill Road, Glasgow for two years.
4. I then went to France, to become a novice, which is all part of the final preparation in becoming a brother. After two years in France I qualified to become a Marist Brother. That was in 1956, so I was seventeen or eighteen years old. I took annual vows for five years until I qualified and took my final vows.

5. I then went to St. Joseph's College in Dumfries. I went there on three separate occasions. The first time was in 1958 or 1959 and I was there for about four years, until 1962 or 1963. I then went back in 1964 for about a year and the third time I was there was from 1969 until 1978.
6. When I left the first time, around 1963, it was to go to St. Andrew's University. I had to leave after one year though because I didn't do well in the exams. I then went to Dundee where I taught in a primary school for a year.
7. I then got a chance to go to university in Manchester to do a new degree that had been created called the B.Ed Degree. That was in French, Spanish, Sociology and Education. I graduated in 1969, and [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I was quite happy about that having failed the exams in St. Andrew's.
8. I went back to St. Joseph's, after I graduated, from 1969 until 1978, although six months of 1978 was spent in Switzerland.
9. Later in 1978 I was asked to go to Lebanon. I went there myself and I thought it was to teach English in an English speaking school. However, the headmaster told me I was to teach science and history. I wasn't qualified to teach in any of them so I had to get the books out and study in order to keep the lessons going.
10. I was in Lebanon for about four years and while I was there I met a young lady and fell in love. That meant I had to leave the Brothers. I left the Marist Brothers in 1982 and we then got married in 1983.
11. I had to inform the provincial that I had met someone and wanted to get married and therefore wanted to leave the Marist Brothers. He said he would arrange it and he contacted Rome and the Vatican to seek approval.
12. I then went back to Lebanon when we were married and I continued teaching in a place called Sayda.

13. I was there for about another three years then trouble broke out and we had to leave. We then moved to Cyprus where I continued teaching and we then moved back to England and we now live in Coventry. I retired from work about four years ago.

### **St. Joseph's College, Dumfries**

#### *General*

14. When I went to St. Joseph's the first time, in 1958 or 1959, I was told to go there by the provincial, Brother Conrad, I think it was, who was based at St. Joseph's.
15. I actually thought I was going to Hetland House but when we arrived in Dumfries he said he wanted me to go to St. Joseph's. That was to teach, I had no choice in the matter.
16. St. Joseph's was a secondary school catering for people who were usually well to do, ex-army for example. It was a fee paying boarding school. I was only involved in the boarding side of things when I was there between 1969 and 1978.
17. When I first started teaching at St. Joseph's I didn't have any childcare or teaching qualifications. All I had were my highers. I had higher French, English and Spanish and I 'O' grade Latin and maths. I wasn't very good at maths.
18. I was quite happy to be at St. Joseph's, I was about nineteen or twenty and I thought it was quite good.
19. In my time at St. Joseph's it was always all boys. The ages were from about eight to about seventeen. There was about three hundred boarders and perhaps one hundred day boys.
20. I think parents had to apply for positions for their boys and then pay for them to attend as boarders and the local authority paid for the day pupils. I remember there

were catholic and protestant day boys, but I can't recall exactly why that was. It may have been because there was only one primary school in Dumfries, so we took the excess.

### **Life at St. Joseph's College, Dumfries**

#### *Layout*

21. St. Joseph's was quite an impressive place. The building comprised of two main buildings and a science block. There was also big games field, but that wasn't on the actual property, you had to walk to the playing fields for games and all that.
22. One of the main blocks was for seniors and the other was for juniors, intermediates and the middle division. The blocks contained all the living areas, bedrooms, classes and dining areas for the children staying in those blocks.

#### *Staffing*

23. When I first started at St. Joseph's there were Brothers and civil staff, or lay teachers, who were very good. I think there was about eighteen Brothers involved in teaching and only two lay [REDACTED] teachers. Gradually, lay [REDACTED] teachers came in as well, who were women, and that was it. I would say the ratio between staff and boys was about twenty five boys to one teacher or brother.
24. The Brothers will all be dead now as they were a lot older than me. The [REDACTED] SNR was a Brother [REDACTED] Brother [REDACTED] MFS was the [REDACTED]. Brother Lucas was a Latin teacher and Brother [REDACTED] MMK and Brother [REDACTED] MZI were [REDACTED] teachers. I can't remember them all now.
25. Lay staff and all the Brothers were accountable to Brother [REDACTED] the [REDACTED] SNR. He was replaced by Brother [REDACTED] MZH, who was English. He was a very strong man and a

great disciplinarian. If you weren't up for prayers in the morning he would come and bang on your door. He had us all up and at prayers.

26. Brother **MZH** was replaced by Brother **MYZ** and he was then replaced by Brother **MMK**. I can't remember what the years were for each of them but Brother **MFY** was **SNR** when I left, ultimately, that was in 1978.

#### *Roles*

27. When I first started at St. Joseph's I was in the primary school. There were only two primary classes, Control 1 and Control 2. I had Control 2 and Brother **MLA** had Control 1, he was preparing them for the Eleven Plus exams.
28. I had 49 children in my class, in my first year, ranging from five to nine or ten years of age. When Brother **MLA** left I then moved to Control 1 and did the prep for the Eleven Plus. It was heavy going but that was the way things were in those days, nobody really bothered about it and you were just expected to do it.
29. I then went to the secondary department and taught  to years seven, eight, nine and ten at O level standard and then advanced level. That was all during my first time at St. Joseph's.
30. When I went back to St. Joseph's the second time I was in charge of the middle division. That was fifteen year olds. I was also the master of discipline for them and responsible for the monitoring. I continued to teach  as well, to all age groups.
31. I then went to the intermediate division, that's thirteen and fourteen year olds, where I was master of discipline for them. I found that easier to do. I didn't really enjoy the master of discipline role with the middle division.
32. As master of discipline I had to make sure the boys did as they were told to do. I did things like stopping them from smoking, ensuring they made good use of their time and making sure they weren't refusing to have haircuts.

33. I had a struggle with haircuts as it was at the time of the Beatles. There was a barber who came in to the college and a couple of times he came to me and told me some of the boys were refusing to have their hair cut and were going to be telling their parents we were forcing them to have haircuts.
34. I told him to let them do that and just give them a haircut, that was it. That caused me a lot of trouble. The boys had trendy Beatles haircuts and the parents then started complaining, asking why their boys had to have their hair cut.
35. I did not receive training to become a master of discipline. It was just general observation, keeping control of the boys and not letting them away with anything. I was considered capable of doing that, so they let me do it.
36. Smoking was the thing and I used to patrol the area of a shop outside the school that I knew sold cigarettes to the boys. I did that a lot and I'm sorry to say it, but in those days I smoked, so if I saw anyone smoking I would tell them to give me the cigarettes and I would confiscate them for myself.
37. It's true, because, as a Brother, you had to seek permission from the provincial to smoke. You were only allowed to get forty cigarettes, or two packets, per week, and very few people were able to stick to that.
38. I had to go to the Provincial, Brother Conrad, and ask his permission to smoke. He said no and that I had to wait until I made my final profession and got my cross. I was then to go back and ask him, which I did.
39. I remember a guy who was a motoring inspector came to me and asked if I wanted to learn to drive. He had a motoring school in Glasgow and said he would take me out for lessons during a Christmas week I was spending in Glasgow with a group of boys from the school.

40. I did that and passed my driving test. The Provincial found out, got me in and asked me if I'd been given permission to have the lessons and the test. I told him it had been offered to me and cost nothing but as he hadn't given me his permission he took my licence away from me. That too was until I reached my final profession.
41. The Provincial controlled much of what we could and could not do. When the new Provincial came in, Brother Gaul, I went to see him and he gave me my licence back. I hadn't reached my final profession but Brother Gaul was more lenient.

*First Day*

42. On the first day, all the new boys gathered in the hall. Brother MMK would then read out the names and tell them which classes they were to go to. The other boys all knew where they were to be, so it was usually just the newcomers that gathered.
43. A brother would be assigned to looking after certain groups and he would guide them to their classes. That was about it. I only ever came across one or two cases where you could see the kid hadn't settled in and wasn't at home.
44. Siblings were always kept together, we didn't separate them if they were in the same age grouping. Generally they were free to see one another throughout the day. They would be actively encouraged to be together.

*Daily routine*

45. When I was in charge of the middle and intermediate divisions I was in the dormitories with the boys at night time. I stayed in the dormitory, but in a separate room, in the corner. They also had another room there, for any Brother that was spare, so they could help out a little.
46. The junior division dormitory had about sixty beds and the middle division one had about fifty beds. There was another dormitory with about twenty cubicles in it. That

was the dorm most of the boys liked to be in because there was more privacy with the cubicles. All the boys had little cupboards to keep things in.

47. When I was in charge of the intermediate division, in the evenings, if the boys had been playing football, I'd ask if any of them wanted to shower. After their showers they would get dressed into their pyjamas and if there was any fooling around it would be detention.
48. I would let them watch TV until just before nine o'clock, then the TV was off, and when everyone was quiet, we would have an evening prayer.
49. At night time, I would leave the door open and after the lights went out, anybody who disturbed me was in trouble the next day. The boys knew I was there and they could come and go to the toilet, or knock on my door if there was ever a problem.
50. I can't remember ever coming across any bedwetting at St Joseph's. I know it could be a problem, possibly more with the juniors, but I wasn't connected with them.
51. In the mornings I got the boys up at seven o'clock. I would put the lights on, switch the radio on and then walk around the dorm to make sure everyone was up. If anyone was still in bed I would tell them to get up.
52. The boys then went to wash and I checked they had made their beds. The boys then stood by their beds before going down to the dining room for breakfast. While they were going down I would check the dorm again to see if any beds weren't made properly. I would take a note of any, and after breakfast I would have the boys, who hadn't tidied their beds, go and tidy them.
53. After breakfast they had a half hour of recreation, unless they were back tidying their beds, then school started at nine o'clock.
54. During the day I had to be with the boys for their mid-morning break, during their dinner in the dining room and throughout their games periods in the afternoon.



School was between two and five o'clock, then they had tea, recreation and homework. I had to be with them for all of that. It was a full days' programme.

55. When I wasn't staying in the dormitory, I stayed in what was called Provincial House, the area where the Provincial stayed. That was when I was teaching. I had a room there where I could go after my teaching, to relax and say prayers.

*Washing and bathing*

56. Usually we had a list of all the boarders and we would split them up for showers. There was maybe twelve showers, so if there was sixty boys that would be five groups of twelve for the showers.
57. We would have the door left open if the showers were being used and I would patrol outside. We had to watch for fooling around or there would be water all over the place. I used to be pretty strict regards that, if the boys were fooling around I would throw the door open, walk in and tell them to get out.
58. The boys would generally have one shower per week but, if they had been playing games a lot, I would let anyone who wanted a shower have one. I would always tell them to remember the rules, no fooling around.

*Food*

59. I think the food was very good. So long as there was chips everyone was happy. I think it was porridge at breakfast, I can't recall. The Brothers ate, more or less, the same food, but we ate in our own dining room.
60. There was a separate cook who made the food for the Brothers and a big kitchen for the boarders. If I remember rightly, the juniors, intermediate and middle divisions ate together in one dining room and the seniors had their own dining room.

61. I don't think the boys were bothered much if they didn't eat. I don't recall anyone ever being force fed or the same food being put down again, at the next meal.
62. In general terms, the food was good and I never came across any great problems. If it was being thrown across the room or something like that, that would be different and you would step in and put an end to that.

*Religious instruction*

63. The day started off with prayers and mass was obligatory every Sunday, everyone had to go. I think everybody just went, whatever their faith. I think religious education was also the first period every day in the school.
64. There was a [REDACTED] on the property, Father <sup>MML</sup> [REDACTED], who took confession in the church. He was from Ireland and I remember he had a bit of a [REDACTED]. He actually just dropped down dead in his house at the college one day.
65. The boys were taken to confession and were supposed to wait, in the church, in an organised fashion. However, I did sometimes hear that no one was there to supervise, other than the priest, so there could be boys running about all over the place in the church.

*Clothing / uniform*

66. There was a uniform which was blue and gold. The boys wore a blazer and tie and when I first went to St Joseph's I remember there was a special uniform for church on Sunday's. All the Brothers had a responsibility for making sure the uniform was being worn by the boys.
67. The boys were also allowed to wear their own casual clothing, when not involved in actual school lessons.

68. There was an outside firm that came in and took the laundry out for cleaning once a week. That was for the boys clothing and for ourselves.

*Schooling and work*

69. St. Joseph's school had quite a good reputation in Dumfries and we were on a par with Dumfries Academy. The schooling was of a good standard and the results much the same as Dumfries Academy.
70. The boys usually did their homework every night, Monday to Friday, between six and seven thirty. The boys would all be gathered together and that was supervised by me or other Brothers.
71. I can't think of there being any life skills education or activities. I don't remember there being any crafts or woodwork or metal work classes.
72. I did have a group of kids, who were about fifteen, who were not gifted academically and I suggested doing some different activities during the day. We did a bit of gardening and growing vegetables. I kept them busy, and it really worked, that was successful. I've no recollection of any other chores or regular work.

*Leisure*

73. The boys could play football and rugby in the sports field. I would supervise that. We had a staff football team, I loved football, and we would play other teams, like the police and the hospital. That was good.
74. There was an under fifteen football team that played in the local school league in Dumfries. I remember us winning a cup, that they'd never won before, so that was good as well.
75. I remember one day I was asked if I knew anything about rugby, which I didn't, but I was asked if I wanted to do some refereeing. I did that, I looked at the rules and then

I started refereeing some games. I got really interested in rugby and I also started to do some coaching and the school had a really good team.

76. I ended up coaching the [REDACTED] and St Joseph's had fourteen boys in that team, along with one from Annan Academy.
77. Chess and cards were quite common and books were available. I think there was a library but I can't remember where it was, how it was operated or who was in charge. It was down to each individual boy to decide if they wanted to read. I don't recall encouraging reading to be honest.
78. There were televisions in the dormitories. They would be on from about eight o'clock until nine o'clock, when the lights went out. There was also a radio in the dormitory which I put on sometimes.
79. There was swimming on a Wednesday, which was a half day, I went with the boys for that trip. The boys also had a horse riding club and a rowing club. It was Brother MFS who [REDACTED] and arranged annual gymkhana's and things like that. Horses were brought up to the college.
80. In May or June every year, there was the Whitson Tide Pentecost which was a big event. There were three or four days of activities and the parents visited to take the boys out. There was sports events, a gymkhana and a dance in the evening. It was a holiday for everyone and there was an opportunity to meet the parents.
81. Every Sunday after mass in the morning, for one or two hours before lunch, the boys had team games and I would play along with other Brothers. After lunch they could do their own thing, but they were not allowed to go into the town.

*Trips and holidays*

82. There were organised trips to the local cinema some evenings. We would all watch a film and walk back. That was all well organised and had to be supervised. That was once a month or so. I was involved in that and often supervised those cinema trips.
83. I remember some of the boys were also once asked to go to a Celtic against Queen of the South football match. The headmaster allowed that, but I remember someone mentioned to me that knives had gone missing from the dining room.
84. I didn't think it possible that some of the boys might have taken knives to go to the game, but we decided to check the boys. Some boys actually had the knives so none of the boys ended up getting to go to the game.
85. I also arranged trips to Spain and Majorca, for the boarders, during the school holidays. I would ask the boys, and the Brothers, and we took anyone who was interested. If there were sufficient numbers, about thirty boys and four Brothers, I would go to the travel agency and get a price. The parents paid for the boys and I made all the arrangements.
86. I arranged six or seven of those trips, almost every year during my second visit to St Joseph's. We stayed in hotels or hostels. We still practiced our faith, which was easy with Spain being mainly catholic, so there were no problems there.
87. Those trips went very well and we all had a good time. The Brothers would perhaps have a drink at midday, then, in the evening we would go out for a walk and maybe go to a club for a drink. The boys were supervised most of the time but had some free time.
88. The Brothers I remember going to Spain were Brother <sup>MYZ</sup> [REDACTED] who was the <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED] Brother <sup>MMK</sup> [REDACTED] Brother Kenelm and Brother <sup>AKV</sup> [REDACTED]

*Birthdays and Christmas*

89. If the boys had birthdays during term time, they were celebrated within the college. We had presents and cake, things like that.
90. The boys all went home at Christmas. Many of the Brothers stayed on and celebrated Christmas on their own within their community.
91. The Brothers all had their own festivities at Christmas, Easter and throughout the summer.

*Personal possessions*

92. The boys all had bedside lockers where they were encouraged to keep personal belongings. They would keep all their stuff in there. We did inspect them fairly regularly, as some kids got into the habit of leaving food in their lockers, which would go off and that then encouraged mice. There was a rule not to keep food in the lockers.
93. The boys did get pocket money from their parents. What normally happened was the parents gave money to us for their kids and we took it to the bursars office who kept an account and issued the pocket money to the boys. I think that was on a Wednesday afternoon.

*Visits/progress reviews*

94. Some boarders had visitors. The boys could have visitors whenever they wanted, Monday to Friday. The boys could also get permission to go home, within reason, at weekends. I think there was a visitors book at the entrance to the college. It was either put out in the visitors room, or at the entrance to the visitors room, which was to the left as you came in the main entrance.

95. Parents could request a meeting with a teacher, if they wanted a progress report. It was usually something that was done at the annual Whitson Tide Pentecost when all the parents came to visit. We usually made a point of meeting the parents and discussing their child's progress. There was no face to face progress report, type of thing.
96. There was an annual report for every child and individual teachers provided their own comments. Those were all reported back to the parents.

#### *Healthcare*

97. There was a matron, I forget her name, who was very strict, even with us Brothers, she used to take care of us as well. If the boys didn't do what they were told, she would sort them. The boys would see her before they would go to see the doctor, which they could do directly or through a brother.
98. I think the matron did all the routine checks for the boys but I'm not sure. She certainly would report to one of the Brothers if anything was untoward. I'm sure the matron kept records of everything. I also remember ambulances being called, for injuries at rugby and football matches.

#### *Deaths*

99. I think there was one death while I was at St Joseph's, or it may have been a serious injury. It was during my first time there, when a group of students were out for a walk in the fields, with a brother. It was within army property and the Brother hadn't noticed a sign that was up warning that army exercises were in operation.
100. The army were firing guns in that area and one of the students was hit by a bullet. He was very seriously injured. That left a very sour taste in the mouth, why didn't the Brother see the sign and who gave him permission for him to go out in that area? I can only presume the family were called in by the headmaster. I think the Brothers had to pay compensation. That may have been a death, but I'm not sure.

### *Access*

101. If a Brother came up asking to see a boy, they would generally have unrestricted access. If I was supervising in the dormitory and a Brother came up wanting to see somebody I would let him go in to see them. I don't recall any specific circumstances of that, but it would probably have been unsupervised.
102. If I wasn't happy, because it was an awkward time for instance, then I would probably have asked what it was about, or asked them to come back another time.
103. During the day access would have been fairly unrestricted but it wouldn't have been that easy once the day was over. I suppose you just had to rely on yourself, to make sure you checked everything that was going on and that the people that were in the place had the authority to be there and to have access to children.
104. Personally I never found anyone working or walking about the property without being authorised to be there.

### **Inspections**

105. We did have Inspectors who came in. I think they were from the local authority inspectorate. I remember a group of Inspectors coming into a Control 2 class I was holding. They spoke to the children and they spoke to me. I don't know what, or how any, information was recorded.
106. I don't remember that happening very often and I don't remember getting any feedback. I think feedback would have gone directly to the headmaster. I do think there were reports as I remember a magazine that was produced every year, called the Blue Book.



107. The Blue Book was a summary or accounts of all the activities that had been going on in the school during that year. It included sports, studies, visitors and inspections. It covered a whole lot of aspects and activities.
108. I do remember one case I heard about, when the Inspectors came, and were inspecting a [REDACTED] lesson Brother MFQ was taking, and the Inspector told him to move on a bit. Brother MFQ told the Inspector that if he thought he could do any better he was welcome to take the class, and Brother MFQ then walked out the class leaving the Inspector there. I'm not sure what happened to Brother MFQ as a result of that.

### **Discipline and punishment**

109. There were four age groups in the college. Junior, intermediate, middle and senior. When I was master of discipline for the intermediate Brother MFU was the junior master of discipline, Brother AKV was middle and Brother MLZ was senior.
110. The master of discipline was a position within an age group, it wasn't recognised within the hierarchy of the college. The headmaster had maintained overall responsibility within the college.
111. It would usually be some sort of bad behaviour that would result in some form of discipline. That discipline could be the belt on the hand, doing lines, learning to recite a poem or exclusion from the class. Exclusion would mean standing outside the class, in the corridor, for a period of about half an hour.
112. That was when I was master of discipline at intermediate level, so that was primary school age.
113. The type of behaviour that would result in a boy getting the belt would be answering back, not doing what they were told to do, not obeying instructions, talking during lessons, being easily distracted during lessons or cheating.

114. As master of discipline it would be me who decided what the punishment would be for the behaviour. Sometimes I could go many days without using any punishment at all. It very much depended on the class. If the class was inclined to follow instruction then there would be no need for discipline. If, however, you came across bad behaviour then you had to step in and do something about it.
115. I did find that more with the middle group than with the intermediate group. The punishments did differ between the groups, because the boys were grouped in ages.
116. If I did have to administer punishment, it would be fairly light with the intermediates, perhaps even a threat might be enough. To say they should be put in the junior group might be enough, or one of the belt, for example.
117. I did find, with the middle group, that belting badly behaved boys was needed. I had to be quite tough with them. I constantly had to be on my guard with the middle group. They knew I wasn't going to suffer any nonsense and there was no great love lost between them and me. That was for one year and I was glad when that year was over.
118. I think the master of discipline for the middle group, before me, Brother MNV, was terribly lax, so the boys learned what they could get away with. I made it quite clear I wasn't going to accept that type of laxity. The boys did realise I was a strict disciplinarian and I wasn't going to accept any nonsense. I wasn't going to suffer them wasting my time with bad behaviour.
119. In the middle group, I would give three of the belt, unless it was something serious like smoking, then I had to really punish them. I remember belting three boys two times each on the backside, in their dorm, for smoking. It was too dangerous to let them off and I wanted them to see how serious it was and that their actions weren't acceptable.

120. I don't think any of the other boys woke up in the dorm, it was about midnight, and that was the only time I belted any boys on the backside. Normally it was on the hand, once or twice.
121. When I was master of discipline for the middle group I would have administered some form of punishment nearly every day. When I was with the intermediate group it would have been about once a week. I was master of discipline for about a year with each group.
122. I did punish boys in class, but more so after school. The dorm was one place I needed to be careful about dishing out punishment. That was more about being careful when near the boys, not to be touching them, and just administering the punishment. The punishments could happen after school activities or in between breaks, there were times during the day, so I would be careful.
123. I didn't actually see any other Brothers administering punishments. I think they all had their own ways of dealing with problems. I didn't notice any particular Brothers issuing any specified form of punishment. We all had belts.
124. I didn't keep any records of the punishments I administered. I don't think anyone really bothered much about it, and everyone was left to do their own thing. I don't think anyone kept any records.
125. I think that if a child was having problems, or causing problems I would, if I could, have informed the parents about the problems that were being experienced. I would also have informed the headmaster.
126. I think the headmaster at the time did realise I was putting up with a lot of nonsense from students. He didn't want me to give up the job at the time I was leaving, but he couldn't get anyone else to do the job.

**Abuse at St. Joseph's College***General*

127. I honestly can't think that I saw anything I would call abuse at St Joseph's. When I think about it, in my own case, there were possibly times when I was going too far.
128. When I think now about those kids who were smoking I think I maybe overdid it with regards to punishment there. I sometimes think that I could have slackened off a bit there. When I reflect, I think I could have done it a different way.
129. It was just the danger and they had to know that and something had to be done there and then. I had to do something about it. I don't think I would say that was abuse though, on that occasion. I would say I could have acted differently.
130. No boys ever came to me saying they were being abused. If they had wanted to, they could have spoken to me, but I can't think of us having any procedure to deal with that. I can't actually think that we had anything in place to help to solve any problems for anyone who wanted to report abuse.
131. During any of my time at St Joseph's, I cannot think of any occasions or incidents that I would describe of as constituting abuse. I'm not aware of any instances of bullying at St Joseph's either. I think I would have acted had there been any instances reported to me. I would have asked who was doing it to them and I would have questioned them. I'm not aware of that though, I never came across it, but that isn't to say it didn't exist.
132. I did not see discipline of any boys that I would describe as abuse, and I did not see what I would describe as abusive behaviour towards any of the boys at St Joseph's, during any of the three occasions I spent time there.

**Marist Brothers***Brother* MFS

133. I remember Brother MFS he's dead now, but he was at St Joseph's during my time. He was a teacher and I think he was retired when I went for the second time. He was a pleasant character but I didn't know him very well. He always seemed to be surrounded by children, as he was a bit of a magician and did tricks.
134. I have no knowledge of him ever being involved in the abuse of any boys and I've not heard since being at St. Josephs' of him being involved in the abuse of any boys.

*Brother* MFO

135. I knew Brother MFO he was at St. Joseph's when I was there. He died of cancer but I used to go and see him in Dumfries. He was and wasn't involved in any teaching or classes. He had no involvement in any discipline.

*Brother* MFU

136. I remember Brother MFU his proper name was MFU He was in charge of the seniors and was a master of discipline for them. I always knew of him as head of the radio department and didn't teach. I didn't see him with any of the boys and I have no knowledge of him ever having been involved in any abuse.

*Brother* MFI

137. Brother MFI is a name I know, his name was MFI and was in charge of the juniors, I think. I didn't see him with boys and have no knowledge of him being involved in any abuse of boys.

Brother **MFQ**

138. Brother **MFQ** taught **██████████** and liked playing football. I didn't see him with any boys and I have no knowledge of him being involved in any abuse of boys.

Brother **MFR**

139. I knew him, he was at St. Joseph's but not when I was there. I have no knowledge of him being involved in any abuse.

Brother **MLS**

140. Brother **MLS** was at St. Joseph's. He was involved in **██████████** and was a **██████████** teacher. He arranged and organised big **██** He was about twenty five when I was there. He was always with the kids. I didn't see or hear of any abuse involving Brother **MLS**

Brother **AKV**

141. Brother **AKV** was in his twenties, he was the master of discipline for the seniors. I didn't see him with boys and have no knowledge of him being involved in any abuse of boys.

Brother **MFW**

142. Brother **MFW** was in Dundee, I do remember him from there, but not from St Joseph's, he wasn't at St. Joseph's during my time.

Brother Germanus

143. Brother Germanus was retired when I was at St. Joseph's. He would have been in his sixties. I don't remember him ever being there though. He had a brother [REDACTED] who was also a Marist Brother.  
*Brother* AKU [REDACTED]
144. Brother AKU [REDACTED] doesn't ring a bell. I don't remember that name.
145. I do not think the passage of time has affected my memory of any of the Brothers I have spoken about.

### **Allegations**

#### *Allegations by Steven Behan*

146. The name Steven Behan does ring a bell but I can't remember him being in any section where I was in charge. I don't recall punishing him in any way and I did not abuse him.
147. I understand that Steven Behan has stated that '*Brother* MFT [REDACTED] *was my nemesis. He was a strange man. He ended up leaving the order and marrying. He was brutal, not just physically but he had the most cutting sarcasm imaginable. He could cut a kid down in a few words. He was a master of cutting sarcasm. He could humiliate you with a look or a one line expostulation. I can't recall any specific examples due to the passage of time but he was quite a nasty piece of work. Then there was a bunch of Brothers, which just, sort of, faded in the background'*
148. I don't recall Steven Behan or remember teaching him. I think that's exaggeration. The passage of time may have affected my recall but if he thinks that, what can I say. It's perhaps been erased from my memory. I cannot recall being like that with anyone.

149. I also understand that Steven Behan has further stated that *'for most of my time there, Brother MMK took over as SNR from Brother MYZ. When Brother MMK was away to a conference or on a retreat, SNR would take over and we would see an increase in the violence. Particularly, from Brother MFT who seemed to enjoy breaking kids mentally. He liked the ritual humiliation'*.

150. I don't see myself purposefully breaking someone like that. That just means nothing to me and I can't recall anything to do with him. Perhaps the passage of time has affected my recall but that doesn't represent me at all. I wouldn't have been like that with kids.

*Allegations by MGE*

151. I feel MGE is quite a common name and I can't recall who that was. Perhaps if I saw a picture I would recognise him, but don't know who that was.

152. I understand that MGE has stated that *'there was a strange incident in San Sebastian involving Brother MFT. My passport went missing from my dormitory. I told Brother MFT and we arranged to go to the consulate. On the way there Brother MFT took me for some tapas and drinks in a bar. I remember being ok with that at the time. We then went to the consulate. It was closed because it was siesta. I remember we went back to the consulate later on. It was strange because they didn't seem concerned about me losing my passport. Later on, the passport suddenly reappeared in my locker in my room at the youth hostel. That was odd. In hindsight, in light of things I learnt later on about Brother MFT I wonder whether that was some sort of attempt to groom me. It was all very strange'*

153. I can't recall that incident at all. Nothing like that ever happened in San Sebastian. Perhaps the passage of time has affected my memory but I certainly don't recall anything like that. I have no idea why he would say something like that.

154. I also understand that MGE has further stated that *'another thing you were supposed to be belted for was smoking. There was a toilet where groups of*



*boys who weren't old enough to smoke went to smoke, Brothers used to walk in and randomly pull out a couple of people from the group and take them away to be belted. The rest of the boys in the group were told just to put their cigarettes away. Brother <sup>MFT</sup> was one of the Brothers who did that. I think that was because the toilet was located in the Mids recreation area and he was the dormitory master for the Mids. He's the one I remember the most doing that. Not all the Brothers behaved like that. I remember that Brother <sup>MLU</sup> would look in the 'toilets and just tell pupils to put their cigarettes away'*

155. I think that might have been me. I remember going into the toilets and taking out boys and belting them. I remember something like that as I used to go into the toilets and check for smokers. I don't remember Brother <sup>MLU</sup> being there or having anything to do with it, but I did do that.

156. I also understand that <sup>MGE</sup> has further stated that 'Brother <sup>MFT</sup> attempted to abuse me on one occasion during third year during the first half of the first term. I hadn't been in the dorm all that long. I would have been about fourteen. He took me into his room ostensibly to punish me. I can't remember what that was for. It would have been for smoking or laughing too loudly or something like that. He got his belt out and told me to lean over his bed. He then lifted up my dressing gown and pulled my pyjama bottoms down. He then put his belt away. It was at that point that I worked out what was happening. I then resisted. Looking back, resisting could have been dangerous. I made it clear that it wasn't happening. He just left me to sort out my dressing gown and pyjamas and go back into the dormitory. I don't recall any repercussions for me but I think my brother was affected later on'.

157. I don't remember anything like that. My door was always open and anyone could walk in but I'm sure I didn't do that. I wouldn't do that sort of thing. I can't think why he would say that.

158. I also understand that <sup>MGE</sup> has further stated that 'at some point in third year  was caught drinking. I don't know who it was who caught him. However, it would have been reported to Brother <sup>MFT</sup>. My brother thought he had

got away with it. Later on, one of the three [REDACTED] boys had some money stolen from them. My brother knew who it was who had taken the money but decided that he wouldn't grass the boy up. The [REDACTED] boys went to the dormitory master, Brother MFT [REDACTED] and reported that the money had gone missing. Brother MFT [REDACTED] told the boys that it was [REDACTED] who had stolen the money. Not long after that, on a Wednesday afternoon, Brother MFT [REDACTED] arranged for the three [REDACTED] boys to have half an hour undisturbed in the cubicles in the dorm with my brother. He did that by calling my brother up to the cubicle. When my brother got there he found out he was alone with the [REDACTED] boys. They had been waiting for him. They ended up putting my brother into hospital. There weren't broken bones but my brother was beaten unconscious. He was badly bruised. My brother ended up having to stay in hospital for a week to recover.

159. I don't know whether my brother made a report about the assault to anyone whilst he was in hospital. I do know though that the three [REDACTED] boys totally got away with it. They weren't punished even though Brother MFT [REDACTED] would have known it was those boys who had done what they had done'.

160. I don't remember MGE [REDACTED] or his brother. I don't believe that at all and I've no recollection of it. Perhaps the passage of time has affected my memory but that did not happen. I don't know why that's being said.

Allegations by MND [REDACTED]

161. I do remember the name MND [REDACTED] there was two MND [REDACTED] from the same family at St. Joseph's. I can't recall ever punishing him or abusing him in any way. I didn't abuse any boys, I administered corporal punishment.

162. I understand that MND [REDACTED] has stated that 'Brother MFT [REDACTED] made a plan to micro manage me and stop me going out on Sundays. He had these playing cards with the silhouettes of fighter jets on them, which had been left by the RAF on a recruitment drive at the school. He gave me a pack of the cards, and on each card he had written a time. The times were fifteen minutes apart, and he told me I had to

*go to him at the time written on each card and hand the card to him. Basically, he wanted to keep an eye on me and I couldn't go very far if I had to go and give him these cards every fifteen minutes'.*

163. I can't remember anything like that. I never did anything like that and I have no idea why he is saying that.
164. I also understand that MND [REDACTED] has further stated '*I got the belt quite a lot. There were periods when I was getting belted at least once a week. The belting varied depending on who your rec master was. Brothers MFU [REDACTED] MFT [REDACTED] MYZ [REDACTED] and even MFI [REDACTED] on occasion would all give the belt'.*
165. Boys were given the belt every week. That's what happened, but I can't remember him and I can't remember punishing him. The passage of time may have affected my memory, I don't know.
166. I also understand that MND [REDACTED] has further stated that '*when I think about the sexual abuse at the hands of Damian, the physical abuse from MYZ [REDACTED] and the psychological from MFU [REDACTED] and MFT [REDACTED] it is hard to imagine that it hasn't affected me. It has obviously had an effect on me'.*
167. I'm sorry to hear that. I don't know how you judge that psychologically, I just feel so disappointed about this as I don't remember any of it.

#### **Police involvement**

168. I have not provided any other statements regarding my time at St Joseph's and I have not been spoken to by the police. I am not aware of, and cannot think of anything that was ever reported to the police. I can't recall ever seeing the police at St Joseph's. They must have been there, when the boy was shot, but I didn't ever see police at St Joseph's.

**Record Keeping / Reports**

169. I can't recall keeping any records. I wrote reports on the boys and sent them out to the parents but I'm not aware of anyone else keeping any kind of records. I would keep notes on the boys to help write up the reports but that was nothing official that was kept or filed in any way.
170. There was no punishment book and I was certainly never told to maintain or keep any records. I was never asked for any records on discipline or punishment by anyone.

**Leaving St Joseph's College**

171. I was told I was leaving St. Joseph's in 1978. I went away to Switzerland for six months because I couldn't get back into teaching again. Once you left teaching and your position in the school, you couldn't automatically get it back again. There was a rule about that, but I can't remember what it was.


**Lessons to be learned**

172. I think most of what you've been talking to me about in relation to those allegations would not happen nowadays. We were very careful when we were dealing with the boys and when we talked with the boys but discipline was very important.
173. We had to be strong though and let the boys know what was right and what was wrong.
174. I wouldn't do now, in schools, what I did then and I have since taught in many countries. I've taught thousands of children since St. Joseph's all over the place. I've taught in France, Spain, Beirut, Lebanon and Cyprus and I adapted to the conditions

that were used in those countries. I didn't use a belt to punish any children after I left St. Joseph's in 1978.

**Other information**

- 175. I would like to say that I do not feel I abused any boys, I punished them. The actions I carried out in some circumstances may amount to abuse nowadays but in those days it was accepted corporal punishment.
- 176. I didn't think I was as bad as you are saying, I'm so surprised at all of this. I'm surprised at myself if there is any truth in any of it. There may be some truth in it, but I just cannot remember any of these things happening.
- 177. 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..... MFT  .....

Dated..... 10/09/2019.....