

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

[REDACTED] LCS

Support person present: No

1. My name is [REDACTED] LCS although most people call me [REDACTED] LCS. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1957. My contact details are known to the inquiry.

Background

2. My parents [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are both deceased. I have two brothers and two sisters. [REDACTED]

Life before being put into care

3. I can't really remember much before I went into care because I was only five years old when I went to Nazareth House. We were living in Kirkintilloch and I just really remember being in a cot a lot of the time and my mum and dad arguing. I vaguely remember going in to primary one.
4. I have been told that I went in to care because my mum had a nervous breakdown and ended up in hospital. We were all put into care at different times. My brother [REDACTED] went to Nazareth House in Lasswade. My other brother [REDACTED] came to Nazareth House with me. My two sisters also came to Nazareth House too but I didn't see them because they were in a different part of the building.

5. I went in to Nazareth House in 1963 when I was five and was taken out on [REDACTED] 1965 when I was seven and a half. I only know this because my sister found an old diary belonging to my dad with this date in it. I went back to primary school in P3.

Nazareth House, Paisley Road West, Cardonald, Glasgow

6. Nazareth House was run by the Sisters of Nazareth and it was mixed with both boys and girls. Mother Superior was in overall charge but I never really had any dealings with her or saw her much. The rooms had either two beds or four beds. I shared a room with my brother. The children were split into three groups and there might have been twenty in each group. You spent most of the time with your own group and didn't really mix with the other groups. I think I was probably the youngest at five years old and I am not sure what the age range was. There was a nursery as well for the younger children.
7. The staff I really remember were the nuns; Sister [REDACTED] LFP who was in charge of our group and Sister [REDACTED] LFL who was in charge of another group and the carers; [REDACTED] LFQ and Madeline McColgan. Madeline was nice and she never hit me.

First Day

8. I remember my dad taking me and [REDACTED] to Nazareth House. I was told by my dad that I was going on a holiday and I remember I got a new duffle coat. We got the bus there then my dad walked me and [REDACTED] along Paisley Road West. I was excited about my holiday but I wondered where the sea-side was. When we got there it was an imposing big building with a pathway leading up to the front door. We were met by the nuns, although we called them the penguins. There were no big goodbyes from my dad, he just said 'cheerio' and 'behave yourselves' then he quickly left.
9. No one told me that I was in a home. I just remember there were children running about and it was noisy. All the children were split into different coloured groups. After a couple of hours we went for a meal and they gave us food. I said that I didn't like

the food and that was the first time I got battered. After I had been hit I don't remember much of that day after that.

Mornings and bedtime

10. I remember it used to be lights out at 07:00 pm every night but that's all that I remember. They must have got us up in the morning but I am not sure when. We would get up have our breakfast then go to school. We would come back at lunch-time have something to eat then back to school. After school we would have our tea then we would sit about maybe for an hour in the sitting room then off to bed.

Washing and Bathing

11. Me and my brother [REDACTED] usually shared a bath. After our first bath they put talcum powder in my hair but I now believe it was actually DDT to kill any head lice. The carers usually bathed us, not the nuns.

Food

12. I can't really remember much about the food but if you didn't eat it nothing happened although I did see a couple of other children getting slapped at the table. I never got hit for not eating my food. The only time was on my first day when I got hit after I said I didn't like the food that was put in front of me.

School

13. I went to the primary school across the road from Nazareth House called Lourdes Primary. It wasn't just for children from the home. I loved going there, probably because it got me out of Nazareth House. I loved it because there was freedom, I could do more or less what I wanted and I got to play football. I learned to read and write there. We weren't treated any differently because we were from the home.

Clothing

14. We didn't wear any uniform and I think they provided more or less all the clothes.

Leisure Time

15. When we were not at school there wasn't much to do in Nazareth House. There were no toys or games to play with and no comics or books to read. There was no playground outside that we could play in or if there was I never saw it. Once [REDACTED] and I found a ball outside and we sneaked out and kicked the ball about. We never got any pocket money and the only treats we ever got was once when I got sweets from a box but that is all that I remember. Bellahouston Park was just along the road but we never got taken out to go there. We were too young to go there ourselves.

Religion

16. We had to learn the rosaries in Nazareth House and we had to say them all the time. We just used to watch the nuns saying it then we repeated it like a parrot. If I didn't remember it I just mumbled. We went to mass often, more than twice every day. I remember at Easter time we were in the chapel for hours. We also got some general religious instruction at school.

Chores

17. Because me and [REDACTED] often didn't go home at weekends we got the job of washing and polishing the floors. You had to put these cloth boot things on your feet to rub the wax in and then you had to polish it off. It was a waste of time because the floors didn't even need waxed. I was always tired after doing that.

Trips / Excursions

18. I remember going out two or three times on day trips to Troon with the taxi drivers. Another time me and [REDACTED] went to the pictures in Glasgow with a couple of older

girls. I don't know who these girls were, but it was organised by Nazareth House. We never went on any holidays when we were at Nazareth House.

Bed wetting

19. You were supposed to lie a certain way in your bed or you would get punished. I remember through the night someone came in the room through the night and I felt their hand coming under the sheets and under my backside. I think they were just checking to see if I had wet the bed. I was too frightened to open my eyes to see who it was that was doing it in case I got battered. I never wet the bed.
20. My brother [REDACTED] wet the bed a couple of times and one morning when the bell rang for us to go to breakfast [REDACTED] was standing in the corridor holding the wet sheet up high above his head. I could see there was a big stain on his sheet. Everyone passing could see it as well. We were both humiliated and embarrassed. I felt really terrible for my brother. The nuns made him do this. Sometimes they had to wash the sheets themselves in the bath but there was a laundry where everything was normally washed.

Discipline

21. If ever you did anything wrong you could expect to get hit. They would make me roll up the sleeve of my shirt and they would slap me with their hand on the back of my arm. You were told not to button up your shirt at the wrist so you could easily roll up your sleeve.
22. They would tell you at certain times that you had to be silent. I don't think it was at a certain time of the day, they would just tell you to shut up. You were not allowed to speak in the chapel because the chapel was for saying prayers, nothing else.

Birthdays and Christmas

23. On my seventh birthday I remember I was given a blue racing car and it had a number seven on the side. It was the biggest present I had ever received in my life. I played with it for about twenty minutes and then it was taken off me. I never saw it again after that. I can't remember who took it off me.
24. They didn't really make any fuss about birthdays and I don't remember getting a birthday card when I was at Nazareth House, and I can't really remember anything about Christmas.

Visits / Inspections

25. My dad came to visit us maybe once or twice a month and sometimes he would take us home for the weekend, from the Friday until the Sunday evening. I never saw my sisters when I was at Nazareth House apart from once. When we went out to play when we were at home nobody wanted to play with us because we were in a home. We never saw our mum because she was in hospital. I think once when my dad came to visit he took us through to the nursery and I got to see my sisters
26. If there were inspections at Nazareth house I never saw anyone.

Running away

27. Me and my brother [REDACTED] talked about running away but we were always too scared because we knew that when we got caught we would just get punished. We never did run away.

Healthcare

28. We were told occasionally to go to see the doctor when he was at Nazareth House. We were just told to drop our trousers and were given a jag in the bum. That was a

shock because there was no warning about what was coming. We also got our polio drops there. I never saw a dentist when I was there.

Abuse

29. Within a couple of hours of arriving on my first day we went to the dining room for our meal. I got a plate of food put down in front of me and I remember saying that I didn't like it. The carer hit me across the side of my head on my ear with a big slap more like a bang. It was really sore and I was really upset. I was in agony and I was screaming and she told me to shut up. I didn't know what was happening, I was just a wee boy. I had never experienced pain like that before. Her name was [LFO] [LFO] but was known as ' [LFO] '. She was a paid helper, and she would have been in her 20's then. She then took me out of there and threw me into the hall. There were nuns in the dining room as well when I was hit but none of them said anything.
30. I remember one time we were walking along the road, in two's as we were told to do, and I must have stepped on to the road maybe for a couple of steps to let somebody past. When we got back to the home one of the young girls in our group must have told the nuns because Sister [LFP] made me roll up one of my sleeves and hit me with her hand on the back of my bare arm. This was a common punishment.
31. Another time me and another girl [REDACTED] were playing in the sitting room and we were sort of play fighting and she ended up sitting on top of me. Sister [LFP] came in and slapped [REDACTED] really hard on the side of the face. It left an imprint on her face and she had to stay off school. I had to roll up my sleeve and she hit me on the back of my arm.
32. Another time I was out playing football and I think they must have been looking for me. When I went back in Sister [LFP] again made me roll up my sleeve and hit me on the arm. We got hit like this probably once every couple of weeks for things like that.

33. One time my dad was coming to take me and [REDACTED] home for the weekend and I was given a black jacket with orange stripes to wear. It was horrible and I refused to wear it. A circus clown wouldn't have worn that jacket. There is no way I could let people in Glasgow see me wearing that jacket. Sister [REDACTED] LFP told my dad that I was sick and couldn't go home and then she battered me. [REDACTED] went home that weekend.
34. Once I was playing with crayons in the sitting room and Sister [REDACTED] LFP came over and hit me with a metal ruler on my knuckles because I was writing with my left hand. She said it was a sign of the devil. I changed hands just for that day and it didn't happen again. Where she hit me it broke the skin and later got infected and was septic for about four weeks. I never got any treatment for it.
35. I remember when I made communion and after it we went in to the old folk's home next door to Nazareth House. An old lady gave me a half crown but shortly after, when we were out of sight, one of the carers, but I can't remember who, took it off me.
36. I remember going out on the day trips to Troon with the taxi drivers. At the end of the day we were given a shoebox full of sweets but that disappeared. As soon as we got back to the home they took all the sweets off us. I didn't even get a packet of sweets from that shoebox.
37. When we were lying in our beds we weren't allowed to talk so I used to cough and my brother coughed back so that we knew the other person was alive. I would lie in my bed at night and I was scared. We used to cough at each other until we fell asleep.
38. My brother wet the bed a couple of times and they made him stand in the corridor and hold the sheet up high so that everyone would see he had wet the bed. This happened to lots of the other boys there and they would all be made to do this.

39. Two older girls who I didn't know, but they may have been potential foster carers, I don't really know who they were, took me and [REDACTED] to the pictures in Glasgow to see the Sound of Music. I was holding on to the chair and I hated it. They forced me to sit through the whole thing. I wanted to scream and shout. This may sound stupid but I honestly thought Julie Andrews was going to batter all the children.
40. A nun who I didn't know died when I was at Nazareth House. I was told to go to the chapel within Nazareth House but didn't know why. When I got there a nun was sitting there and there was a dead nun lying in a coffin. I was told that every time a nun came in and said a prayer and kissed the dead nun I was to wipe her forehead. The nuns were coming in every now and again and said their rosaries. I was absolutely petrified. I was only six or seven years old and I had never seen death and didn't even know what death was and there I was looking after a dead nun. I thought she was going to get out that coffin and pull me in it. There I was alone for a lot of the time in a chapel with a dead nun lying there and a figure of Christ was looking down on me. I actually physically wet myself, but I didn't tell anyone when they came in because I knew I would get punished. I don't know how long I was there for but it felt like a lifetime and that still haunts me today. Who in their right mind would do that to a wee boy?

Reporting of abuse

41. When me and [REDACTED] got home for the weekend we would tell our dad what was going on in Nazareth House but he didn't believe us. I remember feeling terrible when it was time to go back to Nazareth House on Sunday.
42. I told my dad that when he had been told by the nuns that I was sick when he called to take me home for the weekend that I wasn't sick. I told him it was because I had refused to wear the black and orange jacket to come home. He battered me for telling lies. He wouldn't believe that the nuns were hitting us.

43. No one at school ever asked me how I was or if everything was okay at Nazareth House, and I never told anybody at school. I liked the teacher in our class at school but I was too frightened to say anything in case they told staff at Nazareth House because I would then get battered. I couldn't trust anyone.
44. I didn't have a social worker when I was at Nazareth House and didn't even know what a social worker was. I have never had a social worker in my life.

Leaving Nazareth House

45. I left Nazareth House when I was seven. I think me and my brother were rebelling and were trying to smash windows so we had to leave.

Life after Nazareth House

46. Me and [REDACTED] went back to live with my dad but he still couldn't cope because of his work. We thought we were back home for good. He put us in his lorry and he drove us to Nazareth House at Lasswade. I would have been seven years old I think. Me and [REDACTED] were in the back and my dad told us he was taking us to another home. We were screaming, shouting and crying because we didn't want to go and we were telling him that we would behave and wouldn't do it again. When we got there they wouldn't take us because apparently my dad didn't go through the proper channels. We left there and drove back home. I remember sitting in the back of my dad's lorry holding hands with my brother and we were so happy that they wouldn't take us. We were over the moon with delight and shaking with pure relief.
47. We then went to stay with my auntie, my dad's sister who lived round the corner from my dad. She was really nice. We lived there for just over a year but she couldn't really cope with us so we went back to live with my dad for good.

48. I stayed at home living with my dad until 1973 when I was fifteen, then I joined the Royal Navy. I was on [REDACTED] for the first nine months which is a shore based training establishment in [REDACTED]. I went there voluntarily. You could probably say there was physical punishment there but it was all part of navy life and it was character building rather than abuse. I was in the navy for two years altogether. I enjoyed my time there.
49. My mum came out of hospital when I was seventeen but she was only out for about two weeks but she couldn't cope so went back in to hospital.
50. I left the Navy at seventeen and I got married young because my partner fell pregnant. I started working initially as a hospital porter then went to college and got my O' levels and went in to nursing which I have done now for 41 years. I am now a nursing manager at a nursing home. I got divorced from my wife in 1997 and I currently have a partner. I have five children ages from eighteen up to forty three.

Impact

51. I remember a lot of the time I was in Nazareth House I wondered if I was ever going to get out of there, and I thought I must have been really bad to have been put in there. I wondered what I had done, and I wondered what [REDACTED] had done. I just felt confused and bewildered. I thought I was going to be there for the rest of my life.
52. I hated Sister [REDACTED] LFP with a vengeance and I still do to this day. As for [REDACTED] LFQ [REDACTED] I have never forgotten that time she hit me on the side of my head on that first day. I think I would kill her if I saw her. I know I wouldn't but I would love to meet her again and I would verbally destroy her. I have just never understood why they were hitting us.
53. I think it was just after I left Nazareth House that I developed a bit of a speech impediment in that I had difficulty with my R's and my L's and I went to some classes

at [REDACTED]. I don't really know what caused this. I suppose what happened to me has affected me psychologically.

54. When I had to wipe the dead nuns face that has always stayed with me. I don't know if it was a punishment or not but who in their right mind would do that to a child of five or six years old. That has freaked me out to this day. I still have a vision of that dead nun lying there; it has just stayed with me. I can't watch the sound of music because of the nuns in it. There are some other smells that trigger bad memories for me. The nuns had a particular smell and when I experience that smell it brings things back to me.
55. Because of what happened to me I don't really connect with anybody and find it difficult to trust people. I hated my dad for ages because he put me in there but I realised, probably when I was in my thirties, that it wasn't really his fault.
56. I sometimes get depressed when I think about my time in Nazareth House. I have never been diagnosed with depression and am not on any sort of medication for depression.
57. The only good thing I can say about Nazareth House is that it has taught me never to tolerate any form of abuse. It has certainly opened my eyes to what abuse is. Nobody will ever hurt me again; I just won't let them do it to me. The bad points about Nazareth House is all the bad memories that often come back to me. I just really find it difficult to believe that I was subjected to the abuse I was and no one did anything for me.
58. The relationship with my mother is non-existent. She was in hospital when I was doing my nurse training but to be honest I would just say hello to my mum in the passing and that is it. She dumped us and didn't bother about me and left us so I didn't know her and didn't want to get to know her. I am now in touch with my sisters and brothers but we are not particularly close. The family was split up basically and we now only really get together at christenings, weddings and funerals.

59. It has affected my own religious faith. All these nuns were meant to be servants of god and they can't have children because they don't have sex and yet they give them the authority to look after children. Who in their right mind thought that one up? They have no experience in bringing up children. It is crazy and beggars belief. As soon as I was old enough to stand up to my dad I never went back to the chapel. They used to talk about guardian angels, well where was my guardian angel when I was in the chapel looking after the dead nun. I very rarely go to church, only really for weddings and funerals.
60. Cardinal Winning said the abuse didn't happen. The catholic church has always said that it didn't happen. I despise the catholic church for saying that it didn't happen. ■
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61. Since I have been in touch with the inquiry I probably think about my time in Nazareth house probably every week, whenever I get a moment to myself. For the last couple of nights I haven't slept because I knew I was coming here.
62. I don't blame Nazareth House for everything that has happened in my life because I have made a lot of my own decisions and I try to leave what has happened behind me. I just wish that it had never happened.

Hopes for the Inquiry

63. I hope that they stop nuns being given the power to look after children. Nuns are worse than anyone I know and shouldn't be allowed to do it, and just because they wore a nun's habit no one would believe that they would do some of the things they did. They hid behind their uniform and it was a perfect disguise for them.
64. I think there should be more visits by trained foster mums who can go in and check on the welfare of children in homes and ask children searching questions. This could also be done by someone who has themselves been through the system because

they will know what to look for. They should make several regular visits to build up a relationship and a trust with the children. There is no point a stranger going in because the children will be too frightened to speak.

Other Action Taken

65. Years ago I went to Cameron Fyffe the lawyer who was taking action against these establishments and he sent me to a counsellor to be assessed and she took lots of notes. It then came back from the Scottish Government that my case was time-barred. Cameron Fyffe sent me a letter that I would be eligible to claim criminal injuries and was told that I should report what happened to me to the police but I couldn't go to the police station because I just wouldn't have known where to start. I phoned Paisley police office and they gave me another number but they didn't sound interested and I didn't feel comfortable about it so I just let it drop.
66. About twenty years ago I plucked up the courage and went back to Nazareth House with my sister to try and get a hold of Sister [REDACTED] LFP [REDACTED]. We were allowed in by a nun and we explained that we had previously lived there. The nun just said that Sister [REDACTED] LFP [REDACTED] was not there anymore. We gave a £5 donation and left.

Treatment / support

67. I have never sought any medical treatment or any kind of counselling for what I have been through.

Records

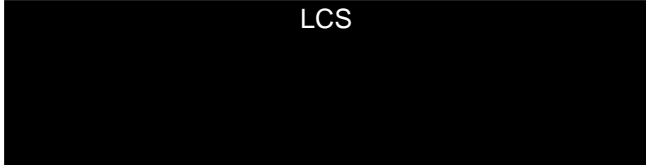
68. I have never tried to get any of my records.

Other information

- 69. I would be happy to give evidence at any subsequent hearing if asked.

- 70. 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.

LCS



Signed.....

Dated..... 20/11/17