

1 Friday, 19 January 2018

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning. Mr MacAulay, we have a fresh
4 witness this morning, do we?

5 MR MacAULAY: Good morning, my Lady; yes, we do. This next
6 witness wants to remain anonymous and to use the name
7 "Sister Margaret" in giving her evidence.

8 My Lady, allegations have been made in the past in
9 connection with this witness and therefore this is
10 a witness that should be warned.

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

12 "SISTER MARGARET" (sworn)

13 LADY SMITH: It's very important that you use the
14 microphone; it'll help you to be able to be heard and it
15 certainly helps us to hear you.

16 A. Thank you.

17 LADY SMITH: Before I hand over to Mr MacAulay, there
18 a couple of things I want to say to you. I'm aware, and
19 I'm sure you remember, that in the past some allegations
20 were made against you in relation to treatment of
21 children. It is important that you understand that
22 although this is a public inquiry and not a trial and
23 not a court case, you still have a right not to
24 incriminate yourself. It is important that you
25 appreciate that if you say anything that indicates you

1 were in some way involved in the abuse of children you
2 could be asked further questions about that. You're not
3 obliged to answer any such questions, but if you do do
4 so, your answers will, of course, be part of the
5 recording that is going on throughout these proceedings
6 and it could be used as evidence against you in any
7 future criminal proceedings.

8 So it is important that you understand you have that
9 right: you are not obliged to answer any such questions,
10 but if you choose to do so that evidence could be
11 available in the future to be used against you. Do you
12 understand that?

13 A. I understand, thank you very much.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. You'll have noticed
15 there's a red file on the desk; I'll leave it to
16 Mr MacAulay to explain what's going to happen about
17 that.

18 Mr MacAulay.

19 Questions from MR MacAULAY

20 MR MacAULAY: Good morning, sister. Can I begin by taking
21 you to the red file that at the moment contains your
22 statement. For the purposes of the transcript, I'll
23 give the reference of the statement first and that's
24 WIT.003.001.1079.

25 Sister, if I could take you to the last page of the

1 statement at 1098, can I just ask you to confirm that
2 you have signed the statement?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Do you tell us at the very end of the statement that:
5 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
6 published as part of the evidence to the inquiry"?

7 Is that your position?

8 A. That's my position, yes.

9 Q. And I think at that time you had been given a similar
10 warning as to the one that Lady Smith has just given
11 you.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Do you go on to say:

14 "I believe the facts stated in this witness
15 statement are true"?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Is that the case?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Sister, I don't need to have your date of birth but just
20 to get a timescale I need to confirm with you your year
21 of birth. Can I confirm that you were born in 1944?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And that therefore would make you 73 at the moment;
24 is that right?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. I want to ask you about your time at Smyllum, but before
2 I do, can I just say to you that if I ask a question
3 about something you and can't remember, just say that,
4 and likewise if something comes to mind that you think
5 might be important now that hadn't been in your mind
6 when you gave the statement, again feel free to tell us
7 that. Do you understand that?

8 A. Okay, thank you.

9 Q. I think you tell us, sister, that you joined the
10 Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul in 1965;
11 is that correct?

12 A. That's correct.

13 Q. Perhaps what I can do is take you to a ministry
14 statement that has been prepared. Again, that'll go on
15 the screen for you. It's at WIT.003.001.0522.

16 As we look to this, sister, can we see that your
17 training as a sister was in Dublin over the period 1967
18 to 1968?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Then we see that from 1968 to 1975, you were at Smyllum.

21 A. That's correct.

22 Q. Then we can read on, sister, what you did after Smyllum,
23 including studying. You give us some reference to that
24 in 1980. What were you involved in at that time in
25 studying?

1 A. I went to do the advanced course in childcare, which was
2 a -- the course was the Bachelor of Philosophy in
3 education. It was a two-year course, one year I spent
4 there and another year I got to do a thesis.

5 Q. I think we'll see you also did a training course when
6 you were at Smyllum; is that right?

7 A. I did; I did the basic childcare course.

8 Q. We can then read through what your track record has been
9 since your days in Smyllum and, bringing it up-to-date,
10 it would appear that you are [REDACTED] at
11 Provincial House; is that correct still?

12 A. That's correct.

13 Q. Can I look to your time at Smyllum. As I just noted,
14 you started in Smyllum in 1965 --

15 A. 1968.

16 Q. I'm sorry, you're quite right. You joined in 1965 and
17 you came to Smyllum in 1968 and you were there until
18 1975.

19 A. That's right.

20 Q. So you were quite young when you went to Smyllum?

21 A. I was, yes.

22 Q. 24 or thereabouts?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And so far as training in childcare is concerned, and
25 you have touched upon that, would it be right to say

1 you'd had no training?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Or indeed any experience in childcare before you went to

4 Smyllum?

5 A. No, except I belonged to a very large family.

6 Q. When you went to Smyllum, I think you tell us in your

7 statement that the superior was

8 Sister EAL is that correct?

9 A. That's correct.

10 Q. Would you be answerable to her at your time in Smyllum?

11 A. Yes; she was my boss.

12 Q. Yes. When then you went to Smyllum, did you take charge

13 of a particular group of children?

14 A. Yes, I did.

15 Q. What was the group called?

16 A. St Mary's.

17 Q. I think we've already seen from other witnesses where

18 St Mary's was located within Smyllum. Perhaps I can

19 just put the photograph to you, just to see if we can

20 confirm that is the position. This is DSV.001.001.4661.

21 The photograph will come on the screen for you.

22 You will see towards the bottom of the page there's

23 a little box indicating St Mary's and then there's the

24 yellow line moving really to the left of the main

25 building.

1 A. Yes. The dining room and the sitting room was in that,
2 but you went up a few steps of stairs and St Mary's
3 bedrooms and that were situated up there.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. So it was a split site.

6 Q. So you're on two levels effectively?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. But that's the general area that we're pointing to?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Did you take over from another sister then when you went
11 there in 1968?

12 A. I took over from Sister Evelyn Warnock when I went
13 there.

14 Q. And we've heard from Sister Evelyn already.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. You were in charge then of that group of children when
17 you went there?

18 A. Yes. I was responsible to Sister EAL for that
19 group.

20 Q. So far as assistance was concerned, did you have lay
21 staff to help you?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. How many did you have?

24 A. When I went, I only had two, but then we brought it up
25 to three, and sometimes you would be two and sometimes

- 1 three, depending on staffing.
- 2 Q. Can I then ask you about the children that you had in
3 your group -- and I appreciate we're talking about
4 a period of years, but approximately how many children
5 did you have from time to time to care for?
- 6 A. Twenty, and I think at one stage it might have gone to
7 22, but nearly always it was 20.
- 8 Q. So far as the type of children were concerned, can you
9 tell me about ages and sexes?
- 10 A. We had a mixture. It was a family group home and it was
11 a mixture of boys and girls. Sometimes we would even
12 have a baby; we had somebody of 2 months at one stage.
- 13 Q. Would that be for a fairly short period of time or --
- 14 A. I think we had [REDACTED] for about 2 years.
- 15 Q. I see.
- 16 A. Then he went back to his mother.
- 17 Q. So are we talking then about that sort of age up to into
18 the teens?
- 19 A. Yes. Most of the children would stay to 16.
- 20 Q. Would the balance change from year to year?
- 21 A. Oh yes.
- 22 Q. So far as the internal structures were concerned, you've
23 given us some indication about St Mary's being on two
24 levels. If we just look at the sleeping accommodation,
25 what was the position when you were there in 1968 to

1 1975?

2 A. Well, if you think of the second level, we had a work
3 room and a television room, and then you went into the
4 bedrooms and there was a corridor and there were
5 bedrooms on either side of the corridor. The rooms
6 would take, I think, about four, as far as I remember,
7 in each of the bedrooms. I don't think we had anything
8 bigger.

9 Q. What about washing facilities, what was --

10 A. Further along from the bedrooms, just a little bit down
11 to your left, we had bathing facilities, sinks, and
12 washing machines. Then beyond that, the staff had their
13 quarters.

14 Q. When you say washing facilities, I take it they were
15 sinks. What about baths, did you have baths?

16 A. We had two baths.

17 Q. Showers?

18 A. I can't remember showers. We must have had, but I can't
19 remember them.

20 Q. Can you tell me --

21 LADY SMITH: Maybe you had shower attachments on the bath
22 taps? That was not uncommon at that time.

23 A. Yes, we did. Maybe that's what it was.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

25 MR MacAULAY: Can you tell me how a child or children might

- 1 be admitted to St Mary's group as opposed to another
2 group within Smyllum?
- 3 A. Well, basically, it was where there was a vacancy at the
4 time. That's how -- because Smyllum was always full.
5 We rarely ever had vacancies. So if somebody was coming
6 in, Sister EAL would know where the vacancy was,
7 and that's how it was worked, really.
- 8 Q. You've mentioned the fact that at that time it was
9 geared towards it being a family unit; is that right?
- 10 A. That's right. Sometimes within the house you might have
11 to split the family until you had a vacancy to take all
12 the family. Now, I can't remember if we did that too
13 often because we just had the children -- whatever
14 vacancies we had, they were the vacancies that were
15 filled. So sometimes we wouldn't take a family group
16 because we didn't have a vacancy within a certain group.
- 17 Q. But do I also understand from what you've just said that
18 sometimes you'd take part of a family group?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. And another part would go elsewhere within Smyllum?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. So to that extent the family would be split up?
- 23 A. Yes, and as soon as there was a vacancy in whichever
24 group it was -- the group some were in or the others,
25 they would be moved, or it could be outside of the home.

1 Q. Speaking generally, sister, looking to your experience
2 of the group over the years, would you describe it as
3 a hard group to manage?

4 A. I have to say I loved my time in Smyllum. I think there
5 was a great spirit in it and there was just a great
6 feeling around Smyllum.

7 Q. But to deal with my question, I think what I was asking
8 is, notwithstanding what you just said, whether you
9 thought the group was still quite a hard group to
10 manage.

11 A. Well, if you had the staff, if you were lucky enough to
12 have your three staff at all times, then it wasn't
13 a hard group to manage.

14 Q. Okay. The reason I put that to you is that one of the
15 other sisters who will give evidence seemed to suggest
16 that she'd picked up from you that it was quite a hard
17 group. I'll perhaps put this on the screen for you and
18 just get your reaction.

19 This is at WIT.003.001.0891. This is in the
20 statement given by Sister **HCE** who I think you
21 probably know, and at paragraph 80 she's I think talking
22 about you and she goes on to say:

23 "From what I picked up from Sister [name redacted],
24 she had quite a hard group. It was a big group and she
25 had told me that there had been a lot of changes in the

1 group."

2 Does that mean anything to you?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Would you not accept that description?

5 A. I don't think so.

6 Q. In any event, when you went to Smyllum, sister, you've,
7 I think, told us that you had no experience from the
8 point of view of training and so on dealing with
9 children. Did you have any form of induction when you
10 went there?

11 A. The only induction I had was there was such a thing as
12 an extramural course in childcare and I attended that in
13 Glasgow and you went on a weekly basis. I can't
14 remember for how long, but I remember the course.

15 Q. But that was after you were in Smyllum?

16 A. That's after I was in Smyllum, at the beginning.

17 Q. What you tell us in the statement at paragraph 13 was
18 that there was nobody who was to be your mentor, but you
19 had the opportunity to ask advice from the superior or
20 from other sisters. So was that the position, if there
21 was a particular problem --

22 A. That's true.

23 Q. -- you could go to one of the more experienced
24 sisters --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- or the Mother Superior?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Can I ask you about this sentence while we have this on
4 the screen. It's the last sentence in the paragraph
5 where you say:

6 "I didn't raise concerns at these meetings [I think
7 these were community meetings] because we wouldn't have
8 talked about the children because of issues of
9 confidentiality, but we would go to Sister [REDACTED] EAL and
10 we would talk to her about it ..."

11 This reference to confidentiality, what did you mean
12 when you said that?

13 A. I think -- I'm trying to see where it is. When we would
14 go to some of our meetings, very often they would be of
15 a general nature, and I wouldn't raise something of
16 a confidential nature within those groups.

17 Q. I see.

18 A. I would see that it would be to Sister [REDACTED] EAL I should
19 go if there was something dealing specifically with
20 a specific child or children.

21 Q. Sister, when a child was admitted to your group, what
22 you tell us in your statement at paragraph 24 is that
23 you would not get, as you put it, a lot of information
24 about that child; is that right?

25 A. That's correct.

- 1 Q. Indeed, what you say is that:
- 2 "Very often we just knew they were coming."
- 3 A. Yes. Very often our children came in on an emergency
- 4 basis.
- 5 Q. What I'm seeking to explore with you then, sister, is do
- 6 I take it from that that you didn't really get
- 7 information about the history of the child, what the
- 8 circumstances were of the background of the child and so
- 9 on and so forth?
- 10 A. Minimal, minimal information.
- 11 Q. Looking back, do you consider that it would have been
- 12 desirable to have had more information than you had
- 13 insofar as being able to care for the particular child
- 14 that was being admitted?
- 15 A. Very definitely because the more information you have,
- 16 the better.
- 17 Q. Do you know why that was the system as to -- that, as
- 18 you've put it, the information was minimal?
- 19 A. A number of our children came in as emergency people
- 20 coming into the home; it wasn't a phased entry. So
- 21 something might have happened in the home and they
- 22 needed a placement quickly.
- 23 LADY SMITH: I appreciate that, but even just a few
- 24 sentences such as, "This child is coming to you because
- 25 the child found its own mother dead in bed", "This child

1 is coming to you because mother has been admitted to
2 hospital with TB and father can't cope because the
3 family is too large, some siblings have gone to another
4 relative, others are here"; it wouldn't take very long
5 to put that either on a piece of paper or tell it
6 verbally when the child arrived so it then gets recorded
7 at Smyllum, would it?

8 A. I agree with you, my Lady, but I think that we might
9 have received that kind of information, general
10 information, a little bit of -- like if somebody was
11 going into hospital, but you wouldn't get a lot about
12 the child in that instance.

13 LADY SMITH: But it would be really important, if you're
14 going to do your job well, to understand what the nature
15 of the trauma is that has brought the child to you,
16 because inevitably they were traumatic circumstances in
17 which these children were coming into care, wouldn't it?

18 A. I would say that that was one of the drawbacks of
19 Smyllum, of children's homes at that time.

20 LADY SMITH: Yes. If you're going to understand the child
21 and the child's needs, for example, to grieve for
22 a parent, you need to know, don't you?

23 A. Oh definitely.

24 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

25 MR MacAULAY: The other side of that coin is as the child

1 continues that child's residence within the group, you'd
2 want to see how that child was to progress. Was any
3 record kept by you in your group to track the progress
4 of an individual child?

5 A. We never kept any -- in those days we never kept any
6 records of it but assumed that Sister [REDACTED] EAL kept the
7 records because the contact of Social Services was with
8 her, not us.

9 Q. When you say assumed, do you know if she did?

10 A. It's assumed.

11 Q. Is the answer to my question you didn't actually know?

12 A. We didn't know, no.

13 Q. But if Sister [REDACTED] EAL were to keep such a record, the
14 information would really have to come from you because
15 you were there caring for the child?

16 A. Yes, and we would meet with Sister [REDACTED] EAL on a regular
17 basis to see how things were going. She would meet with
18 us as individuals and sometimes as a group.

19 Q. Do I understand from what you said a moment ago that you
20 yourself did not keep records?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. So you didn't even have, for example, a daily logbook
23 that might record events on a daily basis?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Was there any advice given to you that you should keep

- 1 that kind of record or indeed any record?
- 2 A. No.
- 3 Q. The medical position -- we understand there was a sister
4 who was designated as looking after the children from
5 a medical perspective. So far as you were aware, were
6 medical records kept in connection with the children you
7 cared for?
- 8 A. Yes. Sister **FAM** kept all the medical records because
9 she took responsibility for that part of the care. We
10 had another nurse who used to come in as well to help
11 Sister **FAM** around that.
- 12 Q. Can I ask you a little bit, sister, about the routine at
13 Smyllum. Let's look at the morning position first of
14 all. You give us information about that in
15 paragraph 25. I'm interested in particular in asking
16 you about children who might have wet the bed in the
17 night. Did you have children who did wet the bed?
- 18 A. Oh yes. A lot of our children were traumatised, so it
19 was to be expected that that would happen.
- 20 Q. What then was the practice in your time in connection
21 with your group if you had a child who wet the bed?
- 22 A. When the children got up in the morning, we were trying
23 to get them all up together, and if there was somebody
24 who wet the bed, if they were able, they took their own
25 sheets off the bed and brought them down and just left

1 them in the washing machine. That was what they did.
2 If they were younger children, we would help them,
3 we would do that bit for them, and then they would have
4 a bath and get dressed then.

5 Q. You'll be aware, I think, sister, that there has been
6 evidence given to the inquiry about particular types of
7 practices in connection with how children who wet the
8 bed were managed and, in particular, that those
9 practices involved humiliation and physical punishment.
10 Did any of that happen in your group?

11 A. None.

12 Q. Were you aware of any such practices in Smyllum, either
13 during your time or indeed before your time?

14 A. I was never aware of how other people ran their group or
15 even before that. But, no, I wasn't aware of it.

16 Q. You mentioned the child would have a bath. Again,
17 there's been some evidence that in such circumstances
18 what the child would have would be a cold bath.
19 What was the position with you?

20 A. No.

21 LADY SMITH: Were you aware of there being any notion that
22 cold water was required to get rid of the smell of
23 urine?

24 A. No.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

1 MR MacAULAY: Can I then look at mealtimes, sister. Let's
2 look at that within the context of your unit, St Mary's.
3 As I understand it, St Mary's would appear to be
4 a relatively self-contained unit; is that a fair
5 description?

6 A. That's a fair assumption.

7 Q. So far as meals were concerned, where would you have
8 your meals?

9 A. The meals were -- I said this was a two-level site.
10 They were on the ground floor, we had a huge room down
11 there, and that's where we would have our meals.

12 Q. Would the children all have their meals together?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. The cooking of the food, where was that dealt with?

15 A. In the earlier days the food came from the main kitchen.

16 Q. We've been told that there was a girls' kitchen and
17 a boys' kitchen, a main girls' kitchen and a main boys'
18 kitchen. Can you tell me which --

19 A. There wasn't in my time. Things were moving differently
20 in my time because we had family groups, so we would
21 have it from the main kitchen, which was just along from
22 the ground floor, and we had a sister in that kitchen.

23 Q. Did that remain the position then throughout your whole
24 time when you were there?

25 A. Yes, it did, but then we began to do our own cooking

- 1 later on.
- 2 Q. Did you then become effectively more self-contained then
3 when you did your own cooking?
- 4 A. Yes, we did.
- 5 Q. So far as the food was concerned, how would you describe
6 the standard of the food?
- 7 A. I would have said that the food was basic but good, well
8 cooked and sufficient.
- 9 Q. Did children require to be persuaded to eat food on
10 occasions?
- 11 A. Sometimes they mightn't like what was given and you'd
12 have to try and find something else for them to have at
13 that time.
- 14 Q. Would you try and persuade in the first instance, at
15 least, the child to eat what had been --
- 16 A. You'd try and encourage them.
- 17 Q. How would you do that?
- 18 A. Well, just to kind of cajole them into trying to eat it,
19 but sometimes you'd know that that would be a waste of
20 time and you'd have to try and find something else for
21 them.
- 22 Q. Would that mean going back to the kitchen then to see if
23 you could get something else?
- 24 A. We often had things in the cupboard that we could
25 have -- we might have soup or something like that that

- 1 we could have prepared for them.
- 2 Q. Again, the inquiry has heard evidence about children,
3 for example, being made to eat their food, being
4 force-fed in fact. Did you have any knowledge of that
5 sort of practice in your time at Smyllum?
- 6 A. No, because it was a waste of time doing that because if
7 a child didn't want to eat it, they wouldn't eat it.
- 8 Q. That may very well be correct, but I think what the
9 inquiry has heard is that a sister might hold a child in
10 such a way as to force the food down that child's mouth.
11 Did you have any knowledge of that sort of practice
12 happening while you were at Smyllum?
- 13 A. None.
- 14 Q. What about if a child did not eat a particular meal and
15 the meal being there again for the child at the next
16 meal? Let's take lunch, for example: a child doesn't
17 eat his or her lunch; would that meal be there again at
18 dinner time for that child?
- 19 A. No, I don't think so. I did read that, but I couldn't
20 subscribe to that.
- 21 Q. Do you know if any of your colleagues indulged in that
22 sort of practice?
- 23 A. I could never say that I knew what was happening in
24 other groups because it took me all my time to manage my
25 own.

1 Q. So do I take it then that you have no knowledge of that
2 sort of practice being followed by any of the other
3 sisters?

4 A. No knowledge.

5 Q. So far as washing and bathing would be concerned, you've
6 told us in fact, sister, that you had a range of
7 different ages within your group. How was washing and
8 bathing managed in your time?

9 A. The older children would bath themselves, obviously, and
10 we would have to do the younger ones. We always had
11 a number of younger children. We would start that after
12 tea and get them ready for bed. But they wouldn't go to
13 bed, they could watch television then after that when
14 that happened. But if it was somebody that maybe had
15 a bath in the morning because they had wet the bed, then
16 they wouldn't have one that night because they may need
17 to have one in the morning.

18 Q. Would children queue up for baths or -- how would you
19 organise -- because I think you had two baths, is that
20 right --

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. -- and you're dealing with about 20 or so children?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. So how was that managed?

25 A. The older ones would have baths on their own later on.

1 Earlier, we would start the bathing.

2 Q. And would you change bathwater?

3 A. Always.

4 Q. At what point in time?

5 A. We would only bath one child in water and then change

6 it.

7 Q. The reason I put these questions to you, sister, as

8 I think you probably understand, is because there has

9 been evidence of children queueing up for baths, the

10 water being very hot at the beginning and cold towards

11 the end because different children used that bathwater

12 and indeed being dirty at the end. Did you have any

13 knowledge of that sort of process taking place within

14 Smyllum when you were there?

15 A. Not when -- I didn't have any knowledge of that.

16 Children wouldn't have a bath every night. So you

17 wouldn't have your 20 children to have a bath each night

18 so you could phase it.

19 Q. So in any event, what I've sought to describe to you is

20 certainly nothing that happened within your section?

21 A. That's right.

22 Q. Or that you had any knowledge of from any other part?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Leisure time. You do discuss leisure time in your

25 statement, sister, from paragraphs 43 to 51. I think

1 you've already mentioned television. You had
2 a television in a room, for example?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And was that for the children of your section only?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. You also say that children had their own toys; is that
7 right?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Were they allowed to keep their toys and have a place
10 for their own toys?

11 A. We never had -- they would put their toys in bed, but we
12 had little boxes under the bed and they would keep them
13 there.

14 Q. If I can move on to look at the question of deaths
15 because you were asked about deaths at Smyllum during
16 your time. There was one child who was a resident at
17 Smyllum who died during your time as a result of an
18 accident. That was in 1969, not long after you were
19 there. Do you have some recollection of that?

20 A. That child ... That child wasn't in my group; she was
21 in another group.

22 Q. And we're talking about Patricia Meenan?

23 A. That's right. She was friendly with a child in my
24 group, and both children were expecting their mothers to
25 come and visit on this Sunday and they ran away. It was

1 in the process of running away that Patricia was knocked
2 down and later on died.

3 Q. As you've just told us, both children ran away.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Why did they run away?

6 A. Because their mother didn't turn up. They were waiting
7 all day to see their mothers.

8 Q. Were you aware that the child in your group was waiting
9 for her mother to come?

10 A. We knew that.

11 Q. But then when the mother hadn't appeared, what was the
12 position with the child in your group?

13 A. The child ran away.

14 Q. But --

15 A. But at the time we didn't know they ran away together.

16 Q. But what I'm interested in knowing is -- did you know,
17 for example, if the child was upset because her mother
18 had not turned up?

19 A. Yes, I did know that because it happened on a number of
20 occasions.

21 Q. On this particular occasion you were aware the child was
22 upset?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Well, can you explain to me what happened between you
25 and the child before the child ran away?

1 A. We talked to the child about her mother. We would have
2 allowed her to phone her mum, but she didn't have
3 a phone. So what we said to her was we would phone the
4 social worker the next day and hopefully she would throw
5 some light on it or maybe talk to the mother.

6 Q. But notwithstanding that, this child ran away with the
7 other child that was killed, notwithstanding your
8 efforts; is that fair?

9 A. And then that evening, that's what happened.

10 Q. Did you become aware the child was not there?

11 A. I did. We were going to -- I was going to phone the
12 police when the sister in the other unit told me that
13 the girl in her group had gone too.

14 Q. And that is Sister AEG isn't it?

15 A. That's right.

16 Q. What did you do then?

17 A. Then we heard that there was an accident.

18 LADY SMITH: At what stage in the evening did you discover
19 the child had gone?

20 A. I discovered it -- I was out and when I came back in,
21 I discovered that the child wasn't there.

22 LADY SMITH: What sort of time would that have been?

23 A. I think it was about 7.

24 LADY SMITH: When had her mother been due to visit?

25 A. Her mother was due to visit between 3 and 4.

1 LADY SMITH: You said the child was spoken to; was that by
2 you?

3 A. Yes.

4 LADY SMITH: And she was upset?

5 A. Very upset.

6 LADY SMITH: So was anything done to try and comfort her?

7 A. Yes.

8 LADY SMITH: What?

9 A. We had certain ways of trying to comfort her, but it was
10 really to try to talk to her, try and get her to talk to
11 us about it, and also to see if there was any relatives
12 that we could phone, because we were caught in it really
13 because the mother didn't have a phone, we couldn't get
14 on to the mother, so it was a difficult situation.

15 MR MacAULAY: Had this child run away before?

16 A. Not that child particularly, but another child --
17 another girl in that family would have run away before.
18 We did have a meeting with Social Services about it.

19 Q. The child that did run away on this occasion, can you
20 remember what age she was at that time?

21 A. She would have been between 7 and 8, I think.

22 Q. So a young child?

23 A. Young, yes.

24 Q. Clearly, someone who would require a degree of
25 supervision after the upsetting events of the day?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. And I think you said you were out. Do you know what
3 supervision there was after you had spoken to her?
- 4 A. I think the staff took time out with this girl and spent
5 a good bit of time with her. But obviously, the child
6 was still hurting and then, when she met her friend,
7 they both decided to go together.
- 8 Q. The position, as I understand it, then, sister, from you
9 is both these girls were running away from Smyllum at
10 the time that the accident happened.
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Sadly, one of the children did not come back, but the
13 child in your group did come back.
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. What happened to that child?
- 16 A. She was very upset about it. We talked to the doctor
17 about her. We gave her whatever help we could and we
18 spent a lot of time with her over the weeks and months
19 because it required that. The social worker came to see
20 her, so we did have things in place.
- 21 Q. Did that child remain at Smyllum?
- 22 A. She did.
- 23 Q. Can I then look at what chores, if any, the children in
24 your group would be required to carry out. Can you give
25 me some insight into that?

1 A. Well, at mealtimes they would always help with the
2 washing up and tidy up and if the table had to be set
3 they would be involved in that. In their bedrooms they
4 would be required to keep their drawers reasonably tidy,
5 but we would do the beds. We would make sure that --
6 when they had gone to school, we would make up the beds
7 and leave it fresh. Then we would have somebody in --
8 we had a woman who came in to clean the bedrooms.

9 Q. There has been some evidence that there were children
10 who had, if I can put it this way, perhaps more
11 strenuous work to do. From what you're saying to me
12 about your unit, the sort of chores children had would
13 be what I would call ordinary or common or garden-type
14 chores that any child might have at home.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Is that how you'd describe it?

17 A. They didn't have time for anything else because they'd
18 have to go to school.

19 Q. Were birthdays celebrated?

20 A. They were.

21 Q. How would you know that a child's birthday was coming
22 up?

23 A. I can't remember this now, but I think we had the dates.
24 We always knew when the birthdays were coming up.
25 We would have an idea and we'd have a cake for them.

1 Sometimes they would play games or maybe be allowed to
2 stay up a little longer, just simple things.

3 Q. Just going back into the matter of the dates, I just
4 want to understand how you've got 20 children and
5 20 birthdays to have in mind. How would you know that
6 on a particular day a birthday was due?

7 A. I can't remember that. I have no -- I just have no
8 recollection of that.

9 Q. From what you've said already, sister, you kept no
10 records in your section in connection with the children.

11 A. No, we kept no records about the history of the
12 children, but whether we kept a record of their dates,
13 but they themselves would have told us anyway that it
14 was their birthday.

15 Q. The older children would know?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. But the younger children --

18 A. I think we must have got something about their date of
19 birth. I really can't remember that.

20 Q. Birthdays were celebrated with a cake?

21 A. With a small cake.

22 Q. Can I ask you about visitors: were visitors encouraged
23 to come to Smyllum to see the children?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. How was that done?

- 1 A. We would encourage -- if somebody phoned, we would
2 encourage them to come or we would encourage the
3 children to get their family to come.
- 4 Q. Did you have a section where there were regular visits
5 from family members?
- 6 A. We didn't have many visitors because a lot of them were
7 in Glasgow and it was too far for them to come. But
8 some of our children went out to other families on
9 a regular basis; some weekends you could have as many as
10 six or eight out for the weekend.
- 11 Q. To local families?
- 12 A. To local families or a little further afield, families
13 that they had started going out with.
- 14 Q. Can I ask about inspections. Do you have any
15 recollection of there being any inspections carried out
16 by the authority?
- 17 A. I never remember an inspection.
- 18 Q. But what about social workers coming to see a child or
19 children? Do you have any recollection of that?
- 20 A. I have a recollection of social workers coming, but they
21 would speak to Sister EAL and sometimes we would be
22 part of that, but not always.
- 23 Q. Would the social worker speak to the child?
- 24 A. Sometimes they would only come during school time when
25 the child was in school and they mightn't wait until the

1 child came out of school.

2 Q. What did you understand the purpose of the visit to be?

3 A. In some instances they were coming just to find out how

4 the children were settling and in others it might be to

5 plan a move forward.

6 Q. If the plan was in connection with a move forward, would

7 you be involved in that planning?

8 A. Sometimes.

9 Q. But not always?

10 A. Not always.

11 Q. You were also asked in your statement, when you gave

12 your statement, sister, about who might have had access

13 to children, and you mentioned there were some students

14 who were studying for the priesthood who would come from

15 time to time; is that right?

16 A. That's right.

17 Q. Were they supervised in any way? Can you tell me how

18 that was managed?

19 A. Yes. When they came, we had one particular one and his

20 brother, and they would come and they would take the

21 boys out, play football outside, do the things that the

22 boys wanted to do, basically, and that we didn't always

23 have the time to do with them. They would come on

24 holidays with us as well, but again, it was always very

25 supervised. They were a good aid to the staff because

- 1 if the staff were taking out a group, it's always
2 helpful to have another person around, and from that
3 point of view that was very helpful on holidays.
- 4 Q. So from what you're saying, though, these individuals
5 would be with the children in a relatively unsupervised
6 way?
- 7 A. No.
- 8 Q. Would they be supervised?
- 9 A. They'd be supervised. There was always a member of
10 staff or myself would be around. There was always
11 somebody else.
- 12 Q. You do mention a person you describe as the [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED] I think that must be a reference to
14 [REDACTED] that we've heard about.
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. What about him, did he have any dealings with the
17 children?
- 18 A. When I went to Smyllum, [REDACTED] was what I would
19 consider the [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED] we would send for him, but he
21 didn't have anything to do with the children in my time.
- 22 Q. Nothing at all?
- 23 A. Nothing at all.
- 24 Q. So did you see him at any time interacting with any of
25 the children?

1 A. I never saw him interacting with the children -- sorry,
2 I didn't catch your question.

3 Q. Yes, that was the question: did you ever see him
4 interacting with any children?

5 A. No. People talk about that he belonged to [REDACTED]
6 and that kind of -- we didn't have [REDACTED] in our time.

7 Q. Although I think it may be [REDACTED] who might have
8 been more associated with [REDACTED]

9 A. Yes, [REDACTED]

10 Q. There has been evidence, as you may be aware, that
11 Mr [REDACTED] BAC did interact with children in quite
12 a significant way, it would appear from the evidence.
13 But that's not your recollection?

14 A. No. That was before, before my time.

15 Q. Your time began in 1968.

16 A. That didn't happen at all in 1968. It didn't happen.

17 Q. Then, if we look to when it came for a child to leave
18 Smyllum, when you went to Smyllum was there any process
19 in place that you were aware of that would manage that
20 particular operation?

21 A. Not when I went, no, but I suppose over time it was
22 about the relationship you had with the child and to
23 look with the child about their future needs.

24 Q. So was that something that developed --

25 A. That only developed, there was nothing in place for

- 1 that.
- 2 Q. -- when you went there?
- 3 A. No.
- 4 Q. What I should have asked you, sister, earlier in
5 connection with your time in Smyllum is that, as you've
6 already told us, I think, you, at one point in time,
7 went on a childcare course; is that right?
- 8 A. Mm-hm.
- 9 Q. I think that was in 1973.
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. Perhaps I can just put on the screen your certificate.
12 It's DSV.001.001.4206. We're looking at a certificate
13 from the Central Council for Education and Training in
14 Social Work awarded to you, and we can read that you've
15 completed a full-time course of training at
16 Langside College of Further Education and the period is
17 March 1972 to February 1973. Do we see that?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. During that time -- that's not long before you left
20 Smyllum in 1975 -- for that year, what was the position
21 in connection with your group?
- 22 A. The staff managed the group and I came home some
23 weekends.
- 24 Q. When you say "some weekends", do I take it that
25 throughout the week you would be based in Glasgow?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. And some weekends you'd also be in Glasgow but other
3 weekends you would not be?
- 4 A. Well, it could be that you were away on placement
5 because we did placements during that course in other
6 homes. It could be that you were actually on placements
7 and you wouldn't be home that weekend.
- 8 Q. So do I understand from what you've said that another
9 sister did not fill in for you during this year?
- 10 A. No.
- 11 Q. As far as the course was concerned, was it beneficial to
12 you?
- 13 A. It was very beneficial to me.
- 14 Q. In what way?
- 15 A. Because it helped me to pick up good ideas, good working
16 practices, and more individual treatment of the
17 children.
- 18 Q. And that particular final comment, I think we can all
19 see, that's of particular importance; is that correct?
- 20 A. Mm.
- 21 Q. Was there a gap there, do you think, at Smyllum insofar
22 as looking at individual children would be concerned?
- 23 A. I think in Smyllum we always looked at the needs of the
24 children, but maybe sometimes it was more of the group
25 that we looked at rather than -- that's what I picked up

1 for me on the course, that I would need to look more
2 at the individual needs of children rather than the
3 group needs.

4 Q. We'd gone down this route because I was asking you about
5 what happened when children came to leave Smyllum. What
6 you say in your statement, in fact -- and this is
7 page 1091 at paragraph 93 -- is you didn't have anyone
8 old enough to leave. I just wondered how that could be
9 because you were there from 1968 to 1975, leaving aside
10 the training period. So as the years went on, would
11 children in your group not reach a stage when they would
12 be leaving Smyllum?

13 A. Yes, that is true, but in my beginning years nobody left
14 Smyllum because the children were younger. I had
15 a younger group of children when I went.

16 Q. But those children stayed with you?

17 A. Not all of them, they would move on and some other
18 children came in.

19 Q. When you say move on, move on within Smyllum or move
20 away?

21 A. No, they might leave, they might go back to their
22 families, they might -- I can't remember, but there was
23 movement in that way within the group.

24 Q. So it's not absolutely correct to say that you didn't
25 have anyone old enough to leave because children did

- 1 leave?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. On a regular basis?
- 4 A. Yes, they probably went back to their families.
- 5 Q. Okay. The next section of the statement looks at what
- 6 you tell us about discipline and punishment, sister.
- 7 Can I just give us an understanding as to how you would
- 8 seek to discipline and/or punish a child that might
- 9 require discipline or punishment?
- 10 A. That might be?
- 11 Q. That might required to be disciplined or punished.
- 12 A. The one thing I think that I did, looking back, was to
- 13 deprive the children of something. If there was some
- 14 issue around the child, the punishment would be that
- 15 maybe they weren't allowed to watch television that
- 16 night or they would have to give -- and they would have
- 17 to help around, which they didn't like, they might help
- 18 the staff to do something. But it was about while they
- 19 were being punished that they were being observed too,
- 20 that we were able to see how these children were.
- 21 Q. Did you use any form of corporal punishment and by that
- 22 I mean either a slap or in some way hit a child?
- 23 A. As far as I can remember, no.
- 24 Q. Well, you don't sound absolutely sure.
- 25 A. No, I've thought and thought about it and I would say

- 1 no.
- 2 Q. We are in an era where corporal punishment was still
3 acceptable as a form of punishment in the 1960s into the
4 1970s. Perhaps I can ask you this: why didn't you use
5 some form of corporal punishment as a means of
6 controlling children?
- 7 A. I remember discussing it with Sister EAL once and
8 she said then that one of the things she didn't like was
9 anybody using corporal punishment for the children.
10 Because of that, I took a lesson from it and tried to
11 look at other ways of dealing with them.
- 12 Q. What about your staff then, sister? Do you know if any
13 of your staff members used any form of corporal
14 punishment on the children?
- 15 A. Again, to my knowledge, no.
- 16 Q. Did you see anyone within your years at Smyllum strike
17 a child, whether it be a slap, a smack, or whatever?
- 18 A. Never.
- 19 Q. So far as punishments were concerned, I think I can
20 understand from what you've said so far that there was
21 no record kept of what any punishments might have been.
- 22 A. No.
- 23 Q. Did you ever see anyone -- by that I mean your staff or
24 your sister colleagues -- losing their temper for
25 whatever reason in connection with a child?

- 1 A. I can't say that I did.
- 2 Q. What about yourself, sister? Did you lose your temper
3 on the odd occasion?
- 4 A. There were times that I would get annoyed, but my way of
5 dealing with that was to walk away, for myself, and then
6 come back.
- 7 Q. Sister, when you were giving your statement to the
8 statement-taker that spoke to you, a number of
9 allegations were put to you that were raised in the past
10 by a number of different people. You're aware of that,
11 I think.
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. These have been set out in your statement in quite some
14 detail. This begins at paragraph 112 in particular,
15 perhaps, through to 125. You're asked about particular
16 individuals. I think you do know the names of
17 individuals; is that correct?
- 18 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 19 Q. Some of the allegations in fact involve being forced to
20 share cold bathwater and so on and so forth, being given
21 the same meal subsequently, issues that we've looked at.
22 Do I understand your position that, insofar as any of
23 these allegations go, that you do not accept any of
24 them?
- 25 A. No, I don't accept any of them.

1 Q. Can I ask you about allegations that have been made
2 about other staff members and sisters, and let's look,
3 first of all, at Mr [REDACTED] BAC who I've already mentioned.
4 You've already told me that he had nothing to do with
5 the children so far as you could see; is that right?

6 A. That's correct.

7 Q. Did you hear if he had any sort of reputation in
8 connection with being violent towards children?

9 A. I never heard anything about [REDACTED] BAC while I was there.
10 Afterwards, I heard stories.

11 Q. When did you hear the stories afterwards?

12 A. Only when -- I think it was a good number of years ago
13 when the whole thing broke about Smyllum. I heard then
14 that Mr [REDACTED] BAC as you say, wasn't nice to the
15 children, shall we say. But in my time he was never
16 around, you know, he was [REDACTED] and ...

17 Q. One of the things you were asked when you were giving
18 your statement in relation to the type of allegation
19 that's been raised against you, sister, is whether the
20 passage of time might have affected your recollection in
21 connection with these issues. What do you say to that?

22 A. Well, I don't -- I mean, I don't -- I have no
23 recollection of the ones that you're talking about and
24 if that is the case then it must be. But I remember
25 a good number of things, but definitely not that.

- 1 Q. Would you really forget, sister, that for example
2 a particular child was being beaten and someone had to
3 watch that?
- 4 A. No.
- 5 Q. So although your recollection -- you might have
6 forgotten some things, are the type of allegations that
7 have been put forward to you the type of matters you
8 really would have forgotten?
- 9 A. I wouldn't think so. I don't remember **BAC** ever
10 having anything to do with the children.
- 11 Q. You were also asked about some other sisters. For
12 example, Sister **AEG** who you've mentioned already.
13 You were asked about Sister **AEG** She was in the
14 same part of the building as yourself; is that correct?
- 15 A. No. We were on the second level, but they were upstairs
16 in another -- so it was away from us.
- 17 Q. I've put it badly. Her group was in the same
18 building --
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. -- but in a different part?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. What you tell us in your statement -- this is at
23 paragraph 142 on page 1095 -- is that she was strict.
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. What do you mean by that?

1 A. What I mean by that is that she was good to her children
2 but she would ... I'm just trying to think what I ...
3 She was good to her children, but I think that she would
4 expect a standard.

5 Q. So can you just help me with that?

6 A. That's a hunch of mine. But I never saw her being
7 strict with them. But when we would talk about it,
8 maybe, she would say, well, yes, but -- whatever she
9 would do, you know.

10 Q. Can I put it this way: is your hunch based on --

11 A. Fact? No.

12 Q. Is it based on things she may have said as to how she
13 was treating the children in comparison to how you were
14 treating children?

15 A. I don't know, really.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. I don't know that I can answer that.

18 Q. In any event, had you heard anyone complain about the
19 way she had been treating children?

20 A. No. No.

21 Q. Did you have a strap or anything of that sort when you
22 were --

23 A. No.

24 Q. Did you know if anyone had a strap or a belt?

25 A. I never heard of it.

1 Q. You also say that you do remember a man by the name of

2 [REDACTED] LVK

3 A. I do.

4 Q. What's your recollection of him?

5 A. [REDACTED] LVK worked in the [REDACTED] and he came to
6 do voluntary work in one of the other units, which was
7 St Kentigern's, and in order to get -- our unit was
8 a very open unit and in order to get to St Kentigern's,
9 he came through our unit, but he just went straight
10 through. He never had any interaction with any of our
11 children. It was St Kentigern's always.

12 Q. And what did you understand his presence there to be
13 for?

14 A. Well, that he was a volunteer and he was doing things
15 with the children. But -- that's what I understood.

16 Q. What you say in your statement in paragraph 138 on
17 page 1095 is that he was there all the time that you
18 were there; is that right?

19 A. Yes. I see that he was -- at some stage somebody said
20 he was the Scout leader, but he wasn't a Scout leader,
21 he didn't work with the children in that way, he just
22 came voluntarily to work. But when he went to
23 St Kentigern's, I didn't know what he was doing, I just
24 saw him as a volunteer.

25 Q. But his focus was on that particular group?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And that was a boys' group in the main?

3 A. When I was there it was all family groups so it was boys
4 and girls there.

5 Q. In your time I think you say --

6 A. In my time.

7 Q. But in your time you say it was Sister [REDACTED] ADE
8 who was in charge?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. You don't know who replaced her?

11 A. I hadn't remembered, but it's -- Sister [REDACTED] HCE replaced
12 her.

13 Q. Sister, if we then move on towards the latter part of
14 your statement, this is at paragraph 160 on page 1097,
15 you say there at paragraph 160 in connection with the
16 allegations:

17 "I don't know why these allegations are being made.
18 It is possible that the passage of time has affected my
19 recollection, but I am so shocked by some of the
20 allegations that I doubt that I would have forgotten
21 them."

22 Do you see that? And that must be the case. Some
23 of the allegations are, do you think, quite shocking?

24 A. Oh, quite shocking. I was shocked. I'm still shocked
25 about them.

- 1 Q. So you wouldn't have forgotten them?
- 2 A. I don't think I would have forgotten them.
- 3 Q. Have you any idea as to why then, looking to your own
4 history and what you tell us about Smyllum, what you
5 say, that it was a very happy place, why such
6 allegations are being made now or have been made?
- 7 A. I find it very hard to answer that because my memory of
8 Smyllum was always a happy place where I thought we
9 helped one another, but when I look at this, I think,
10 "What did I miss?" That's hindsight now.
- 11 Q. And again, looking possibly with the benefit of
12 hindsight, I think you do suggest in your statement that
13 there could have been more that could have been done in
14 connection with procedures and systems and so on;
15 is that correct?
- 16 A. Yes, I think we could have done a lot more. I suppose,
17 since I've left Smyllum, I've done other studies and
18 I can see things that we could have done and didn't do.
19 But we didn't know.
- 20 Q. Can you give me some examples, sister?
- 21 A. Well, I suppose the whole thing of documenting things,
22 making sure that we had a history of what was happening,
23 that type of thing. We had good communication with
24 children, we knew them well, but we have nothing to show
25 for that now.

1 Q. When you say documenting, for example things like
2 a child's progress, discipline and so on --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- do you know yourself what regulations there might
5 have been in place for that type of practice to be in
6 place in the 1960s into the 1970s?

7 A. Well, I know that then things were beginning -- the
8 regulations were to be in place. But because I had
9 assumed that the superior was actually doing them,
10 I didn't think -- I mean, I didn't even think that it
11 was anything to do with us.

12 Q. Do I understand from what you've said, sister, that
13 in relation to matters like discipline and indeed care
14 that you did not have any written guidance --

15 A. No.

16 Q. -- from any source to guide you in relation to these
17 matters?

18 A. No.

19 MR MacAULAY: Very well, sister, these are all the questions
20 I have for you. I haven't received any written requests
21 to put questions to you. My Lady, I don't know if there
22 are to be any questions.

23 LADY SMITH: Let me just check. Are there any outstanding
24 applications for questions of this witness?

25 Sister, thank you very much for coming along this

1 morning to help us with your memories of your time in
2 Smyllum.

3 A. Thank you.

4 LADY SMITH: That has been very helpful to me and I'm now
5 able to let you go. Thank you.

6 A. Thank you very much.

7 (The witness withdrew)

8 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

9 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, I don't know if your Ladyship would
10 consider having the morning break now -- I know it's
11 quarter past 11 -- and perhaps coming back at 11.30.

12 LADY SMITH: I think that would fit quite well looking
13 at the programme for the day.

14 We'll rise now for the morning break and try to
15 start again at 11.30, please.

16 (11.11 am)

17 (A short break)

18 (11.30 am)

19 LADY SMITH: Before I invite Mr MacAulay to call the next
20 witness, I think that briefly there was on the screen
21 during the evidence of the last witness a ministry
22 history that had a name on it that hadn't been redacted.
23 That name actually does have the protection of one of my
24 restriction orders and that witness is entitled to
25 anonymity. As I have said before, where that applies it

1 cannot be repeated outside this hearing room.

2 Mr MacAulay.

3 MR MacAULAY: The next witness wants to remain anonymous.

4 I have already mentioned her nom de plume, her
5 pseudonym, and she is to be known as "Sister Esther".

6 As I say, I mentioned her statement earlier.

7 Just to also say, my Lady, this witness would
8 require to be warned.

9 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

10 "SISTER ESTHER" (sworn)

11 LADY SMITH: It looks as though that microphone is in the
12 right position for you now. It's important that you use
13 the microphone because it'll help you and help us to
14 hear you.

15 A. Okay.

16 LADY SMITH: Before I hand over to Mr MacAulay, there are
17 a couple of things I want to say. If I can just take
18 you back to when you were interviewed by members of the
19 inquiry team. They explained to you, you may remember,
20 that although this is a public inquiry and not a trial,
21 you still have the right not to incriminate yourself.
22 They will then have explained to you that if you were to
23 have told them that you were in any way involved in the
24 abuse of children then you would be asked further
25 questions about that, but that you weren't obliged to

1 answer those questions.

2 You would then have had it explained to you that if
3 you did provide answers, those answers would be recorded
4 and could be used as evidence against you in any future
5 proceedings such as criminal proceedings.

6 The same applies at this hearing. You continue to
7 have that right not to incriminate yourself, but if you
8 tell us you were involved in any way in children being
9 abused then you may be asked questions about that. You
10 don't have to answer those questions, but if you do do
11 so your answers will be part of the recording that is
12 going on all the time during these proceedings and they
13 would be available as evidence in the future in any
14 criminal proceedings that took place.

15 It is important you understand all this. Do you
16 understand?

17 A. I do, yes, my Lady.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you for confirming that. I'll now hand
19 over to Mr MacAulay.

20 Mr MacAulay.

21 Questions from MR MacAULAY

22 MR MacAULAY: Good morning, sister. Before I ask you any
23 questions, can I take you to your witness statement,
24 sister. I'll give the reference number, first of all,
25 for the transcript: it's WIT.003.001.0878. It's in the

1 red folder in front of you.

2 What I want to do, first of all, is take you to the
3 final page at page 0903. Can I ask you, sister, to
4 confirm that you have signed the statement?

5 A. I have signed the statement, yes.

6 Q. You see your signature there?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. While we're on that page, can I just ask you that
9 you have no objection to your witness statement being
10 published as part of the evidence to the inquiry?

11 A. That's what I've agreed to.

12 Q. I think you have confirmed that after the sort of
13 warning that Lady Smith has just given you?

14 A. Yes, I did, yes.

15 Q. Do you also go on to say:

16 "I believe the facts stated in this witness
17 statement are true"?

18 A. I do, yes.

19 Q. Sister, I don't need from you your date of birth but to
20 get a timescale I need to confirm your year of birth.

21 Can I confirm with you that you were born in 1944?

22 A. That's true.

23 Q. So now that would make you, I think, 73?

24 A. That's right.

25 Q. During your time at Smyllum were you known as

- 1 Sister [REDACTED] HCE or Sister [REDACTED] HCE
- 2 A. [REDACTED] HCE
- 3 Q. I'll look at Smyllum in a moment, but do you tell us
- 4 that you joined the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent
- 5 de Paul on [REDACTED] 1963?
- 6 A. That's true, yes.
- 7 Q. And I think you set out in your statement -- perhaps
- 8 we can go back to the first page of the statement on
- 9 0878. Do you set out a number of postings that you had
- 10 within the order?
- 11 A. That's right, yes.
- 12 Q. For example, let's just pick one or two of these up,
- 13 sister. You tell us that from 1964 to 1966 you were at
- 14 a place [REDACTED] in Dublin.
- 15 A. Yes, that's right.
- 16 Q. There you were involved in the care of children; is that
- 17 right?
- 18 A. That's right, children with special needs.
- 19 Q. Was that a children's home?
- 20 A. Yes, it was, yes.
- 21 Q. You then go on to say that from 1967 to 1969 you were at
- 22 another place called [REDACTED] again involved in the
- 23 care of children; is that correct?
- 24 A. Yes, that's true.
- 25 Q. Was that a children's home?

1 A. It was a children's home, but there was a school
2 attached. We looked after the children during the
3 day -- the evening time when the children came back from
4 school.

5 Q. Then we know, sister, that, as you tell us, from 1969 to
6 1976, you were at Smyllum?

7 A. That's right, yes.

8 Q. I know that you tell us that you did a childcare course
9 in due course, but before you went to Smyllum, had you
10 had any qualifications in childcare?

11 A. Not at that point, no.

12 Q. But you did have some experience from what we've seen
13 from your history?

14 A. Oh, I did have. Having worked with and having -- when
15 I was in [REDACTED] and in [REDACTED] we had quite
16 a few lectures from specialists in the field because
17 they were special needs children. So obviously I was
18 very young and we were given all the training that was
19 necessary. Not a course as such, we had day courses and
20 day lectures and things we attended when the children
21 were in school, so it gave us kind of a background into
22 epilepsy and things like that that we had some of our
23 children with. Because that was foreign to me,
24 obviously. I wouldn't have experienced it prior to
25 that, so it was good, it was helpful.

1 Q. When you went to Smyllum, I think you tell us that you
2 became responsible for the children in a section called
3 St Kentigern's.

4 A. That's true, yes.

5 Q. Did you get any, what we would call nowadays, induction?

6 A. Not that I'm aware of, Mr MacAulay, no, I didn't really.

7 Q. Who did you replace at that time?

8 A. I replaced [REDACTED] ADE

9 Q. I think, as we've looked at, you were there until 1976?

10 A. That's right, yes.

11 Q. Did somebody replace you, so far as you are aware?

12 A. Yes, Sister [REDACTED] AHM

13 Q. When you started off at St Kentigern's, can I just ask
14 you this: what was the set-up in relation to the group
15 that you had to look after?

16 A. The groups were -- when I went there, the groups had
17 been divided into kind of family group homes. Because
18 prior to that there was a huge big building -- I didn't
19 know then, but it was -- you came up the stairs into
20 where we were, which was St Kentigern's. The dining
21 room was on the right-hand side. You came along a long
22 corridor where the laundry was and you came into kind of
23 the main area where the children were all -- the
24 bedrooms were on either side -- and then along there was
25 a playroom and then a sitting room.

1 Q. Perhaps what I should do now is get you to point to
2 where you think St Kentigern's was on the aerial
3 photograph that we have.

4 A. Okay.

5 Q. That's at DSV.001.001.4661.

6 A. You mean on the screen?

7 Q. Perhaps I can deal with it in this way. If you look at
8 the bottom right, you can see that there's a little
9 box --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- where we have St Kentigern's and then there's the
12 yellow line that takes to you a particular point.

13 A. Yes, that rings a bell.

14 Q. That's where it was?

15 A. Yes. I'm not great on that, but I think that's -- yes.

16 Q. Can I ask you, first of all, how many children then did
17 you have when you went there to begin with in 1969?

18 A. I would say roughly, 16, 17, 18. I'm never that sure
19 but I think that's roughly what they were.

20 Q. Can you tell me a little bit about the ages of the
21 children?

22 A. They varied from 16/17 down to young children. It
23 varied because the intake, different families may have
24 younger -- we had 9 months and 6 months at one stage
25 because we had a family with four children and the

- 1 youngest was only 9 months.
- 2 Q. What about boys and girls, what was the mix?
- 3 A. There was mostly boys. I had more boys than girls, yes.
- 4 Q. You tell me there was an emphasis on family groups;
- 5 is that correct?
- 6 A. That's right, yes.
- 7 Q. Just to understand the layout then in relation to the
- 8 rooms that accommodated the children, can you help me
- 9 with that, what was the set-up?
- 10 A. From my memory now, because it's a long time ago, there
- 11 was a corridor and on either side of the corridor.
- 12 There were bedrooms with four or five children, I think,
- 13 in each of the bedrooms. I'm a bit vague about some of
- 14 the stuff because it's a long time ago.
- 15 Q. But insofar as dividing the children up within the
- 16 bedrooms, would that depend on family connection or age?
- 17 A. Mostly on age.
- 18 Q. On age?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. Do you know how a particular child or family might be
- 21 selected to come to St Kentigern's as opposed to one of
- 22 the other sections?
- 23 A. I would say very often it depended on the availability
- 24 of beds. Because we tried not to divide up families so
- 25 we all tended to have a family together if we could.

1 Q. But could there be occasions when because of the lack of
2 availability of sufficient beds that a family could be
3 divided up, which meant some came to you and others go
4 to another --

5 A. Yes, that is true, it could easily have been, yes.

6 Q. And so far as staff would be concerned, sister, how many
7 staff did you have to help you in caring for the
8 children?

9 A. I had three staff and one lady who came in to do the
10 kind of general cleaning and just generally around the
11 house.

12 Q. So you had three staff who helped you care for the
13 children; is that right?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And another lady who was more of a domestic assistant?

16 A. Yes, but they had time off obviously as well so there
17 wouldn't always be three on duty, you know.

18 Q. I think in your statement what you say -- and this is on
19 page 0881 at paragraph 13 -- is that there were in fact
20 five separate bedrooms in your area.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. That's your recollection?

23 A. That is my recollection, yes.

24 Q. Let's look a little bit at the routine then at
25 St Kentigern's when you were there in that period of

1 time. One of the things you were asked about when you
2 gave your statement was in connection with bed-wetting.
3 Were there children in St Kentigern's who did wet the
4 bed?

5 A. There were, yes.

6 Q. Looking back, can you give me any assistance in relation
7 to the numbers of children who might have wet the bed?

8 A. I really couldn't tell you, to be honest. There would
9 have been three or four, I'd say, most ... It varied.
10 There could be two or three some days, but I am really
11 only speculating. I couldn't really tell you --

12 Q. You could have three or four --

13 A. Yes, but not any more than that, I don't think.

14 Q. What I want to ask you is how do you say a child who
15 might wet the bed would be managed in St Kentigern's in
16 your time?

17 A. What they would have done is they just would have taken
18 their sheets with them into the laundry area, which was
19 just around the corner, and then they would go and get
20 a bath. Then that was more or less it. It was as
21 simple as that. Then we made the beds up after the
22 children had all gone to school.

23 Q. The inquiry has heard evidence of certain practices that
24 have been alleged were in place at Smyllum including,
25 for example, children being humiliated for wetting the

1 bed by sheets being put on their person, also being
2 physically hit for that, and also having to have cold
3 baths. These are some of the allegations that have been
4 made; were any of those practices in place in your unit?

5 A. I certainly wouldn't know. I wouldn't be aware of that
6 at all, no, because that is -- what I remember was it
7 was definitely as I have explained.

8 Q. Can I ask you this: if such practices were being carried
9 out in your section, would you be aware of them?

10 A. Oh I would have been aware because we were there every
11 morning when the children got up and -- they might have
12 been in the process of having baths when I came back up
13 from church, because we went to church every morning,
14 because the staff would be getting the children up.
15 They'd be in the process of having a bath or getting up
16 out of bed, yes. To me, that was just the routine.

17 LADY SMITH: I think you say in your statement you would go
18 to Mass every morning.

19 A. That's true, yes.

20 LADY SMITH: And you have just explained by the time you get
21 back, the bed-wetters may already be in the process of
22 being in the baths, having been got up by staff?

23 A. They wouldn't all have been. They would have been
24 getting up -- they wouldn't all get up together because
25 children, you know, some would be hard to get up, they'd

1 be tired. But they'd get up and I think we had two
2 baths, so it was availability of the baths as well. So
3 when one had finished then obviously the next person,
4 child, would go in and get a bath.

5 LADY SMITH: All this may have started by the time you got
6 back from Mass?

7 A. It would have been started, but it would have been
8 completed.

9 LADY SMITH: I picked you up correctly, thank you.

10 MR MacAULAY: So far as the baths were concerned, again
11 there's been an allegation made that baths were cold
12 baths.

13 A. I would have no memory of that and I certainly wouldn't
14 have had children in cold baths. I wouldn't.
15 I wouldn't have agreed to it.

16 Q. One of things you do say in your statement, sister, at
17 paragraph 28 on page 0883 is that you begin by saying
18 that -- and it'll come on the screen for you, you have
19 it in front of you as well if you prefer that -- is that
20 you say:

21 "There was no punishment for bed-wetting. There
22 would be a bit of moaning if it happened a lot."

23 Is that reference you make to moaning -- can you
24 help me with that? Who would be moaning about it?

25 A. Well, if it was constant -- what we tried to do with the

1 children who were bed-wetting was to try to reduce maybe
2 drinking. If there was a child at night who was
3 a regular -- bed-wetting every morning, we would try to
4 restrict maybe the drinking of fluids in the night-time
5 because if it was constant, there was a lot of extra
6 work obviously, but apart from that you kind of -- the
7 kids would be moaning they had to have a bath and they
8 had to have sheets brought into the laundry. It was
9 generally trying to get everything ready before they had
10 their breakfast and then school. It wouldn't be
11 a moaning session given out to them; it would be
12 a moaning session of getting things moving so you could
13 get them into breakfast and keep the process moving.

14 Q. As you've said then, it would involve quite a bit of
15 work if you had three or four children who had wet the
16 bed.

17 A. It would do, yes.

18 Q. But that work, are you telling me, would be done by the
19 staff and not --

20 A. Yes. We all mucked in. We all helped to keep the thing
21 moving because the children had to be up in school --
22 I think it was by 9 o'clock, 9 or quarter past. So they
23 would have got up about 7.30 and by the time they got up
24 and had their bath and had breakfast and the other
25 children had to get washed -- and there were quite a few

1 of them and some of the older boys especially, it was
2 hard to get them out of bed. So you were trying to
3 negotiate all of that at the same time.

4 Q. Can I understand this practice then of cutting down on
5 fluids at night. Can you just help me with that? What
6 did that involve?

7 A. Because some of the children were upset because they
8 were bed-wetting every night -- the bigger ones
9 especially would be wanting, how can we stop it? After
10 teatime, you'd be having the last drink of drinking
11 chocolate, whatever they had, maybe 8 o'clock or
12 something, especially if the older ones were going to
13 bed say 9 o'clock, 9.30, because we had talked to the
14 doctor about it and he was saying reducing fluids does
15 help people who have got a bed-wetting problem.

16 Q. Would it be evident to other children that a particular
17 child was not getting a drink at night because of this?

18 A. It probably would be yes, yes. They lived in very close
19 proximity to each other. So not much went on that they
20 wouldn't have seen with each other, to be honest.

21 Q. You mentioned the doctor: did you involve the doctor in
22 relation to bed-wetting?

23 A. We would have mentioned it, yes, if it was a constant
24 thing to try to see if there was something that could be
25 done, but sometimes because of the emotional problems it

- 1 was difficult.
- 2 Q. One of the things you tell us -- and I don't think
- 3 we've, so far as I can remember, heard about this from
- 4 any other source, but you say in paragraph 29 that there
- 5 were machines that were fitted to the beds and an alarm
- 6 would sound if the child wet the bed. Do you see that?
- 7 A. Yes, I seem to remember that towards the end of my stay
- 8 in Smyllum we had got some kind of a gadget that once
- 9 a child did start wetting the bed, it went off and it
- 10 helped the child to get up to the toilet. That's just
- 11 a memory I've got and I am not sure.
- 12 Q. But your memory is that there was some form of
- 13 machine --
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. -- that essentially would wake the child up?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. Possibly in the middle of the night?
- 18 A. They were prepared to do that as well because some of
- 19 them didn't really want to be doing this all the time.
- 20 It was humiliating for them.
- 21 Q. What would trigger the alarm?
- 22 A. I think there was obviously some kind of -- something in
- 23 it, mechanical. I really don't know, to be honest with
- 24 you.
- 25 Q. Would it be the bed becoming wet that would trigger the

1 alarm?

2 A. Yes, it was the child wetting the bed. The water would
3 have -- the urine would have set the thing off.

4 Q. So in a way, the damage has happened in a sense --

5 A. In a sense, yes.

6 Q. -- when the alarm has gone off? Can we look at food
7 then, sister. You were again asked about that when you
8 gave your statement. How would you describe the
9 standards of the food within your section?

10 A. I think for the time it was in the food was okay. The
11 first I -- I can't remember when, but I know that we
12 started cooking ourselves. When I went there the food
13 came from the main kitchen and all the cereals. But we
14 did some shopping ourselves as well. They got their
15 usual, as I say, their morning cereal, porridge, toast
16 and jams and marmalades and things that you would have
17 for a normal breakfast, but as time went on we actually
18 choose to do the cooking ourselves, which was trying to
19 encourage the children -- to help them, to set tables,
20 to -- be training in preparing vegetables and stuff --
21 because if the food was always coming from down the
22 kitchen that they weren't too familiar with -- you know,
23 and the older ones -- I had 16, 17, 18 -- not 18, but
24 16, 17 boys who were keen to learn how to prepare veg
25 and stuff, so we started that. I don't remember if it

1 was two or three years after I was there. Then we had
2 a choice, sorry.

3 Q. Was the food better once you were able to deal with it
4 yourselves?

5 A. The quality of it would be better because obviously it
6 was being produced on site and we could -- we got to
7 know really what the children liked. We didn't have
8 a huge choice because we didn't -- money was always
9 a big issue. We didn't have a lot of money to spend,
10 you know. So we had to make do with what we had and
11 make a good meal out of maybe mince and potatoes or
12 something and put plenty of veg into it.

13 Q. Who made an issue of money?

14 A. Generally the home -- I don't know how we were paid --
15 I mean I know we were paid by Local Authorities, but
16 I don't know how -- I know from the superior down we
17 didn't have a lot of money to play around with. So we
18 had to kind of make as good use, I suppose as many
19 families had at that stage, to make do with what you had
20 to the best of your ability.

21 Q. I just wondered where that message came from. Would it
22 have come from the superior?

23 A. It would have come from, yes -- generally in the house
24 we were aware there wasn't a lot of money. There
25 wasn't -- we always had enough but we certainly didn't

- 1 have anything kind of over and above, you know.
- 2 Q. Can I ask you this, sister: was there any pressure on
3 a child to eat food if the child didn't find that
4 particular food appetising enough?
- 5 A. Well, I suppose I would encourage the children to eat
6 what was put before them. There were occasions I think
7 I wrote in my statement where I would have insisted that
8 they would have to finish off whatever they had started.
9 But then you would get to know if a child, for example,
10 didn't like fish, then there was no point in providing
11 them with it -- another kind of meat, I don't know, I'm
12 trying to give an example but I can't think of -- but, I
13 mean they wouldn't be let off with not accepting there
14 and then what they liked or didn't like because
15 sometimes children would play up and they would maybe
16 play around with it or whatever, you know.
- 17 Q. So how would you encourage a child to eat what was in
18 front of him or her?
- 19 A. We continued to encourage them and we would get maybe
20 one of the staff to sit with them and to finish off
21 their meal, whichever meal it was.
- 22 Q. Sorry, I didn't catch that.
- 23 A. To get one of the staff to sit with them --
- 24 LADY SMITH: Sister, that was a bit better then. Can
25 I invite you to pull your chair in a little bit more?

- 1 These are really good microphones and we'll hear you
2 more clearly if it is closer to you.
- 3 A. Is that better?
- 4 LADY SMITH: Yes, thank you.
- 5 MR MacAULAY: I think you said there that on occasions you
6 would get a member of staff to sit with the child; did
7 I catch you correctly?
- 8 A. You did, yes.
- 9 Q. To do what?
- 10 A. To finish off the meal. Rather than -- because it kept
11 the others back for one thing and they weren't that
12 happy about it because it might mean they could miss out
13 on play time before they went back to school or
14 whatever. So it just encouraged them to finish their
15 meal rather than playing around with it.
- 16 Q. If the child didn't want to eat what was there, what
17 then would happen?
- 18 A. They may have to -- we may have to give it to them later
19 on in the evening, but that happened very rarely. You
20 get to know the children, I think, who would play up as
21 well for want of a better word.
- 22 Q. Do I understand then that, at least in your unit, there
23 was a practice whereby if a child didn't eat the meal,
24 let's say at lunchtime, the same meal would be put in
25 front of the child at dinner time?

- 1 A. Yes, but they'd also have their own dinner in the
2 evening -- they would have a proper dinner as well.
3 They wouldn't be deprived of their dinner in the evening
4 if they didn't eat --
- 5 Q. Would you be expecting the child to eat the food that
6 had been there at lunchtime at dinner time?
- 7 A. There could be something that could be heated up and put
8 on the plate, if it was vegetables or something, which
9 was one of the main offenders that children didn't
10 like -- and you were trying to encourage them to eat
11 vegetables, for example. That was one of the main
12 things we used to have trouble with really.
- 13 Q. Why did you have this practice of having the same meal
14 that the child clearly didn't want to eat put in front
15 of the child at the next meal?
- 16 A. I understand what you're saying, but I suppose we were
17 trying to encourage the children to be -- a bit of
18 discipline in themselves and that there may not always
19 be a choice of a food, you know. (I probably just -- we
20 felt that it was helping them to kind of build in some
21 kind of discipline themselves, to encourage them to eat
22 what was put before them.
- 23 Q. Was it to do with not wasting food?
- 24 A. It was of course, yes, yes.
- 25 Q. Would you reprimand a child if the child wasn't eating

- 1 the food?
- 2 A. Reprimand, yes, and encourage.
- 3 Q. The inquiry has heard evidence that children were made
4 to eat food and by that I mean force-fed, the food was
5 effectively put into their mouths by somebody. Did that
6 happen in your section?
- 7 A. I'm not aware of that, no, definitely not.
- 8 Q. Could that have happened?
- 9 A. I really wouldn't -- I wouldn't know.
- 10 Q. This practice that you say was there of putting a meal
11 back in front of the same child, was that something, so
12 far as you're aware, that had been in place before you
13 went there?
- 14 A. I'm not aware, Mr MacAulay, I don't know.
- 15 Q. How did this start, how did this practice then of the
16 same meal being put in front of the child begin to
17 happen? Can you tell me?
- 18 A. I can't, really, no. I suppose I can only remember what
19 happened in my own group and I just can't -- I can't
20 give any more on that. I can't tell you.
- 21 Q. Do you know if this practice of giving a child the same
22 meal that had been there before was also carried out in
23 other sections?
- 24 A. It may have been, but I don't really know what happened
25 in the other groups. I can only account for what

- 1 happened in my own group.
- 2 Q. But would you ever discuss with other sisters what they
3 would do if a child was reluctant to eat food?
- 4 A. I don't remember.
- 5 Q. Would the child be upset if the same food that had been
6 put before him or her at lunchtime was there again at
7 dinner time?
- 8 A. They would be, yes, yes. Mm-hm.
- 9 Q. Did you really expect the child to eat the same meal
10 that was unattractive at lunchtime at dinner time?
- 11 A. Well, you try to make it attractive looking again in the
12 evening with the dinner that was being provided for the
13 evening.
- 14 Q. Would you describe this practice, so far as a particular
15 child was concerned, as a sort of punishment for not
16 eating the food, let's say at lunchtime?
- 17 A. I think it would vary from child to child because some
18 children would, as I said, play up or not really eat
19 what was put before them. But it wouldn't be --
20 I didn't see it as a punishment; I saw it as trying to
21 encourage them to eat what was put before them. That's
22 about all I can remember about it.
- 23 Q. In any event, would the child be upset in seeing the
24 same food there again that the child did not want to eat
25 before?

- 1 A. They would have been upset, yes.
- 2 Q. Really, unless you are going to put a different form of
3 pressure on the child, was there any real chance of the
4 child actually eating something that the child had not
5 wanted to eat before?
- 6 A. Looking back in hindsight, I mean, there probably
7 wasn't, but it's such a long time ago, it's very hard to
8 kind of imagine how different it might be, to be honest,
9 you know.
- 10 Q. Okay. You were also asked when you gave your statement
11 about what chores children might be asked to carry out
12 in your section. Can you give me some idea as to what
13 sort of chores, if any, they were asked to do?
- 14 A. Yes, we would ask them and encourage them to set tables
15 in the dining room, collect their clothes from the
16 laundry, which was where the clothes were ironed,
17 et cetera. I can't --
- 18 Q. What about making beds? Would they make their own beds?
- 19 A. The older ones, as far as I can remember, made their own
20 beds, yes, but I'm not -- I am really quite vague on
21 what I remember of that.
- 22 Q. Insofar as sort of heavier type work, if I can call it
23 that, like polishing floors, working in the laundry and
24 so on, did any of that happen in your --
- 25 A. No, that never happened in ours, no.

- 1 Q. Sister, can I then ask you about discipline and
2 punishment. The first thing I want to ask you there is
3 this: were you given any guidance when you went to
4 Smyllum as to what sort of discipline or punishment
5 should be used with children?
- 6 A. I don't remember any code of discipline or guidance that
7 was given to me. There might have been, but I really
8 can't remember.
- 9 Q. Were you given anything in writing, for example, to --
- 10 A. I don't remember, Mr MacAulay.
- 11 Q. Who would you be relying on to give you guidance?
- 12 A. It would have been the superior at the time.
- 13 Q. Was that Sister [REDACTED] EAL
- 14 A. No, that was Sister [REDACTED] EAA when I was there.
- 15 Q. Just to be clear, I think we've heard evidence that
16 there was a Sister [REDACTED] BAF who I think was then followed
17 by Sister [REDACTED] EAL Did Sister [REDACTED] EAA follow
18 Sister [REDACTED] EAL
- 19 A. She did, yes.
- 20 Q. Well, how then would you discipline a child who was
21 misbehaving?
- 22 A. Depending on the age group -- depriving them of pocket
23 money was one of the ways we used to deprive them of it
24 or maybe, if it was the older boys especially, not
25 allowing them to watch football, which was a big thing,

- 1 or maybe their favourite programme on the television,
2 you got to know it, that'd be -- there would be forms --
- 3 Q. What about --
- 4 A. Pocket money was probably the biggest one, I think.
- 5 Q. Depriving of pocket --
- 6 A. Yes, depriving them, mm-hm.
- 7 Q. What about corporal punishment then?
- 8 A. I wouldn't -- I didn't administer it. A slap on the
9 legs or a slap on the hands, I would have been -- but
10 I wouldn't have done any corporal punishment. It
11 depends what you mean by corporal punishment.
- 12 Q. What you tell us in your statement is that you might --
13 they might get a slap on their bottom --
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. -- or on their legs.
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. It would be a slap with your hand over their clothes.
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. You say this would only happen if the child was totally
20 out of control and you needed to get them back into
21 line. So you do accept that there was a degree of
22 physical chastisement --
- 23 A. Mm-hm.
- 24 Q. -- in connection with children; is that right?
- 25 A. Yes. That is right, yes.

- 1 Q. That could be described as corporal punishment in that
2 you are striking a child on that child's body.
- 3 A. Yes, but it was hard to know how to discipline the
4 children --
- 5 Q. I'm not criticising you; I'm simply wanting to
6 understand what the position was. Indeed, as you say,
7 if it was hard to discipline a child then you saw this
8 as a way of dealing with it; is that correct?
- 9 A. That is correct, yes.
- 10 Q. Did you see others administering this form of
11 punishment, a slap either on the bottom or the legs or
12 indeed on the hand?
- 13 A. I think my staff would have administered similar.
- 14 Q. And you saw that happening?
- 15 A. Yes. I would have been aware of why it happened. It
16 wouldn't have been just willy-nilly; there would have
17 been some reason for it.
- 18 Q. So far as other sections or units were concerned, what
19 was your understanding as to how children were being
20 disciplined in these sections?
- 21 A. I really don't know how it was done. I can only answer
22 for my own unit, really.
- 23 Q. Did you ever receive any advice that you should not slap
24 a child?
- 25 A. Well, you'd be encouraged to talk with the children and

- 1 to talk -- and to talk whatever the problem was, but
2 there were occasions when that was a waste of time,
3 really. Depending on the child as well, you know.
- 4 Q. I think one can understand in relation to children why
5 simply talking would not be productive. What I'm asking
6 is whether you were told at any point in time when you
7 were there not to, for example, slap a child or was
8 it -- the other side of that coin is, was is acceptable
9 to do that?
- 10 A. I can't remember being told -- I might have been, but
11 I really can't remember.
- 12 Q. What you do say is that the older boys would not be
13 slapped; is that correct?
- 14 A. That's correct.
- 15 Q. What ages are you talking about there?
- 16 A. 15/16-year-olds.
- 17 Q. So you're really looking to the younger boys for this
18 sort of treatment?
- 19 A. Yes. Yes.
- 20 Q. Perhaps, could I ask you about this at this point this
21 time: would you keep any record of any discipline that
22 was administered to a child?
- 23 A. I don't remember any record, but what I do remember is,
24 as I said there in my statement, if a child had been
25 punished for whatever reason we would make sure that

1 that child wasn't being punished twice by a member of
2 staff as well as -- or if the child had been punished by
3 a member of staff that I didn't. We were aware what was
4 happening in the group: it was deal with it and then let
5 it go, rather than keeping the thing up.

6 Q. If a child had been punished by being slapped by
7 a member of staff, would you be told if that had
8 happened?

9 A. I would be aware of it, yes. Because within the group,
10 we were -- yes, we had quite a lot of open communication
11 between us and we talked about the children, you know.
12 We worked, I would say, well together. That's my memory
13 of it and impression of my time there.

14 Q. What you do say in paragraph 48, sister, on page 0886,
15 is -- and this is where you're looking at the different
16 sections. What you say is:

17 "I think it was the same as with a family. Everyone
18 dealt with their children differently."

19 Do you see that?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. So perhaps I could go to the beginning and what you say
22 at the beginning of paragraph 48:

23 "I would honestly say that I never saw or had
24 knowledge of anything happening towards children that
25 I would consider to be abusive. I would hear from the

1 other sisters during community meetings about children
2 playing up, I wouldn't have heard of how this was dealt
3 with. I think it was the same as with a family;
4 everyone dealt with their children differently."

5 Do you see that?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. What did you mean by that? How did you understand that
8 children were being dealt with differently in other
9 sections?

10 A. I suppose when I look at that statement, I think each
11 one deals with the group -- because each one knew their
12 group the way they knew them. I wouldn't have known the
13 children in any of the other groups. So I suppose it's
14 a statement that I've made that each one does deal with
15 their children differently. I can't enlarge on that,
16 but it's just a statement that I made when I'd been
17 asked about it. I can't give you descriptions or
18 anything because I wouldn't know.

19 Q. How self-contained do you consider your group was?

20 A. Each of -- my group, they were self-contained, yes. We
21 tried to operate on what we called a family group basis,
22 you know, which was the nearest we could get to a family
23 group situation. That was the whole idea of dividing up
24 the place from the big institution, you know.

25 Q. We may look at this later, but you mention at

1 paragraph 49, where we have it close to hand,
2 a reference to [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] He was somebody you
3 knew at --

4 A. Yes, that's right.

5 Q. You say that you can remember [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] being
6 tough on the boys and shouting at them, calling them
7 names on the football field; do you see that?

8 A. 49, yes?

9 Q. Yes. Paragraph 49. So you have a recollection of, as
10 you put it, [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] being tough on the boys and
11 shouting at them?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Were these boys from your section?

14 A. Yes, if they were playing football outside on the field.

15 Q. What interaction did [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] generally have with
16 the boys?

17 A. He took them for football and I think they did football.
18 They used to have different teams divided up between
19 them, sometimes different boys from different houses.
20 The boys that were in my group were particularly big
21 into football, so I suppose that's where I would have
22 encountered [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] with the boys.

23 Q. And shouting at the boys, calling them names?

24 A. I really never heard them call them names. He might
25 call them softie or something, but he wouldn't be soft

1 on them, but I've never seen him -- I didn't experience
2 them being slapped by him -- when I say tough, I mean --
3 I suppose it was a man in the sense of a -- trying to
4 get the boys to be tough on the football, I suppose, and
5 tough on the field.

6 Q. Just picking up on what you say, calling them names, did
7 he call them names?

8 A. There would be occasions when I think he would call
9 their by their surname rather than their Christian
10 names.

11 Q. So that's what you mean?

12 A. Yes, that's it.

13 Q. So it's not -- one might think that's some sort of
14 derogatory --

15 A. No, no, he wouldn't be.

16 Q. You mention at paragraph 52 that:

17 "If a child felt that they were being picked on by
18 a member of staff and I found out about it, I would
19 speak to the staff member."

20 Do you see that?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Did that happen, did children complain to you about
23 being picked on?

24 A. There may be a couple of children who might have been
25 picked on -- not necessarily picked on but kids who were

1 kind of what we would say in trouble, you know, kind
2 of -- you'd have difficulty with discipline and trying
3 to ... They would be constantly being late and
4 constantly keeping the other children back or stuff like
5 that. Then maybe they'd have to be spoken to.

6 Q. But what I'm asking is: did you have a child report to
7 you that particular child was being picked upon by a
8 member of staff?

9 A. No, I couldn't say I have done, no. I didn't.

10 Q. Although you say that:

11 "If a child felt they were being picked on by
12 a member of staff and I found out about this, I would
13 speak to the staff member."

14 Are you saying that although that may have been the
15 thing in theory, it never actually happened?

16 A. What I'm trying to say -- the point I was trying to make
17 was that if a child had been corrected then maybe
18 I wouldn't have wanted -- they wouldn't necessarily want
19 to prolong that being told off, you know. It had
20 happened. One of us had dealt with it and not to be
21 picking on the kid again to -- once was enough to speak
22 to the child.

23 Q. Right, okay.

24 A. That's what I was thinking of.

25 Q. Can I ask you about birthdays: were birthdays celebrated

- 1 in St Kentigern's?
- 2 A. They were, yes.
- 3 Q. How would that be done?
- 4 A. They usually got a card from -- they might have got
- 5 a card from one or other parent, they might not. But we
- 6 always had a cake for them in the evening. Before we
- 7 started cooking, a birthday cake would come up from the
- 8 kitchen and we would have that in the evening. Then
- 9 later on when we started ourselves we would either do
- 10 something or else go down and get a cake and have it in
- 11 the evening for the children.
- 12 Q. How would you know that a child's birthday was due on a
- 13 particular date?
- 14 A. You would know because we had all the children's
- 15 birthdays, dates of birth. When they came into us we
- 16 had their dates of birth. The children themselves knew
- 17 when their birthdays were so we wouldn't less it pass.
- 18 Q. Did you have some record then that you could consult?
- 19 A. We had a certain amount of detail, scant, but the date
- 20 of birth we definitely would have known, yes.
- 21 Q. Would it be yourself then that would consult this
- 22 information to establish when the date of birth was?
- 23 A. I can't remember, but I just always -- we never seemed
- 24 to have a difficulty in finding out when the birthdays
- 25 were. From my memory, it was never an issue.

- 1 Q. What about visits? Did the children in your group have
2 many visits from family members?
- 3 A. From family members? No. My memory is there were one
4 or two families who had a regular visit every week when
5 the parents -- because one parent was psychiatric. They
6 were very, very faithful to that particular family. But
7 there were other families that weren't visited -- was
8 infrequent.
- 9 Q. What about inspections then? Do you remember any
10 inspections being carried out insofar as your section
11 was concerned by anyone in authority?
- 12 A. There may have been, but it doesn't stand out in my
13 memory so I can't remember.
- 14 Q. What about social worker visits then? Did you have
15 visits from social workers?
- 16 A. We would have visits from social workers -- a very odd
17 time I think it was, we had a Father Gibbons, who was
18 Catholic Welfare, he would come in as well and visit
19 each of our units.
- 20 Q. Just focusing on social workers, did you have situations
21 where a social worker would come to visit and speak to
22 a particular child or children?
- 23 A. There would have been, but from my memory, it wasn't --
24 it didn't happen very frequently. That could be wrong,
25 but that's from my memory.

1 LADY SMITH: You mentioned Father Gibbons from the
2 Catholic Welfare, as you referred to it. The Catholic
3 Child Welfare, was it?

4 A. Yes.

5 LADY SMITH: What was your understanding of their role?

6 A. Because he was responsible for the Catholic Welfare in
7 Glasgow. From what I can remember I think we had
8 children from the Glasgow -- his area and he seemed to
9 come and visit them. But he came to look at -- not to
10 look at -- he came to visit the children in the group.
11 He was a friendly presence. That's the way he came
12 across. He was interested in them, you know, as people,
13 and I suppose because I had so many boys, he would be
14 big into football and he would talk about football and
15 maybe he --

16 LADY SMITH: So you're really talking about a priest who
17 knew these families and was coming to see the children
18 from his area?

19 A. I'm not 100 per cent sure how much of the families he
20 knew, but he certainly would have I think -- this is
21 "I think" because I'm vague. There were a few families
22 where I think he would have been instrumental in getting
23 the children into Smyllum. I think.

24 LADY SMITH: But you're not talking about any sort of formal
25 visits by the Catholic Welfare Society?

- 1 A. No, not that I can remember.
- 2 MR MacAULAY: Do you know what the connection or
3 relationship was between the Catholic Welfare Society
4 and a place like Smyllum?
- 5 A. I couldn't really speak about that, Mr MacAulay. It was
6 a friendly -- there was no ... He came in and out as
7 a friendly presence, but I mean, as to what the
8 relationship was, I really can't go into any more detail
9 because I don't know.
- 10 Q. You mentioned that you would have some record at least,
11 although I think you used the word "scant" --
- 12 A. I did, yes.
- 13 Q. -- in connection with children. Would that be a record
14 that would be kept by you?
- 15 A. No, it was kept -- I can't remember us keeping any
16 records; they were kept by the superior.
- 17 Q. Just to be clear, within your section itself you had no
18 records to give you any information about the children
19 in your care?
- 20 A. I can't remember. We might have done, but I honestly
21 can't remember.
- 22 Q. Did you carry out any sort of review of the children and
23 keep a record of that review over the period that you
24 were there?
- 25 A. Latterly, from what I remember, we had case conferences.

- 1 Q. Latterly was into the late 1970s?
- 2 A. Late 1970s, yes. 1975, 1976. But again -- sometimes
- 3 I get mixed up with the other children's homes I was in
- 4 after this and I'm not ... My memory is a bit confused
- 5 sometimes with what was later on in the 1980s and
- 6 what was then in the 1970s. That's why I'm a bit wary
- 7 of something just exactly what was what.
- 8 Q. I'm not sure if I took this from you or not, but I think
- 9 you also did a childcare course during your time at
- 10 Smyllum.
- 11 A. I did, yes. 1971 to 1972.
- 12 Q. Yes, I think you say 1971 to 1972.
- 13 A. That's right.
- 14 Q. Where was that done?
- 15 A. In Langside College, Glasgow.
- 16 Q. During that time what was your commitment to Smyllum?
- 17 A. I was still responsible for the children, but my three
- 18 staff kept -- I was totally responsible for the children
- 19 and the superior would come in and out and make sure
- 20 that everything was okay --
- 21 Q. Did you stay at Smyllum during that time or --
- 22 A. No, I stayed in Tollcross when I was doing the course.
- 23 Q. In your statement, sister, a number of allegations are
- 24 put to you and I think you may remember that was the
- 25 position when you gave the statement.

1 A. Mm-hm.

2 Q. I want to put to you some evidence that has been given
3 to the inquiry. I'll just check -- I don't want you to
4 tell us the names of the persons that gave the evidence
5 and I'll give you a pseudonym to work with so that we
6 don't disclose what the name might be.

7 (Pause)

8 My Lady, we don't seem to have the relevant
9 document. I wonder if we could have a five-minute
10 adjournment to deal with this?

11 LADY SMITH: Yes.

12 (12.23 pm)

13 (A short break)

14 (12.28 pm)

15 MR MacAULAY: I'm obliged, my Lady, and I think we've sorted
16 the problem out.

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

18 MR MacAULAY: Sister, what I want to do is put some evidence
19 to you that has been presented to the inquiry for your
20 comments to see whether or not this may relate to
21 yourself. You see in front of you a piece of paper that
22 sets out on the one side, the left-hand side,
23 a pseudonym that a witness has chosen to use, and on the
24 right the witness's name. Do you understand me?

25 A. I do, yes.

1 Q. These witnesses want to remain anonymous and therefore
2 could I ask you, please, not to mention their names; we
3 shall use the pseudonyms that are available.

4 A. Okay.

5 Q. Do you recognise the names?

6 A. I recognise the names, yes.

7 Q. If we take the first name on the list, which uses the
8 name "Jimmy", do you recognise that particular name?

9 A. I do, but I get confused between the three names.

10 Q. I can understand that, but you think you do recognise --

11 A. I recognise, yes.

12 Q. According to the evidence that Jimmy gave to the
13 inquiry, he was born in 1961 and he was admitted to
14 Smyllum in August 1965. Then he left Smyllum in
15 September 1970. Do you understand that so far?

16 A. I do, yes.

17 Q. He thought that he was in St Kentigern's.

18 A. Mm-hm.

19 Q. Because you seemed to recognise the name --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- that would appear to be correct?

22 A. I think so.

23 Q. Okay. He was there before you, of course, looking to
24 those dates.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. But he must have crossed over with you if he didn't
2 leave until 1970.

3 A. He must have done. I'm not familiar with that.

4 Q. In particular he said he left in September 1970.

5 A. I really wouldn't have --

6 Q. No, but because you were there in 1969, there would have
7 been a degree of crossover.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. One of the things he did say -- and I think this chimes
10 with what you've said, sister -- is that before he left
11 that what had been dormitories had been converted into
12 smaller rooms.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Had that happened before you arrived at St Kentigern's?

15 A. It had, yes.

16 Q. If we look at his transcript, the reference is
17 TRN.001.002.1039. I'll just convert the last four
18 digits to 1039 and we're looking at page 1 of his
19 transcript.

20 If I can take you to page 9. We're looking at the
21 transcript number, if we go back to the top of 1047.

22 At line number 12, if I can take you to what is said
23 there, he's asked:

24 "Question: If I take you then to St Kentigern's
25 where you were, was there a particular nun in charge of

1 "Question: Can you remember any of the names?"

2 And he says he couldn't remember any of the names.

3 Do you see that?

4 A. I see where that's written, yes.

5 Q. One of the things he does say in the next page -- if we
6 could move on to the next page, that's page 10, and
7 that's at 1048, towards the -- at line 11 ... actually,
8 let's go to line number 11, where he's taken to his
9 statement and what is put to him is this:

10 "Question: One of the things you say early on in
11 your statement is that -- and you are talking here about
12 the people that were looking after you -- is that:

13 'None of the people who were supposed to
14 look after me ever showed any love towards me
15 or gave me any praise.'

16 "Answer: No, they never did.

17 "Question: Was that throughout the whole period?

18 "Answer: I was never shown any love or any
19 affection. I was never congratulated on doing anything
20 good or anything. Never, ever was shown any affection
21 at all."

22 That covers your period, sister.

23 A. Mm-hm.

24 Q. What do you say about that sort of observation?

25 A. It doesn't ring a bell with me, but it's sad if that's

1 what his memory is. That's really all I can comment on.

2 Q. If I can move on to something else he says. I just want
3 to see if this was the practice when you were there.
4 This is on page 11 of the transcript. The transcript
5 number is 1049.

6 It's towards the top of the page where he's asked
7 the question:

8 "Question: One thing you do tell us about the
9 dormitories and when you were to go to sleep is that you
10 had to sleep with your hands on top of the blankets.
11 Can you help me with that? Was that a rule that had to
12 be obeyed?

13 "Answer: It was a rule that had to be obeyed. On
14 numerous occasions you went to bed and, like I say,
15 everybody was visible from -- if you want, big long
16 dormitories and there was a corridor that connected all
17 of them."

18 And he goes on to talk about that.

19 Clearly there he is talking about a time before the
20 dormitories were divided up. Was there a practice in
21 your time of children having to keep their hands above
22 the blankets?

23 A. I have no memory of that at all. That's news to me.

24 I really have no memory of that at all.

25 Q. I think he went on to say on the next page, page 12 --

1 and that's transcript number 1050 -- where he says if
2 you didn't follow this practice -- at line number 5 --
3 you would get slapped for that. Do you see that?

4 A. I see that, yes.

5 Q. It may be he's talking about a time before you were
6 there, sister, but do you have any recollection of there
7 being such a practice and children getting punished if
8 they didn't follow the practice?

9 A. I really can't. I honestly have no memory of it and
10 I can't comment on it.

11 Q. Then if we move on to the next page, page 13. This is
12 at number 1051. He gives evidence about being -- food
13 being physically forced into his mouth -- you can see
14 that at line numbers 8 to 9 -- with a nun's hand held
15 over his mouth. Do you see that?

16 A. I see that.

17 Q. I think he goes on to say that it wasn't the nun in
18 charge of him but it was just one of the nuns who was
19 there at the time. But the point I want to put to you
20 is this is happening in St Kentigern's. It's not clear
21 when this was within this individual's time at
22 St Kentigern's, but it is an instance of force-feeding
23 at that time.

24 A. I just honestly have no memory of that at all. I can't
25 imagine myself doing it either, you know.

- 1 Q. I'm sorry?
- 2 A. I can't imagine myself doing that either.
- 3 Q. Well, you wouldn't have forgotten if you'd done that?
- 4 A. I don't think you would, no.
- 5 Q. As I think I've asked you before, just to be clear, is
6 this something that could have happened because of the
7 anxiety of wanting the children to eat their food?
- 8 A. I don't know really. I can't comment on that aspect of
9 it.
- 10 Q. Another piece of evidence he gave, sister, is at page 17
11 of the transcript. For the transcript reference, it's
12 1055. He's asked about birthdays at line number 4:
13 "Question: What about birthdays? What happened on
14 your birthday?
15 "Answer: I used to celebrate my birthday [and he
16 gives a particular date] but it wasn't until I went to
17 another place that I found out my birthday was on
18 another date. There wasn't anything special. I can't
19 ever remember getting any birthday cake or birthday
20 parties or presents or anything like that."
21 So that's his recollection, sister, which would
22 spill into your time there.
- 23 A. Mm-hm.
- 24 Q. Could there be a situation where a child didn't know his
25 own date of birth?

1 A. From my memory, that isn't -- I can't go along with that
2 because I understood from what I remember we had
3 remembered all their birthdays and we celebrated them.

4 Q. Do you know -- perhaps I can approach it in this
5 way: when you took over, as it were, in 1969 -- and
6 I can't remember if you gave me a particular month or
7 not when you took over. Can you remember what month it
8 was?

9 A. I think it was August. I think.

10 Q. August 1969. So you'd been there for over a year with
11 this person. Do you remember if you had to change
12 practices that may have been in place before you took
13 over?

14 A. I can't remember and I think in the first six months
15 I was trying to get used to the place and trying to get
16 my way around and trying to familiarise myself with the
17 children. I can't really tell you.

18 Q. I know you didn't have -- you have told us, sister, you
19 didn't have an induction type of introduction.

20 A. Mm-hm.

21 Q. But do I take it that you'd have at least appraised
22 yourself of what the practices were --

23 A. I would have done, yes. That doesn't ring a bell, you
24 know. Some of the things don't ring a bell with me.

25 Q. Okay. If I could take you then to page 18 in this

1 person's evidence. For transcript purposes, it's 1056.

2 At the top of the page, it's put to him:

3 "Question: You do give us quite a bit of detail
4 about that in your statement and you tell us that you
5 were hit by the nuns and by the staff.

6 "Answer: Yes.

7 "Question: Can you just give me some feel for what
8 happened to you. Let's take the nuns; what sort of
9 abuse was that?

10 "Answer: I mean, getting slapped and getting
11 kicked, that was a regular -- that happened on a regular
12 basis and that was for trivial stuff as well."

13 Do you see that, sister?

14 A. I see that, yes.

15 Q. You accept, I think, that there may have been slaps of
16 the type you described; what about kicks?

17 A. Definitely not.

18 Q. He then goes on to describe an event that I think he at
19 one point describes as being quite a vivid recollection.
20 He begins telling us about that particular event on that
21 page when he joined the Cubs. Could I ask you about
22 this? Could children join the Cubs when you were there?

23 A. Yes. We would encourage the children to join Cubs,
24 Scouts, whatever, would involve them outside.

25 Q. He appears to have been given a jumper -- presumably

1 a jumper for the Cubs.

2 A. There would have been, yes. I can't remember that
3 incident, but they would have been having a special one
4 for it, yes.

5 Q. If we go on to the next page -- and this is on page 19,
6 page 1057 -- he's telling us about being late and if
7 I could just pick it up at line number 3:

8 "Answer: So instead of going the back way I decided
9 to go round the front way and go down the stairs.

10 I walked past this room and that was where they used to
11 keep the boilers, the water stuff like that, and you
12 weren't really allowed in there. But the door was open
13 and I shouldn't have been in, but I went in just to have
14 a look. As I went in, there was two nuns in there and
15 one of the nuns had her arms around the other one, at
16 which point she turned around and give me a right good
17 hiding. I'm talking about punching, kicking, pulling me
18 hair, everything you could think of."

19 He goes on to say:

20 "She literally -- I can distinctly remember there
21 was a boiler and it had a flame coming out of it like
22 a flamethrower and it was directed to where they used to
23 heat the water [and he gives an indication] and, yes,
24 she put my face really close to that and I can still
25 remember me hair getting singed, the front of my hair

1 and my eyelashes. The smell of singeing stayed with us
2 for quite a while after that. She gave me a proper
3 hiding -- like, I'm talking about a really, really
4 aggressively bad hiding."

5 He goes on to say on the next page:

6 "I woke up there by myself. I don't know how long
7 I was out unconscious for."

8 And he says that he was black and blue because of
9 what happened to him.

10 Now, he's asked if we turn to page 22 -- and this is
11 transcript number 1060 -- towards the bottom of the page
12 at line number 22:

13 "Question: The nun in question, was she a nun you
14 had dealings with before that?

15 "Answer: Yes.

16 "Question: Was she the nun in charge of your
17 section?

18 "Answer: She was, yes.

19 "Question: At that time?

20 "Answer: Yes. She was the nun who was in charge of
21 me when I left in Smyllum.

22 "Question: When you left in 1970?"

23 Do you see that?

24 A. I see that, yes.

25 Q. That would be you.

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. What do you say about this particular allegation that's
3 being made?
- 4 A. I have racked my brain as to that incident, but I cannot
5 recall it at all. The boilers, to me, were always out
6 of bounds and there would be no reason for any of us to
7 be down there in the boiler house except the water being
8 cold up the stairs and you'd go down and find the
9 handyman. But he was the one who always dealt with the
10 boilers. I have no memory of ever having to go and
11 check the boiler room because, as I say, it would be out
12 of bounds and locked.
- 13 Q. I don't understand the suggestion here was that the nuns
14 involved in this matter were checking the boiler room;
15 the suggestion from this witness is that the nuns were
16 there because they wanted to be alone together.
- 17 A. Yes. I have read that since, but that does not --
18 I cannot for the life of me bring that back to mind.
19 I have tried to recall it, but I can't.
- 20 Q. Did it happen, sister?
- 21 A. I'm not aware of it happening. I can only say what
22 I remember and I can't -- the incident has shocked me,
23 but I cannot remember it happening. No aspect of it can
24 I remember.
- 25 Q. Sometimes one can say "I can't remember" in a situation

1 where there's a possible acceptance that something did
2 happen and it has been forgotten. That's when one can't
3 remember something, it may have happened but you have
4 just forgotten about it. That happens to us all. What
5 I want to be clear about is -- and I'm asking you
6 a direct question: did this happen or did it not?

7 A. To my knowledge, it hasn't happened, but I can only say
8 what I remember honestly.

9 Q. Is it at all feasible, sister, that you would have
10 forgotten an event that involved what sounds like quite
11 a serious attack on a young child?

12 A. I don't think it's the kind of incident I would have
13 forgotten quite easily in all honesty.

14 Q. At all? Could you have forgotten it at all?

15 A. I don't think I could have done. Looking at that
16 transcript, you couldn't possibly forget.

17 Q. I think the witness at that time said he may have been 6
18 or 7; certainly he was a young boy.

19 A. Yes, mm-hm, mm-hm.

20 Q. So to get your final word on that particular incident
21 then, sister, are you leaving open the possibility that
22 it might have happened but you've just completely
23 forgotten and blacked it out?

24 A. No, I have -- no, I don't think I've blacked it out.
25 From my knowledge, as I said, since I've read that

1 transcript recently, I have racked my brains to try to
2 remember and at no point has any memory of it come back.
3 If it had, I would say it.

4 Q. He went on to say that -- I think to summarise what he
5 said, after that, he was in a sense persecuted by this
6 particular nun. You'll have read that?

7 A. I have read that, yes.

8 Q. If one turns, for example, to page 26 -- the transcript
9 reference is 1064 -- and towards the bottom of the page
10 at line 20 he's asked:

11 "Question: You mentioned the episode involving the
12 boiler room and the nun that did what she did to you,
13 which you've told us about. What about after that,
14 insofar as she was concerned? Did you have much
15 dealings with her?

16 "Answer: Yeah, she used to attack us every -- not
17 every opportunity, but most times she would hit us, slap
18 us, when I wasn't expecting it, grab us, kick us."

19 Then he goes on to give an account in connection
20 with a chocolate Santa that he had been given at school,
21 that it was taken off him and smashed. Do you see that?

22 A. I have seen that, yes.

23 Q. And also that he was kicked when he tried to hide. And
24 so far as the smashing of the chocolate Santa was
25 concerned, what he goes on to say is that the particular

1 nun involved put it on the floor and then just stood on
2 it. So you'll have read all of that?

3 A. I have, yes.

4 Q. Do you have any recollection of that?

5 A. I have no recollection of it. I'd be horrified if I did
6 something like that because we were always grateful when
7 they got anything from school that they could call their
8 own personal bits and pieces. So kicking is something
9 I would never have done to my knowledge --

10 Q. Sorry, I interrupted you.

11 A. It's just something that I wouldn't have -- I have no
12 memory of it at all. I'd be horrified at myself if
13 I even thought I did that kind of thing.

14 Q. Another point he makes about dealings with the nun in
15 question is that he was hit on a particular occasion
16 with a cricket bat. I think you may remember reading
17 that.

18 A. I do remember that. I don't know where I would have had
19 a cricket bat, to be honest with you.

20 Q. So are you denying that?

21 A. I'm denying that, yes.

22 Q. Can I go back to another aspect of this person's
23 evidence, and this is in connection with bed-wetting.
24 If we turn to page 23 of his transcript -- and that's
25 transcript 1061 -- towards the bottom at line number 21

1 he's asked:

2 "Question: You mentioned bed-wetting in your
3 statement. Did you wet the bed on occasion?"

4 "Answer: Yes, when I was unwell.

5 "Question: Before we come to that, when you were
6 not unwell, generally in the dormitory, were you a
7 bed-wetter?

8 "Answer: No.

9 "Question: But were there bed-wetters in the
10 dormitory?

11 "Answer: Oh yes, yes. They were all put in -- they
12 weren't in a separate dormitory but they were segregated
13 and all put together in the same part.

14 "Question: Did you see what happened to them?

15 "Answer: They used to get -- they used to get
16 ridiculed, hit, made to strip their beds, marched up and
17 down, and all the stuff that shouldn't happen to them,
18 really."

19 This may be in the context of there being
20 a dormitory and therefore at a time before you, but
21 nevertheless he's talking about a practice --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- that was in place at that time. As I understood your
24 evidence earlier, such a practice was not in place when
25 you were there?

1 A. Definitely not, no.

2 Q. But had you heard about it, had it been mentioned that
3 there had been such a practice in the past?

4 A. I hadn't heard about it, no.

5 Q. The other thing this witness said, and I'll put this to
6 you -- I think this is the final bit of what I want to
7 ask you about him. This is on page 44; the transcript
8 reference is 1082. Here he's looking at when he went to
9 leave Smyllum in [REDACTED] 1970. He's asked the
10 question at line number 6:

11 "Question: Can just tell me about how that came to
12 happen?"

13 "Answer: Well, I got up as normal, was going for me
14 breakfast, and I was told I was going to Newcastle.
15 That's how I found out. I didn't know why, how I were
16 getting there, anything. Later on just momentarily
17 after me breakfast had finished, Mr Miller appeared --
18 and it's strange because he appeared in the house, he
19 normally went to the front of the building where there
20 was like a posh room. So that again was unusual. But
21 I was just taken away and off I went to Newcastle.

22 "Question: I think your older brother went with you
23 at the time.

24 "Answer: Yes.

25 "Question: But not your sister?

1 "Answer: No."

2 So there he's giving us an indication of how he came
3 to leave Smyllum to go to another location, with no hint
4 of any preparation or information that that was the
5 case. What do you make of that? Because this again
6 would be in your time.

7 A. It was, yes, I agree with that. You see, this incident
8 I don't remember.

9 Q. Well, do you remember the boy in question leaving and
10 going to another place?

11 A. Unfortunately, I can't remember.

12 Q. How likely is it that the lack of preparation for such
13 a move did occur?

14 A. Well, obviously it occurred at that point, but I know
15 later on, when boys were moving on, we would have the
16 social worker in and, for example, when some of the boys
17 moved to Glasgow or the older girls moved on to
18 Wilton Street, it would have been discussed with the
19 social worker in question. That was, as I say, towards
20 the end.

21 LADY SMITH: Do you remember Mr Miller?

22 A. I don't remember Mr Miller, no.

23 LADY SMITH: Do you remember a family being moved from
24 Smyllum to another place run by your order in Newcastle?

25 A. I don't.

1 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

2 MR MacAULAY: The other point further on this page I just
3 want to raise with you, sister, is that towards the
4 bottom of the page, if I just take you there, it's
5 when -- this is when he gets to Newcastle:

6 "Answer: When we got there -- and that's when
7 I discovered I had brothers. There were three of me
8 other brothers there and the older brother, he was in
9 a different -- different place."

10 As he tells us. Now, what I want to ask you is
11 this: the picture that is being presented here is of
12 a boy who had been in your care who was never told that
13 he had brothers; what do you make of that?

14 A. I can't really comment on it because I don't ...
15 I can't kind of understand that that would have
16 happened. The children in my group that I had, from my
17 memory, I knew exactly who the children had -- I mean,
18 I have quite a clear memory of most of the children and
19 the families that were within the group.

20 Q. I can understand --

21 A. I have a very vague memory of that particular child,
22 strangely enough.

23 Q. You have a vague memory?

24 A. Very vague. I suppose when I think about it, I went --
25 until the year I was there, so my memory is more vague,

1 Q. If we look at 1110, that's page 72, and the transcript
2 number is 1110, he says at line numbers 9 to 10, when
3 he's asked about where he was:

4 "Answer: I can't even remember. The name of the
5 house was Kentigern or something like that."

6 Do you see that, sister? So that's the suggestion
7 that he makes that he was in Kentigern as well.

8 A. What number are we on, please? We're on a different
9 page.

10 (Pause)

11 Q. While we're waiting for the technology to catch up with
12 us, sister, his suggestion is that, so far as it goes,
13 the name of the house was Kentigern House. It may be
14 that, because of the dates, that he was speaking to
15 a time before your time, at least to some extent.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. But at one point, he's asked about birthdays and whether
18 birthdays were celebrated, and what he said at that
19 point was that:

20 "Answer: They didn't even acknowledge it."

21 That's what he says. That's what he said in his
22 evidence. That's not your own recollection during your
23 time?

24 A. That's not my experience at all.

25 Q. He also went on to tell us that in relation to feeding:

1 "Answer: They were forcing us to eat food I didn't
2 like, forcing us to eat me sick. When they were trying
3 to force it into me mouth, I would be sick. They would
4 pull your hair and pull it back and stuff it in your
5 throat. Then I would be sick on the plate and they
6 would make us eat that as well -- and if you done
7 anything else the answer was just to give you a hiding."

8 Again, he's giving a description of quite an unhappy
9 type of event. Your position is that wasn't the case in
10 your day?

11 A. Definitely not. Definitely not.

12 Q. Like the previous witness, when it came to leaving --
13 and that would be in your time, sister --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- he was really given no warning. It was just a normal
16 day and then quite suddenly he was told that he would be
17 leaving.

18 A. Mm-hm.

19 Q. Could that have happened at that time in 1970?

20 A. As I said before, I cannot remember and I just --
21 I can't imagine that happening, the way he's explaining
22 it.

23 Q. You would anticipate there would be greater
24 preparations?

25 A. There would have been preparation for it, definitely,

- 1 yes.
- 2 Q. Sister, can I go back to your statement and we can leave
3 the transcripts aside.
- 4 A. Okay.
- 5 Q. From about paragraph 88 onwards, you were asked about
6 allegations, including, I think, the points I've been
7 putting to you from the transcript, and your position
8 essentially is that you don't accept the allegations
9 that are being made insofar as at least they relate to
10 yourself; is that correct?
- 11 A. You mean the previous transcript?
- 12 Q. Yes.
- 13 A. I definitely don't agree with -- I have no memory of
14 them happening and I really deny the fact that they
15 actually did happen.
- 16 Q. Okay. But also in your statement, when you gave your
17 statement, other names were put to you; some you
18 recognised, some you didn't.
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. As far as you are concerned, sister, you can't help us
21 with any of these allegations? So far as you're
22 concerned, they didn't happen from you?
- 23 A. Which way are we talking about now because I'm not clear
24 on where we're talking?
- 25 Q. I'm perhaps moving too quickly. Let's take you to your

1 statement at paragraph 89.

2 A. I can see that, yes.

3 Q. You're asked about a particular person; is that right?

4 A. In 89? Yes.

5 Q. What's your position in relation to that particular
6 individual?

7 A. That child wasn't in my group.

8 Q. So you can't really help us?

9 A. No, I can't really talk to that, no, definitely not.

10 Q. You're asked about a number of children and insofar as
11 they weren't in your group, you can't help us?

12 A. I can't, no way.

13 Q. But insofar as children were in your group and in
14 particular the possibility of the two people that I've
15 drawn your attention to, as you have just said a moment
16 ago, you deny these allegations, is that --

17 A. Because just -- I can't believe they would have
18 happened.

19 Q. Then if I take you to paragraph 129, sister. There's
20 a section that's headed "Looking Back" and you say
21 this -- and I'll just read this to you:

22 "I think that it would stand out in my mind if I saw
23 a child being regularly beaten and humiliated for things
24 like wetting the bed. I can only speak for my group.
25 I would say that if these things did happen, beatings,

1 punishments for wetting the bed, being force-fed, then
2 I would definitely say that's a form of abuse."

3 That's your position, sister, if these things
4 happened it would be abuse?

5 A. I would see it as a form of abuse, yes, yes.

6 Q. If I take you to the final bit of your statement at
7 paragraph 137, and that's at page 0902, what you're
8 asked there at paragraph 137 -- we'll wait until that's
9 on the screen. (Pause).

10 In any event, you have that in front of you, sister?

11 A. I have, yes.

12 Q. I'll read that again to you:

13 "I have been asked why I think that people have made
14 the allegations that I have been made aware of. I think
15 that people obviously feel they have a grievance against
16 the sisters. I think that everyone is looking for
17 justice and that's what we would all want for people."

18 And that is your position, sister, you'd want
19 justice for people?

20 A. Definitely, yes.

21 Q. You say:

22 "However, I can't believe that all these allegations
23 are true."

24 And you go on to say after that:

25 "So I have no explanation as to why so many

1 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, the next witness is
2 Sister Maria Lanigan.

3 SISTER MARIA LANIGAN (sworn)

4 Questions from MR MacAULAY

5 MR MacAULAY: Good afternoon, sister.

6 A. Good afternoon.

7 Q. Are you Maria Lanigan?

8 A. Maria Lanigan, yes.

9 Q. Perhaps the first thing I can do actually is to take you
10 to your statement, which is in the red folder in front
11 of you, sister. For the transcript, the reference is
12 WIT.003.001.1028. Sister, if I can just take you to the
13 very last page of the statement, 1041. Actually, what
14 I shall do is give you the reference. At the top
15 right-hand side, you'll see there's a number,
16 WIT.003.001.1041.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Can I ask you, sister, to confirm that you have signed
19 the statement?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And do you also say in paragraph 72:

22 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
23 published as part of the evidence to the inquiry"?

24 Is that correct?

25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. And you also say:
- 2 "I believe the facts stated in this witness
- 3 statement are true."
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Can I just go back a little bit in time, sister?
- 6 I needn't have your complete date of birth, but
- 7 am I right in thinking you were born in 1931?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. So you're now 86?
- 10 A. 86, yes.
- 11 Q. Do you tell us in your statement that you joined the
- 12 Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul on
- 13 8 September 1952?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. Was your name in the community that of Sister Vincent
- 16 for a period of time?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. Can I put this document on the screen -- it's what's
- 19 described as a ministry history and I'll ask you to look
- 20 at it. It's WIT.003.001.0561.
- 21 This is designed to set out your ministry history.
- 22 Can we note, for example, that from 1954 to 1955, you
- 23 were based at Tollcross in Glasgow?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. You are described there as being in care of a nursery

1 group.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Was Tollcross one of the homes that you had in Scotland
4 at the time?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. You then give us some further information about other
7 places and then, if we come to 1979/1981, do you tell us
8 that you were at Smyllum?

9 A. 1979, yes.

10 Q. 1979 to 1981.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Were you there essentially as the Mother Superior?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. You provide us with some other information, including
15 being at St Joseph's Rosewell from 1987 to 1990; is that
16 correct?

17 A. Sorry, St Joseph's?

18 Q. Yes. If you look down the column for the dates, 1987 to
19 1990, can we read that you were at St Joseph's?

20 A. Rosewell.

21 Q. Thank you. As we've seen, sister, you went to Smyllum
22 in 1979.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. What was your purpose in going to Smyllum?

25 A. To close Smyllum. I was sent to close the house.

1 Q. Had a decision been taken then that it was time to close
2 Smyllum?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. What was the thinking behind that?

5 A. Because the children had been placed there -- there were
6 few children, there were no children in the large house,
7 they were in four groups outside, so we had this huge
8 building and only a few of us living in it.

9 Q. I think what you say in your statement is that you don't
10 remember how many children were there.

11 A. Not in the groups, no. There were no children in the
12 large house. They had all been moved out into smaller
13 groups.

14 Q. But insofar as the numbers were concerned --

15 A. Oh, I don't know. I can't remember the numbers.

16 Q. Let's see if I can help you with that. I'll put this
17 document on the screen for you. It's DSV.001.001.5640.
18 That'll come on the screen.

19 If you look at the document, you'll see towards the
20 top left there's a handwritten note.

21 A. Oh yes, I see.

22 Q. It reads:

23 "Notes from Father Gibbons, June 1979. Considered
24 at Council, 30 June 1979."

25 Do you see that?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. This appears then to be a note by Father Gibbons. Did
3 you come across Father Gibbons when you were involved in
4 the closure of Smyllum?
- 5 A. Yes, I knew Father Gibbons, yes.
- 6 Q. The note begins by saying:
7 "It is now impracticable to retain the above
8 establishment in its present form."
9 A number of points are being made. The reason
10 I want to put this to you is in the third paragraph, can
11 we read:
12 "At the moment there are 50 children resident in
13 Smyllum living in four groups of 14 to 15."
14 Do you see that?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. So the suggestion at this time in June of 1979 is that
17 there were 50 children altogether. Would that be about
18 right, do you think?
- 19 A. Well, I would imagine between the four groups, yes. But
20 I wouldn't know exactly -- I can't remember exactly
21 anyway.
- 22 Q. Can you remember who the sisters were when you arrived
23 at Smyllum?
- 24 A. Sister [REDACTED] AEG
- 25 Q. You have mentioned one sister there. I think if I can

1 just take you to your statement, I think you mention the
2 other sisters in your statement.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. But were the sisters who were there then in charge of
5 the groups of children that you mentioned?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. What you tell us in your statement, sister, is that,
8 putting it shortly, you really didn't have anything to
9 do with the children when you were there.

10 A. No.

11 Q. Why was that?

12 A. My position -- there were five elderly sisters in the
13 large house and they were my responsibility, to move
14 them to the house that we had started in the town, in
15 Lanark town. They were my responsibility.

16 Q. But were the children not your responsibility as well?

17 A. No, the sister in charge of the children and presumably
18 the social workers -- but I had nothing to do with the
19 children.

20 Q. I just wondered about that because I wondered whether,
21 as the Mother Superior, you would have ultimate
22 responsibility within the establishment for the
23 children.

24 A. No. No, the responsibility was with the sister in
25 charge of the group. My whole reason for being there

1 was to close and move us out of Smyllum.

2 Q. I think at that time you've said there were four
3 separate groups still in operation, is that right?

4 A. Yes, as far as I can remember, there were four.

5 Q. And these four groups were being managed by a particular
6 sister?

7 A. A sister, yes.

8 Q. So there were four sisters for four groups?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. To whom were these four sisters answerable?

11 A. Well, they would be answerable to me for their community
12 life and their living, but, I would presume too, the
13 social workers would be dealing with the actual children
14 and the moving of the children. I had nothing to do
15 with that.

16 Q. Was that then a change from the set-up before you got
17 there? Because we have heard in evidence, sister, that
18 ultimately in relation to the care of the children the
19 Mother Superior would be responsible within the confines
20 of Smyllum.

21 A. Well, my reason for going there was to, you know, close
22 the house and the care of the elderly sisters.
23 I presume that the sister in charge of each group with
24 the social worker dealt with the children and the
25 movement of the children. I had nothing to do with

1 that.

2 Q. So far as matters such as discipline would be concerned

3 then, would you know anything about what was happening

4 in connection with discipline within Smyllum?

5 A. No, I don't remember anything like that.

6 Q. You wouldn't know anything about that?

7 A. No, no.

8 LADY SMITH: If it had been the case that a sister was

9 abusing children and that became known, would she be

10 disciplined within the community?

11 A. Oh, of course.

12 LADY SMITH: How?

13 A. Well, I have no experience of that happening.

14 LADY SMITH: I appreciate that that's your position, but you

15 do seem to be able to tell us something about the way

16 the structures within the order were working at that

17 time. You have told us each of the remaining units had

18 a sister in charge of the unit.

19 A. Yes.

20 LADY SMITH: Let's just think for a moment about a scenario

21 where one of those sisters abuses a child and it becomes

22 known; what happens to her?

23 A. Not having had that experience ...

24 LADY SMITH: Would it have been for you to do something

25 about it?

1 A. If I'd heard anything very serious, I would have to get
2 in touch with our superiors in Mill Hill to ask what was
3 the procedure now.

4 LADY SMITH: That would seem to make sense because it would
5 need to be escalated within the community for decisions
6 to be taken about how she should be dealt with.

7 A. Yes.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

9 MR MacAULAY: Coming back to the matter of discipline, do
10 I take it then, sister, from what you've said, that no
11 child was sent to you for any form of discipline during
12 your time over this period?

13 A. No. No.

14 Q. I think we've heard that Smyllum closed in about 1981;
15 is that correct?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Were you there for that period of time?

18 A. I was there for the closure, yes.

19 Q. That's about 2 years?

20 A. It's 2 years. That's all I was there, yes.

21 Q. Did you see the children within Smyllum?

22 A. Well, they came to -- as far as I can remember, they
23 came to the chapel on the Sunday morning. As far as
24 I can remember. I remember one Christmas, going round
25 probably to wish them a happy Christmas and I couldn't

1 believe the amount of toys and goods and things that
2 they'd had. I remember that stuck in my mind, how well
3 off they were at Christmastime with all the things that
4 they had given to them. But other than that, my time
5 was taken up moving and I had another job that took me
6 round Scotland.

7 Q. Right.

8 LADY SMITH: Sorry, what was the other job?

9 A. I was on the council so I had to visit other houses in
10 Scotland.

11 LADY SMITH: That was the Provincial Council, was it?

12 A. Yes.

13 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

14 MR MacAULAY: I think when your statement was being taken
15 from you, sister, a number of allegations that have been
16 made against the Daughters of Charity were put to you;
17 is that right? You weren't being blamed personally, but
18 allegations were mentioned as to what the regimes had
19 been possibly like at Smyllum.

20 For example, if I take you to paragraph 63 of your
21 statement, at page 1039 -- take your time. It's on
22 page 1039, paragraph 63. There's a heading there
23 "Practices/regime". Do you see that heading?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. I'll read this out to you:

1 "I understand that the inquiry has information about
2 practices and regimes which are said to have been taking
3 place at Smyllum over the years, like discipline for
4 bed-wetting, children having to put the soiled sheets on
5 their head, children being force-fed, children being
6 beaten, including severe beatings. I wasn't aware of
7 any of these things when I was there, nothing. It's
8 insane to me, all this. If these kinds of things did
9 happen, of course I would accept they were abusive."

10 A. I don't remember like that at all.

11 Q. No, no, I understand that --

12 LADY SMITH: That's not what you're being asked, sister.

13 It's your observation that if those things happened to
14 a child, you accepted that they would have been abusive.
15 That's all Mr MacAulay is interested in talking to you
16 about.

17 A. Of course, yes.

18 MR MacAULAY: I understand your position, sister, that you
19 didn't witness anything like this at all.

20 A. No.

21 Q. From what you said, you really had nothing to do with
22 children or discipline and that aspect of the learning
23 of Smyllum.

24 A. No.

25 Q. You took nothing to do with that?

1 A. No, no.

2 Q. Can I just look at an exchange of correspondence with
3 you then, sister. This first letter I want you to look
4 at is DSV.001.001.3893. Again, it'll come on the
5 screen. There's a bit of a delay, but it'll be there.

6 (Pause)

7 We are looking at a copy letter dated
8 9 November 1979. Do you see that, sister? If we can
9 move up a bit, we can get the date.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. It's addressed to -- it says:

12 "Dear Father Gibbons."

13 That's been blanked out, but that's Father Gibbons
14 whom you've mentioned. You can see it's in connection
15 with Smyllum; do you see that, sister?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. If you look towards the bottom, can you see that it
18 bears to have been sent by the Provincial: "yours
19 sincerely" and if we move down a bit the Provincial is
20 mentioned.

21 If I take you to the second paragraph, do we read:

22 "Regretfully, I have to tell you that it finally
23 became obvious to us at our last Council meeting that,
24 quite apart from uncertainty concerning local authority
25 policy, our lack of childcare personnel does not allow

1 us to maintain our present commitments and leaves us no
2 option but to withdraw completely from Smyllum."

3 Do you see that?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. So this was what was being put forward by the order to
6 Father Gibbons as to why it was appropriate to withdraw
7 from Smyllum?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Is that correct, sister?

10 A. Well, that must have happened, yes. Yes.

11 Q. If we move on to Father Gibbons' reply, that's at
12 DSV.001.001.5638.

13 A. Will this come up?

14 Q. It will come up, I hope.

15 (Pause)

16 So we're now looking at a letter that's dated
17 21 November 1979; you'll see that?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And it appears to be addressed to Sister Joan Dwyer, the
20 Provincial.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. It begins by saying:

23 "Thank you very much for your letter of 9 November
24 and its information regarding your Council's decision on
25 the future of Smyllum."

1 He goes on to say:

2 "As you can imagine, I feel deep regret not only
3 at the passing of such an establishment but at the fact
4 that fewer Sisters of Charity will now be working in the
5 field of childcare in Scotland."

6 We can see he signed the letter, so that is
7 Father Gibbons acknowledging the fact that the sisters
8 were going to withdraw from Smyllum?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And I think when we look at that letter, move towards
11 the -- yes.

12 Sister, one thing I want to raise with you relates
13 to records. No doubt you can appreciate that the
14 records of a child's existence at a place like Smyllum
15 would be of importance to that particular child.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Would you acknowledge that? Because such children quite
18 often want to get some insight into their past,
19 particularly when that past has involved being in a home
20 such as Smyllum. You understand that?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. What steps did you take to preserve records of children
23 that may have been in existence at Smyllum?

24 A. As far as I can remember, a book of records was brought
25 down to St Catherine's, the house we went to, and then,

1 as far as I know, went to Mill Hill, our provincial
2 house.

3 Q. When you say a book --

4 A. As far as I know, it ...

5 Q. Can I say this: the inquiry has recovered from the
6 Daughters of Charity admission books, for example,
7 indicating that children were admitted, when they were
8 admitted and, in most cases, which local authority was
9 responsible for that admission.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. These books have been recovered. What I'm interested in
12 is what -- first of all, can I ask you, what records
13 were there when you went to Smyllum to close it down in
14 respect of children?

15 A. I can only remember a large book being brought down to
16 St Catherine's and we kept it there until it was
17 taken -- that's all I can remember about it.

18 LADY SMITH: Can I just ask you a couple of things. Is this
19 St Catherine's in Lanark?

20 A. In Lanark.

21 LADY SMITH: When you say "down", that's from Smyllum --

22 A. Into the town. We had a house renovated there to remove
23 us into.

24 LADY SMITH: But that was, I take it, in 1981 that you moved
25 there.

1 A. Yes.

2 LADY SMITH: Going back to when you arrived in 1979, did you
3 take over the room that had been used by the previous
4 sister superior?

5 A. Yes, I presume so. I can see the room now.

6 LADY SMITH: What can you remember, if anything, about any
7 facilities for storage that were in that room: filing
8 cabinets, shelves, piles of papers, anything of that
9 sort?

10 A. No. No. I can't remember anything about that, only the
11 room that I --

12 LADY SMITH: Was there an administration office?

13 A. There was a small one, yes, a very small one that one of
14 the elderly sisters did the books in, the accounts in.
15 A very small --

16 LADY SMITH: Think carefully and tell us what you can
17 remember about what it contained.

18 A. Oh ... I can only see her sitting at her desk with
19 a cupboard beside her. That's all.

20 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

21 MR MacAULAY: Who was responsible for the preservation of
22 any records that may have been at Smyllum when it came
23 to close?

24 A. I really can't remember.

25 Q. Would it not be yourself, sister, as the person in

1 charge?

2 A. I only ... I only remember this little office where one
3 of the sisters, who was quite elderly, did the accounts.
4 But my responsibility was closing the house and moving
5 the sisters, the five sisters that I was responsible
6 for. They were all elderly, they were my
7 responsibility, and my desire to get them comfortably
8 rehoused -- but I just left the children to the
9 responsibility of the sisters and social workers.

10 Q. I understand that. I'm really focusing on any records
11 that may have been kept at Smyllum in connection with
12 the children. Can you help me? If it wasn't you, who
13 was responsible for the preservation of any such
14 records, then --

15 A. No.

16 Q. -- who was responsible?

17 A. I really can't remember unless the sister before me
18 had -- but I don't, I honestly don't remember, except
19 that this large book came down to St Catherine's and
20 then it was taken down -- it was sent down to Mill Hill
21 to our provincial house. But I really have no record at
22 all of, you know, an account of each children or
23 anything like that.

24 LADY SMITH: You said a moment ago you remembered an older
25 sister doing accounts in this administration office.

1 A. Yes. She was quite an elderly sister and she seemed to
2 have done them for quite a few years. She'd been there
3 in Smyllum for a good many years.

4 LADY SMITH: And you were there for 2 years?

5 A. Two years.

6 LADY SMITH: During that period, there would have been
7 income coming in from Local Authorities, particularly
8 Strathclyde; would that be right?

9 A. Yes.

10 LADY SMITH: So was she keeping records of what was being
11 paid for the care of children at Smyllum?

12 A. Yes. She must have done because I had no -- I didn't do
13 anything like that.

14 LADY SMITH: Handwriting it into a book, a ledger of some
15 sort?

16 A. Possibly, yes.

17 LADY SMITH: What happened to them, her ledgers?

18 A. I'm presuming it all went to Mill Hill, to the
19 provincial house.

20 MR MacAULAY: When you say "you presume", you've told us
21 about the -- I think you're talking about a book. When
22 you say a book, is it one book you have in mind?

23 A. Yes. As far as I can remember, it was left in
24 a cupboard. My whole being was to clear Smyllum of
25 furniture and everything. That was my whole

1 responsibility, to get us out of this huge big building
2 where there were only the few sisters in it, to take us
3 all down to the house or take us to Lanark, to
4 St Catherine's. It's going back nearly 40 years to try
5 and remember.

6 Q. You did agree with me, sister, that records are
7 important.

8 A. I know.

9 Q. Particularly in the circumstances we're looking at now
10 where children have spent -- some children -- many years
11 in a place like Smyllum, they want to know what their
12 backgrounds are. That's why I'm pressing you on this
13 because it can be of some importance as to --

14 A. I certainly did nothing or had nothing to do with the
15 records of the children coming in and I don't know --
16 except I remember one time, I think it was
17 Father Gibbons came in to look up a name and produced
18 this book. That's all I remember about any records at
19 all.

20 Q. So do I take it from that that so far as you're
21 concerned essentially the only records that were there
22 was this book that --

23 A. This book. That's all I can remember.

24 Q. And you saw no records --

25 A. No.

1 Q. -- relating to each individual child, for example?

2 A. No.

3 Q. That's the --

4 A. No, none.

5 MR MacAULAY: Very well, sister. That's all I need to ask
6 you today. Thank you very much indeed for coming to
7 give your evidence and telling us about the final days
8 of Smyllum.

9 No questions have been submitted to me, my Lady, and
10 I don't know if there are to be any further questions.

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. Let me check. Are there
12 any outstanding applications for questions of this
13 witness?

14 Sister, thank you very much for coming along today
15 to help us understand the part you played in the life of
16 Smyllum. I appreciate it was for a limited period at
17 the end and I'm not going to make any apologies for
18 pressing you about the records -- that's without making
19 any criticism of you for not having a memory of them,
20 but I'm sure you appreciate how important it is for
21 people to get their hands on any shred of any record
22 that relates to them.

23 A. Yes.

24 LADY SMITH: Perhaps through you, I could take this
25 opportunity again to encourage the order not to be

1 backward in coming forward if they find anything
2 relating to a child at Smyllum.

3 A. Yes.

4 LADY SMITH: But now I'm able to let you go. Thank you very
5 much.

6 (The witness withdrew)

7 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

8 MR MacAULAY: The next witness, my Lady, is Bernard Traynor.
9 We can start now or we can have the mid-afternoon break
10 at this point.

11 LADY SMITH: We will need to have a break at some point.
12 I wonder if it's better to take the break now and then
13 get straight through Mr Traynor's evidence without
14 taking a break, perhaps.

15 MR MacAULAY: I think that makes sense, my Lady.

16 LADY SMITH: Let's do that.

17 (2.42 pm)

18 (A short break)

19 (2.52 pm)

20 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, can I then call the next witness,
21 Bernard Traynor.

22 BERNARD TRAYNOR (sworn)

23 Questions from MR MacAULAY

24 MR MacAULAY: Good afternoon, Mr Traynor.

25 A. Good afternoon.

1 Q. Can I ask you please to confirm that you were born in
2 1953?

3 A. I was, yes.

4 Q. I don't need your exact date of birth, but that's the
5 year of your birth.

6 I want to put a document on the screen. This is the
7 statement you've provided to the inquiry. You'll see it
8 on the screen; it's also, I think, in the red folder in
9 front of you. It's WIT.001.001.3203.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. I'll wait until it's on the screen before I ask you
12 about it. Can we read on the first paragraph that
13 we can read:

14 "This is the statement of Bernard Traynor which
15 I make pursuant to a notice dated 13 December 2017,
16 pursuant to Section 21(2) of the Inquiries Act 2005."

17 That perhaps indicates the background to how you
18 came to provide the statement; is that right?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. If we move on to the final page, page 3205, it's the
21 third page of your statement. Can you perhaps confirm
22 for me, Mr Traynor, that you have signed the statement
23 and you did so on 3 January 2018?

24 A. That's right.

25 Q. I think the position was that the inquiry had hoped to

1 meet you and take a statement from you in the way that
2 the inquiry has done with other witnesses. Indeed,
3 I think a date was suggested for that, for 5 December of
4 last year, but for whatever reason, you didn't seem to
5 have received that correspondence; is that correct?

6 A. Yes, I never got it. There was no card left in my
7 carrier bag -- we have a strange arrangement where the
8 postman won't come anywhere near the house because of
9 the dogs, so we have a carrier bag on the gatepost. The
10 mail goes in the carrier bag and when there's anything
11 to be signed for, he puts a red card in. I never, ever
12 got a red card, so I never knew I had to go to the post
13 office to collect a letter, which apparently then was
14 returned here as it hadn't been picked up.

15 Q. In any event, the position was that because of that lack
16 of communication, if I can just put it in that neutral
17 way, the position is that the inquiry, in order to get
18 a statement from you, invoked this section of the Act.

19 A. Right, okay. Yes.

20 Q. And this document is one that you've provided to assist
21 the inquiry?

22 A. Yes.

23 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, I had, I think -- perhaps I should
24 mention that although I'm about to ask Mr Traynor about
25 convictions, and these are clearly matters that he is

1 obliged to answer, I don't want to stray into matters
2 that may otherwise prejudice him, so it may be that
3 a warning in relation to these matters might be
4 appropriate.

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

6 Mr Traynor, you have heard what Mr MacAulay's just
7 explained, that it is not his intention to ask you about
8 matters of which you have not been convicted, but the
9 way evidence goes, sometimes things can end up being
10 referred to, not least by the witness, that go beyond
11 the intention of the questioner.

12 It is important you understand that although this is
13 a public inquiry and not a trial, you still have a right
14 not to incriminate yourself. If you tell us that you
15 were in some way involved in abuse of children, you will
16 be asked questions about that, but you do not have to
17 answer them unless it was something that related to
18 matters of which you have already been convicted.

19 A. Yes.

20 LADY SMITH: But if the subject matter is a matter of which
21 you have not been convicted, you do not have to answer
22 the questions, but if you do do so, there is a recording
23 taking place all the time during the inquiry hearings,
24 your answers will be included in that recording, and
25 they would be available for any future proceedings,

1 including criminal proceedings.

2 A. Yes.

3 LADY SMITH: Do you understand that?

4 A. I do, yes.

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

6 MR MacAULAY: I'm obliged, my Lady.

7 Can I then put this document on the screen for you,

8 Mr Traynor. This is DSV.001.001.5628.

9 (Pause)

10 It'll turn up very soon.

11 (Pause)

12 Would my Lady give me a moment?

13 LADY SMITH: Certainly.

14 (Pause)

15 MR MacAULAY: I'm sorry about that, but the document is not

16 apparently fully on the system. So what I'll do for

17 you, Mr Traynor, is just provide you with a hard copy of

18 this document.

19 A. Right. (Handed)

20 Q. So you will see that this document is headed:

21 "The Crown Court at Newcastle upon Tyne."

22 Do you see that?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. It's a certificate of conviction concerning Bernard

25 James Traynor. It gives your full name and also your

1 date of birth. Just to read on:

2 "... who, on 6 June 1995, in this Crown Court was,
3 upon his own confession, convicted on indictment ..."

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And it goes on to say:

6 "... of indecent assault of a male person contrary
7 to section 15 of the Sexual Offences Act 1956, times
8 six."

9 Do you see that?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Is it the case, Mr Traynor, that you pled guilty to six
12 charges or counts of indecent assault on that day?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. If I can take you to the statement of the offence, the
15 reference is DSV.001.001.5631. Does this document set
16 out in particular the six counts to which you pled
17 guilty?

18 (Pause)

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. That is in fact on the screen in front of you. Taking
21 this shortly, is it the case then, having looked at the
22 document, that the indictment against you related to
23 indecent assaults on four brothers over a period of
24 time?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And these brothers, these children at the time were
2 in the care of St Vincent's in Newcastle; is that
3 correct?

4 A. If I remember rightly, AAH AAG and AAF
5 were; AAI wasn't.

6 Q. Indeed, we don't want the names of the individuals.

7 A. Sorry.

8 LADY SMITH: We don't need the names of any individuals --

9 A. I apologise.

10 LADY SMITH: -- who were in the charges of which you were
11 convicted, or indeed any charges.

12 MR MacAULAY: You've been given a document which is to the
13 front of the red folder, Mr Traynor. If you look at
14 that, where the individuals that might be concerned here
15 have been given the pseudonyms --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- "David", "Jimmy" and "Michael", and you can see on
18 the other side of the document their names, that you
19 will recognise.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. My understanding of the indictment is that the charges
22 to which you pled guilty covered a period from
23 11 December 1970 to 12 December 1979; is that correct?

24 A. No, it's not correct.

25 Q. Can we just look at the charges then? If you look at

1 charge 2 on page 5631 -- we can go on to the screen now,
2 I think. Charge 2 sets out the particulars of the
3 offence that tells us:

4 "On a day between the 11th day of December 1970 and
5 the 12th day of December 1972 ..."

6 A. I don't know how important it is, but the dates are
7 wrong because on 11 December 1970, I was only 17, so
8 I was still doing A levels. I wasn't ... My
9 involvement with the children's care home happened after
10 my 20th birthday.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. So the dates are wrong. But I don't know if that's ...

13 LADY SMITH: These have been provided to us as the charges
14 to which you pled guilty, Mr Traynor.

15 A. Yes, I know. It's probably getting too complicated.

16 MR MacAULAY: Not really. These are the dates in relation
17 to charges to which you pled guilty, but however that
18 may be, you're saying it's a narrower time frame than
19 the time frame I've put to you?

20 A. Yes. It is a narrower time frame.

21 Q. What time frame would you like to work with?

22 A. Well, I think -- well, I don't think, I know. My dad
23 died in January 1972. I started working -- my senior
24 training at Ushaw -- the placement as part of my senior
25 training started round about October/November 1972.

- 1 Q. 1972?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. And what about the end date that we've provided you
4 with, 1979?
- 5 A. Again, I was ordained in 1977, so would have had no
6 involvement after 1977. But I was ordained deacon in
7 1976 and I was in a parish in Tarlow(?) in 1975 so
8 I would have no involvement from 1975.
- 9 Q. So your time frame then, just to be clear, is 1972 to
10 1975?
- 11 A. Yes. Sunderland won the FA Cup in 1973 and I do
12 remember that, definitely.
- 13 Q. I'll come back to the charges shortly, but can I then go
14 back to your own statement, Mr Traynor. This is at
15 WIT.001.001.3203. At paragraph 3 you set out some
16 background information. You go on to tell us that
17 between the ages of 11 and 16 you were continually
18 abused yourself; is that right?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. Are you pointing there to a family member or to somebody
21 else?
- 22 A. It's a family member. I'm not pointing to anybody, but
23 it was a family member.
- 24 Q. I don't need the details, but you also go on to say that
25 you also sustained abuse at your secondary school.

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. That abuse, are you pointing to that -- what relevance
3 are you seeking to draw from that background?
- 4 A. I'm drawing the relevance as to why I left home at such
5 an early age and why I went to seminary for the first
6 2 years to do A levels. I just needed to be away from
7 secondary school and away from home. I wanted to be in
8 an environment that I thought was safer.
- 9 Q. You tell us in the next paragraph that you went to
10 St Aidan's Grammar School and that was a school that was
11 run under the auspices of the Christian Brothers; is
12 that correct?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 LADY SMITH: Just let me check something you just said. Are
15 you saying you went to the seminary when you were 16 and
16 you finished your education while you were there?
- 17 A. Yes, I went to seminary at 16 and did A levels for
18 2 years. I don't think it was possible to start
19 theological training before you were 18.
- 20 LADY SMITH: Is that a seminary that also provided
21 theological training?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 LADY SMITH: So you could go on and become a trainee priest
24 in the same place?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
- 2 MR MacAULAY: Then you tell us that so far as the priesthood
3 training was concerned, you resided at the college from
4 September 1969 to 1977; is that correct?
- 5 A. Yes, but 1969 to 1971 was A levels rather than training
6 for the priesthood. It was just doing A levels in
7 a semi-religious environment.
- 8 Q. In any event, you were ordained in 1977?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. You then provide us with some information as to what
11 positions you held after you had been ordained.
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. If we move on then, Mr Traynor, to paragraph 10, you're
14 providing us there with information about what your
15 primary objective has been in the years that have
16 elapsed since the period of your offending; is that
17 correct?
- 18 A. Say the question again, sorry?
- 19 Q. You begin by saying that:
- 20 "[Your] primary objective throughout the many years
21 that have elapsed since the period of [your] offending
22 has been to lead a sober and upright life."
- 23 Is that correct?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. You provide some information in the next few sentences

1 and you go on to say:

2 "But in any event, whatever were the proclivities of
3 the man who was Bernard Traynor, the trainee priest of
4 the 1970s, such form no part of the Bernard Traynor who
5 would swear to the truth of this statement."

6 Do you see that?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. When you talk about "the proclivities of the man", what
9 do you mean by that?

10 A. I believe everybody's dysfunctional to a greater or
11 lesser extent. I was extremely dysfunctional probably
12 from the age of 13 until -- I've had two ... Two ...
13 I've been into two rehabilitation centres: I was at
14 Our Lady of Victories, Brownhill, and much more
15 successfully I was at Castle Craig at Blyth Bridge under
16 Dr Margaret McCann. I am a chronic alcoholic, but I'm
17 a recovering alcoholic and have been a chronic
18 alcoholic -- I now know I have been a chronic alcoholic
19 since I was 13. At 13 I would drink to blackout.

20 Castle Craig helped me put my life back in order so
21 that my dysfunctionality is manageable. So that's
22 really what I mean, where I would describe my life as
23 a kind of -- a bit like a whole load of radiotherapy
24 beams in a locked cage, bouncing off the wall and
25 bouncing into each other, totally out of control. I'm

1 now sufficiently aware of what I need to do to stay
2 sober to make sure that my sobriety remains my greatest
3 achievement and my most precious possession.

4 Q. You confessed, pled guilty to a number of charges --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- involving the sexual abuse of boys.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. In particular, you came into contact with these boys
9 because these boys were resident at St Vincent's in
10 Newcastle; is that right?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Were you attracted to boys at that time?

13 A. I suppose in essence you would say that I must have
14 been, otherwise I wouldn't have done what I did.

15 Q. That's why I asked about proclivities. That's why
16 I focused on proclivities. Was one of those
17 proclivities that, at least at that stage in your life,
18 you were attracted to boys?

19 A. Yes, because I think I was subjected to -- I think in
20 jargon speak what they refer to as repressed
21 adolescence. I never had my own adolescence because of
22 what happened to me at home and at school and I was
23 seeking the adolescence that I never had.

24 Q. So did your involvement then with St Vincent's allow you
25 to, as it were, develop this attraction to boys?

- 1 A. I can see why you would say that. In hindsight,
2 I genuinely don't think it was my intention in wanting
3 to go there in the first place. But in hindsight, it
4 did allow me a certain licence and freedom.
- 5 Q. Okay. What you're saying, I think, is that at least
6 initially you didn't target St Vincent's, but once
7 St Vincent's became accessible to you --
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. -- then you were able to target certain boys; is that
10 a fair summary of your position?
- 11 A. Yes. I didn't target the placement, the placement
12 offered ...
- 13 Q. Yes. Can I then look at your involvement with
14 St Vincent's, Mr Traynor. You've already, I think,
15 indicated that you would not have been involved with
16 St Vincent's in 1970, notwithstanding the terms of the
17 charges, but from about 1972 onwards; is that right?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. What age were you at that time?
- 20 A. Well, I was born in -- I can't say when I was born.
- 21 Q. You'd be 20/21?
- 22 A. Yes. 20.
- 23 Q. How did it come about that you got involved with
24 St Vincent's?
- 25 A. As part of the -- I don't know how much detail you need.

1 As part of the training for the priesthood, you would do
2 theology, you would do philosophy, you would do pastoral
3 studies and you would do what were called pastoral
4 placements. So for example, I did some time with
5 Sunderland Probation Service because Sunderland was my
6 home town. I did work in various kinds of aspects of
7 church, pastoral life in various organisations.

8 I worked in the geriatric hospital. The call went out
9 that they were looking for volunteers who were willing
10 to give up their weekends to help at St Vincent's in
11 Newcastle.

12 So the call went out and I responded to the call.
13 There were probably at any one time -- there will have
14 been about ... It would be between 10 and 15 people.

15 Q. So when you went to St Vincent's were there other
16 students with you when you went there?

17 A. Yes, we used to go out in the minibus on a Saturday
18 morning, get dropped at the various homes in Newcastle,
19 and then on a Sunday night the minibus would come round
20 and pick everyone up and take them back to the seminary.

21 Q. So can I understand then what your commitment was to
22 St Vincent's over this period that we're looking at.

23 A. Well, during term time it would be weekends, Saturday
24 mid-morning, 11.30, to Sunday evening, 7 or 8.

25 Q. Did you have a room to yourself when you were there?

- 1 A. Yes. We would be -- it would allow the paid staff to
2 take time off. So we would be in the role of house
3 parents.
- 4 Q. Would that allow you to have really unsupervised access
5 to the boys?
- 6 A. Yes. In hindsight, wrong, I accept that. Totally,
7 totally wrong.
- 8 Q. But it was the reality at the time?
- 9 A. Yes. The cynic in me would say we were -- it was a way
10 of allowing the staff to have some time off and we took
11 the responsibility of being a house parent without any
12 proper training and certainly no proper supervision.
- 13 Q. Was it that arrangement that allowed you to have access
14 to particular boys?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. And it was that arrangement that allowed you to abuse
17 particular boys?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. You've identified the period 1972 to 1975 --
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. -- because you have narrowed down the period I think we
22 saw on the indictment. Are we dealing with that period
23 then when we're looking at the abuse that you committed?
- 24 A. At St Vincent's?
- 25 Q. At St Vincent's, yes.

1 A. Yes. I've tried to rack my brains. I don't think
2 I could have been there after 1975.

3 Q. But would you have appeared then to the boys like
4 a member of staff because of your commitment at
5 St Vincent's?

6 A. Would they have thought I was a member of staff?

7 Q. Yes.

8 A. Yes. Yes.

9 Q. I think part of the evidence we've heard is that you
10 were part of the structure.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Would that be a fair description of --

13 A. Yes. I mean, yeah, because you'd be asked to drive the
14 minibus -- and I think when I first started going,
15 I think Sunday Mass was in the home itself and then that
16 arrangement ended and we would walk to the local church.
17 So you would be in charge of the crocodile queue that
18 walked to church. You were just in loco parentis,
19 I suppose.

20 Q. What was your understanding as to the reasons why
21 children were being accommodated at St Vincent's?

22 A. Again, at the time we didn't really know. We were never
23 given any kind of background information. I genuinely
24 believed that when we first went they were all actual
25 orphans because I think it used to be called the

1 Orphanage Society or ... I genuinely -- at the
2 beginning, I thought all these people were people that
3 didn't have mams and dads.

4 Q. Did you think that they were particularly vulnerable as
5 a group?

6 A. Again, am I looking with hindsight or at the time?

7 Q. Well, let's look at the time first and then we'll
8 perhaps --

9 A. I didn't think at the time that they were vulnerable
10 because they looked really happy. But with hindsight,
11 I could see that they weren't happy. But they seemed
12 to -- at the time they seemed to enjoy life. They
13 didn't -- I mean, I wasn't trained in any way, shape or
14 form. They didn't present to me as anyone who was
15 withdrawn, suffering from personality disorders, or ...

16 I mean, at the time, as a 14-year-old, I thought
17 I was normal. Now, as I look back, as a 60-year-old to
18 when I was 14, I think, God, you were anything but
19 normal.

20 Q. Looking back to the boys who were at St Vincent's,
21 at the time then you didn't consider them to be
22 particularly vulnerable because they were orphans and
23 because of the fact that they were in a home, for
24 example?

25 A. I think at the time I wanted to ... It sounds

1 really ... I just wanted to help them be happy,
2 I think.

3 Q. Sorry, I didn't quite catch that.

4 A. At the time my motivating force was probably I was
5 helping them to be happy. I was allowing them to go to
6 the swimming pool, I was allowing them to go shopping
7 when the ordinary staff -- sorry, that sounds bad. When
8 the regular staff were having time off or a weekend off,
9 I was going in and enabling the home to function.
10 I think that was the view of all of us when we set off
11 on a Saturday morning. We were helping life continue
12 in the homes, so the staff would have time away.

13 Q. Well, can I just look at the charges?

14 A. Excuse me.

15 Q. You have indicated you may need a break. Just indicate
16 if you do.

17 A. I will do.

18 LADY SMITH: We can do that and do help yourself to water if
19 you need it.

20 A. I need to keep drinking water because of the medication
21 but I will ...

22 LADY SMITH: And I know it's quite warm in here today.

23 Just help me with one thing. You said a few minutes
24 ago that you regarded yourself as being in loco parentis
25 in relation to the children, but that's not about just

1 helping children to enjoy themselves, is it? It's to do
2 with protecting children and being able to be trusted
3 with children.

4 A. Yes. I think I was over-grandising (sic) myself,
5 I think.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

7 MR MacAULAY: Can I just look --

8 A. I think it's a term you hear quite often on the telly
9 and you pick up the sort of terms on the telly without
10 really understanding what they mean.

11 LADY SMITH: Parental duties are a serious business.

12 A. Yes.

13 MR MacAULAY: Can I take you to the charges then,
14 Mr Traynor, and again I'll put this on the screen
15 hopefully. It's DSV.001.001.5631.

16 A. Yes, I've got it here, yes.

17 Q. We'll wait until we have it on the screen. (Pause)

18 I think this may have been on the screen before.

19 (Pause)

20 So let's look at them in turn. Let's look at the
21 first charge. The charge is, and we're given
22 a particular time frame, that you indecently assaulted
23 a particular person. The name has been blanked out.
24 For present purposes, if you look at your key, as it
25 were, with the pseudonyms and the witness's name, you're

1 looking at the pseudonym "David" --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- for this person. Do you remember this person?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. So far as this particular charge is concerned, can you

6 tell us what was involved here?

7 A. It was improper touching, encouraging him to remove his

8 clothing, particularly his trousers and underpants.

9 Q. Was that the extent of it or was there more than that?

10 A. I can't remember with absolute clarity. I think there

11 will have been possibly an attempt at masturbation.

12 Q. By whom on whom?

13 A. By me on David.

14 Q. Was that once or more than once? What was the position?

15 A. That was once.

16 Q. Okay. Do you remember what age David was at that time?

17 A. I don't. I think he was the oldest sibling. I would

18 hazard a guess that he was sort of 16-ish. I can't

19 remember his -- I know he was the older one.

20 Q. Then if we look at the second charge --

21 A. I know he wasn't at St Vincent's at the time.

22 Q. You're clear about that?

23 A. Yes, because there was another home across the other

24 side of Newcastle. The name of that one, I've

25 completely forgotten. It was either Akenside or

1 Lesbury, something like that.

2 Q. Can I say the reason that the inquiry is interested in
3 these particular children is because their care was
4 arranged in Scotland, so although they were being looked
5 after in England, that's why we have an interest in
6 these particular children.

7 If we look then at the second charge, you haven't
8 been given the key for this particular individual, but
9 I think you know there were a number of brothers; you've
10 been given three names and I think you can work out this
11 would be the fourth name.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. What about this charge? It covers the period
14 December 1970 -- I know you challenge that, but up to
15 1972.

16 A. This one I do remember and he had started working for
17 the Rescue Society. It was 16.

18 Q. What was the nature of the offence?

19 A. This was an attempt at masturbation -- by me on him.

20 Q. The next charge, again it's the same person; can you
21 help me with that one?

22 A. In that case, 2 might have preceded 3. There was one
23 clumsy fumbled attempt and one more serious attempt.

24 Q. Can we then look at the fourth charge? This involved
25 the person whose name is Michael. That also, I think,

1 covers -- it's the same person in the fifth charge.
2 What about these charges?

3 A. Again, I think these were -- I think all my offending
4 behaviour would follow a pattern. I think on these
5 occasions I was helping to bath the person referred to.
6 So he'd have been completely naked and I would have been
7 soaping and rubbing and massaging and trying to
8 stimulate an erection.

9 Q. Do you suggest that's the same behaviour for both the
10 charges?

11 A. I think ... I think my pattern of behaviour that I've
12 come to identify is that it would be clumsy and fumbled
13 and an attempt and then suddenly withdrawing at the
14 critical point. I mean, I'm trying not to use offensive
15 language. Stopping -- hating myself and stopping it
16 progressing, if you see what I mean.

17 Q. This witness has given evidence to the inquiry and has
18 spoken about the events that he remembers. Can I just
19 put that evidence in front of you. The transcript
20 begins at -- it'll come on the screen --
21 TRN.001.002.1039. The witness begins on that page --
22 if we move up to the top and I'll get the transcript
23 number that we need for the transcript. It's 1039.
24 If we move on to page 90, the transcript reference we
25 need is 1128.

1 At line number 13, if we move down a bit, he's asked
2 the question:

3 "Question: That was later on, of course, but what
4 happened to you in connection with sexual abuse when you
5 were at St Vincent's?"

6 And he answers:

7 "Answer: He was a trainee priest called
8 Bernard Traynor. He used to come into my room on
9 a regular basis. It started off -- he used to just feel
10 us. Then it started -- he tried to masturbate us and he
11 would do it on a regular basis -- it started off in it
12 the caravan, actually, in Scarborough. He done it there
13 and then he just continued doing it when he got home."

14 So far, is that a correct description of some of
15 your behaviour?

16 A. I don't remember the caravan incident. I don't remember
17 it happening in the caravan. I don't think ... I don't
18 recognise myself in that one. I recognise myself that
19 I would get so far and then would panic myself and stop.

20 Q. What about his suggestion that this was -- that this was
21 a regular thing? Do you accept that?

22 A. If he feels that -- the nightmare for him is that he ...

23 Q. Before you go on to look at his position, can I just
24 understand your position, Mr Traynor: do you accept what
25 he says, that this sort of behaviour happened on

1 a regular basis with him?

2 A. I would say I don't think it happened regularly, but it
3 happened often.

4 Q. Very well. He's asked what age he was when this
5 started, and he goes on to tell us:
6 "Answer: I would be about 12."

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Would that be correct?

9 A. I think he was older.

10 Q. Okay. On page 91, the next page, 1129, he's asked:
11 "Question: For how long did it go on?
12 "Answer: It went on for the rest of the duration,
13 two/three years, the time I was in St Vincent's."
14 A. I think, as I've explained before, I wasn't there for
15 three years, I was there for two, max.

16 Q. The two might be right.

17 A. Yes.

18 LADY SMITH: Mr Traynor, this boy seems to have been about
19 the age that you were at a period that you tell us you
20 were sexually abused.

21 A. Yes.

22 LADY SMITH: You knew how upsetting that was --

23 A. Yes.

24 LADY SMITH: -- and distressing to be subjected to it. But
25 you were doing to this boy what had happened to you.

1 A. Yes. And I still to this day feel shitty about it.

2 It's abhorrent to me now that I could do that.

3 LADY SMITH: Particularly when you knew what it was like to
4 experience it.

5 A. Yes.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

7 A. I don't in any way feel proud about anything I've done.

8 MR MacAULAY: Can I ask you about the boy, AAF, who's also
9 mentioned on your list.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. There is a charge that also relates to him; I think it's
12 the sixth count on the indictment. If I could just take
13 you again to what AAF said in evidence to the inquiry
14 and get your views on that. That begins at
15 TRN.001.002.1039.

16 (Pause)

17 We're looking at the person whose pseudonym is
18 "Jimmy" on your list, just to let you know who we're
19 talking about. If we begin the transcript at page 1039
20 and if I can take you to page 49. For transcript
21 purposes, if we scroll up to the top, that's 1087.

22 If we look at line number 17, he's asked:

23 "Question: Can I just ask you what happened in
24 connection with being sexually abused?

25 "Answer: We used to go on holiday once a year and

1 in this particular year I was probably about 10 going on
2 11, so my birth was in June, so it was in the summer
3 holidays, so it was about that time. This year we went
4 to a caravan site in Scarborough. It was called
5 Wallace's caravan site."

6 Do you remember going on such trips?

7 A. I do and that was 1973 because that was the year
8 Sunderland won the FA Cup.

9 Q. He goes on to say:

10 "Answer: In the middle weekend my two brothers and
11 myself and two members of staff and a trainee priest at
12 the time who was called Bernard Traynor. We all went to
13 the social club -- and I remember it because I shouldn't
14 have been allowed in, but we managed to tell a few
15 porkies to get me in on my age."

16 Do you remember that?

17 A. That's not the way I remember it. The nun concerned got
18 permission for everybody to go in. We didn't have to
19 tell porkies. She said, "We're a group on holiday, can
20 we bring everybody in so the staff can have a drink?"

21 Q. In any event, he goes on to say at line 7 that he had
22 a pint of shandy and went back to the caravan and:

23 "Answer: In the caravan, the beds, everybody was
24 sharing beds and everybody took turns sharing the bed
25 with Bernard because he was in a double bed, so one day

1 it was whoever it was ..."

2 Is that correct, there was an arrangement whereby
3 people took turns, as it were, to share the double bed
4 with you?

5 A. I can't be absolutely certain. If Jimmy says that,
6 that's probably accurate.

7 Q. He goes on to said:

8 "Answer: This particular day it was my turn to
9 share the bed with him and he just was -- I woke up and
10 he had his hand on my penis, rubbing it. His penis was
11 erect, pressing it up against me."

12 Is that correct?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. He goes on to say:

15 "Answer: I didn't really know what to do. I got
16 up, told him I was going to the toilet or whatever it
17 was, went back -- I had nowhere else to go, so I went
18 back to bed with him. I told him that he was touching
19 us and he said, oh, I didn't know, I was having a wet
20 dream, and at the time I didn't know what a wet dream
21 was."

22 Again, do you remember that sort of conversation?

23 A. Yes, because that was the court case in 1995. But that
24 was the police -- when I was interviewed at this police
25 station.

1 Q. If we look on to what this witness said on page 52, this
2 is on the transcript at page number -- if we scroll up
3 a little bit, please -- 1090. Again, he's discussing
4 you, Mr Traynor, and at line 8 he says:

5 "Answer: Yes. He would say funny things like,
6 'Have you had any wanking competitions at school?' 'Not
7 really, no'."

8 Was there conversations of that kind between
9 yourself and this witness?

10 A. I'm ashamed to say yes.

11 Q. What was the purpose behind that sort of conversation?

12 A. I suppose I was -- pathetic though it sounds, I was
13 wanting to be one of the gang. It does sound really,
14 really pathetic now, but that's what I wanted. I wanted
15 to be in the gang.

16 Q. In any event, Mr Traynor, your position is that you
17 fully accept that you abused these boys?

18 A. Yes. I've never, ever tried to deny it. When I had the
19 conversation with the bishop way back in 1994, I told
20 him that I was guilty of totally, totally inappropriate,
21 irresponsible, stupid behaviour. The bishop said to me
22 at the time that the complainants weren't looking to get
23 me into trouble, they just wanted me to say sorry, and
24 that I did wholeheartedly and I said sorry -- because
25 I still, having read the bit of the statement that the

1 third one sent today, to see the hatred that he still
2 feels about that whole period of his life, it just makes
3 me feel, as I said before, shitty. I hate that aspect
4 of myself and there's nothing I can do and there's
5 nothing I can say other than I am totally, totally
6 sorry.

7 Q. I think you agreed with Lady Smith that you yourself had
8 been sexually abused --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- when you were a boy; is that right?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Both by a family member --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- and were you also abused sexually at school?

15 A. I was raped at school.

16 Q. So you'd have an insight into what impact that sort of
17 behaviour would have on a young person?

18 A. Yes. Yes. I don't think I did it -- because I've
19 examined this over and over and over again. I don't
20 think my mental state was, "I know what impact this is
21 going to have and I'm going to do it".

22 Q. No, I understand that.

23 A. That isn't what I was doing. What I was doing was --
24 I was caught up in something horrible that had a huge
25 impact, but at the time you're not doing it because you

1 know it's going to have a huge impact; you're doing it
2 because you're totally, totally selfish and totally,
3 totally screwed up.

4 Q. When we look at the disposal of your case -- and we can
5 see this on the certificate of conviction, you have it
6 in front of you, we needn't put it on the screen, but on
7 6 June 1995 you are sentenced to a probation order for
8 2 years. That was the disposal?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. If we then go back to your statement, Mr Traynor, I can
11 put it back on the screen, and that's at
12 WIT.001.001.3203.

13 What you tell us in paragraph 5 is what your work
14 involved as a priest and indeed becoming a parish priest
15 in 1994; is that correct?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Then you say that:

18 "In 1994, when my church became aware I was the
19 subject of allegations, which included those in
20 appendix 1 ..."

21 And these are the sort of issues I've been
22 discussing with you:

23 "... I was placed at Our Lady of Victories,
24 Brownhill, Stroud, Gloucestershire, until June 1995
25 when I was sentenced at the Crown Court at Newcastle

1 upon Tyne for the offences outlined in appendix 1."

2 So the position seems to be that when it came to
3 light that these allegations were being made, you were
4 placed in this position, this place in Stroud; is that
5 correct?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. What was the purpose of that?

8 A. The first 3 months were spent trying to address my
9 alcohol addiction. So it was an introduction to the
10 12-step programme of Alcoholics Anonymous in
11 a therapeutic setting. And then, for a year,
12 I undertook the psychosexual therapeutic programme.

13 Q. Was it after that period in Stroud then that your case
14 was dealt with in court?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. This would be material that would be put before the
17 court in mitigation?

18 A. Yes. I don't know if it's any help. I have brought the
19 psychiatric assessment that was prepared for the court.

20 Q. Again, if you want to leave that with the inquiry, we'll
21 copy that and return that to you.

22 A. What I'll do is I'll send you a copy because this is my
23 only copy.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. The court has it.

1 LADY SMITH: To save you sending it, we could copy it before
2 you leave today. It's a matter for you, Mr Traynor,
3 whichever would be more suitable.

4 A. I don't want to leave it. Given that the 5 December
5 letter went astray, I don't want to leave anything.

6 MR MacAULAY: Very well, whatever you wish.

7 But can I put this to you: what happened in relation
8 to you being a priest? You were convicted, the
9 probation order was imposed. What about remaining
10 a priest, what was the position there?

11 A. The court case was 6 June 1995. I stopped functioning
12 as a priest on 6 January 1995, the Feast of the
13 Epiphany. So I didn't function -- functioning as
14 a priest, I didn't say Mass, I didn't hear confessions,
15 I didn't have any public ministry.

16 After the court case in 1995, I left -- well, it
17 took a few weeks to get something sorted, but I left
18 Stroud and I went to work as a yardman in a beer, wines
19 and spirits wholesalers in a place called Leatherhead in
20 Surrey.

21 Q. But what you tell us in your statement is you haven't
22 practised as a priest since these matters came to
23 a head.

24 A. I was in a kind of suspended state, but I was allowed to
25 keep on saying Mass while I was at Our Lady of Victories

1 Brownhill because that was a quasi-religious group.

2 Q. But you have been laicized and that was in 2012?

3 A. It might have been a bit earlier, but I was laicized,

4 yes.

5 LADY SMITH: How long were you allowed to continue saying

6 Mass?

7 A. I wasn't allowed to say Mass at all after the

8 conviction.

9 LADY SMITH: Yes, but before then, you were saying Mass

10 until then, were you?

11 A. Well, I went to Stroud in Easter time of 1994, I think.

12 LADY SMITH: Right.

13 A. Because at that stage ...

14 LADY SMITH: You said earlier that you recalled having

15 a discussion with the bishop. That sounds as though it

16 was a very frank discussion.

17 A. In 1994.

18 LADY SMITH: That was 1994?

19 A. Yes.

20 LADY SMITH: So in 1994, the bishop knew that you were

21 accepting that you had abused children?

22 A. Yes. That's when I left Gateshead.

23 LADY SMITH: I see that, but did the church take any steps

24 to exclude you at that stage?

25 A. No.

1 LADY SMITH: I don't know if it can easily be done, but
2 I would like to go back to Michael's transcript if
3 possible at page 91.

4 (Pause)

5 Don't worry. I can remember the passage that I was
6 going to look at and no doubt Mr MacAulay will recall
7 it. At the foot of that page on to the next page, he
8 talked about not having told anybody that he was being
9 abused by a trainee priest. The reason for that being
10 you would not have dared to say anything about a priest
11 or you would -- and I think he used a gesture that's
12 a bit like slashing his own throat, at the time:

13 "Answer: It would be an end of you because priests
14 were up there and everybody else was down here."

15 Did you not at the time appreciate that you would be
16 regarded as being specially trustworthy by children in
17 the first place but then beyond the possibility of any
18 complaint being made about you because you were
19 a trainee priest?

20 A. No, I didn't, because most weekends driving back, if
21 I was worried about anything, I would be terrified
22 driving back, thinking that in between me driving back
23 to Ushaw and the following Saturday, a complaint would
24 be made. I spent most of my time in fear of that. So
25 I can say quite categorically, no, I never thought I was

1 above ...

2 LADY SMITH: But it's understandable, isn't it, that that is
3 how a child would feel?

4 A. It is totally understandable, but all I know is that
5 I went through a lot of angst.

6 LADY SMITH: You have got it on the screen now. In fact,
7 there's a little bit halfway down page 91 at line 10.
8 He said:

9 "Answer: If I had made a statement against
10 a priest -- I don't expect the people in this room to
11 understand what I'm talking about, like, but I would
12 disappear -- I would just have disappeared, mate. They
13 would have just (indicating), one way or another. They
14 would not let anybody find the truth out."

15 And then at the bottom:

16 "Answer: Oh, you just wouldn't say anything like
17 a priest, like."

18 And I think he goes on to the next page and I ask
19 him:

20 "Question: Why not?"

21 "Answer: Because the priest -- I don't -- they
22 just. In the past there were kids who just disappeared.
23 You'd never see them again."

24 So the message he was at pains to get across was he
25 would have been terrified of saying anything against

1 a priest. It is understandable, isn't it?

2 A. Mm. It is, but I wouldn't -- I've never, ever thought
3 that any child would have disappeared.

4 LADY SMITH: Did you expect, when you spoke to the bishop,
5 that he would ask you to volunteer for laicization at
6 that point?

7 A. I knew I was finished as a priest. I was never
8 sufficiently attentive during canon law lectures.
9 I think he had to go through various canon law
10 procedures and I don't know how long those take but
11 there's lots of toing and froing between Newcastle and
12 Rome and ...

13 LADY SMITH: Between 1994 and 2012?

14 A. Yes. I think I might have been wrong on that date. As
15 far as I was concerned, I haven't been a priest since
16 1994. The actual -- I could never have functioned as
17 a priest. It was a piece of paper that came -- it did
18 come to me, saying you have been laicized.

19 LADY SMITH: Okay.

20 A. But I didn't have any subsistence from the diocese,
21 I wasn't supported by the diocese. I didn't make any
22 financial gains or demands from the diocese. I wasn't
23 employed by the diocese.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Mr MacAulay.

25 MR MacAULAY: Can I take you back to your statement then,

1 Mr Traynor, and this is at WIT.001.001.3204. I want to
2 ask you about paragraph 7 of the statement and what you
3 say there. I just want to try and understand the
4 relevance of this to us. You say:

5 "In September 2015 I was sentenced by His Honour
6 Judge Taylor in the Crown Court at Teesside to a term of
7 18 months' imprisonment suspended for 2 years for one
8 offence of indecent assault on a male person. The
9 allegation was made against me in 2014 and arose from an
10 incident occurring in 1977 or 1978. The complainant is
11 not named in appendix 1."

12 The appendix was the document we sent to you.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. But you say it was within the same period. But is this
15 of any relevance to the names of the children that this
16 inquiry is interested in?

17 A. No. I will give you a perfectly straightforward, honest
18 answer here. That was put in at the insistence of my
19 barrister who said, "If you don't put it in, they'll
20 tear you apart and if you do put it in, they'll tear you
21 apart, so you'd best ..." He said, "You're going to get
22 torn apart, so put it in".

23 Q. It's of no relevance to us, it's in connection to
24 something else?

25 A. I said, "What is the point of me saying this?" and he

- 1 said, "They will find out and if you don't put it in,
2 they will tear you apart. If do you put it in, they
3 will tear you apart".
- 4 Q. Okay.
- 5 A. So I didn't want that paragraph in because I thought --
6 well, you've just said, it's of no relevance to this
7 inquiry --
- 8 Q. Okay.
- 9 A. -- but he is a belt-and-braces man.
- 10 Q. Let's leave that aside then. Can I just come back to
11 something that is of relevance and importance to the
12 inquiry and that's the question of supervision. As I've
13 already said, Mr Traynor, you had in effect unsupervised
14 access to the children who were being accommodated at
15 St Vincent's; is that correct?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. And you were able to access the dormitories, for
18 example, as and when you pleased?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. Indeed, as we've seen, you accompanied children on
21 holiday, essentially in a relatively unsupervised way;
22 is that fair? Is that a fair comment?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. Would this be a fair description -- and I'm not wanting
25 to be unkind to you, Mr Traynor, but would it be fair to

1 say that because of the position you were in, that you
2 essentially preyed on vulnerable children during your
3 time at St Vincent's?

4 A. I think that is harsh on me. I think I took advantage,
5 but I don't think I preyed.

6 Q. Very well. You do, I think, acknowledge in your
7 statement that you were an abuser.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And you have said already that the only assistance you
10 can give in this regard is to repeat the remorse you
11 feel. That's your position, is it?

12 A. Mm.

13 Q. Can I look at the last sentence that we find in your
14 statement because you've mentioned your alcoholism and
15 you also mention the chapter of your own abuse as maybe
16 relevant to those who look for explanations. Then you
17 say:

18 "For me neither was an excuse, though both have for
19 years been the source of my empathy."

20 Can you elaborate on what you mean by that? I'm
21 just trying to understand what that means.

22 A. How long have you got?

23 Q. Well, a sentence or two will do.

24 A. Yes. (Pause). Since I've had to get my head back
25 around all of the events that have been described in the

1 statements by the siblings and revisit the court case
2 and revisit my own memories of the therapeutic training,
3 and that process has been going on since -- certainly
4 since Castle Craig, where I had to confront the inner
5 self in a much more direct way when I was with
6 Dr Margaret McCann. Because I've been reliving a lot of
7 stuff, I've become aware of the real hurt that I have
8 caused. One of the ways I've become aware of the real
9 hurt that I have caused is because I've been put back in
10 touch with the real hurt that I experienced.

11 So physically, I have shown symptoms of reliving the
12 physical pain I felt at the time I was raped. That has
13 re-awakened and re-triggered a whole series of stuff,
14 but that hasn't just happened since October when the
15 inquiry first wrote to me, that's been going on since
16 2001 or 2002 when I went to Castle Craig because I was
17 half a glass of wine from death. I've relived so much
18 of my life that in the process, you become aware of how
19 much damage I, Bernard Traynor, have done. And it can
20 never be undone and it never be repaired and people
21 bandy the word "closure" around. All I can say to you,
22 as a fellow human being who has his own failings, his
23 own idiosyncrasies, his own little bits that he hopes
24 nobody ever finds out about -- because unless you
25 haven't got any, you're up there with the Blessed

1 Virgin Mary, with all due respect. We all are needing
2 to put ourselves at the forgiveness of each other
3 because we all continually hurt each other.

4 It's like when you slice through a tree, you see the
5 rings where you slice through but you never see the
6 rings that go all the way up to the top of the tree and
7 all the way down to the roots. All we ever get is
8 a little micro image of what we've got. So in a very
9 clumsy way, what I'm trying to say is I'm always in
10 touch with the pain I have caused because I don't stop
11 revisiting it.

12 MR MacAULAY: Very well, Mr Traynor. Thank you for sharing
13 that with us. In fact, I have no more questions for
14 you. No one has submitted any written questions that
15 I have to put to you. My Lady, I don't know there are
16 to be any questions.

17 LADY SMITH: Can I check if there are any outstanding
18 applications for questions of this witness? No.

19 Mr Traynor, there are no more questions for you.
20 Thank you very much for coming along today to give your
21 evidence. It has been very helpful to us to hear from
22 you and I'm now able to let you go.

23 A. Thank you.

24 (The witness withdrew)

25 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay, it's just after 4 o'clock, and

1 I think you've finished your planned witnesses for the
2 day; is that right?

3 MR MacAULAY: That is the case, my Lady.

4 Looking ahead to next week, for Tuesday we're
5 broadening our horizons in relation to technology
6 because we have a video link with Australia with
7 a witness who will be giving evidence, and two other
8 witnesses for Tuesday. And then we will hear from the
9 sisters again on Wednesday.

10 LADY SMITH: Can I just check that Australia are okay with
11 us using our normal timing for a 10 o'clock start
12 because it's quite a lapse for them?

13 MR MacAULAY: I think it is 9.30.

14 LADY SMITH: 9.30 might be a help. So if people work on the
15 basis that we'll be sitting at 9.30 on Tuesday because
16 of the international video link, please. Otherwise, I'm
17 going to adjourn for the weekend and Monday. Thank you.

18 (4.10 pm)

19 (The inquiry adjourned until 9.30 am
20 on Tuesday 23 January 2018)

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"SISTER MARGARET" (sworn)1

Questions from MR MacAULAY2

"SISTER ESTHER" (sworn)49

Questions from MR MacAULAY50

SISTER MARIA LANIGAN (sworn)114

Questions from MR MacAULAY114

BERNARD TRAYNOR (sworn)134

Questions from MR MacAULAY134

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8