

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

LUI

Support person present: Yes (Partner [REDACTED])

1. My name is [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1960. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. Both my parents are dead. I have one older brother, [REDACTED]. I had two younger sisters [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] died two years ago. I don't really remember much about my time at home with my parents. All I know is that when I was about five or six our house went on fire and I got thrown out the window. After that I was put into care. I don't remember the fire I just recently got told by somebody about it. The house was in [REDACTED], Garngad, Glasgow. I only found out myself a couple of years ago that I was brought up in a dive. I thought I had lived in Bridgeton. I believe it was Glasgow District council that sent me to a children's home. My sisters were put into Nazareth House. I don't really remember anything about my sisters when I was still at home. My brother who was a year older than me came with me to the children's home.

Life in Care - Gryffe Children's Home, Bridge of Weir and Murdoch Home, Bridge of Weir

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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8. One day a man came to Gryffe Home and he said he was my father and he took me away. He took me to his house in Bridgeton, Glasgow. That's when I learned I had

wee sisters and I met them. It was just a room and kitchen and there were six of us. I don't know how long I was with my mum and dad for. When I was there I enrolled at the Sacred Heart Primary School in Bridgeton. I couldn't read, write or do arithmetic. I didn't go to school. I am not sure if there was a panel or if my mum and dad decided but I was sent to St Ninian's because I was dogging school. I know I was sent there by Glasgow District Council

Life in Care - St Ninian's School, Gartmore, Stirlingshire

9. I left my mum and dad's and I went to St Ninian's in Stirling. I would have been about eight years old. It was like a big castle. It was an approved school and was run by the De La Salle brothers. I was there for a long time, several years. We all got given clothes to wear so we all looked the same. It was like a uniform but we weren't all the same size but were told to wear it anyway.
10. I never had an education. The only thing I was taught in St Ninian's was how to play the mouth organ.

Abuse at St Ninian's

11. Down in the dungeons the brothers and the priests used to beat me up all the time just for being stupid. They would pick on me and I would get beaten up. Boys would pick on the other boys too and beat them up. They would just pick on the weakest ones. Even the boys who were getting beaten by the brothers would beat up other boys. We would get beaten up by the brothers but then they would be nice to us. They would let you go down and see the goats, chickens, ducks and the horses. That was Brother ^{HFT} [REDACTED] and Brother ^{LUE} [REDACTED]. That was the only thing that kept you sane in there, the hope of getting to see the horses and other animals.
12. I have a block in my mind about St Ninian's. This is because it was all violence and perversion. I was whipped with the cane. The brothers with their big flowing black

cloaks on were dirty, scary people. They were vicious people. They would grab you and pull you under their cloaks and cuddle you, and pat you on the head to make you feel good. Ten minutes later they would make you terrified. They would take you into their wee side rooms. It was a beautiful house and you were told not to touch anything. I was sexually abused in St Ninian's but I don't really want to talk about it.

13. The brothers and the priests used to cane me but they were banned I think so then it went on to leather belts. This happened quite a lot. It used to be followed up with a cuddle. I would end up crying and telling them I wouldn't do whatever it was I had done again. I regularly refused to take the belt.

Leaving St Ninian's

14. They tried putting me to an outside school. I went to St Mary's Primary School in Bridgeton. On my first day at school I asked to go to the toilet and I went. A teacher came and told me that I wasn't allowed in the toilet that I went to. He told me to put my hands out to belt me. Being a hard man from an approved school I refused. He threatened to send me to the head master and I think I told him where to go. He threatened to expel me from school but I wasn't bothered. The next thing I knew there was a children's panel and I was sent to John Bosco's School.

St John Bosco's, Aberdour, Fife

15. I was at St John Bosco's for about two years. I think I was there from around twelve to fourteen years old. It was all about survival in there. There was one priest in there who was a fantastic priest, Father Daly. Every day was chapel and mass every morning. I didn't want to do that. I was made an altar boy, and a choir boy. All we ever got was religious instruction. We were taught what were sins, but it seemed everything was a sin. The only education I was given in St John Bosco's was Scottish dancing and art.

16. I never got any education there. I was supposed to go to St Mungo's Academy in Bridgeton but I never went. It was pointless me going. All the other kids there had gone through primary school together and all knew each other. I didn't know anyone and in any case I couldn't even read or write.

Abuse at St John Bosco's

17. Father ^{LOB} [REDACTED] was ^{SNR} [REDACTED] and he was "sleekit". One time when I ran away he took me down to the toilets and left me standing there in just my underwear. I was standing in front of a mirror and there were mirrors behind me so everything was magnified. I was standing there from midnight until 4am. He just sat there watching me and reading passages from the bible to me. I was freezing and just wanted to go to my bed.
18. There were times when the brothers would tell you things and if ever you questioned what they said they would just slap you across the head. "Pervy" things went on it St John Bosco's but it was mostly violence and bullying. I was abused at St John Bosco's but I can't tell you what happened to me. Father ^{LUF} [REDACTED], who became ^{LUF} [REDACTED], abused me. He had an aura about him and he was very likeable. I remember stealing a knife once from the dining hall and I was going to stab everybody in St John Bosco's. Father ^{LUF} [REDACTED] got me and gave me a cuddle. He took the knife off me and asked me what I was doing. I told him I was going to stab a couple of the other young boys.
19. The perverts at St John Bosco's were Father ^{LUF} [REDACTED], Father ^{LOB} [REDACTED] and Father ^{LMW} [REDACTED]. They were always very hands on and liked people putting their cloaks on. One morning they came in and told us to get dressed in black because we were doing a funeral. I told them I didn't want to but I didn't get a choice. I would just have got slapped.

20. If we committed any sins, or what the brothers or priests considered to be sins we were punished. Usually it would be that I wouldn't get home for the weekend. My brother [REDACTED] always got home for the weekend. I never got home.
21. I remember when we used to shower we had to go into the showers naked and they watched you. There was no privacy. They held the towels. I was scared and embarrassed.

Leaving St John Bosco's

22. I got out of St John Bosco's and I went home to live with my mum and dad. I got into trouble with the police again so ended up going to a children's panel. They said at the time they didn't want to send me to another approved school. Someone on the panel had the great idea to send me back to Gryffe School. I went there but it didn't go well. I had a lot of memories from the place and I was rebellious. I did a lot of bad things so I got sent to St Andrews.

St Andrews School, Shandon, Dunbartonshire

23. [REDACTED], my brother, didn't come with me to St Andrews. St Andrews was just about violence. I was fifteen by the time I was there so I wasn't going to let the things happen to me that happened in the other places. I remember the brothers and priests were in the old big house and the boys were in the new complex. There was a school there too. There was no education at St Andrews. Religion was still a massive part of life there. By the age of fifteen I could recite the whole of a Catholic mass that's how much they made me into God. I wasn't even interested in it.
24. There were school classes at St Andrews but when there are forty to fifty boys in a class and it is a wee old woman nobody listens. The only thing I learned from her was Scottish country dancing.

Abuse at St Andrew's

25. I remember one time at St Andrews one of the staff, a Mr ^{LUD} it might have been, he was a big guy. He pinned me to the floor and gave me a real beating. I ran away from St Andrew's. When the police took me back what a "doing" they gave me. Then they put me in the digger where I was locked up 24/7 for weeks. I was in there by myself. It was solitary confinement.
26. I was treated like a cleaner there too. I was always in trouble so I was always getting punished. I would be made to do the dishes, cleaning and lots of other chores. The priests would make some of the other big boys, the bullies come and tell me what to do. I was deliberately bad in there.

Leaving St Andrew's

27. I ran away from St Andrews. I ran all the way in a pair of shorts and sandals from Shandon to Dumbarton. The police caught me. They were going to send me back to the approved school because they had responsibility for me. I couldn't go back there. I went in front of the judge and was sent to Longriggend Young Offenders Institution. I was in Jail for six weeks because basically I was "dogging" school and I was running away. I went back in front of the judge after six weeks. That judge saved my life. He released me which meant I didn't have to go back to any of the homes again. Brother ^{LUE} and Brother ^{HFT} were there when I was in court and the judge told them that they had no right to be there. They told the judge that they owned me or something like that.

Visits / inspections

28. My dad came that once when I was in Gryffe Home and that was to take me out. I didn't get any visits there or at any of the other places I have been. I never wrote or got letters from anyone. In all the homes I have been in I have never been visited by

any social worker. I am not aware if I ever had a social worker. I met other people who had been in other approved schools and they told me that they had seen their social worker and they had sorted things out for them. I think the De La Salle order was in charge of the place and they didn't want the social workers in there.

Health care

29. I don't remember ever getting any kind of health care when I was in care.

Reporting of abuse

30. There was no point telling anyone what was going on when you are in care. Nobody listens to you. I was just a child and I wouldn't know how to speak to anyone. If I had told someone it wouldn't have made a difference because nobody cared. There was no-one that I could have told.
31. I think Mr Atkins, my art teacher in St John Bosco's, was the only person that I could have told at any time about any of the abuse that I had gone through. I never actually told him but I think he knew what was going on.

Life after being in care

32. When I left Longriggend I was sixteen and that was just the start of it for me. It was just jail, jail, jail for about seven years. I was in Barlinnie when I was seventeen, then went to Polmont borstal where I did eighteen months. After the borstal I got a gate arrest and was sent to the Young Offender's institution for nine months. I ended up actually doing two years there.
33. After I had been in the Borstal for about thirteen months I was offered the chance of going on the Training for Freedom programme (TFF). I went to a hotel in Wemyss Bay to learn how to run a hotel. It was all going fine until I met a boy that I

recognised from Gryffe Home.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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. When he was asleep in his hotel bed I got a lighter and set fire to his toe. He woke up screaming.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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I got sent back to borstal but on the way I got picked up for a robbery so did another nine months. As soon as I was getting released I was just getting arrested for something else.

34. When I was in prison that's when I met my partner [REDACTED]. She became my pen pal. I was 23 at the time. After I got out of jail there is no doubt she helped stop me going back in again. We have been together now for 34 years. We have two children.
35. When I got out of borstal I went home to Bridgeton but I couldn't get in. I went to my aunt's house because she lived nearby. She couldn't believe that I hadn't been told that my mum and dad had moved house. They were now living in Dennistoun in Glasgow. They never even told me that they had moved.
36. When I came out of prison I joined the Territorial Army, the Royal Highland Fusiliers. I was trying to get into the regular army. I had a fantastic experience in there and met a lot of good people. Because I was good at art I did a lot of signwriting for them.

Impact

37. When I was fourteen or fifteen years old a children's panel sent me back to Gryffe Home.

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38. As far as I am concerned I never had parents. I just never got on with them. I learned to read and write at HMP Barlinnie. That's where I got my education on life.

39. I was in a house when I was 21 years of age and I was lying on a bed. I had just got out of borstal. I was lying in a big bed with a man next to me. He tried it on with me. I ran out the house screaming and terrified. I sat and thought about it for a while. I decided that I couldn't let people keep doing this to me. I went back up to his door and confronted him. I cut his throat then tried to cut his arm off. I was ashamed because it wasn't him I was attacking when I was doing it. I just blamed him. I wasn't really interested in him and in my head I was doing it to the brothers. This was a release for me because I was trying to get rid of all the demons that were inside me. This was all because of what happened to me in the past in approved school. I went to prison for eighteen months for what I did. It was after that I met [REDACTED] and she stopped me getting into more trouble. If I hadn't met [REDACTED] I would have cut somebody else's throat because that was the way I was. My life started when I met [REDACTED].
40. I would not let my children have a religion. They won't have a religion until they are old enough to decide for themselves. We nearly lost our son when he was one year old with meningitis. [REDACTED] begged me to have him baptised saying God will pull him through. I refused to have my son baptised. I refused to allow any of my children to get baptised. They didn't go to Communion because I didn't want my children to go through it. I allowed them to go to Catholic school only because it was close to where we were living.
41. I still freak out when I see big mansions. They look beautiful but it scares me to think what goes on inside. People just don't know what goes on behind the closed doors.
42. I have never worked a day in my life. There is no way I can get a job because of my criminal record. I was in the TA for eight years but I got asked to leave after they found out about my criminal record. I hadn't told them about my criminal past when I joined. I have tried for the regular army but I couldn't get in because of my criminal record.
43. I have got sleep paralysis. This means that it looks like I am sleeping but I am actually screaming inside. My body is asleep but my brain is still wide awake. I also

have to wait until everyone else around me is asleep. I don't know if this is anything to do with what happened to me in approved school.

Treatment / Support

44. I have been to my doctor about my sleep issues. I have never had any sort of counselling. I was going to get some anger management treatment through the prison but I don't really have the same anger issues nowadays.

Records

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

Learning Points

46. Abusers aren't getting prosecuted, they are being rewarded. They get sent to other places and they get forgotten about. It has taken 40 years before anyone will listen, and I am now talked out. The De La Salle brothers are untouchable and they won't get convicted.
47. I blame Glasgow District Council for putting me into care.

Hopes for the Inquiry

48. I hope that these approved schools are closed down that are run by religious orders. Homes should be opened that are for everyone and not dependent on your religion. There shouldn't be segregation.

Other information

49. Not every priest and every brother in St Ninian's, St John Bosco's and St Andrew's were bad. It wasn't like that. Some of them were decent guys and some were there to help you. The better ones were Brother ^{MBZ} [REDACTED]. He was young. He used to play the guitar. Brother ^{MJO} [REDACTED] was Irish and had a heavy Irish accent. Unfortunately there were some who tried to "perv" me.

50. I went back to St John Bosco's with [REDACTED] and my son. It is a beautiful place in Aberdour. Someone came out and asked if he could help. I explained that I had been there as a young boy. He told me that it was no longer an approved school. He invited me in and he took me through to see Mr Atkins who was there when I was a boy. He was the art teacher. He recognised me straight away. We talked about Father Daly who had a wooden leg and he was a joy to be with. He was a true man of God. I learned then that the De La Salle order had left St John Bosco's. He said that I should go back some time for a meal. Mr Atkins and Father Daly were the only good people who were there when I was there.

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

Signed..... ^{LUI} [REDACTED]

Dated..... 23rd Jan 2018