

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

LNB

Support person present: No

1. My name is LNB, but I don't use LNB. My date of birth is 1944. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Background

2. I was born in Ireland and moved to Croydon when I was young. I can't remember it. I started at St John Bosco's, Aberdour in 1966. I had already completed three years study in religious philosophy. When I went to Aberdour it comprised of a couple of Nissen huts and a big building. That was it until my third year there when they built a new school.
3. I stayed at Aberdour for three years then I was at Dublin University for three years and got an Honours degree in Divinity because I was training to be a priest at the time. These days it would be looked on as irrelevant, but at least it was a discipline. During the fourth year I did what was called pastoral studies, where I went round various theological centres of learning. In 1974 I went back to Aberdour SNR. I spent one or two years in that post before going to do a post-graduate at Newcastle University. That lasted a year then I went back to Aberdour still SNR. I stayed there for two years.
4. I left the priesthood in 1977. There was a whole argument raging about birth control and I'd had quite a lot of pastoral experience by that time and I just couldn't see any rational that a Pope could tell people how they should behave. I thought that was a

matter for personal conscience. Those beliefs weren't shared by my bosses at the time and I argued quite strongly for it.

5. I moved to Kent and was in charge of an adolescent unit for young boys called Aldsworth Court. It was offered as an alternative to borstal. They either went on remand in borstal or to my place in Kent. It was all boys from fifteen up to twenty years old. It was new at the time because there were a lot of what were called approved schools and boys were coming out and virtually going straight into prison, so the idea was to give them an alternative. To a large extent it was successful. I remember I was in Gravesend one day and I got a thump on the back and it was an ex-pupil who asked me how I was doing. He had his own business as a window cleaner. He had done very well. Most of those I knew and had kept in touch with, were doing fairly well. I was head of the unit for five or six years. The place isn't used in that capacity any more. That stopped a few years ago.
6. I left there in 1981 or 1982 and was put in charge of the residential sector, covering people who were elderly, people with learning disabilities and disabled people in north west Kent.

#### **St John Bosco's, Aberdour**

7. When I first went to Aberdour, as I said there were only a couple of Nissen huts and the main building. There were about fifty boys who mostly came from Glasgow. There were a couple from Edinburgh and a couple from Dundee and one stray sheep who came from Aberdeen. There was also a boy from near Lossiemouth. It was all boys there.
8. St John Bosco's covered a transition period. During my time there, Scottish law changed and decisions on boy's futures went from children's courts to children's hearings. This meant things were slightly more humane in the way it managed the service. On numerous occasions I would go to Glasgow and Edinburgh to attend hearings with any particular boy. So, boys were sent to St John's from court then latterly as a decision from a children's hearing. There were some there for criminal offences, one or two under section because they had committed serious crime. There was one boy who murdered someone when he left St John's. He went to

Aberdeen prison. I went to see him actually. His name was [REDACTED], he would have been eighteen or nineteen at the time. I just felt sorry for him. He threw a duster at me one time in class. It hit me on the head, but he was genuinely a nice kid. He got caught up in a fight at a Celtic match.

#### *First impressions*

9. My first impressions of St John's were that it was Dickensian. Some of the attitudes were even older than that. It was all very new to me as a young man. The culture there was punitive in the extreme and as I said, Dickensian in attitude. Nowadays I would never put up with it but back then I was 'green behind the ears'. I couldn't believe what I was encountering.
10. My job at the time was both as a care assistant and teacher. I was with the kids more or less from 7:00 am when I got those up who had wet the bed. I took them for breakfast and then at 9:30 am I was teaching, remedial English. I would finish at noon and have a bit of lunch. The dining was in the Nissen huts. I then looked after the kids while they were eating their lunch. Sometimes it was a bit hairy as the kids would be throwing sausages and bits of meat or potatoes at each other. Sometimes they were unruly, other times not at all.
11. There were around fifty boys there when I first went.

#### *Role(s) at St John Bosco's*

12. When I initially went to Aberdour I was teaching as well as being part of the care staff. There was no-one else. When I came back from university, I was deputy head of care, which didn't mean very much. It was just a title.
13. There was no process for me going to St John's. I was studying philosophy and each year [REDACTED] you would get a letter from the order telling you where you were going and what you would be doing. So, [REDACTED] 1966 I got a letter telling me I was going to Aberdour. I didn't know where that was. Everyone in the order who was moving would get a letter on this date.

## Structure and recruitment of staff

14. When I went to Aberdour SNR [redacted] was a priest called LOB [redacted] LOB [redacted]. It was a religious community so there was a rector of catechist as well. This was a guy called Harry Wrangham. He always had snuff on him and secretly he gambled on the horses. In my third year LOB [redacted] had a heart attack, so that left a bit of a gap. There wasn't SNR [redacted] at that time, so when SNR [redacted] LOB [redacted] LOB [redacted]. In directing orders, Harry Wrangham was LOB [redacted] but in professional terms LOB [redacted].
15. I can't remember how many staff there were at St John's. They weren't all part of the order. We had two female teachers. There was a gardener, I think his name may have been Sid. He would walk around with kids and have little forks and shovels and things like that. I wasn't aware of the recruitment policy in relation to the civilian members of staff. I wasn't involved in that side of things at all.
16. I wasn't directly involved in the recruitment of staff. Other members of the order would come and go when I was at St John's. Sometimes I was asked to write a short report outlining if I had any concerns about staff members. Generally I didn't. The job was difficult enough.
- [redacted]
17. You do lots of studies [redacted] on the way through the order. I think LOB [redacted] LOB [redacted] was just trying to be a martinet, trying to be very strict, but he was genuinely a good man. He used to terrify the kids, which I thought was unnecessary.

## Training

18. I wasn't given any training in my role really. We had a couple of weeks induction, essentially learning from someone else. It wasn't a very professional set up. I'd had periodic placements in a place called Blaisdon in Gloucester, which was at a school for maladjusted children. I did reasonably well there and as such was sent to Aberdour.

19. I did manage others <sup>SNR</sup> but it was in an informal way. I would give those coming in an induction. I wasn't involved in training staff. I did continually ask to go on courses, which were generally refused. I went to one, which was an ISTD, (Institute for the Study and Treatment of Delinquents), conference in Aberdeen. I felt I'd been let out of a cage.

### **Supervision/appraisal/evaluation**

20. I wasn't involved in any supervision or staff appraisals or evaluation. We use language now that was never used in those days. We had a number of volunteers that worked at St John's. Generally, I was responsible for them but they were given fairly mundane tasks like supervising the playground, things like that. Some people would come for work experience and there was an element from our own Order who would come up to have a look. That was about it really.

### **Policy**

21. I was not involved with policy during my first time at St John's except in my third year. They used to give the strap at the school. Not all that often really. We used to go to Rosyth Naval Baths on a Monday night and I remember getting on the bus and seeing one of the kids who had been strapped. I saw the welts on the back of his legs. It horrified me. The next time <sup>SNR</sup> asked me to be a witness to someone being strapped I said no. We had a chat about it, he brought up my vow of obedience but I told him I wasn't doing it.
22. When I returned from Dublin, I was in what they called a Chapter, a community body of the house and I suggested that the practice of strapping was stopped. It did stop but not immediately. It was about two months later. That was the only school I encountered that use of the strap. The kids were told to take their trousers down and they would get six of the strap across their backside and legs. This was fairly common practice in approved schools.
23. When I went to St John's what surprised me the most was that one or two of the staff would slap kids. After the boys washed and got ready for breakfast they would stand

in line. If the boys didn't have a comb in their pocket this individual member of staff would whack them across the face. Not just lightly. This was mostly during my first spell because the individual who did this was moved. His name was LMW LMW. It was an excuse to use his muscle on the boys.

### **Strategic planning**

24. I was not involved in strategic planning. Our main concern at that time was survival both individually and collectively. The place was fairly secure in terms of funding from the Scottish Office. They funded me to go to Newcastle.

### **Children**

25. The capacity at St John Bosco's was fifty boys. During my first stint there the boys seemed to stay forever but then there was a sudden burst in the early seventies when children's panels came in and boys were coming in thick and fast, and leaving as well. The age range was eleven to fifteen, although very few stayed until they were fifteen.
26. On average there were about four members of staff on during the day, mostly teaching and supervision of kids was down to me as I used to look after the meals and the dormitory. I looked after the main dormitory and LMW looked after the smaller one upstairs.

### *Living arrangements*

27. The upper dormitory had six boys in it. It was a sort of attic room. LMW slept up there in his own room. The one below, where I was, on the middle floor, had around forty-four boys in it. It was split into separate rooms with six boys in each one. I slept in one of the corners in what was a cubicle really. The other staff, including SNR had quite plush rooms in other areas of the building on the ground floor.

28. In general members of staff came and went in all areas of the school. Also, in general, very few came into the dormitories. I was responsible for the boys on my level overnight and LMW responsible for those on his floor.

#### *Mealtimes*

29. The food was excellent. They didn't get a choice unless someone had particular allergies. If they didn't like the food, occasionally they would throw it on the floor but in general terms if they didn't like it I would just tell them to leave it. I would go to another part of the dining area and go into the kitchen to see if anything could be substituted. I would see if there was something else like soup. I don't know if other staff did that. I can't see why not. The boys weren't allowed in the kitchen.

#### *Washing & bathing*

30. The facilities for the boys washing were very primitive in the old school. Once we got the new school they were pretty good. The old ones had just a curtain across the shower, but the new ones were more private. They could be used by boys who had psoriasis, then they would have cream scraped on to them afterwards by a member of staff.

#### *Leisure time*

31. The boys just went to the playground. That was the sum total of their recreation. There was nothing in the playground. It was tarmac. The boys would kick a ball about.

#### *Trips & holidays*

32. I used to take the boys out because I got a coach driver's license. I would take them on day trips to Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh, Dunfermline and places like that. Every Monday we would go to Rosyth Naval baths. I would drive the coach down there and they would have an hour's swim. It was good.

33. During the summer holidays Glasgow corporation used to provide a school and their lorries used to take beds and bed linen up and we would occupy the classrooms in that school. We went to Aberdeen, Inverurie, Golspie, places like that for two weeks. All the boys would go on these holidays and about four members of staff. The coach was pretty big. I remember being in the Aberdeen skating rink and one of the kids was fooling around, I can't remember his name. He went over and the back blade of the ice skate went into the top of his own leg. Events like that stand out but Aberdeen was a lovely city to be in.

#### *Schooling*

34. I think in general the schooling was fairly good. You would get one or two who were unruly because they didn't like it. They were taught different subjects but none of the sciences. We didn't have the equipment. It was basic remedial stuff. There were only two classrooms, so the age groups varied in the classes. I can't remember the criteria that was applied, but it wasn't age. It could have been ability now that I think of it. Most of it was remedial teaching anyway.

#### *Health issues*

35. There was a matron at the school. Her brother was a priest somewhere else. He had silver hair, as did she. She would "look after" boys with injuries or illnesses. She was a nice person but not very well suited to the job. If someone had a more serious injury they would go to Dr Henderson in Aberdour. The boys would only go to a dentist if they had toothache.

#### *Work*

36. I remember Sid, who was the gardener and general handyman. He always wore a grey overall. Boys would help him with the grounds. They didn't clean, we had domestic staff. We had laundry staff as well, although I can't remember much about them. They didn't come under my remit.



### *Visitors*

37. Parents didn't visit the boys. They could go home at weekends if they had been behaving themselves. Social workers only came on the scene towards the end of the boy's stay. That was to discuss their departure, where they were going and things like that. In my last year I was going into Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee to visit the parents for the boys return home. There was one occasion when I went to a house in the Gorbals, [REDACTED] was the name of the boy, and it was like watching an episode of Rab C Nesbitt. The father answered the door in his vest and I told him we had managed to find his son a job and would he be able to help him. He wasn't interested at all. I asked if he had just finished work and he told me he hadn't worked since 1936. Some of the homes I visited were good to middling, but a few weren't and I could see the boy had no chance.
38. I attended children's panels with the boys, where it would be decided whether they were going home or coming back with me. Generally, they went home. These reviews would be held every six months to a year. Social workers were meant to be there but often they wouldn't turn up.

### *Discharged*

39. The boys would generally be discharged from a panel but usually we knew that beforehand. Sometimes they would come back to the school for a short period while preparation was made for them to go. Every case was different. I acted as aftercare officer in my last year at the school, around 1974/1975. As I said, I visited the boy's homes. I was lucky to come away with my car intact in some of the areas I was in. Sometimes we would find jobs for boys who were leaving or at least find them work experience. I was responsible for visiting them and supporting them, but it was virtually an impossible job.

### **Discipline and punishment**

40. There was no written policy on punishment and discipline. I believe this was similar in other schools at Tranent and Springboig.

41. If an offence was deemed serious enough boys would get the strap. For instance, absconding, that was almost automatic without any investigation into why the child wanted to behave in that way. Smoking was an obvious offence. The ingenuity for some of these kids to find a smoke was just incredible. I didn't smoke then, but I started not long after I left and became quite a heavy smoker. I gave up about ten or twelve years ago.
42. It was usually SNR [REDACTED] or SNR [REDACTED] that would punish the kids. I only administered the strap once and it just sickened me so much. It was always over the backside, or just below the underpants. It was horrific. It was always a blanket six of the strap the boys got. It didn't matter what they did, it was always six of the strap. There was a punishment book and both the person administering the strap and the witness signed the book. There also had to be an indication of what the offence was. Every episode was recorded.
43. Some of the staff would punish the boys unnecessarily and one of the punishments was taking their weekend leave away from them. That could be for not having a comb. I remember challenging some things and being told, "Don't forget who you are". It was as if you had an obligation to punish. These punishments were never recorded. I think every punishment should be recorded. The taking away of weekends was quite random. One or two members of staff used it as a form of control, I think. It was a power thing I believe. This was more common in the first couple of years when I was there as opposed to the end when it wasn't as common.
44. I can't remember any other forms of punishment while I was at the school. There was probably more of the subtle kind. Very small things become very big things in an ill-use or abusive use of power. That happened in many institutions. It could have been just a kid giving that member of staff a bit lip.
45. When I went to Newcastle I learned a lot in respect of the care of children. It was a post-graduate in residential care.

## Restraint

46. Restraint was only ever used if two of the boys started fighting each other but there weren't specific policies about that at all. I did restrain boys for the reason I have given. If SNR [REDACTED] LOB [REDACTED] or LMW [REDACTED] found two boys fighting, they would take them aside and give them boxing gloves as some kind of therapeutic resolution, which is a bit bizarre. It's a very random thing to do without any assessment of what had gone on beforehand. It didn't happen regularly, but it happened a few times. Enough to make it memorable for me and everyone else. It would take place in the gym at the new school. I can't remember where it took place in the old school.
47. I did see excessive restraint being used on occasions, mostly by LMW [REDACTED]. This would be mainly twisting boy's arms up their back, things like that.

## Concerns about the institution

48. I did not hear of any external concerns regarding the school while I was there. Internally I did express concerns about the boxing. During my second period at St John's, I also voiced my concerns about LMW [REDACTED] because at night, boys would quietly leave my area and go up to his for quite long periods of time. I was getting quite paranoid and distressed about it really. I brought it to the attention of my superior. On the same day, [REDACTED], KZA [REDACTED], who was [REDACTED] in London, flew up to Edinburgh, came to Aberdour and left with LMW [REDACTED] the following day.
49. I don't know how long it had been going on but I remember challenging him one day and he basically told me to keep my mouth shut. None of the boys ever told me why they were going to his dormitory. At least two would go up at any one time within half an hour of lights out. At the beginning I didn't think very much of it, maybe he just wanted to chat, but then it became rather frequent so I mentioned it as a matter of concern to [REDACTED], LOE [REDACTED].

50. I didn't see <sup>LMW</sup> [REDACTED] again at Aberdour. That's a Catholic thing with those kinds of abuse, going to the missions is a euphemism for being booted out for abuse. I saw him again several years later. I went to my school's old boy's reunion where <sup>KZA</sup> [REDACTED] had been [REDACTED]. At this the time I discovered he himself had abused boys at my school. I remember sitting with my best friend having a drink and he just burst into tears because it was beginning to come out then about the abuse that had occurred to him as a young boy. Father <sup>KZA</sup> [REDACTED] was at the seminary when I was a kid. I remember him approaching me one time, but my father had told me that if anyone came near me to just kick them. My father was a scaffolder.
51. I don't think <sup>LMW</sup> [REDACTED] ever knew I had reported him. I would describe him as a 'subterranean' bully. He exercised levers of power in amongst a group. He was a very inadequate character and that's the only way he could survive.

#### **Reporting of complaints/concerns**

52. There was no complaints process at that time at St John Bosco's. I don't think there was at any of these schools then. I didn't receive any complaints of abuse specifically. For a while there was a horrible feeling around the place and I think it was coming from other approved schools, from brothers and sisters, etc. There was a whole subterranean or under current network, where allegations were flying everywhere. This was in my second period at the school. There was St Joseph's at Tranent, St Ninian's, there was one at Springboig. There appeared to be quite a network and these rumours were flying around about certain members of staff here and there. This was happening even in 1974/75. I remember the rumours because some of them would land in front of me. I just dismissed them at the time. What could I have done about them then?

#### **Trusted adult/confidante**

53. There was no-one at St John's that the boys could speak to formally. Sometimes boys would come directly to me, but that was mainly about small incidents of bullying. Some boys did complain to me about things like being bullied by staff. Bullying is a very wide term but one or two did complain to me about it. Both were

about LMW. I spoke to him about it and he usually reassured me that it was a one off thing.

54. One of the complaints I received was about a member of staff who was a fanatical Celtic supporter. Celtic lost one weekend and he started swinging his arms out and hitting kids. I had to suspend him for the day. This was when I SNR SNR. I didn't tell SNR about this, but I did record it. It was only for the day until he calmed down. His name was IHU. He was what they called a lay Brother. Someone who doesn't go as far as the priesthood. They live an ordinary lay life but they do have vows.

### **Abuse**

55. There was no definition of abuse at St John's. No-one ever used the term 'abuse'. The only abuse I saw when I was there was the slapping by LMW and the incident with IHU. I also witnessed one or two incidents of slapping by SNR LOB. It took me by surprise at the time. This was during my first period at the school.
56. It's hard to say whether abuse would have been detected at or about the time at St John's. There were avenues the boys could go down to complain, but I don't know if they would have the confidence to do this. There was one member of staff there called Father LUF. He was a confidante for a lot of the kids. He would have been able to answer that question better than I could. He was a very discreet man, so if a boy had said something to him he would take the person aside and have a word with them. He did it with me once, he told me I was being a bit rough with the boys when I was playing football, which I was. I was sometimes too heavy in tackling the boys. I broke a young lad's leg in a tackle once. I spent the next year giving him physiotherapy because I felt so bad about it. The boy's name was. I felt very sick after it.

## **External monitoring**

57. There were probably quite a few inspections at the school over my time there, but being in the position I was, I wasn't aware of them. The only one of significance I recall was by a psychologist, a guy called Max Paterson from the Scottish Office. He came and saw a couple of kids. One of the boys he saw was the one that threw a duster at me, [REDACTED]. He went on to commit a murder. Later on, when he was in a remand centre in Airdrie, he committed suicide, which was very upsetting. Max Paterson would have attended through a referral, presumably by the headmaster.
58. Max Paterson called me in one day and spoke about [REDACTED] because he had obviously targeted me. He told me that I looked like [REDACTED]'s dad. That is the only recollection I have of his visits.

## **Record-keeping**

59. There was the punishment book for those who got the strap. There was also a record kept of absconders and things like that, the normal sort of school records that you get. There were individual boy's files. I can't remember what was recorded in these. I would have had access to these files, but I can't recall putting much in them. The only time I read them was to understand the background of some of the boys I was dealing with, to see if there was any cause or affect in terms of their behaviours.
60. I did a lot of background reports on boys leading up to them going to a children's panel. I would include how the boy had got on at the school. If there was anything serious he had been involved in I would include this in the report. There would be a recommendation as to whether the boy should be allowed home included in the report. This report was given to the panel. A copy should have been kept in the boy's file.

### **Investigations into abuse – personal involvement**

61. I have mentioned speaking to my superior about boys from my dormitory going up to LMW's floor and subsequently coming to the school and leaving with him. I was glad that the boss took it seriously at the time. I was also involved in suspending IHU for a day for slapping boys after Celtic were beaten one weekend.

### **Police investigations/ criminal proceedings**

62. I am not aware of any police investigations or criminal proceedings in relation to abuse occurring at St John Bosco's. I have never given a statement to the police or the Crown regarding abuse at the school, although I have been interviewed by the police.
63. Two officers came to interview me, several months to a year ago. They took me to Harlow Police Station. They found a complaint from one of the ex-pupils of St John's who said I used the back of my hand sometimes to hit the boy's heads in class and tell them to behave. This boy had claimed that I'd almost crippled him. His name was . He had a brother called . was a fairly chronic bedwetter and he had psoriasis. That's about all I can remember about him.
64. I have never heard any more about the matter from the police. They took me to Harlow Police Station and formally interviewed me. They got me a solicitor. It really scared me at the time. It was Scottish police that came down but I can't remember their names. I hadn't been contacted previously, they just turned up at my door.
65. I have never given evidence at any trial in relation to abuse at St John Bosco's.

### **Convicted abusers**

66. I am not aware of anyone who was convicted of abuse while at St John's, but if that had happened I would have been well away from the school.

## Staff members at St Johns Bosco, Aberdour

Brother <sup>LMW</sup> [REDACTED]

67. Brother <sup>LMW</sup> [REDACTED] had been there for a few years before I went to St John Bosco's. I think he was older than me, but not by much. I believe he died last year or the year before. He took woodwork classes at the school. He was care staff, but it was general really.
68. I think I knew him fairly well. There was always something about him that made you just stop and think. He was very over friendly when he saw you. When I saw him again several years after Aberdour it was almost as if I was a long lost friend, and I was never his friend.
69. Mostly I saw him very negatively as someone using his influence to exercise power in a negative way. I didn't see him personally disciplining boys as I wasn't his supervisor, but I mentioned it to him a few times and he would just tell me to mind my own business. I did witness him slapping boys many times. This was mostly in the mornings when they washed and dressed themselves. It was mainly because they didn't have a comb or stepping out of line. He would walk down from the house and the boys were in two lines and he would walk along and inspect them. It was really primitive and without warning he would just slap a boy.
70. What made me really suspicious was the boys going from my dormitory up to his and the glances they would exchange to each other. I'm not naturally very suspicious but I was with this and took it to <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED], who was Father <sup>LOE</sup> [REDACTED] at the time. I think there must have been mounting evidence for him to go with [REDACTED] the next day. The paradox of that was that [REDACTED] himself, <sup>KZA</sup> [REDACTED], was done for abuse years later. I think he was abusing boys during my time at the junior seminary.



Brother **IHU**

71. Brother **IHU** could be **IHU**, the one who was Celtic mad. I knew him fairly well. He wasn't a close friend. I would say he was younger than me. I saw him interact with the boys fairly regularly. Normally I wouldn't have any complaints. He used to shout a lot. He had a temper, but it was verbally that he displayed his anger. I didn't see him disciplining any of the boys. I only saw the one incident when he was slapping boys after Celtic had lost the previous weekend. That was why I suspended him for the day. He was a lay Brother and part of the care staff. In general terms his attitude left a lot to be desired. He was a very volatile person but I wasn't aware of any other physical abuse apart from that one incident.

Father **LOB**

72. Father **LOB** was **SNR**. He was about sixty when I was at the school. He has been dead a long time. He had a heart attack in the last year of my first stint at St John's. I saw him slapping boys now and again but in general terms he was a very decent man. He wasn't very approachable. He had this 'bon amie' about him that didn't seem very real at the time, but he seemed a genuine person. I don't think he administered the strap with any joy or relish. His brother was a priest as well, a secular priest in London.
73. I saw him interacting with the boys but not the way you should deal with children. He **SNR** so obviously he kept his distance. I saw him giving the strap to boys, but that was very rarely. If you look at the punishment book, which should still be available you could see the number of times. I had to do it once and I just felt disgusted. I never saw him abusing any boy at the school.

Father **LRM**

74. Father **LRM** was **LRM** from Edinburgh. He didn't come to the school very often, but he would attend periodically. I didn't know him well, only to say hello to. I think he knew my name. In his house in Edinburgh there was a carpentry shop and I think he used to use the machinery we had at the school. I saw him

talking to the boys, but I only saw him very rarely. I didn't see him abusing any of the boys, he didn't have that contact with them, he was only visiting.

Father Hill

75. I knew Father Hill. He was extremely kind, a saintly man. He was SNR from probably before 1968 until I left. He was there when I arrived. He went from Aberdour out to Liberia. He was a little bit older than me but not by much. I knew him well. Hill was a first class bloke. He got on very well with the boys. I never saw him disciplining the boys. He would shout at them but they would just laugh.

GRN

76. GRN was a lay person. He was married and lived in Dalgety Bay, I think. He was a thug in terms that he used to belt kids, knee them or knuckle them. His intentions were extraordinarily good but he was just inadequate. He was a care assistant. I can't remember the timespan of when he started and finished, but he just arrived one day when I was there.

77. GRN worked a lot with LMW. I often saw him interacting with the boys, rather violently. Again, it was a different time, you didn't look for that abuse thing at all. He would hit out, pushing and punching the boys. In today's terms I suppose that was abuse. He was sadly quite volatile. There were a few members of staff that were volatile. In today's terms you wouldn't let them near kids.

GRP

78. GRP was a little Irish guy from Tipperary. He was a lay Brother. His name was GRP. He was a character. Under the house was his basement and he used to go around scrap dealers picking up old wirelesses and radios, anything mechanical. He would never abuse kids. He was kindness itself.

79. On a Sunday morning you would send kids out with different members of staff for a walk or whatever. One Sunday I sent about twenty kids out with GRP and they all ran away from him. Every one of them absconded. I spent weeks picking them up from various locations around Fife and in Edinburgh. It was freezing cold and I was really scared that a couple of them would be found dead. A year before, two people from one of the other schools had been out in the Trossachs and were found dead. On this occasion, our two had actually survived pretty well. They wandered around all the little harbours around Fife and went to boats where the milkmen had been and got milk and rolls and survived on that. We eventually managed to pick them up.
80. GRP was quite elderly then. He was in his fifties or sixties. He was there probably about two years while I was there on my second stint. I don't know where he went from there. I saw him interact with the boys and I think he used to shout at them, but they just laughed at him.

**Specific allegations of abuse made against me for which there has been no criminal investigation and / or conviction**

GWZ

81. GWZ has given a statement to the Inquiry. At paragraph 69 of his statement he has said, "*Brother LNB was a very popular Brother with the boys. He was funny, he would joke with you, but I think there was a darker side to Brother LNB. Everyone noticed that Brother LNB always hung about with KNI. KNI told me that he was indulging in a sexual relationship with Brother LNB. Although he didn't use these words to describe it. I was emerging as a gay man but I didn't have any relations with other boys at that time. I think KNI was gay too*".
82. At paragraph 70 of his statement GWZ has said, "*What happened with myself and Brother LNB was that one day we were playing football. At half time Brother LNB was lying in the ground in front of me. He was almost in a foetal position. He turned his head towards me and started to circle his finger around his anus, over his shorts. He was looking directly at me when he was doing this and I became very*

*embarrassed. I turned away and that was the end of that. I didn't tell anyone about what he was doing, I was embarrassed. I remember that incident because it was unusual, it wasn't a normal way for him to have behaved".*

83. I don't remember the person making these allegations. I also have no recollection of who <sup>KNI</sup> [REDACTED] is. The only [REDACTED] that I dealt with at that time was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from Aberdour. I don't know if I sanctioned or punished the person because I can't remember him. I have never abused anyone as described in the allegations. It is quite disgusting. No, I didn't. I have no recollection or knowledge of them. I don't think the passage of time has affected my recollection of what is alleged. I believe I have demonstrated already that my memory is not bad. If it's around the same time, I mentioned earlier that I think it was going around the grapevine between these approved schools, most of the children had siblings at those other schools. At that time the current thing was to accuse members of staff of all kinds of things. Even at that time I heard allegations against certain members of staff. I remember getting quite panicky. Around that time a new school was being built and I remember asking <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED] to change all the doors of the school to glass panels, to make them transparent. Certainly, at that time, I felt quite vulnerable to allegations. I was quite close to the kids, I could hear the rumours going on. If a child was treated in the way described that would definitely be abuse.

84. I have been read the following quotation from an anonymous letter sent to the school in the 2000's in relation to the writer's time at the school in the sixties. "*Brother* <sup>LNB</sup> [REDACTED] *took him to his bed to press his body up against him for satisfaction and tried to do disgusting things to him on trips away from school.*"

85. I have no knowledge of this allegation and deny it completely. As I said, at that time there were a lot of things swirling around. Kids would come up to you and say, "Do you fancy me?" and that sort of thing. It was an absolutely horrendous atmosphere. This was usually after a weekend away. That's why I associated it with other schools. The language wasn't what we were familiar with at our school.

### **Convictions**

86. I have no criminal convictions at all.

### **Leaving the institution**

87. I left St John Bosco's because I was leaving the priesthood. When I left, I went to Bosco House in Glasgow because the Order had set up a new venture there for young kids. I worked there for two years. I left and did a second post graduate in management. The first job I got was with adolescent kids in Kent. I would have got references from the priesthood but I don't have them now.

### **Helping the Inquiry**

88. It wouldn't surprise me that the physical abuse I saw at St John's would have affected the people concerned but the slaps that I witnessed didn't appear to affect them at the time. It may have affected them if it formed part of a pattern from their own background experience, but singularly it would be hard to imagine that a slap would have had a significant affect. It could have, you don't know how the human mind works.

### **Lessons to be learned**

89. I think there must be stringent procedures for any physical contact with children. There has to be good personnel procedures in respect of recruitment. Also, one of the things that appears to be forgotten is, when someone is appointed that's not the end for them. They have to be monitored and supervised and performance appraised all the way through their career because people can lapse into those areas of abuse without actually being conscious of being an abuser.
90. Abuse takes many forms; presence of power, the use of power and the abuse of power could be very significant. I taught in a grammar school for a short period of time and there were people there who should never have been in the teaching profession but when you are within the group you are not as critical as you should be. You get caught up in the swirl of the day to day running and you forget to pinpoint what was going on there.

**Other information**

91. 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..... LNB [REDACTED] .....

Dated..... 28/4 02.08.24 .....