

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HBM

Support person present: No

1. My name is HBM I'm known as HBM. My date of birth is 1950. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Lennoxton in East Dunbartonshire. My mum was and she wasn't married at the time I was born. I didn't know my dad, so I was known as because my mother was.
3. I had two sisters and a brother and my mother also had a child before me, but that child died. My sisters are, who is dead now and, that's her married name. Their father was a. My brother is.
4. For the first six or seven years of my life I was brought up by my grandfather, in Glasgow. Then when my gran died, I went back to stay with my mum and my step-father, Mr. He was my brother father.
5. There was me, my two sisters and my mum and step-father. That was just before my brother was born. We were in a single end, it was just a room and a kitchen. Things were quite tough. My mother died about four years ago and my stepfather about twenty years ago.

6. I was brought up in the Protestant religion by my grandparents and that caused a lot of problems because my step-father, Mr [REDACTED], was a Catholic. Me and my two sisters were all sent to a Catholic school by him and my mother. I would have started school aged about seven. I only remember going to Riddrie Nursery School before that. The Catholic school I went to was in Parliamentary Road but I can't remember its name, it may have been St. Mungo's.
7. When I was about eleven I went to court because I had thrown a bike in a canal and I hadn't been going to school. My mother said to the court that I was out of her control and she couldn't handle me anymore. She told them she would take me to school, which she actually never did, but I would just wander off at play times and things. I just didn't go to the school.
8. I do remember there was a woman from the school who came to the house and informed my mother and step-father that I wasn't attending school. She told them that my stepfather could go to jail if I didn't go to school. I don't know if that's still the same now but back then he could have been sent to jail for three months to a year, at least that's what I was being told.
9. The judge, who I don't condemn, because he was a nice man, said I was to go to an approved school. He asked for one that was far away, so I couldn't run away. He told me I would be in care until I was fifteen. My mother was told that by the judge and she wasn't really bothered. I was to be sent to John Bosco's.
10. First of all I was sent to a holding centre in Edinburgh Road in Stepps, Glasgow. I think that was Larchgrove. I was told by the judge that I was going to Larchgrove until there was a space made for me at St. John Bosco's. It was brilliant at Larchgrove and everything was done for you.
11. Then all of a sudden I was sent, to St. John Bosco's, a Catholic approved school, which was wrong, but they may be presumed I was Catholic.

12. I would say my home life was fine and I was happy, I got on well with my step-father. As far as I believe it was because I was sent away because I wasn't going to school and because of what my mother said. I did grow up rather wild, my grandfather didn't bother too much, he was happy for me to be running about and things.
13. There was no real reason for not going to school, I was a bit wild and because I wasn't going, I fell a bit behind. I couldn't read or write back then. There was no violence at home, nothing like that.

Larchgrove Assessment Centre, Glasgow

General

14. I went to the Larchgrove Assessment Centre around 1960 or 1961, when I was aged about ten or eleven. I was only there for about four to six weeks.
15. I remember being sent from the court straight to Larchgrove. I just went as I stood, no belongings or anything. I went down into a cell, then someone shouted on me and two people in a car took me to Larchgrove. I presume it was police but I can't remember.
16. I remember arriving there, it was like an old folks home. I went in the door and there were different classes and rooms. They had a garden outside with a big wall around it so you couldn't run away. It had spikes on the top of the wall. I presume Glasgow Council ran the place.
17. There were about a hundred boys at Larchgrove of all ages and I knew a lot of them. A lot came from that side of the city. We were all in dormitories, anything up to ten in a dorm, again mixed ages.
18. The food was alright, we had breakfast, dinner and tea, I think we all ate our meals together.

19. The staff wore a uniform, but I can't remember what it was like, I don't remember seeing any Brothers there either, we saw them at St. John Bosco's but not at Larchgrove.
20. We had classes during the day in the building but I can't remember much about that. I remember art and technical drawing and they had a big thing about gardening as well.
21. They did discover at Larchgrove that I couldn't read or write. They tried to get me reading and writing but it wasn't too successful, as I went off to St. John Bosco's after just a few weeks.
22. I remember there was a lot of exercise and we played football and played in the yard. We didn't run about mad inside the place though. We were taken in groups or classes of eight or ten with one teacher. It was all controlled I remember that.
23. At night time we would get to sit and watch black and white television and I'd never seen that before in my life. We had toys and books and things, so that was alright.
24. I don't have a great memory of Larchgrove as I was only there for about four or six weeks. I know I would have done all three years there if I could have. I could have learned to read and write but then I went to St. John Bosco's and that was just a complete waste of time. Larchgrove was an assessment centre but I don't have any memory of being assessed or speaking to any social workers.
25. The staff seemed okay, there weren't any punishments or anything like that and I never saw anyone being treated badly or being hit, not in there. They were just ordinary people and I enjoyed my time at Larchgrove.
26. I never got any visits from my mum when I was at Larchgrove, I was just abandoned and that was it.

27. I remember it was two CID that took me to St John Bosco's and we had to go by ferry as the Forth Road Bridge wasn't built then. The two of them weren't interested in me, they never spoke to me at all, they just put me in the motor and that was it.

St. John Bosco's, Aberdour

General

28. I believe that about four or five years before I went to St. John Bosco's it was called Hillside and it was a nunnery and belonged to the nuns. The priests then bought it over, the Salesian monks I believe it was, and it became known as St. John Bosco's.
29. It was a two storey building with a basement and front entrance. As you approached the building to the left hand side there was a door with a bell on it for church at night. The building was positioned in a square with the basement area underneath, all the way around, like a moat.
30. Inside the front door to the right was a large front room, with big windows all around it. The priests would go in there at night and read books. The next room was a priest's room, for sleeping in, and next to that, I think, was another priest's room.
31. As you came in the front door there were two sets of stairs leading up to the bedrooms. The first room was where a Brother slept with the boys. There was a fire door in the room where the brother slept with the boys, and another at the top of the stairs as well. There was then a middle door where Father **LOE** stayed and then there were dorms and toilets after that, including my room, where I slept with another six to ten other boys. There was then a brick spiral stair that went up to the top of the house.
32. There were five different rooms up there but we only used two or three. I was in a room up there, with two other people when I first went in to St. John Bosco's. The

other rooms we used up there, slept the same numbers. Brother LMW the one who abused me, slept in the first room at the top of those stairs. My room was the next one down from that. You couldn't go by his room without him seeing you as he always had his door open.

33. Downstairs to the left there were more dorms, toilets and a washing area with about twenty sinks. Father Rector stayed in a bedroom down the stairs and next door to him was a room, like a sick room, where boys would go if they had chicken pox or something like that.
34. I can't remember the names of many staff other than Father LOE, Father Rector and Brother LMW. Father LOE was a heavy built man and very religious. He would read the bible back to front, over and over again, he was besotted with it.
35. We called them Brother or Father that's about all I can remember. There were about eight priests, two Brothers and the matron. There could also be quite a few priests visited the place at weekends. Occasionally, if there wasn't room anywhere else in the building, they would sleep up the stairs in rooms beside us. The two Brothers were the ones that educated you, the priests very rarely came into the class to teach you anything.
36. The matron was a woman in her sixties and I remember she had a collie dog. She lived in the school in her own place. All the priests and Brothers stayed in the school, other than two priests who stayed in a gamekeepers house down at the bottom of the estate. They were older retired priests and we only ever saw them at mealtimes and mass.
37. There were thirty six boys in the place, I remember that. The boys were from all over but most of them came from Glasgow. I don't remember any of the boys names either.
38. We had three houses at St. John Bosco's, St. Andrew, St. David and St. Columbus. I was in St. Columbus all the time I was there. All the boys would get marks for things

during the day and at the end of the day, they would total up the marks and that would go to your house totals. At the end of the year the house with the highest score would be declared the winner and all the boys in that house would get a high tea.

39. What I would say about the place is that it was a real fire risk. There was only one way out and the windows were all shut and sealed, so you couldn't get out. The only way out was through a Brother's bedroom and down the fire escape. Everybody had a white mark on the ground and you would stand at your mark in a line so the Brothers could look up the line and see if anyone was missing. That was a wise decision, but we never had any fires.

Routine at St. John Bosco's

First day

40. I remember going into the building when I arrived and being put in a secure room. The head priest then came in and took me to see the matron who gave me all the stuff to wear and took all my stuff away. The head priest was in charge of the whole school.
41. I went from there back to the big house and I was taken to the bathroom and told to wash myself and have a bath. I put on the clothes they gave me, just shorts, a shirt and a pullover. I wore shorts until I was nearly fourteen, I remember that. It wasn't a uniform just clothes I was given.

Mornings and bedtime

42. Father LOE would wake us up in the morning at about 7 o'clock and we would do our ablutions, then we would brush our teeth and get washed. It was a tub of toothpaste powder and you wet your toothbrush and dipped it in the powder. Then we went down to mass, which we all had to say in Latin. That was well over an hour,

we would be saying things in Latin, and I wouldn't have a clue what we were saying but sometimes I could read Latin better than English.

43. After the mass we went through to the dining hall for our breakfast. After breakfast we had an hours work to do before we went to our school classes.
44. We would stop for lunch, then have a wee bit of time in the playground before going back to our school classes. School finished about 3 or 4 o'clock and then we would get to play before our dinner. After dinner we had recreation and then we had Benediction about 7 o'clock.
45. After Benediction we went to bed which could be as late as 9.30 or 10 o'clock. The lights would be on for about half an hour but we would be tired. Your whole day was taken up and you didn't have time for anything. We didn't have time to talk or to fight or anything.
46. The routine was the same from Monday to Friday for school and classes. On a Saturday morning we did cleaning after breakfast, then, after dinner, we were left to do our own thing, we were free to go out and play.
47. On Sunday we went to church in the morning and we didn't do any cleaning. After church we made our beds and things like that.

Mealtimes/Food

48. I remember that at breakfast time we all ate in the dining hall together. There was one pint of milk laid out on each table and we got a bowl of porridge, two pieces of bread and a wee sausage or a bit of ham. That was our breakfast every day.
49. There were four of us at each table and we would pour the milk out evenly between us all. We were not allowed to talk during meals, we were there to sit down and eat, that was it. We were actually allowed five minutes to talk after our dinner, once all

the plates had been taken away but the priests would all be at their table talking all the time.

50. The priests had completely different food from the food we all had. If you've ever seen the film, Angela's Ashes, it was like that, we were eating all the stuff that was left over at the end of the day and they had much better quality food.
51. What the priests did, to stop you talking, was to read out a book while you were eating. They did that at every meal. If someone was caught talking they would get the belt. Even if you were whispering you would get the belt.
52. If you didn't eat the food that was on the table, then someone else at the table would eat it. The food was bad though. We did get a cake on your birthday, but it was only for the four people at that table. It was just a wee sponge cake, you cut it in four and that was your birthday.

Washing/bathing

53. We had a shower once a week or if we had been playing football one day. Other than that you washed your face every night before bed and in the morning, Sometimes we had hot water other times not, it all depended on the heating system and occasionally it was just cold water. We did get soap, and we did have towels.

Clothing/uniform

54. We were all provided with clothes and shoes, but I had the same pair of shoes for nearly three years. I remember they broke and got sent to the cobbler to get fixed. They always did that instead of buying new shoes. Well they came back as unfixable they had to get me a new pair of shoes.
55. I got three of the strap from Father **LOE** for damaging those shoes by scuffing them. It was the same with clothes. The short pair of trousers we had, they never got washed and we were expected to wash our own underpants. We had one pair of

underpants, they lasted all week, then you washed them and hung them up on a heater.

Leisure time

56. When we were playing outside we were in locked grounds. I remember they once got about twenty pairs of roller skates for us to skate about the place and they had the cheek to charge us a shilling a week to hire the skates. It was so daft, and that was a shilling of your money just to play on some skates.
57. Once a week maybe twelve of us would go out and play football, down in a field that belonged to the local farmer. The farmer would cut the grass maybe once a month but it was just a normal field.
58. At recreation, after dinner, we had a pool table and there was a television room. We didn't get to choose what we watched. There wasn't much else for us to do.
59. We did get taken to Rosyth for swimming at the Royal Navy Base. We got to use their swimming pool because the priests would go up there to take confessions and the like.

Trips and holidays

60. There was a minibus that was used to take us to swimming at Rosyth. We only had that later in my time there, before that we hired a bus. It also got used to drop boys off to then walk back to the school. That would be on a Sunday, we would drive for a about ten miles and then get dropped off. The bus would then get more boys and do the same with them, it was just our Sunday walks.
61. We also went out to see things like the 'Sound of Music', I remember that. It was at the theatre in Edinburgh or Kirkcaldy, not a cinema.

62. I also remember that after my first week or so we went up to Aberdeen for the holidays. We stayed in a school in Aberdeen and we slept in camp beds. That was the whole school that went up there. We got taken round places and did things up there. I'm sure there was abuse on that trip.
63. There was a priest who abused a pupil there and he was caught. That was in the school we were staying in, in Aberdeen. Everyone knew about that and the police were there as well. I didn't see anything and I can't remember the name of the priest or the boy, that was involved in that.

Schooling

64. I couldn't read or write at St. John Bosco's and I wasn't the only one. I remember getting history classes and getting this one book, which was the same book, the whole three years I was there, William the Conqueror.
65. We got art, I remember that, and spelling, but I couldn't spell. No one was ever brought in to help me or to teach me to spell. Not for me or anyone else, we were just stuck up the back and left there, that was it. We did painting and things like that in the art class.
66. When I came away from St. John Bosco's and went to school, they realised I couldn't read or write. A teacher at the school realised I couldn't read or write so the school wrote a letter to St. John Bosco's asking why I couldn't read or write. All the school got back was four lines in a letter saying I was dyslexic, and that was that, there was no other explanation.
67. There were two separate classes at St. John Bosco's, one class and two class. One class was all different things and two class was more advanced things. I was never in two class. It was all based on your academic ability, there was about eighteen in each class.

68. It was two Brothers that took the classes, Brother LMW [REDACTED], who taught my class and another Brother, who I can't remember. They took all the classes all the time. We were never taught the facts of life, we were shown drawings and that was about it.

Healthcare

69. I never actually saw the matron deal with anything medically. I've no recollection of her dealing with boys who had cuts and bruises and things like that. One of the Brothers broke his leg when I was there, but I don't know how that was dealt with.
70. There was a doctor in the village, down at the seafront, and if anything happened to you, that's where you would be taken. I think I only saw him once, I can't remember why. We also got taken to the dentist in a car, I remember that, but that would only be if you complained about a sore tooth, there wasn't any check-ups or anything like that.

Religious instruction

71. I used to do prayers and go to the masonic hall and things like that with my grandfather and I remember when I was first in St. John Bosco's School I was asked to do an 'our father' prayer. I said the one I knew from memory and there was an old priest said I hadn't learnt it at a Catholic school. The one I said was obviously different from the Catholic one. This was when they realised I wasn't Catholic and that I had been brought up as a Protestant.
72. As a result of that they decided to make me a Catholic. So they gave me teaching in religion in the school and I became a Catholic. I got baptised in a church in Kirkcaldy, not at St. John Bosco's. At the end of the day I was the only Protestant that was at a Catholic school. It didn't really bother me, as I hadn't gone to school before that, so I didn't know anything else, but my parents weren't told, they knew nothing about any of that. I was about thirteen when that happened.

73. On a Sunday, the locals were allowed to come to the services with all the boys. I think there was even a marriage in the chapel at one point when I was there. We did get to talk to the locals and I do remember being told that we were not allowed to say St. John Bosco's was a residential home. I'm not sure why that was.
74. I was once asked by a couple how much it cost per term to be at the school and I just told them I didn't know. They priests liked the local people to think it was a boarding school and my impression was that they didn't want it broadcast that that wasn't the case.
75. We had prayers in the chapel every night at about 7 o'clock as well. That was for about an hour. It was long because that was Benediction at night. Everyone was also expected to do altar boy duties every week, when they were within the school. It was compulsory for all the boys to take a turn doing that.
76. If you didn't do the altar boy duties at mass in the morning then you did the Benediction at night. There would be three boys on the altar, one would have the incense and there would be one at either end of the thing. We just watched someone else doing it and copied them, it was day to day routine.
77. None of the boys ever wanted to go and give confession because two of the Brothers would always sit at the back of the chapel and where they were sitting was next to the confession box. Those two Brothers would have been able to hear what was being said in the confession box. When we had a visiting priest visiting the school taking the service, the two Brothers weren't sitting there so that would be when boys would feel secure giving confession.

Work

78. We went to church every day before breakfast, then, after our breakfast we had to do cleaning work. We had to do about an hour of work every day, Saturday and Sunday too, it was compulsory. We weren't forced but we had to do it. It was always cleaning, we would clean classrooms, corridors, showers, the library, just wherever

we were told to clean. It was hard work and we had to buff all the corridors with these big square cleaners with a cloth under it. It must have weighed between ten and twenty pounds and we buffed the floors with it.

79. One job was to clean the cellars that ran the length of the building for about sixty yards. They were black slate and we had to wash the floor from one end to the other and a couple of rooms that were down there as well.
80. The priests would come round afterwards and check all your work. After all that we went to class. We would be given a task and that task would last a month, that same job, every day for a month, then we would rotate those jobs.
81. For that task we were given two shillings a week, about ten pence in today's money. It doesn't sound a lot but to us, back then, it was a lot of money. That money went into your account and then, on a Saturday, you were allowed to spend one shilling on sweets. That would get you three bars of toffee, a bottle of ginger and two packets of crisps.
82. I do think back now and ask myself why were we cleaning and doing all those kind of things. No one ever came in to do those jobs, it was always down to the boys in the place. That was completely wrong.
83. We also did weeding on a Saturday or a Sunday, in the summer, and I used to hate that. We would go round the place cutting all the weeds. Nowadays you would have to do courses to be aware of things that are dangerous, but we were given a long pole with these hook things on it to do that job. We were in shorts and got stung by nettles and jagged by thistles and things.
84. Eventually the school hired a gardener and he stayed in a wee cottage at the end of the road with his family. After that he did all the gardening. We sometimes gave him a hand, but it was never as bad as before.

Personal possessions

85. I only remember one boy getting a present sent in from family. No one got anything, and I didn't. One boy got a ball sent through the post. No one had any possessions, nothing like that was allowed.

Bed Wetting

86. There were boys who wet the bed. I was told that a boy once wet his bed and had to share a bed with a Brother. After that they made one of the ground floor rooms, which had a toilet in it, a wet room, which was where they had extra sheets and pillow cases and things for people who wet the bed.
87. It was a room with beds for boys who wet the bed, but there were boys in there who didn't wet the bed, sometimes it would depend on available space and you just went where you were told to go.
88. If a boy wet the bed or worse, as they shit the bed as well, then that boy had to strip his bed, change the sheets and clean himself up. I didn't wet the bed but there was a lot of boys who did, especially around the age I was at. It didn't happen every night, maybe just once a month or once a week.

Visitors

89. The whole three years I was at St. John Bosco's I only saw my mother once. I never got a letter or a telephone call from my mother either. I never got to talk to her, it would just be a message that was passed on, if she did phone.

Running away

90. I never ran away. If I was going to run away I would have waited until I got home and then run away. It's silly to run away in a place where you don't know where you're running to. I would have been more wise than that and you were always going to get caught by the police anyway.

External Inspections

91. We did get visiting committees coming into the school from the council and they would walk around the school. The place was always clean for that as we were always cleaning and doing our daily tasks. The bright boys would stand at the front when we were spoken to, no one ever asked how we were getting on or how we were being treated. It was very basic comments and none of the boys would ever say anything.

Family contact

92. We were allowed to write one letter a week to our parents. Every letter was read by the Fathers or Brothers before it was sent. They gave you a letter and an envelope with a stamp on, but I just gave mine to someone else. I didn't get any letters and I struggled with the writing anyway.
93. The school was closed for Easter, summer and Christmas holidays. We had a week at Easter, two weeks in the summer and a week at Christmas. Then we would go home to our parents.
94. What I would say about that is that we were given no money for travelling. We got a bus ticket and got taken in the school bus into Queen Street bus station in Edinburgh. They wouldn't pay for us to get the train.

Discipline

95. Father **LOE** used to give boys the belt and that would be on your hands, other than one boy who got the cane, although that was more abuse than discipline.
96. The boy had run away, I was quite friendly with him, but I can't remember his name and the punishment he got, is, to this day, still in my mind. The police caught him and brought him back and I remember the day he was brought back and he got

whipped with a cane by Father [LOE]. That was the only time I know of, that anyone was caned in all my time there.

97. We were in a classroom and he was next-door in the gym and we could hear Father [LOE] running down the gym and hitting him with the cane. It would have been between four and six times, to my memory. We were all told that if we ran away that is what would happen to us.
98. A couple of days later that boy told me that he told the police about all the abuse when he was caught, and that was why he was running away. The police did nothing, that was the system we were in. We were just a commodity, the home was paid for us and that was it. There was also a culture of not to say anything. You just kept your mouth shut back in those days.
99. I saw the marks on that boys bottom, up to his pant line. Long marks across his bottom that were black and blue and he couldn't sit down. After about a week or ten days that boy disappeared, he was sent to another home or something like that. I never saw him again, he just wasn't there and nobody was told anything.
100. You would also get a slap or a clout over the head but you would just accept that as part of the punishment. It happened to most of the boys and was fairly common, it certainly happened most weeks.
101. I once saw a Father hit a boy on the back of the head for talking in class, but you would be happy with that if it stopped you being reported to Father [LOE] because you knew that would mean the belt.
102. You would usually get disciplined for not doing something. You could get reprimanded as well. I got it one day, when I was cleaning the floors and I hadn't put any wax polish on the floor. I had just buffed the floor and Father [LOE] wasn't happy with it, so he put big lumps of polish down on the floor and told me to re-polish the whole floor.

103. I got a cloth and rubbed some of the polish off the floor onto the cloth and put it in the bin. Then Father **LOE** found the cloth and he came and shouted me out of class, to his office. He gave me the belt on that occasion and told me it was about wasting money and not doing the job he'd asked to do.
104. I got four or six of the strap for that. That was the kind of man he was. He would have you hold both hands out facing up one under the other, and you switched them around after each strap.

Abuse at John St. Bosco's

105. Everybody got a shower once week at St. John Bosco's and when you were done, Father **LOE** got everyone to shout out that they were finished. Then he would come into the shower area to check you. You were naked and he would check all about you, get you to turn around and make sure you were clean or whatever. He would pull at your genitals and check underneath.
106. I think it was for his own gratification or something and I think he was checking the size of them or something. Then he would tell you to go and get ready. He would then move on to the next boy and so on. He did that in the showers every week.
107. Father **LOE** taught me and several other boys how to swim. He would cradle you in the water and hold you up, then when he was cradling you he would fondle your genitals. He did that while you were swimming around when he was in the water with you. Again I feel it was self-gratification on his part.
108. When I was in the room down the stairs, Father **LOE** would sit in a rocking chair reading the bible until about twelve o'clock at night. He was outside the rooms and if anybody talked or said anything in the room he would call you out to see him. He would then make you stand with your back to him.

109. That happened to me one night when I was talking to someone and he called me out. He had me standing in front of him looking at a big picture of Lourdes, which was on the wall. He had a big towel on his lap and he was sitting in the rocking chair, I didn't see what he was doing but I presumed he was masturbating underneath the towel. I remember I was petrified and he had me there for about half an hour before telling me to go back to my bed.
110. I didn't ever see Father [LOE] naked private parts, or see him aroused or anything like that. To me it was all about his self-gratification. He was definitely holding us inappropriately at the swimming.
111. Another time during swimming, me and another boy were just splashing about in the shallow end when Father [LOE] shouted at us and told us to get out and go and sit in the bus. He didn't do anything or say anything to us then, but when we got back to the school he gave us both what was called a 'bad conduct mark'.
112. I did ask one of the priests what that meant, and I was told it was some kind of punishment. Well the punishment turned out to be that when the holiday week came around we both had a day taken off our leave. So we were both kept on an extra day at the school. The other lad was in his dorm and I was in my dorm, for an extra day and night, with no other boys staying there.
113. Nothing happened to me that night but, I feel, something definitely happened to the other boy. The next day we were travelling to our homes together and he was totally silent, he never said a word, and looked completely shattered. He didn't tell me anything but something happened to that boy, somebody frightened that boy. I'm not saying it was Father [LOE] but he would have been staying over at that time and it was him who created that by giving us the bad conduct mark.
114. Father [LOE] was not a very nice person and he hated me. A lot of that comes from me having a Masonic Bible that I got from my grandad because Father [LOE] was raging mad when he found me with that. I never felt comfortable when I was anywhere near Father [LOE]. I remember he was addicted to snuff and he always

had cans of that lying about. He always had a can lying about. I would see them when I was doing my cleaning duties in the study or his office.

115. Brother [LMW] had his room at the top of the spiral staircase. When I reported him to the police in 2019, I said his name was [LMW] but I discovered from the prosecuting services that his name was Brother [LMW]
116. He was just under six feet tall, clean shaven with darkish hair and a Scottish accent. He always wore a black suit and shirt, very seldom the cassock that the other Brothers would wear. I remember he always had these pens in his top pocket, they could write in all different colours, you didn't see them in those days, they could only have just been invented.
117. Brother [LMW] was at St. John Bosco's when I arrived there and he was still there when I left. He was in that same bedroom all that time.
118. About six months into my spell at St. John Bosco's, I think it was 1962, I was sitting in my room, at the top of the spiral stairs. My door was open, which was normal, we would always have our doors open. It was dark in my room and I was masturbating, as young boys do. All of a sudden the light came on and it was Brother [LMW] [LMW] he had caught me. He told me to get out my bed and he took me to his room.
119. He then put his arm around my shoulders and he was saying it was alright, that it happens in life and things like that. Before I knew it he had me backwards with one hand on my back, and I didn't know what he was doing or what to do.
120. I was in my pyjamas and all of a sudden he had his penis out and was trying to get it round the back and under my pyjamas. He was moving behind me and then he pulled my pyjamas down and started penetrating me. That carried on for two or three minutes and then he ejaculated inside me. He told me not to worry about it and I pulled up my pyjamas and asked to go downstairs to the toilet.

121. I remember it was just sperm that was coming out when I was doing the toilet. After that I wet myself and I tried to clean myself up. I went back up stairs and he was at the top of the stairs and he told me I was alright and to just go and lie down.
122. First thing the next morning I got up and I felt an urge to go to the toilet. I was in the toilet and it was just diarrhoea and blood that was coming out me. I didn't know what to do so I wiped myself with my underpants, brushed my teeth, washed my face and went back up the stairs. Brother LMW was watching me all the time when I went back up.
123. I was mopping a corridor once, in a part of the school, it was in a basement area. There was a woodworking room off this corridor and while I was mopping the corridor Brother LMW came out that room with a boy. He looked at me and then locked the door and walked away with the boy.
124. I don't know what happened in there, but the two of them were in that room and the wee boy looked upset. At the end of the day I never seen anything but if a boy comes forward reporting abuse in that room, I saw them both come out that room.

Reporting of abuse at John St. Bosco's

125. There really wasn't anyone you could go to at the school, to talk to about anything, you just wouldn't trust them. The matron was just a matron, she cleaned sheets and things like that, so you weren't going to speak to her.
126. The day after Brother LMW abused me was a Sunday, and we would go to chapel an hour later on a Sunday, because all the locals could come along as well. I remember there was a visiting priest that Sunday, they had a visiting priest once a month, to hear confessions.
127. I spoke to that priest in the confession box but not as a confession, I was just looking for advice. I told him I had a problem and told him what had happened to me the

night before. I explained everything to him and told him it had been Brother LMW who had been responsible.

128. The priest told me I shouldn't let people do things like that to me, and he asked if I had told anybody else. I said I hadn't. He said I could go to the Father for the school and speak to him. That was about it. I was just talking to him like I'm talking to you just now. I don't suppose he would be obliged to record that in terms of a confession.
129. Then, about dinner time, I was outside and I saw Brother LMW and the visiting priest walking up and down in the yard. They were talking to each other and looking at me. The next day about 11 o'clock, we had about half an hour of play and Father Rector came in the gates and shouted me over. He didn't say anything other than to tell me to go up the stairs to my room, get all my stuff from my bed and locker and bring it down, as I was going to be put down the stairs in a room beside Father LOE
130. I knew right away that the visiting priest must have said something to Brother LMW who had obviously gone straight to Father Rector and said something different to cover his back, maybe about me masturbating or whatever the case may be. Father Rector never said a word to me about anything else. I just kept my mouth shut after that and Brother LMW just stayed where he was, nothing happened to him.
131. I don't remember the name of the visiting priest, he did tell me his name and it will be on the school records, but I can't remember it now. I had seen him at St. John Bosco's several times, him and many other priests would come on visits.
132. People knew things like that were happening, they just weren't saying anything about them. Some of the boys up the stair actually knew. We all knew not to go by Brother LMW room at night, that's why his door was open, so we didn't go by it or go to the toilet at night. You made sure you went to the toilet before lights out.

133. None of the other boys told me about any abuse from Brother LMW but none of them would, you just presumed things were going on and watched what you did. Everyone was wary of him and scared of him.
134. Brother LMW never sexually assaulted me again, he just kept out my road all the time, from then on, at the school. He was a teacher, he taught technical drawing art and woodwork. He also drove the vehicles, minibuses and things like that.
135. I didn't receive any medical treatment but I wouldn't have gone for any had I had the chance. The bleeding and diarrhoea stopped after a couple of days.

Leaving St. John Bosco's

136. I left St. John Bosco's about two months before I was fifteen. When I left I could barely read and write. We were told we were going to another school and that was that.
137. St. John Bosco's sent us to another school, just before we finished there, so that when we finished schooling, we were coming from a public school and not from St. John Bosco's. I think I went to the Sacred Heart in Bridgeton, and I was only there for about six weeks.

Life after being in care

138. My mother had a house in Bridgeton by the time I was leaving St. John Bosco's so I went to stay there with her and that was the start of my working life.
139. My first job was at Glasgow Cross and I was delivering milk to commercial premises. I was with them for a couple of years.

140. I met my wife when I was about sixteen or seventeen and we've been together ever since, over fifty years now. We have a daughter and a son. My son died about four or five years ago.
141. I joined the Territorial Army and was with them for five years before I got pensioned out because I had a bad fall when I was parachuting and broke my leg in four places.
142. I bought a garage and I ran that for about thirty years. It was mechanical repairs and MOT's things like that. I sold that when I was fifty five when my wife retired.
143. Since then I have been a lollipop man and I enjoy that, it gets me out the house in the morning and gets me talking to people, so that's good.

Impact

144. I've tried to kill myself twice. I have had psychiatric treatment. The first time was about forty years ago, in the 80's, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I spent one or two days in hospital.
145. My wife was a social worker, she's retired now. I've never been able to tell my wife about everything, but she knew something had happened. About twenty to twenty five years ago she decided to write to St. John Bosco's. We got a reply and they invited me to go there to see the place. It was actually a council run establishment at that time. I walked around the place with a chap and he told me that the two people concerned with my abuse were dead. That did help and I put that to the back of my mind.
146. The second time was in 2019 after I gave my statement to the police. About a month after I just kept thinking and thinking about the things that had happened to me when I was in care. Now that it was all out in the open, it was really affecting my life and I just couldn't handle it. I drove through to Aberdour and I had nothing on my mind but [REDACTED] I sat on a bench and my mind was gone, I just wanted to get rid

of everything. It was actually an old black cat that came up and sat on my lap that stopped me from seeing it through, it seemed to calm me down.

147. I wouldn't be part of the Catholic faith now because of what's happened to me. You think of a priest as a good person but when they do things like that it makes you think they are bad. There must be good priests but I seem to have just had bad ones.
148. I'm still not great at reading and writing but my computer in the house has predicted text so that helps me. I don't think it's done me any great harm though, as I got through the army with it and I am brilliant at maths.
149. I feel I should have come out of St. John Bosco's with an education and had an opportunity to go to university. I should have been able to go on and do anything.

Treatment/support

150. I have seen three different psychiatrists and received medication. They all had words with me and I've told them about the things that happened to me during my time in care. I've been seeing psychiatrists ever since.
151. All the psychiatrists can really do is talk to you and put you on tablets and it was about then that my wife started to realise something was wrong.

Reporting of Abuse

152. After I came out of St. John Bosco's I never told anyone about what happened there. I didn't even tell my wife. Even when I took my overdose [REDACTED] I didn't tell the doctor I saw back then, thirty odd years ago. I did tell the doctors after the second suicide attempt. I didn't want anyone to know, I was ashamed of it all and I didn't want to speak about it.

153. It wasn't until 2019 that I actually reported the abuse. It was a DC Walker from Fife that contacted me and came to Glasgow to take my statement. I asked how he came to find me and he told me that someone else had mentioned my name and they had then tracked me down. It was such a weight off my mind to be told that the police had arrested LMW and that he had been charged. Especially when I thought he had been dead for many years.
154. So the police showed me photographs and I picked out Father LOE and Brother LMW. There was going to be a big case, but it took that long for the Crown Office to bring the case to court that Brother LMW died before it got to court.
155. It was actually a relief to get the letter, saying he had died, because going to court would have brought all the stress of giving evidence and being cross examined. I don't know how I would have handled that.

Records

156. I haven't made any official request for any of my records from St. John Bosco's. That is something I have thought about and I don't think it will get me anywhere. I don't want them now. I would like to know how LMW came to die, but that's about it.

Lessons to be Learned

157. I should have had a social report with me when I went into care. There was no history provided of my childhood before I went into care and then no one asked about me. I was just processed and no one ever saw any reports about me.

158. If that had been done I would have gone to the right place. I wouldn't have been a Protestant in a Catholic school. In that respect it was a complete waste of time, although I think a school should be for everybody, not different religions.
159. They had no inclination as to what a child needed, we were just seen as commodities, that was it. I didn't even learn to read and write, that was all so wrong. They could even have brought in an outside person to help. It was all wrong from the very start.

Hopes for the Inquiry

160. If you look at the law just now the people who commit these kind of abusive crimes are getting community service. In my day it was like three strikes and you're out, the judges had no hesitation in sending anybody to jail. Now they try to keep people out of jail because it costs too much money.
161. Kids like me, when I was sent to St. John Bosco's, need to get taught and need to get taught right. If I'd stayed at Larchgrove I'm sure everything would have been different. I don't think sending kids to an institution was the thing to do. All I got was three years of hell and a lifetime of misery.
162. I dare say it will continue to happen in the future but I hope the Inquiry can do something to prevent it. We should make sure that people know they have a lot to lose if they abuse children.
163. 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..... 

Dated..... 15 / 12 / 2020

