

1 Wednesday, 6 June 2018

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Yes, Mr MacAulay.

4 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, the next witness who wants to remain
5 anonymous will give evidence under the name of
6 "Sister Zara". This is a witness that would require to
7 be warned, my Lady, as well.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

9 "SISTER ZARA" (sworn)

10 LADY SMITH: Please sit down and make yourself comfortable.
11 Sister, you will see the microphone is now on. It's
12 very important that you do use the microphone so that
13 everybody can hear you and in particular the
14 stenographers can pick up your voice through the sound
15 system.

16 Before I hand over to Mr MacAulay to ask questions,
17 there are a couple of things that I want to say to you.
18 I think you probably remember that you've already been
19 told that although this is a public inquiry and not
20 a trial, you still have a right not to incriminate
21 yourself and I think it has been explained to you that
22 that means that if you say you have been involved, you
23 were involved, in the abuse of children, that could lead
24 to you being asked further questions about it, but
25 you aren't obliged to answer those questions.

1 If you do choose to answer though, and it's your
2 choice, your answers will be recorded, they will be
3 in the transcript from the hearing, and they could be
4 used as evidence at any time in the future in any future
5 proceedings. It is important that you understand that
6 this continues to apply at the hearing just as it
7 applied when you were being interviewed to provide
8 a statement for the inquiry. You continue to have this
9 right not to incriminate yourself, so if you tell us
10 when answering questions that you were involved in the
11 abuse of children, and you're asked further questions,
12 you don't have to answer them. You can answer them, but
13 it's your choice as to whether you do or not, but again,
14 they will be recorded and be available for the future if
15 required. Do you understand that?

16 A. Yes, I understand.

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. I'll now pass over to
18 Mr MacAulay.

19 Questions from MR MacAULAY

20 MR MacAULAY: Good morning, sister.

21 A. Good morning.

22 Q. Can I take from you the year of your birth, not the date
23 of your birth. Can you confirm for me that you were
24 born in 1942?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. In the red folder, sister, you'll find your statement.
2 Can I take you to that. I'll give the reference to the
3 stenographers: it's WIT.001.001.7092. If I could ask
4 you, sister, to turn to the very last page of the
5 statement at page 7125. Can you confirm that you have
6 signed the statement?

7 A. Yes, I have.

8 Q. Do you say in the last paragraph of the statement:

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

11 Is that right?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Do you go on to say:

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

16 Is that right?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. While you have the folder in front of you, if you turn
19 to the very beginning of the folder, you'll find there
20 what I tend to describe as a key, whereby on the
21 right-hand side you have the name of certain persons
22 and, on the left, the pseudonym that that particular
23 person has chosen. If I refer you to a particular
24 pseudonym, clearly I don't want you to disclose the name
25 of that pseudonym; do you understand?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Sister, can then I go back to when you joined the
3 Sisters of Nazareth. I think you say in your statement
4 at paragraph 2 that you joined the order on
5 [REDACTED] 1962.

6 A. Yes. That's right.

7 Q. When were you professed as a nun?

8 A. My first profession was [REDACTED] 1964.

9 Q. I think you tell us in your statement that you did
10 a number of things before you went to Nazareth House in
11 Aberdeen; is that right?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. According to what you tell us in your statement, you
14 went to Nazareth House Aberdeen in 1968.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And you left in 1972?

17 A. Around that time, yes. I forget the actual time, but it
18 was then.

19 LADY SMITH: So you'd be about 26 or so, 25/26, when you
20 went to Aberdeen, were you?

21 A. Yes.

22 LADY SMITH: And 30-odd when you left?

23 A. Yes.

24 MR MacAULAY: You left, I think, to go to Nazareth House in
25 Lasswade.

- 1 A. That's correct, yes.
- 2 Q. And you stayed there from about 1972 to 1975?
- 3 A. That's correct.
- 4 Q. So for quite a considerable period of time you were
5 working with children in the Scottish Nazareth Houses?
- 6 A. Yes, that's right.
- 7 Q. After 1975, did you go elsewhere?
- 8 A. 1975, I went to -- it's called [REDACTED] in [REDACTED],
9 in the north of Ireland.
- 10 Q. Did 1975 see you end your connection with Scotland at
11 that time?
- 12 A. At that time, yes.
- 13 Q. So far as going to Aberdeen was concerned, sister, were
14 you just told to go there by the Superior?
- 15 A. I was --
- 16 Q. Had you made any --
- 17 A. -- the Superior General.
- 18 Q. Yes. I think that's the way things were: you were told
19 to go and if you were told --
- 20 A. In those times, yes.
- 21 Q. -- you had to go?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Did you have any experience or training in working with
24 children?
- 25 A. Well, I was brought up in a large family, so that's the

1 training that I had. That's where I took my doctorate
2 out in childcare.

3 Q. Sorry?

4 A. I took my doctorate out in childcare with my brothers in
5 a large family.

6 LADY SMITH: I appreciate what you're saying, but I think
7 what Mr MacAulay is getting at is whether you had had
8 any training about how to go about looking after other
9 people's children, people who are not family.

10 A. No, not at that time I didn't.

11 MR MacAULAY: When you went to Aberdeen, you were going, as
12 you've just told us a few moments ago, as a junior
13 sister.

14 A. Yes. That's right.

15 Q. Were you then attached to another more senior sister?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Who was that?

18 A. Sister [REDACTED] LFB

19 Q. Had she been in Aberdeen for some time before you?

20 A. She was.

21 Q. When you went there then and you were with
22 Sister [REDACTED] LFB, were you allocated a particular group of
23 children?

24 A. I was.

25 Q. What was the group?

1 A. There were sometimes 20, sometimes 24 in a group, aged
2 from about 7 to 14.

3 Q. And they were boys?

4 A. All boys.

5 Q. And what you're saying, sister, you worked on the boys'
6 side of Nazareth House?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Did you work in conjunction with Sister [REDACTED] LFB ? Did
9 you both look after the same group of boys rather than
10 dividing the group up in any way?

11 A. There were two groups: Sister [REDACTED] LFB was upstairs,
12 I was downstairs.

13 Q. So the group itself was divided into two?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And so far as your group was concerned, how large was
16 that group?

17 A. Sometimes 20, sometimes 24.

18 Q. I see. What about Sister [REDACTED] LFB 's group?

19 A. She would have been around the same.

20 Q. So did you and Sister [REDACTED] LFB in effect look after all
21 the boys that were in Nazareth House --

22 A. Yes --

23 Q. -- at that time?

24 A. -- although I think some of the younger boys might have
25 been over in the girls' side.

1 Q. Yes. I think we've heard some evidence that very young
2 children might have been in the girls' side and when
3 they came to a particular age --

4 A. They came up to the boys, that's right.

5 Q. So if I look at numbers that have been provided to us by
6 the order -- this is at NAZ.001.001.0265. If you just
7 orientate yourself, you'll see this is described as:

8 "Statistics of numbers of children and babies at
9 Scottish Nazareth Houses (1925 to 1984)."

10 If you look to the left-hand column where we have
11 the heading "Aberdeen", and move down the page, can you
12 see, a few entries from the bottom -- certainly the
13 suggestion here is that in 1968 there were 37 boys, but
14 that's jumped up to, by 1969, 41. Do you see that?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. These are the figures that have been provided. So if
17 your groups were roughly divided in half, you'd have up
18 to about 20, certainly, in each group if you were
19 covering all the boys?

20 A. Yes.

21 LADY SMITH: And, of course, we have to bear in mind that
22 this reads as though it was a statistic for a snapshot
23 at the end of the year and not an averaging-out over
24 12 months. I think that's right, Mr MacAulay, isn't it?

25 MR MacAULAY: That is right, yes.

1 LADY SMITH: It tells us what the position was at -- I think
2 it's the end of the year each year. So the numbers may
3 have varied during the year, and that would fit with
4 your feel of about 20 boys, maybe more than that at
5 times.

6 A. Yes.

7 MR MacAULAY: Did you have any help, sister, looking to your
8 own group, in looking after the boys?

9 A. Yes. We had like part-time staff and also a cleaner.

10 Q. Did the part-time staff cover both of the boys' groups?

11 A. No, no, sister [REDACTED] had her own staff and then
12 I would have maybe one full-time staff.

13 Q. Can I just get some idea as to where your group was
14 located within that Nazareth House? Can you help me
15 with that? Did you say a moment ago you were on the
16 second floor?

17 A. I was on the first floor and Sister [REDACTED] was on the
18 second floor.

19 Q. But do I take it from what you've said that
20 Sister [REDACTED] was in overall charge?

21 A. Yes, she was.

22 Q. What was your role, sister?

23 A. I was like a housemother.

24 Q. Could you just develop that for me? What do you mean by
25 that?

1 A. Like an ordinary home where the mother will look after
2 her children. And, with the help of the staff, that's
3 what I did.

4 Q. Then looking at the staff, what did you see the duties
5 of the staff to be?

6 A. They would help with the staff getting them up in the
7 mornings. We had Mass and while we were at Mass, then
8 they started getting the children up about half 7,
9 getting them washed, getting them dressed, and then when
10 I came back from Mass, then we would help with the
11 breakfast.

12 Q. One thing you say in your statement in paragraph 6 --
13 it's the paragraph on the screen -- you say there that:
14 "A lot of the children that [you were] dealing with
15 were from the east end of Glasgow."

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Is that correct?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Not Aberdeen then, it was children from Glasgow?

20 A. Most other places, yes, and Dundee and maybe one or two
21 from Stirling.

22 Q. You go on to say:

23 "A lot of the children were dysfunctional."

24 I just want to understand what you meant by that.

25 A. Well, I think, you know, when they're taken from their

1 normal parents, it's not easy for them then to come into
2 care and to be looked after by somebody else, no matter
3 what the parents might have been, you know. They're
4 still -- it was their parents.

5 Q. In what way did they display this dysfunctional --

6 A. Sometimes by their behaviour, maybe sometimes they'd go
7 out and start stealing and things like that.

8 Q. There has been some suggestion from other sisters that
9 the children were generally well-behaved at
10 Nazareth House; was that your own experience?

11 A. Well, I suppose on the whole they were, probably, yes.
12 You always have the odd one that would be sort of, you
13 know, getting into trouble at school or getting into
14 trouble on the way ...

15 Q. Okay. What information were you given as to the
16 background of the children that you were looking after?

17 A. Not very much at all.

18 Q. Were there any records that you could look at to see
19 what the backgrounds were?

20 A. No.

21 Q. And did that --

22 A. Not that I can remember.

23 Q. Did that remain the position throughout your time in
24 Aberdeen?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. What about Sister [REDACTED] LFB ? Do you know if she had any
2 access to information that would help in relation to the
3 background of the children?

4 A. No, I wouldn't know.

5 Q. You wouldn't know?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Did she ever discuss with you that you can remember the
8 children's backgrounds?

9 A. No.

10 Q. When you got there, did you have any what one would
11 refer to as an induction process? By that I mean being
12 told about the children, what your duties were and so on
13 and so forth? Did you have that -- go through that sort
14 of process?

15 A. No.

16 Q. So how then did you, as it were, get up and running?

17 A. Well, you just went over and you just, you know, sort of
18 got started in and talked to the staff and found out
19 from the staff what was the routine and you took it from
20 there.

21 LADY SMITH: Can I just take you back a moment? In answer
22 to the query about what you meant by "dysfunctional",
23 you said:

24 "Sometimes the children would go out and start
25 stealing and things like that."

1 How often are you talking about children going out
2 and stealing? How often did that happen?

3 A. Maybe once or twice a week.

4 LADY SMITH: So what did you do about it?

5 A. I spoke with them about it and how wrong it was.

6 I remember one boy in particular came back to me about
7 a month after and said, you know, thanks for telling me
8 that, and he was stopping stealing.

9 LADY SMITH: Right. Did you report it?

10 A. No, I didn't.

11 LADY SMITH: Why not?

12 A. I ... I just dealt with it and that's what I thought
13 was the best thing to do.

14 LADY SMITH: Were these children who had come to you as part
15 of the approved school element of Nazareth House?

16 A. No, not on the boys' side.

17 LADY SMITH: Right. Okay, thank you.

18 MR MacAULAY: Yes, I think the approved school was
19 exclusively on the girls' side.

20 A. That's right.

21 Q. I may not look at this with you, but there came a point
22 in time when the approved school was no longer an
23 approved school in Aberdeen. Do you know about that?

24 A. No. When I left Aberdeen, it was still there on the
25 girls' side, the approved girls.

- 1 Q. Very well. Another thing you say, sister, in
2 paragraph 7 is that -- and I just want to understand
3 what you mean by this -- that when you were there, no
4 child left the group. Is that what you mean in
5 paragraph 7? It's that sentence where you say:
6 "I am asked if there was a typical length of time
7 for children to spend in Nazareth House. When I was
8 there nobody left."
9 A. As far as I can remember, yes.
- 10 Q. I was puzzled by that because if you were there for the
11 years that you were there, the older children -- would
12 they not get to an age when they would be leaving?
13 A. Not while I was there. Nobody left.
- 14 Q. Does that apply to both the groups, the whole of the
15 Sister [REDACTED] LFB group?
16 A. I wouldn't know about Sister [REDACTED] LFB 's, whether anybody
17 left hers or not.
- 18 Q. So does that mean then that if that's the case, your
19 children must all have been very young children?
20 A. Well, like some of them would have been only about 9 or
21 10 when I went there first.
- 22 Q. If you were there for four years and you had
23 a 12-year-old, then that child would be 16 by the time
24 you came to leave. Would a child of 16 still be at
25 Nazareth House?

- 1 A. There was nobody at 16 when I was there.
- 2 Q. No, what I'm putting to you is: would it be the case,
3 from what you're saying, sister, that you probably
4 wouldn't have a child as old as 12 in your group?
- 5 A. Not when I went there first, no.
- 6 Q. Okay. I think the other thing you say is you saw no new
7 children come into your group when you were there;
8 is that right?
- 9 A. No -- that's correct, yes, sorry.
- 10 Q. Do I take it then that you had this fairly steady group
11 of children during your four years?
- 12 A. In the time I was there, yes.
- 13 Q. What about Sister [REDACTED] LFB 's group?
- 14 A. I think she got a few from the girls' side whose
15 brothers were already in her group. There was a family
16 there and she had the older children and the two younger
17 ones had been over to the girls' side.
- 18 Q. Do I take it from what you said that you got no children
19 from the girls' side?
- 20 A. No.
- 21 Q. What about the accommodation then? What was the set-up?
- 22 A. The bedrooms were on the third floor and most of them --
23 there was either three or four boys in each room. They
24 had a little locker each and then there was a wardrobe
25 for the whole lot of them.

1 Q. Were the bedrooms allocated to children as within the
2 group? So would the children in your group be together
3 in a bedroom?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And likewise for Sister [REDACTED] LFB ?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. In your statement, sister, you provide some information
8 about the daily routine. For example, I think you tell
9 us that, in relation to food, the food was good.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Is that correct?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. As one of the sisters, did you eat the same food as the
14 children?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. If children did not eat their food, would anything
17 happen?

18 A. No, not in my time.

19 Q. Did you ever see a child either being told to eat his or
20 her food --

21 A. No.

22 Q. -- or punished in any way?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Did your group have its own dining area?

25 A. Yes, we did. Each group had their own dining area and

- 1 dining room.
- 2 Q. Just to be clear: would your group and Sister [REDACTED] LFB 's
3 group dine at the same time in the same area or would
4 they be separate?
- 5 A. Around the same time, but there'd be separate areas.
- 6 Q. So far as bedtime was concerned, I think you tell us in
7 your statement, again just looking at the routine, that
8 that would vary according to the age of the children;
9 is that right?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. Can you give me some feel for what bedtimes you're
12 talking about?
- 13 A. Probably from about 8 o'clock on. Like, the younger
14 ones would go first and one the staff or myself would go
15 up with them. Then the rest would be watching
16 television, maybe until 9 or 9.30. If there was
17 a football match on, they would stay up later, the older
18 ones.
- 19 Q. You also mention bed-wetting in that particular part of
20 your statement. Can you help me with this? Were there
21 children in your group who wet the bed?
- 22 A. I'm sure there was one or two, but I'm not -- I can't
23 really fully remember.
- 24 Q. How did you deal with bed-wetting.?
- 25 A. The staff -- the staff would get them up, they would

- 1 take the sheets off and bathe the boys.
- 2 Q. Were children punished or humiliated for wetting the
- 3 bed?
- 4 A. Not that I remember or seen.
- 5 Q. So far as schooling was concerned, we've heard some
- 6 evidence that the children would be taken to school on
- 7 the bus.
- 8 A. That's right.
- 9 Q. But were the sexes separated on the bus?
- 10 A. They were.
- 11 Q. Was that the general approach within the house itself,
- 12 that the boys and girls were kept separate?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Was that the position throughout your time at
- 15 Nazareth House?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. What was the thinking behind that particular approach?
- 18 A. I don't know. Like, in the 1960s every school or
- 19 boarding school was -- it wasn't mixed in those days,
- 20 I don't think.
- 21 LADY SMITH: But sister, this was a home and there might
- 22 have been brothers and sisters amongst the children.
- 23 They weren't even allowed to be together on the bus.
- 24 A. No, unfortunately, yes, that's right.
- 25 LADY SMITH: Do you see what I'm getting at?

1 A. Yes.

2 LADY SMITH: This wasn't a school; it was supposed to
3 replicate the children's home where they would see their
4 brothers and sisters.

5 A. They would see them getting on and off the bus.

6 LADY SMITH: But they weren't allowed to be together?

7 A. No.

8 LADY SMITH: Was there some fear that something terrible
9 would happen if boys and girls mixed?

10 A. I don't know. I can't answer that question.

11 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

12 MR MacAULAY: I think we had evidence from one particular
13 former resident who, notwithstanding his efforts to try
14 and see his sisters, he wasn't able to do that. Was
15 that the case, that children were prevented, boys were
16 prevented from going across to see a sibling sister?

17 A. That I can't answer.

18 Q. So far as bathing is concerned, you also deal with that
19 at paragraph 13. What you say is that they had a bath
20 a number of times every week. You go on to say that you
21 would draw fresh water for each bath. Is that correct?

22 A. As far as I can remember, yes.

23 Q. Again, there has been evidence that children would
24 essentially be queueing up for baths and one would go in
25 after the other into the same water. Was that --

1 A. I can't remember them queueing up for baths, no, because
2 there was always a member of staff there doing baths or
3 myself.

4 Q. So you yourself would be involved in that process?

5 A. Yes, I would be there as well, yes.

6 Q. Was Jeyes fluid involved?

7 A. No, I did not use Jeyes fluid.

8 Q. Did you have any knowledge of Jeyes fluid being used?

9 A. No.

10 Q. And you didn't use it for anything?

11 A. No.

12 Q. You also tell us, sister, in your statement at
13 paragraph 14 that the children had toys and could play
14 games; is that right?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. You mentioned football and cricket. Was there anyone
17 who coached the children in these sports?

18 A. I used to go out with them and teach them.

19 Q. I think we did hear that you were a keen football
20 player.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Can I say, sister, because this is no longer your name,
23 you are referred to in evidence as "Sister LFZ".

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Was that your name at the time?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. [REDACTED]

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And what about cricket?

5 A. Yes. I did cricket as well. We had them involved in --

6 I think it was an under-16 league -- but it only lasted

7 about a year -- to get them involved in the community.

8 So we had a team and they were called The Happy

9 Wanderers.

10 Q. Did the children have to do chores?

11 A. Just the usual helping with the drying-up after the

12 meals, maybe setting the tables -- and I know one of the

13 boys went to the church to help sister.

14 Q. What about polishing floors and cleaning toilets? Did

15 any of the children do that?

16 A. No, no.

17 Q. Who did that sort of work?

18 A. We had a cleaner for that.

19 Q. So far as Christmas was concerned, was that celebrated,

20 sister?

21 A. Yes, it was.

22 Q. In what way?

23 A. They always went to the midnight Mass and then we came

24 back and they had toys or we had that in the morning --

25 and they had their Christmas dinner.

- 1 Q. And birthdays, were birthdays celebrated?
- 2 A. Well, yes, as far as we could, because there wasn't much
3 finance around in those times, and one of the things
4 they did -- they didn't do their chores on their
5 birthdays.
- 6 Q. How would you know it was a particular child's birthday
7 on a particular day?
- 8 A. You'd have it in their records.
- 9 Q. So there were records then that you could have access
10 to?
- 11 A. Well, just the normal, like, date of birth, where they
12 were born, where they came from.
- 13 Q. So where were these records kept?
- 14 A. In the office, in the Superior's room.
- 15 Q. So can I just understand then, would you be looking at
16 these records on a regular basis?
- 17 A. Not on a regular basis, but, yeah, often.
- 18 Q. And apart from the date of birth and where they may have
19 come from, what else was contained in the records?
- 20 A. That's about all -- and their parents, who their parents
21 were.
- 22 Q. When you say "office", was this Sister [REDACTED] LFB 's office?
- 23 A. No, the Sister Superior's office.
- 24 Q. So just so I can understand, if you were to focus on
25 a particular child and you wanted to know that

1 particular child's birthday, you'd have to go and look
2 to see when that would be?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. But what would prompt you to go and look?

5 A. You might be looking for something else at the same
6 time -- something might have happened and maybe the
7 social worker was coming to visit them or something.

8 Q. So it could be quite coincidental then that you could
9 focus that a particular child's birthday was on
10 a particular day?

11 A. It could be.

12 LADY SMITH: And that could mean that you could miss
13 a child's birthday?

14 A. Yes.

15 LADY SMITH: And some of these children didn't know when
16 their birthdays were, so they wouldn't know to tell you;
17 isn't that right?

18 A. That's right.

19 LADY SMITH: It would have been quite simple to keep a diary
20 system of putting children's birthdays into a diary,
21 wouldn't it?

22 A. Well, in hindsight, yes.

23 LADY SMITH: That wasn't done?

24 A. No.

25 LADY SMITH: Sorry to take you back, but you were talking

1 about baths a few minutes ago and you say you think you
2 remember fresh water being drawn for every bath.

3 A. Yes.

4 LADY SMITH: And you had over 20 children to bath.

5 A. They wouldn't all be bathing at the same time.

6 LADY SMITH: How many would you bath at the same time?

7 A. Maybe 7 or 8. They wouldn't be bathing every night.

8 LADY SMITH: That's still 7 or 8 baths to be drawn off
9 a water system at the same time as Sister [REDACTED] 's
10 group would be drawing water off the water system.

11 A. She mightn't be bathing at the same time. I wouldn't
12 know what routine she had.

13 LADY SMITH: That's asking quite a lot of a water system in
14 an old house, isn't it?

15 A. Yes.

16 LADY SMITH: I just wondered if your recollection was really
17 accurate about that. Mm? Is it possible that children
18 did have to use the same water one after the other?

19 That's possible, isn't it?

20 A. It might have been possible, it might have been
21 possible.

22 LADY SMITH: Yes.

23 Mr MacAulay.

24 MR MacAULAY: We've already spoken about the fact that
25 children with siblings of different sexes generally did

1 not have contact, but was any thought given during your
2 time, sister, to organising some degree of socialisation
3 between family members, organising for children on
4 occasions to meet up with other family members?

5 A. Well, if we went on an outing, we usually went on an
6 outing for everybody, at least once a year, so they
7 would mix then.

8 Q. I had in mind a more regular type of arrangement.

9 A. No.

10 Q. Can I now, sister, ask you about discipline and
11 punishment. When you arrived at Nazareth House
12 Aberdeen, were you given any advice or guidance as to
13 how a child ought to be disciplined?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Were you given any advice or guidance as to how a child
16 should be punished?

17 A. No.

18 Q. And throughout your time there, did you receive any such
19 guidance or advice?

20 A. No.

21 Q. What about Sister [REDACTED] LFB ? Did she discuss with you at
22 any time how the children under her general care ought
23 to be disciplined?

24 A. No, not really.

25 Q. Is that --

- 1 A. But when I did a childcare course when I was in
2 Aberdeen -- I think it was in my second year there --
3 I learned a lot from that.
- 4 Q. Was that an one-year course?
- 5 A. A one-year course.
- 6 Q. So that would have been in 1969 or thereabouts?
- 7 A. About 1969/1970, yes. It might have been 1970.
- 8 Q. Well, can I then just focus, sister, on what you say
9 yourself that you would do if, let's say, a child has
10 been misbehaving. What would you do?
- 11 A. You'd try and talk to them first and, you know, make
12 them realise what they were doing wasn't right, but,
13 like, they weren't punished, they weren't verbally --
14 they weren't abused and I would take -- they'd miss out
15 on their television.
- 16 Q. Yes. You say they were not abused and I understand
17 that, but what about a degree of what one would call
18 corporal punishment?
- 19 A. No.
- 20 Q. Something like the strap or a smack?
- 21 A. No, no.
- 22 Q. Was any record kept, so far as you can remember, of any
23 punishments that were given to children?
- 24 A. I can't remember, no.
- 25 Q. When you were giving your statement, sister, I think

1 a number of allegations were put to you in the course of
2 giving your statement. For example, in paragraphs 30
3 through to 42 you're asked about allegations that were
4 made by a former resident, and you'll see that her name
5 in the key at the front for these purposes is the
6 pseudonym "Jill". You'll see the name across from
7 there; do you see that?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. This particular witness provided evidence about certain
10 treatment that she received from Sister [LTX] and
11 Sister [FAF], and I think these allegations were
12 put to you. Do you remember that?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. For example, Sister [LTX] referring to certain
15 children as "Glasgow tinks" and slapping and hitting
16 children. Were you aware of any of that sort of
17 behaviour going on?

18 A. Oh, I wouldn't know because I was on the other side of
19 the house. So I wouldn't have known what was going on
20 in the girls' side.

21 Q. If you turn to page 33, what is said there is:

22 "Just out of the blue, Sister [LTX] started to
23 hit us. It was a real battering. She hit us with her
24 knuckles -- this was into our heads and backs, basically
25 anywhere she could get into us. Sister [LTX] wore

1 a rope as part of her uniform and she took this off on
2 her belt and started to hit us with the belt."

3 You knew Sister [REDACTED] LTX ; is that right?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Was she a friend of yours?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Did she have a temper?

8 A. That I can't say, really.

9 Q. Well, did you ever see her lose her temper?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Just looking at this behaviour, am I to understand that
12 you never saw behaviour of this kind?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Did you hear of it?

15 A. No.

16 Q. What you say towards the bottom of that paragraph is:

17 "The only comment I can take is that we never wore
18 a rope. We used to have a cincture."

19 Can I just understand that? What is the cincture
20 that you --

21 A. Like a belt.

22 Q. And is it --

23 A. It had rosary beads hanging from it.

24 Q. Does it look like a rope?

25 A. No.

1 Q. So what does it look like?

2 A. Like a belt.

3 LADY SMITH: What's it made of?

4 A. Just leather.

5 LADY SMITH: Is it plaited leather or smooth leather?

6 A. Smooth leather.

7 LADY SMITH: Could it be plaited leather depending on the

8 individual cincture?

9 A. What do you mean by plaited?

10 LADY SMITH: Some belts are made of leather plaited into

11 a belt.

12 A. No.

13 MR MacAULAY: This witness -- and indeed others, but this

14 witness in particular -- talked about bed-wetting

15 practices and how Sister LTX and Sister FAF

16 managed children who wet the bed, in particular that

17 they would be hit, that the bed sheets would be put on

18 their heads and they'd be humiliated. Were you aware of

19 that procedure at all?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Was there anything of that kind happening in your group?

22 A. No.

23 Q. The other point I think, if I can take from this

24 particular witness -- and it also came from other

25 witnesses -- is the fact that they were required to kiss

1 a dead nun if they went to the church. I think I'm
2 right in saying that the practice, at least then, was
3 that the dead body would be in an open coffin in the
4 church.

5 A. Yes, that's right.

6 Q. To your knowledge, were children required to kiss the
7 dead body of a nun?

8 A. Not that I remember.

9 Q. Was it a practice among sisters, for example, to do
10 that?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Well, was it expected that children would do that?

13 A. I don't think so.

14 LADY SMITH: What do you mean you don't think so? Is it
15 possible that they were, that the children were expected
16 to kiss the dead nun?

17 A. I can't ... I can't say yes or no.

18 LADY SMITH: Is it possible?

19 A. It could be possible.

20 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

21 MR MacAULAY: It would be to follow the practice that the
22 nuns themselves were engaged in. The nuns themselves
23 would kiss the dead nun.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. So could there have been the expectation that a child

1 would have to follow suit?

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

3 LADY SMITH: If you don't yourself remember children kissing

4 the dead nun, do you remember them being taken to file

5 past the coffin, for instance?

6 A. No.

7 LADY SMITH: You have no memory of that?

8 A. No.

9 LADY SMITH: Can you remember whether any nuns died in the

10 time you were there?

11 A. No, none died while I was there.

12 LADY SMITH: If none died while you were there, that might

13 explain it. Thank you.

14 MR MacAULAY: I want to put to you what one particular

15 witness has said in his evidence to the inquiry, sister.

16 Again, if you look at the key, this is the witness --

17 the fourth name down on the left, the name is "John",

18 and you'll see that's the pseudonym. You'll see the

19 individual's real name to the right-hand side. Do you

20 recognise that name?

21 A. No.

22 Q. This person was in Nazareth House from [REDACTED] 1968 to

23 [REDACTED] 1969, so he was only there for a little over

24 two months. Do you follow that?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. That's what the Nazareth House records say. He was aged
2 about 9 or so at that time. A child of that age, 9 or
3 10, would you expect him to be on the boys' side?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. If we look at his evidence, it begins at
6 TRN.001.003.1941. It'll come on the screen. That's
7 where he begins his evidence. If I can turn to
8 page 1946. He is asked towards the top -- this is at
9 line 6:

10 "Question: Was there a particular sister or sisters
11 that were in charge of you?

12 "Answer: A Sister [REDACTED] and [I know it is blanked
13 out but is what it says] and Sister [REDACTED]."

14 We know there wasn't a Sister [REDACTED], but there
15 was a Sister [REDACTED]. Do I take it from what you've
16 said that on the boys' side it'd be Sister [REDACTED] who
17 would be directly in charge of a boy?

18 A. Well, this particular boy?

19 Q. This is what he says. When he is asked who was in
20 charge, he says Sister [REDACTED] and Sister [REDACTED].

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. So what is likely to be the case, if it's a boy of 9 or
23 10?

24 A. It would be on the boys' side.

25 Q. So that would be either Sister [REDACTED] or indeed

- 1 yourself?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. But you have no recollection of this boy?
- 4 A. No.
- 5 Q. He says towards the bottom of that page is that he was
- 6 there with his sister and they went up different stairs
- 7 and he shouted at her and he just heard bells ringing in
- 8 his ear, he got a slap. Could that have happened?
- 9 A. No, because the boys and girls' side were totally
- 10 different, so he couldn't have gone up the stairs.
- 11 Q. If a boy and a girl came in at the same time and they
- 12 were being separated, would they go up different stairs?
- 13 A. They'd go in different doors, yes.
- 14 Q. If I can go on to page 1948, he is giving evidence there
- 15 about what he calls at line 3:
- 16 "You got that tapioca, it was called, it was
- 17 frogspawn."
- 18 Can you see that?
- 19 A. Yes. It's very small print.
- 20 Q. Perhaps we can try and make it bigger. Was tapioca
- 21 something that was on the menu from time to time?
- 22 A. It would have been probably, yes.
- 23 Q. Towards the bottom he says at line 19:
- 24 "As I said in my statement, we used to call it
- 25 frogspawn. You were made to eat it, and if you were

1 sick they made you eat that and all."

2 That's his evidence, sister. It may be he's talking
3 about Sister [REDACTED] LFB , but he's on the boys' side. Did
4 you see any of that?

5 A. No.

6 Q. He goes on at page 1950 to talk about bed-wetting.

7 He is asked:

8 "Question: And how were bed-wetters treated?

9 "Answer: Like a concentration camp. You were
10 slapped about. Sometimes if you did wet the bed, you'd
11 hide it to maybe a day or two later and say, 'I've wet
12 the bed', so that would save you two days of slapping.
13 So you'd probably go to school smelling of pee, but that
14 didn't matter."

15 Again, if he's talking about the boys' side -- and
16 that's where he would be, I think you've told us that --
17 could this have happened without you knowing about it?

18 A. I didn't know about it.

19 Q. The other child I want to ask you about -- a former
20 resident, rather. You'll see from the key that his
21 pseudonym is Ned. You'll see reference to him towards
22 the second last entry and you will see his real name to
23 the right-hand side. Do you recognise that name?

24 A. No.

25 Q. He was in Aberdeen, 1968 to 1972, so that would cover

1 your own period. He would be -- his date of birth was
2 1962, so he'd be 6 to perhaps up to 10 when he was
3 there. Do I take it from that that he's likely to have
4 been on the boys' side?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. If I take you to his transcript at TRN.001.003.0618.
7 There we see him beginning his evidence using the
8 pseudonym "Ned". If we turn to page 0623, towards the
9 top he is asked the question under reference to his
10 statement -- and I'll read what's been blanked out at
11 line 3:

12 "Question: What you tell us is that you're not sure
13 if there was a Sister [REDACTED] who was in charge of you,
14 but you had a lot to do with her; is that right?

15 "Answer: I'm not 100 per cent sure if
16 Sister [REDACTED] was there that day I arrived but
17 Sister [REDACTED] became apparent in my life from that
18 point."

19 And that would be right, wouldn't it, for a boy of
20 that sort of age?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. He is then asked:

23 "Question: Another sister you mentioned in that
24 paragraph, while we're looking at it is a
25 Sister [REDACTED]. What you say about her is that she

1 was okay; what do you mean by that?"

2 If I can pause there. It's likely there, sister,
3 that he's talking about you; is that fair to say?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And what he goes on to say is:

6 "Answer: I had no -- my only memory of
7 Sister [REDACTED] LFZ was she was playing football."

8 And he gives an example of the Aberdeen Football
9 Club winning the cup and he goes on to say:

10 "Answer: She came out and she played football with
11 us that day. I think she was a younger nun."

12 Now, that seems to chime with what you yourself
13 said, sister, that you were interested in football and
14 you played football.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. He goes on at page 0629, to say this, if we can turn to
17 that page. He's asked at line 13:

18 "Question: Before we do that, can I just ask you
19 about one or two aspects of the routine at
20 Nazareth House. For example, birthdays. Was your
21 birthday celebrated in any way?

22 "Answer: Oh, not at all."

23 That's his position. Could he have been someone
24 then who slipped through the net for whatever reason?

25 A. Could be.

1 Q. He was a boy who particularly, when he arrived there,
2 regularly tried to see his sisters, who were -- I think
3 he had three sisters who were older than him who were
4 going on to the girls' side. If you turn on to
5 page 0633, he gives some evidence on this.

6 Again, it'll come on the screen, sister.

7 (Pause)

8 If we look at line 13 and what he says towards the
9 end of that answer:

10 "Answer: I found out my sisters were obviously on
11 the other side, and I began to see an avenue to get to
12 there. I started trying to get there a few times at
13 night, not in the beginning because certain things
14 happened, but I started trying to get there at
15 night-time and trying to get to my sisters.

16 "Question: And what happened?

17 "Answer: Well, I was punished for that on a few
18 occasions: slapping, punching -- not so much punching,
19 slapping, pulling the hair, dragged about, pulled up the
20 stairs. The locking in the cupboard happened at the
21 beginning, but that wasn't continuous; that only
22 happened at the beginning because eventually I detached
23 myself from my sisters."

24 Moving on to the next page, he explains why that
25 happened. What he says is:

1 "Answer: Because at one point they brought my older
2 sister over. My older sister came over and she told me
3 that they were being punished for the way I was behaving
4 and my resentment towards them then changed to betrayal
5 of how they'd betrayed me."

6 So what he's telling us there, sister, is not only
7 was this separation we've discussed in place, but there
8 was a determined effort, which involved punishment, to
9 prevent a male child having contact with a female
10 sister. Does this ring any bells with you?

11 A. No.

12 Q. He goes on to say that in relation to the punishments,
13 at line 11:

14 "Answer: Sister [REDACTED], it was always
15 Sister [REDACTED]."

16 Do you see that?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Well, were you aware, sister, that Sister [REDACTED] was
19 treating children in her care in this way if this is
20 true?

21 A. No.

22 Q. He goes on to say:

23 "Question: One thing you tell us is sometimes she
24 would drag you by the hair along the floor.

25 "Answer: She did on many occasions, it was just

1 a regular occurrence."

2 So if this is true and this happened on a regular
3 basis, sister, then from what you're saying, you never
4 saw this?

5 A. No.

6 Q. How separate were the two boys' groups from each other?
7 By that I mean would you and Sister [REDACTED] LFB have regular
8 contact and discussions about the groups?

9 A. Yes, we would talk, yes: she was upstairs, I was
10 downstairs.

11 Q. What about the children themselves? Did the boys
12 themselves between the two groups mix with each other?

13 A. They did when we went out for playing, yes.

14 Q. And perhaps just to look at what he says over the page
15 on page 0635 -- towards the top he says:

16 "Answer: The slapping, the pulling of the hair, was
17 continuous and then the more out of control I became,
18 then a stick came out and Sister [REDACTED] LFB would bring me
19 on the hand with a stick. Then if you closed your
20 knuckles, you'd be getting hit on the knuckles."

21 So did you have any knowledge of Sister [REDACTED] LFB
22 having a stick?

23 A. No.

24 Q. He also talks about bed-wetting. If we look at
25 page 0640, if we look at line 6, he's asked the

1 question:

2 "Question: You do talk about bed-wetting in your
3 statement, Ned?

4 "Answer: Yes.

5 "Question: Did you wet the bed?

6 "Answer: I did at the beginning, yes.

7 "Question: What happened if you wet the bed?

8 "Answer: I always remember they would put the sheet
9 round over your shoulders, and they would be obviously
10 soaking in urine, and you would queue up waiting to be
11 taken into the bathroom. I'm pretty sure there were
12 three industrial baths, but in any case you'd wait when
13 it was your turn, you'd put your wet sheet down and then
14 you would be dragged over to the bath and I described it
15 like a sheep dip: in you went, out you went. Sometimes
16 the bath would be freezing cold, sometimes it'd be
17 boiling hot."

18 There's a description of a bed-wetting practice that
19 he says was in place in the boys' group. Again, do
20 I understand from you, sister, if that was happening,
21 then it was without your knowledge?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. If you had become aware of that sort of practice, would
24 you have done anything?

25 A. I would have done. I would have thought about it and

1 then I'd have went to the Superior and discussed it with
2 her.

3 LADY SMITH: Why?

4 A. Because it's not a proper practice.

5 LADY SMITH: What would have been a proper practice?

6 A. Well, like, that they wouldn't have been made to feel
7 bad about bed-wetting.

8 LADY SMITH: Why not?

9 A. Because they couldn't help it.

10 LADY SMITH: You told us you came from a big family. Did
11 you have experience of brothers and sisters wetting the
12 bed at times?

13 A. No.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

15 Actually, while we're thinking about your family,
16 what about food? If brothers and sisters were difficult
17 about eating the food that was put in front of them,
18 what happened?

19 A. They got something else instead.

20 LADY SMITH: It's fair enough, isn't it --

21 A. Yes.

22 LADY SMITH: -- because in a home setting, that's what
23 happens?

24 A. Yes.

25 LADY SMITH: Yes.

1 Mr MacAulay.

2 MR MacAULAY: Can I also take you to look at what this next
3 witness I want to put to you said. Again if you look at
4 the key, sister, to understand who this is. Looking at
5 this, I don't think he's actually on the key. Just bear
6 with me and I'll get that for you.

7 (Pause)

8 While we are waiting for that, I'll put the
9 transcript on the screen. It's at TRN .001.003.0494.

10 Sister, you'll see that the pseudonym that this
11 former resident is using is "Alan", and you'll see his
12 real name there. Do you recognise the name?

13 A. I recognise the name, yes.

14 Q. According to the Sisters of Nazareth records, he was in
15 Nazareth House in Aberdeen from 1963 through to about
16 1974 or 1975, so he was there really as a toddler, he
17 told us, and at one point in time he was moved from the
18 girls' side to the boys' side --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- and we've discussed how that might happen.

21 A. Yes, because he had older brothers in Sister [REDACTED] 's
22 group.

23 Q. So if we look then to page 0535. Again, it'll come on
24 the screen for you, sister. Towards the bottom of that
25 page at line 21, he's asked:

1 "Question: Can I then look at the position when you
2 moved to Sister [REDACTED] LFB 's side when you got that bit
3 older -- and that was for the boys, of course.

4 "Answer: Yes.

5 "Question: What about her behaviour? How did she
6 behave towards you?

7 "Answer: She wouldn't have been as physical as
8 regards to like, I can't remember if -- I think for
9 a short time you still got the malt and the thingummy,
10 but I just can't remember. I just remember specifically
11 if you did something wrong, she would punish everybody
12 rather than -- I always felt a sense of guilt of --
13 people used to admit that they'd done something when
14 they didn't. She used to make you stand for hours and
15 hours in the bathroom."

16 What he's talking about there is a form of group
17 punishment where children were made to stand until
18 somebody admitted to something. Were you aware of that
19 sort of approach to punishment?

20 A. No.

21 Q. He goes on to say that at line 14 and he gives an
22 example:

23 "Answer: She had a stick and she would hit you with
24 a stick on your hands for not singing correctly."

25 Did you see anything like that happening?

- 1 A. No, because in the cathedral it was -- we had --
2 a Mr Hoskins was the choir director.
- 3 LADY SMITH: He's talking there about when they got back
4 after having been in the cathedral, if you see.
- 5 A. Okay.
- 6 LADY SMITH: "We used to sing in St Mary's Cathedral in
7 Aberdeen -- I used to be a soloist -- and if I got
8 a note wrong or something, when you returned, she had
9 a stick and she'd hit you with a stick on your hands for
10 not singing correctly."
- 11 This is something that happened back in
12 Nazareth House.
- 13 A. I don't know anything about that.
- 14 MR MacAULAY: Okay. But you do remember this particular
15 child, sister?
- 16 A. Oh, I do. I think he was a twin.
- 17 Q. Was he in Sister [REDACTED] 's group rather than your own?
- 18 A. He was, yes.
- 19 Q. The other witness I want to ask you about -- and his
20 name I think is on the key if you look back to the key,
21 the pseudonym that he used was "Derek" and you'll see
22 his name on the right-hand side. Do you recognise that
23 name?
- 24 A. I recognise the name, yes.
- 25 Q. Was this particular person in your group?

- 1 A. That I can't remember, but I remember the name.
- 2 Q. He was in Aberdeen certainly at a time that would cover
3 your time in 1967 to 1969, but in any event, he would be
4 on the boys -- he was on the boys' side?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. I just want to put something to you from his witness
7 statement. His witness statement is at
8 WIT.001.001.3054. If we turn to page 3063 and move down
9 to the next paragraph. He's here dealing with aspects
10 of the routine. At paragraph 51 what he says is -- and
11 I'll read out what redacted:
- 12 "Sister **LFZ** was in charge of my dormitory and
13 her room was right next door to the one I was in. She
14 had a window that she could look at us through."
- 15 And he goes on to give some information about the
16 numbers of children. So he certainly seems to identify
17 yourself, sister, as the person who was in charge of his
18 dormitory. Does that help you at all in --
- 19 A. No. I can remember the name all right, but I can't
20 recall ...
- 21 Q. If I take you to this particular page, page 3067, and
22 if we look to the very bottom, where he's giving some
23 information about the discipline, first of all he says
24 at paragraph 81:
- 25 "They were very strict at Nazareth House."

- 1 Is that a fair description of the regime, that it
2 was a strict regime?
- 3 A. Yes, probably.
- 4 Q. And in what way was it strict?
- 5 A. Um ... we probably wanted the children to, you know, be
6 basically as good as they could be.
- 7 Q. But how would you achieve that? How did you seek to
8 achieve that with the strict regime?
- 9 A. Well, like, you'd always try to talk with them, be with
10 them, explain things to them and tell them sort of
11 what was right and what was wrong.
- 12 Q. Is that what you'd describe as a strict regime, trying
13 to reason with the children as to --
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. If we then look at paragraph 82, he says this:
16 "Sister **LFZ** was basically our mother and would
17 look after us and control us."
- 18 Well, would you agree with that?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. "She was as hard as nails and we were scared of her,
21 although at times she was all right."
- 22 What about that characterisation of you, sister?
23 Would you agree with that, that you were hard as nails?
- 24 A. No, not really.
- 25 Q. Did you get an impression that children might have been

1 scared of you?

2 A. No.

3 Q. We've talked about cricket before, but he says that:

4 "[You] used to keep a cricket wicket and would
5 wallop us with it over the knuckles [if we move to the
6 next page, 3068] if we'd done something wrong."

7 Do you remember if that was something you might have
8 used on occasions?

9 A. No, I don't remember that.

10 Q. But is it possible?

11 A. No.

12 Q. He goes on to say:

13 "One time I dropped a Bible and got a skelping. She
14 had a terrible temper on her."

15 Would you accept that at all, sister, that you could
16 lose your temper?

17 A. I don't remember him dropping a Bible or anything like
18 that.

19 Q. What about your temper? Do you think you had a temper?

20 A. Not really.

21 Q. The next thing he says at paragraph 84:

22 "Another time, just before I left Nazareth House,
23 Sister LFZ snapped and burst my nose. I had been
24 doing my chores and told her I needed to get away to
25 play football. I kept pestering her and eventually she

1 grabbed me and battered my head twice against the bed
2 frame. I swore at her and about two or three months
3 later I got sent to St Ninian's."

4 Does this description of the event ring any bells
5 with you?

6 A. No, I don't remember that at all.

7 Q. Do you think it could have happened?

8 A. I don't see it happening.

9 Q. What about what he says at the end in paragraph 86?

10 "When I left Nazareth House, Sister LFZ gave me
11 a jewellery box she said she had got from her mother."

12 Did that happen?

13 A. I can't remember. I honestly can't remember.

14 Q. He goes on to say:

15 "I've still got it. I think she liked me and
16 I think she had just lost it when she hit my head off
17 the bed frame."

18 Did you like this particular child?

19 A. I cannot really remember.

20 LADY SMITH: Sister, a few moments ago -- a couple of
21 things. One was you said that you just wanted the
22 children to be as good as they could be. What do you
23 mean by that?

24 A. Well, I think any parent would like their children to be
25 as good as they could be.

1 LADY SMITH: What do you mean by "good"? What constituted
2 "good"? Was it a child being quiet and well-behaved at
3 all times or what?

4 A. No, that they could use their ability, whatever
5 abilities they had, to the best, you know, and become as
6 good as they could, say, with their education and
7 everything else.

8 LADY SMITH: Right.

9 Then when you were asked about your temper and you
10 were asked whether you thought you had a temper and you
11 said to Mr MacAulay, "Not really". Just help me unpick
12 that. What do you mean by "not really"?

13 A. Looking back, I can't say that I had a temper.

14 LADY SMITH: Is it possible that there were occasions on
15 which you lost your temper?

16 A. Maybe.

17 LADY SMITH: It must have been quite challenging looking
18 after so many little boys; was it?

19 A. It could be at times.

20 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

21 MR MacAULAY: Sister, can I now take you then to when you
22 came to leave Nazareth House Aberdeen. What sort of
23 notice did you get that you were to leave?

24 A. Probably about a week.

25 Q. Were you told why you were leaving?

- 1 A. No.
- 2 Q. When you left, was Sister [REDACTED] still there?
- 3 A. She was.
- 4 Q. And she'd been there before you got there?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. Perhaps I should have taken this from you, but clearly
- 7 she was a much older sister than you were.
- 8 A. She was.
- 9 Q. During your time in Nazareth House did you feel that you
- 10 had to follow her lead in how you dealt with the
- 11 children?
- 12 A. Yes, I think so.
- 13 Q. You've told us about the course that you did, sister;
- 14 did you at any time challenge any aspects of
- 15 Sister [REDACTED]'s care of the children?
- 16 A. No, I didn't.
- 17 Q. Any reason why not?
- 18 A. I think she was the senior sister and that's --
- 19 Q. Can I ask you this: were there aspects of the way in
- 20 which she cared for the children that you disapproved
- 21 of?
- 22 A. But reading some of the things, I didn't know those
- 23 things were going on.
- 24 Q. Let's look at what you did know, sister. If you didn't
- 25 know things, then of course you couldn't disapprove of

1 those things. But just looking at her approach to care
2 generally, were there aspects of that that you did
3 disapprove of at the time?

4 A. Not really.

5 Q. So although she was a different generation to you, you
6 were content, were you, with the way that she cared for
7 the children?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Were you given any explanation at the time as to why you
10 were leaving Aberdeen and going to Lasswade?

11 A. No.

12 LADY SMITH: Sister, if you had disapproved of any aspect of
13 Sister LFB ways of caring for the children,
14 am I to understand that you would not have challenged
15 her because she was senior to you?

16 A. I probably would have talked to her about it.

17 LADY SMITH: Even although she was senior?

18 A. Yes.

19 LADY SMITH: Because at the end of the day, the children had
20 to come first, didn't they?

21 A. Yes.

22 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

23 MR MacAULAY: Can I then take you, sister, to Lasswade.

24 I think you mentioned earlier that you were there from
25 about 1972 to 1975.

- 1 A. About two and a half years.
- 2 Q. What you tell us -- and to perhaps to go back to your
3 own statement now, I think it's on the screen in fact,
4 at paragraph 52 -- is that you -- you begin by saying:
5 "It was totally different to Aberdeen ..."
6 That's one of the things you say:
7 "... and it was a smaller house altogether."
8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. You go on to say at the very end:
10 "It was just lovely."
11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Can I just understand what you mean by all of that,
13 being totally different from Aberdeen and it being just
14 lovely? Can you explain that?
15 A. Aberdeen was a big granite building, and it was old
16 inside as well, whereas Lasswade -- it was smaller and
17 the groups were more individual than they were in
18 Aberdeen, and they were mixed as well.
- 19 Q. What about the atmosphere? Was the atmosphere in
20 Lasswade different to the one in Aberdeen?
21 A. It was, it was more relaxed.
- 22 Q. You've described the Aberdeen -- I think you've accepted
23 the Aberdeen regime could be described as strict.
24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. What about Lasswade?

- 1 A. It was different.
- 2 Q. Can you give me some examples then as to how it was
3 different?
- 4 A. Well, I think with the groups being mixed and brothers
5 and sisters sometimes being together, it was better
6 in that way.
- 7 Q. And that was the position at Lasswade?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. That there was no separation of the siblings?
- 10 A. No.
- 11 Q. Are you able to tell me why --
- 12 A. There might have been -- sometimes they might have been
13 over in Holycote before they came over to the bigger
14 groups.
- 15 Q. That's if they were very, very young?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. Subject to that, in the bigger groups, the boys and
18 girls from the same families were together?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. Are you able to explain to the inquiry why more or less
21 at the same time the regimes were so different?
- 22 A. This was the beginning of the 1970s, so I think things
23 were beginning to change then.
- 24 Q. Had they changed -- from what you've said, sister, they
25 had changed at Lasswade at a time when they had not in

1 Aberdeen.

2 A. No.

3 Q. Did you move to Lasswade with Sister [REDACTED] LTX ?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. When you got to Lasswade, were you allocated different

6 groups?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. What was the position so far as you were concerned?

9 A. How do you mean, the position?

10 Q. What group were you given to care for?

11 A. I was given a group that was between 20 and maybe 26,

12 sometimes even more than 26. Sister [REDACTED] LTX was over

13 in what is called Holycote, which is a separate house.

14 Q. Were you in the main building?

15 A. I was in the main building. I was the middle group.

16 There was three groups.

17 Q. So in the main building there were three groups?

18 A. Three groups of children.

19 Q. And in your group, so I can understand this, you would

20 have boys and girls?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Orientated towards families?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Were the other groups the same?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Subject to the qualification you've made that much
2 younger children of that family would be in Holycote --
3 A. Might be over in Holycote, yes.
4 Q. Again, in relation to getting to Lasswade, were you
5 given any form of induction when you got there?
6 A. No.
7 Q. Were you replacing another sister?
8 A. Yes.
9 Q. Who was the sister?
10 A. Yes.
11 Q. Who was that?
12 A. Sister Benedict, I think.
13 Q. I think you say in your statement, it may have been
14 Sister [REDACTED] LFX, unless I've misunderstood that.
15 A. No.
16 Q. So you think it was Sister Benedict?
17 A. I think Sister Benedict, yes, I'm sure it was.
18 Q. Was there a Sister [REDACTED] LFX there?
19 A. Not at that time.
20 Q. Did she come at a later point?
21 A. It must have been after, yes.
22 Q. At what point do you say she was there?
23 A. I don't know now because I don't know who took my place
24 when I left.
25 Q. Just to be clear then, the ages in your group, they'd be

- 1 from quite a young age up into their teens?
- 2 A. Yes. Yes, 14, 15 -- the boys went to St Ninian's,
3 I think, when they were 12.
- 4 Q. Yes, I think we've heard that evidence, that when boys
5 reached a particular age, they left.
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. I'll come on to that shortly. But what was the age of
8 the youngest child in your group?
- 9 A. Probably 7, around communion time. Yes, 7.
- 10 Q. When you arrived at Lasswade, although you weren't given
11 any induction, were you provided with any information
12 about the children in your care?
- 13 A. Not that I remember.
- 14 Q. Were there records available to you in connection with
15 the children?
- 16 A. There were some records, but not very many.
- 17 Q. What were the records?
- 18 A. Just about where they came from and their parents.
- 19 Q. Do I understand from what you've said, sister, that you
20 would not have information that would provide you with
21 the backgrounds of the children?
- 22 A. No.
- 23 Q. I think now we're dealing with -- there was no approved
24 school element to Lasswade.
- 25 A. No.

- 1 Q. What about a punishment book? Was there a punishment
2 book kept at Lasswade?
- 3 A. No, I don't remember.
- 4 Q. Can I take it in this way: when you say you don't
5 remember, did you yourself keep a record of any
6 punishments?
- 7 A. No.
- 8 Q. Was there any discussion with you -- for example, by the
9 Mother Superior or anyone else who might have the
10 knowledge -- as to whether there was any duty under the
11 law to keep a record of punishments?
- 12 A. No.
- 13 Q. There was no such discussion?
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. Can I then just look at some aspects of the set-up with
16 you, sister. Another thing you say at paragraph 54
17 is that -- the way you put it is there were better
18 civilian staff in Lasswade than Aberdeen, and you
19 yourself had two members of staff and a cleaner. When
20 you say they were better, I wonder if you could explain
21 what you mean by that.
- 22 A. One or two of them already had done childcare courses.
- 23 Q. Are you contrasting that with Aberdeen then, that --
- 24 A. Yes, they hadn't done --
- 25 Q. They had no training?

- 1 A. No.
- 2 Q. So far as the two civilian members of staff would be
3 concerned, what would their duties be?
- 4 A. Getting the children up in the morning, getting them
5 washed, getting them dressed, serving at breakfast.
- 6 Q. So would you be overseeing that?
- 7 A. Yes, we would have Mass early in the morning, so the
8 staff would be already getting the children up, but when
9 we would come back after breakfast, we would help them
10 if they were still at breakfast and get them ready for
11 school.
- 12 Q. Can I ask you this, sister, so I can try and get some
13 understanding as to, at that time, a sister's commitment
14 to, if I can put it this way, her duties as a nun?
15 You've talked about Mass, for example. During the
16 working day -- let's leave Sunday out of it -- would
17 there be times when you would have to devote yourself to
18 certain aspects of being a nun?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. Can you perhaps help the inquiry with that? You've
21 talked about early morning Mass, for example.
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Would that be a daily occurrence?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. That would take you away for, what, about an hour or so?

- 1 A. Half an hour and then breakfast, 15 minutes.
- 2 Q. At other parts of the day, would you also have
- 3 another --
- 4 A. Yes, probably around 6 o'clock in the evening, we'd have
- 5 evening prayer, and supper, and then night prayer, maybe
- 6 at 7.30 or so.
- 7 Q. Would that be as a congregation?
- 8 A. Yes, as a community.
- 9 Q. That's what I meant. Would you gather at a particular
- 10 place within the convent?
- 11 A. In the chapel.
- 12 Q. So I think you've pointed to at least three times:
- 13 morning Mass, evening prayer -- and was there something
- 14 else?
- 15 A. Night prayer.
- 16 Q. What about during the day itself? Would there be any
- 17 interruptions to your normal daily life because of --
- 18 A. Yes, in the early times, maybe at about a quarter to
- 19 one, we would have prayers.
- 20 Q. Would you be summoned to prayer by a bell?
- 21 A. No, not then.
- 22 Q. What about earlier on then?
- 23 A. Before, years before that, yes. About 10 years before
- 24 that it would have been.
- 25 Q. At no time during --

- 1 A. No.
- 2 Q. You, from what you've said so far, in connection with
3 your group, were in charge of that group?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. So it wasn't like Aberdeen --
- 6 A. No.
- 7 Q. -- where you were answerable to Sister [REDACTED] LFB ?
- 8 A. We were answerable to the Superior.
- 9 Q. To the Superior?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. We know that Sister [REDACTED] LTX also was in charge of
12 a group. Can you remember the names of the other
13 sisters?
- 14 A. Sister [REDACTED] LQC and Sister Eileen.
- 15 Q. Were they in the big house, if I can put it that way,
16 the main building?
- 17 A. Sister [REDACTED] LQC and Sister Eileen were, yes, where
18 I was, and there was Sister [REDACTED] LTX and I think
19 Sister [REDACTED] LNR was over in Holycote.
- 20 Q. Coming back to the business of a boy reaching
21 a particular age and being sent to St Ninian's, I think
22 you said, St Ninian's -- there were two St Ninian's.
23 I think one of the St Ninian's was run by the
24 Christian Brothers and I think the other by the
25 De La Salle Brothers. Do you know which --

1 A. I think it was the De La Salle.

2 Q. Why was that?

3 A. I don't know; it was just the practice when I went
4 there, you know.

5 Q. Did boys from your group go to St Ninian's?

6 A. They did, yes.

7 Q. At the age of about 11 or 12?

8 A. 12 I think it was when they went, yes.

9 Q. So you could be dealing with a boy who'd been in
10 Lasswade for a number of years?

11 A. Yes, the sisters would have been, yes.

12 Q. I'm sorry?

13 A. The sisters would have been, yes.

14 Q. If you look at the boy who's being moved, he could have
15 been at Lasswade for a number of years before he was
16 moved.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. So from that perspective, there'd be a bit of upheaval
19 from the child's perspective?

20 A. Yes, there would have been, yes.

21 Q. Would the boy be concerned? I want to understand what
22 the procedure would be for moving a boy from Lasswade to
23 St Ninian's.

24 A. I just remember that when they came to 12, that was the
25 policy, and then they were told that before they were

1 moving. I didn't like it, but, you know, that was the
2 policy at the time.

3 Q. Why didn't you like it?

4 A. I just didn't -- I didn't think it was right, but
5 I didn't ... I couldn't do anything about it.

6 Q. Why didn't you think it was right?

7 A. Because, just as you said, he'd been with us all that
8 time and, you know, we could have kept him maybe another
9 year or two and got him a place somewhere else.

10 Q. Who made the decision then that such a boy would go to
11 a place like St Ninian's?

12 A. It would have been the Superior.

13 Q. Would you be consulted?

14 A. No, not really.

15 Q. Would there be some social work involvement in that, do
16 you know?

17 A. There probably would have been. I just can't remember.

18 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, it's 11.30.

19 LADY SMITH: I think we should have the morning break just
20 now, Mr MacAulay.

21 We'll pause at this stage for the morning break and
22 I'll sit again in about 15 minutes or so, sister.

23 Thank you.

24 (11.30 am)

25 (A short break)

1 (11.46 am)

2 MR MacAULAY: Can I just touch upon one or two aspects of
3 the routine at Lasswade with you, sister, and first of
4 all ask you about bed-wetting. Did children in your
5 group wet the bed?

6 A. Yes, there were one or two.

7 Q. How did you deal with those?

8 A. They got up in the morning and their sheets were taken
9 by the staff and they got bathed.

10 Q. Was there any --

11 A. Later on we had showers, so then they got showers.

12 Q. Was there any procedure whereby children would be
13 humiliated in any way?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Do you know what was happening in other parts of the --

16 A. No --

17 Q. -- home?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Do you know what happened before you took over?

20 A. No.

21 Q. I did mention to you a Sister **LFX** who I think may
22 have been there at a point in time before yourself. Do
23 you know if you took over the group that she had had at
24 some point?

25 A. I don't think so.

- 1 Q. You also tell us that you'd go on trips. For example
2 you mention Dunbar at paragraph 65; is that right?
- 3 A. Yes, we went there each year, down there, to the cottage
4 hospital.
- 5 Q. What sort of activities would you engage in at Dunbar?
- 6 A. Oh, we would go out for the day and if there was any
7 quizzes or anything taken, they would take part in it.
8 And the Church of Scotland used to be up, so they'd go
9 down to the beach and sing along with them.
- 10 Q. Would this be your own group that you'd take or would
11 there be more than one group?
- 12 A. There'd be more than one group.
- 13 Q. From the main house or --
- 14 A. Yes, from the main house.
- 15 Q. So far as chores were concerned then, what sort of
16 chores did the children that you cared for require to
17 do?
- 18 A. The usual: drying up after meals, setting the tables.
- 19 Q. What about polishing floors and cleaning toilets? Was
20 that sort of work --
- 21 A. No, no, no.
- 22 Q. Did you have a cleaner?
- 23 A. There was a cleaner for that, yes.
- 24 Q. I think you do tell us in your statement, sister, that
25 Christmas and birthdays were celebrated.

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. Did children get presents on their birthdays?
- 3 A. I think there was just a kiss -- one of the staff, their
4 mother was in the kitchen and I think we got a birthday
5 cake.
- 6 Q. Do you remember if there were social work visits, visits
7 by social workers?
- 8 A. Yes. Every few months, not that often.
- 9 Q. If you compare the position in Lasswade to Aberdeen, how
10 would you describe the comparison?
- 11 A. I think they were more regular in Lasswade than they
12 were in Aberdeen.
- 13 Q. Did you deal with them?
- 14 A. Yes. If they were coming to see any particular child
15 that I had, yes.
- 16 Q. Did you have in Lasswade for your group any system
17 whereby you reviewed children's progress?
- 18 A. No.
- 19 Q. Do you think, with the benefit of hindsight, that would
20 have been a useful system to have had in place?
- 21 A. Yes, I think so.
- 22 Q. The childcare course you told us about, sister, did that
23 in any way discuss the value of having regular reviews
24 of a child's progress?
- 25 A. Probably it did, but I can't remember.

- 1 Q. In any event, I think you see there would be value in
2 it?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. Do you know why such a system was not in place, at least
5 for your own group?
- 6 A. I don't know.
- 7 Q. Do you know if such a system was in place for any of the
8 other groups?
- 9 A. No, I don't think so.
- 10 Q. Can I then ask you about discipline, sister. Again, how
11 did you discipline children who misbehaved?
- 12 A. Again, it was just like Aberdeen, it was that -- they
13 missed out on their favourite TV programme and that was
14 like -- there was no corporal punishment.
- 15 Q. What about the regime before you? Do you know if there
16 was corporal punishment or not?
- 17 A. I don't know.
- 18 Q. What about the other groups, do you know if --
- 19 A. I don't know.
- 20 Q. You don't know?
- 21 A. No.
- 22 Q. Were these matters that were not discussed then amongst
23 the sisters as a group as to how children were being
24 disciplined?
- 25 A. No, I don't think it was discussed.

- 1 Q. Do I understand you to say you had no guidance on how
2 children ought to be disciplined?
- 3 A. No.
- 4 Q. If we go back to your statement, sister -- and here I'm
5 looking at paragraphs 83 through to 92, where you're
6 asked about a number of allegations made by a particular
7 person. Again, I'll give you the key for the name of
8 the person. If you look at the key, on the left-hand
9 side, four from the bottom, you will see the name "Anne"
10 and the name against Anne. Is that a name that rings
11 a bell?
- 12 A. Yes, I remember the name.
- 13 Q. There was a family with that name?
- 14 A. Yes, there was.
- 15 Q. You'll remember, and you can remind yourself, sister,
16 looking at these paragraphs in your statement, that this
17 particular former resident is talking in particular
18 about a Sister LFX; is that the case? Perhaps I can
19 help you in this way. Of course it's blank on the
20 screen, but if you look at paragraph 83, you see:
21 "I'm asked if I remember a particular girl."
22 And you do remember the name. You're told that she
23 was at Lasswade from 1967 or 1968 until 1976. Now,
24 of course, you didn't get to Lasswade until 1972.
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. Was this person in your group at that time?
- 2 A. Not at the beginning. I think she might have come over
3 from the group from Holycote. I'm not quite sure.
- 4 Q. Did this particular person come into your group or not?
5 I think some of her siblings may have done so.
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. What about --
- 8 A. No, I don't think so.
- 9 Q. This witness says towards the bottom:
10 "I am told she says when she was there,
11 Sister [REDACTED] LFX was in charge of the group and, after
12 that, Sister [REDACTED] LFZ was after Sister [REDACTED] LFX."
13 I think you're saying that's not correct.
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. But Sister [REDACTED] LFX may have been there at a point in
16 time before you?
- 17 A. Yes, she could have been.
- 18 Q. I needn't take you to this, but I think from the
19 sisters' employment registers, there's a suggestion that
20 there was a Sister [REDACTED] LFX there in 1970, which would be
21 some time before you.
- 22 A. Yes, I wasn't aware of that.
- 23 Q. But what she goes on to tell us in the next few pages is
24 some of the treatment that she received from
25 Sister [REDACTED] LFX. I'm not going to go into that with you

1 in detail because, on any view, that was before you were
2 there.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. But I think you will have seen from what was put to you
5 that again there's physical, I think one would have to
6 say, abuse from the nature of what she says and there's
7 also the sort of bed-wetting practices that we've
8 already discussed. Is that correct, that's what she
9 says? That was what was put to you when you gave your
10 statement. Do you remember that? I don't really want
11 to go into the detail of it, but I can do.

12 A. What are you really asking me?

13 Q. I'm asking: do you remember when you gave your statement
14 that certain parts of this witness's statement were put
15 to you, where she made allegations against
16 Sister [REDACTED] in particular? Do you remember that?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. From what you've said, Sister [REDACTED] did not -- you did
19 not replace Sister [REDACTED]; she was there some time
20 before you.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And if these practices were in place before you, they
23 were not in place, you would say, when you were there?

24 A. No.

25 Q. I'll put her statement on the screen. WIT.001.001.7120.

1 This is at paragraph 92 of your statement --

2 A. It's not on the screen yet.

3 Q. It'll come. But you'll have it --

4 A. I have it, yes.

5 Q. While we're waiting for it to come, what you say in your

6 statement at paragraph 92 is:

7 "I am told that she has also said that

8 Sister [REDACTED] LFZ used to hit ..."

9 And I think you know what the name is:

10 "... and another boy a lot. They seemed to get the

11 brunt of it. I only ever saw her hitting them with her

12 hands."

13 But you say that did not happen?

14 A. No.

15 Q. You did not hit the children?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Well, sister, can I then take you towards the end of

18 your statement.

19 Just before I do that, you left, I think you told

20 us -- you left Lasswade in 1975, you told us.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Where did you go at that time?

23 A. To [REDACTED] in the north of Ireland.

24 Q. Were you still involved with caring for children?

25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. Did that remain your career for --
- 2 A. No, then I -- later on I trained for nursing.
- 3 Q. Sister, as I understand the essence of your position
4 in relation, in particular, to what I've been asking you
5 about, about Aberdeen, it's that you did not witness in
6 any shape or form the sort of practices that I've
7 discussed with you today?
- 8 A. No.
- 9 Q. If such practices did exist, that's the way bed-wetters
10 were dealt with, children being slapped and punched and
11 hit, and demeaned or humiliated, would you look upon
12 that as abuse as at that time?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Can I ask you this, both in relation to Nazareth House
15 Aberdeen and also Lasswade, but let's deal with
16 Nazareth House Aberdeen first. Were there any
17 arrangements for letting siblings know that another
18 sibling was leaving the home?
- 19 A. Not that I remember.
- 20 Q. Do you yourself think that may have been a failure?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. What about Lasswade? What was the position there?
23 Would a sibling be told that an older sibling was
24 leaving?
- 25 A. They would have known that they were leaving, yes.

- 1 Q. How would they know that?
- 2 A. They would be told, it'd be talked about, yes.
- 3 Q. So that was different then, was it, to the practice in
4 Aberdeen?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. Can you help me with this: do you know why the practice
7 in Aberdeen was that siblings were not told that another
8 sibling was leaving the home?
- 9 A. That I can't answer.
- 10 Q. So as far as Aberdeen will be concerned then, the child
11 staying behind or indeed the child leaving would not
12 have the opportunity to say goodbye to the other child?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Would not have, there would be no opportunity?
- 15 A. Not then there wasn't, no.
- 16 Q. What about Lasswade?
- 17 A. Yes, at Lasswade they would have known, yes.
- 18 Q. Perhaps I should have asked you this as a general
19 question because we've heard how children who came into
20 the home, particularly in Aberdeen, for example, their
21 heads would be checked for lice. Was there a particular
22 policy that children's heads, hair, would be checked on
23 admission?
- 24 A. Yes, it was always just done, yes.
- 25 Q. Was that also done at Lasswade?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. The final thing I want to ask you, sister, is this: have
3 any of the children that you cared for over the years in
4 Aberdeen or Lasswade kept in touch with you?

5 A. No.

6 MR MacAULAY: Very well, sister. Thank you very much for
7 coming and giving your evidence. These are all my
8 questions. I hope that I've covered the other questions
9 that I have been asked to put to you. Thank you.

10 A. Thank you.

11 LADY SMITH: Sister, can I just follow up on one thing.
12 When Mr MacAulay was asking you about chores, he asked
13 you specifically about whether the children cleaned and
14 polished floors at Lasswade. I think your answer was
15 firmly: no, no, no. You seemed to think that that was
16 out of the question, that children would have been
17 cleaning floors. Did I pick you up right about that?

18 A. Yes, they didn't clean floors, no.

19 LADY SMITH: Would it have been right to have young children
20 cleaning and polishing floors?

21 A. No.

22 LADY SMITH: Why not?

23 A. I wouldn't expect them to clean floors.

24 LADY SMITH: Why not?

25 A. We had staff to do that, so why would the children?

1 LADY SMITH: Staff apart, I'm thinking about the job itself.

2 A. Yes.

3 LADY SMITH: Not an appropriate job to get children to do?

4 A. Do you mean like polishing floors?

5 LADY SMITH: I mean getting on their knees and cleaning

6 it --

7 A. No.

8 LADY SMITH: -- and then having to apply polish --

9 A. No.

10 LADY SMITH: -- and polish it up to a shine, a job that

11 takes hours to do.

12 A. They didn't do that. We didn't have floors like that in

13 Lasswade to do. But they did help with washing the

14 floor after the dining room meals.

15 LADY SMITH: You did have floors like that in Aberdeen?

16 A. Yes. There were floors like that in Aberdeen.

17 LADY SMITH: Am I right about your reaction that that's just

18 not something you should be asking young children to do?

19 A. No, I didn't ask them to do it, no.

20 LADY SMITH: You shouldn't be asking children to do that,

21 is that what you're saying?

22 A. Yes.

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

24 Are there any outstanding applications for questions

25 of this witness? No.

1 "From April 1959 to January 1962 I worked in
2 Belfast Lodge where I worked doing toddler nursery
3 in the baby home. From January 1962 until November 1970
4 I also worked in the toddler nursery, but in Isleworth
5 where I was the housemother.

6 "From November 1970 until February 1971 I relieved
7 a sister who was ill and worked with the children in the
8 home in Oxford.

9 "From February 1971 to March 1972 I took a degree in
10 childcare training at Langside College in Glasgow,
11 during which time I resided at Nazareth House in
12 Cardonald, Glasgow.

13 "Thereafter I moved to Nazareth House in Aberdeen,
14 where I worked with a group of children from March 1972
15 until January 1973.

16 "After I left Aberdeen, I worked in a variety of
17 homes throughout England and Ireland, the last of which
18 was working in Wrexham dealing with elderly people from
19 April 1990 onwards.

20 "Over the years I have studied childcare and
21 received various certificates in this as well as
22 completing several childcare courses. In March 1959
23 I passed and received the National Nursery Examination
24 Board's certificate, which concerned the theoretical
25 training with children from birth to five years and

1 practical training with children aged three and upwards.

2 "In February 1972 I received a certificate of
3 qualification in the residential care of children having
4 studied for almost one year in Langside College in
5 Glasgow and having completed numerous residential
6 courses.

7 "In 2002 I was awarded a 'Lifetime Achievement in
8 Care Award'.

9 "When I was studying at Langside College in Glasgow,
10 between February 18971 and March 1972, I resided at
11 Nazareth House in Cardonald. However, I simply resided
12 there while studying at the college and had nothing to
13 do with the day-to-day running of the home.

14 "When I completed my course in March 1972 I was sent
15 to Nazareth House in Aberdeen to replace a sister who
16 had left. This wasn't something I volunteered for but
17 given my qualifications, I did want to work with
18 children and I knew it was likely that I would be given
19 such a posting by my order.

20 "I don't recall any interview before going to
21 Aberdeen; I was simply posted to that position. That is
22 the way of religious life: you go where you are told.
23 I was not aware of any vetting of me.

24 "Nazareth House in Aberdeen was a big institution
25 with a hostel attached to it and it was to this hostel

1 that I was posted. It was basically an annex to the
2 main building and was a very homely place. When I first
3 arrived there I was shown around Nazareth House and was
4 put in the hostel as the sister who had been there had
5 left. This was why there was a vacancy. I don't recall
6 her name and never met her.

7 "I had 14 children there who were mostly girls. The
8 same children remained with me in the hostel throughout
9 the 10 months I was there and there were no new intakes
10 during that time. If any of them had family in the main
11 building then they sometimes would go there to visit
12 them or vice versa.

13 "There were twin boys aged 5 as well as their two
14 older sisters, who were 8 and 9. I think these boys
15 were there to keep them with their older sisters and
16 because there was no room in the main building. I think
17 that's why all those children were in the hostel: lack
18 of room in the main building.

19 "We were very much independent from the main
20 building. None of the sisters in the main building had
21 anything to do with those of us that worked and lived in
22 the hostel. We looked after ourselves.

23 "We had a little yard at the back where we did our
24 own laundry and hung it out. The dining room was on one
25 side with the sitting room on the other. The bedrooms

1 were upstairs and we tried to keep families together.

2 I can't recall how many bedrooms we had.

3 "The twin boys shared a bedroom and their sisters
4 shared another. The oldest girl in the hostel was 16.
5 She was lovely. Her name is the only name I recall and
6 that is only because I met her a few years later when
7 she was studying at university.

8 "We had a kitchenette next to the dining room though
9 our main meals were sent over from the main building.
10 The staff would go over and collect it. We made our own
11 breakfast.

12 "I had two women who came in in the mornings to help
13 me with breakfast and getting the younger children
14 ready. I was the only nun who worked in the hostel and
15 had almost no contact with the nuns in the main
16 building.

17 "The two women who came in to help me were mother
18 and daughter. The mother normally came in in the
19 morning while the daughter would come in later to help
20 with the cleaning. One or the other would be there if
21 I was away at prayers or the like.

22 "I reported to the Mother Superior, Sister McCarten,
23 who stayed in the main building. I had no involvement
24 whatsoever with the main building and the
25 Mother Superior preferred us not to have contact with

1 them.

2 "I didn't have anybody who mentored me but the
3 children all had social workers who would come in to see
4 them. I suppose after finishing the course I thought
5 I knew it all.

6 "The school bus came at 8.30 am and so the children
7 had to be up, washed, dressed and have had breakfast by
8 that time. When they got up, I would be at morning
9 prayers, which is why one of the women came in early
10 in the morning to help the children.

11 "I had a few teenagers who were able to get
12 themselves ready. At weekends the children would get up
13 slightly later. The children didn't go to prayers
14 in the morning.

15 "We had a bath and a shower. The children would go
16 for either a bath or a shower at different times though
17 the younger children were usually first. I would help
18 the young twin boys who loved being bathed together. No
19 child ever bathed in dirty water. The water was always
20 fresh.

21 "The food was very good and I always made sure that
22 the children got a lot of fruit. I ate with the other
23 nuns in the refectory whilst one of the two women who
24 helped me would supervise the children at mealtimes.

25 "On a Saturday morning we would have a fry-up in the

1 hostel, which was a good way for the older children to
2 learn how to cook.

3 "If the children did not like something then I would
4 get them something else. For instance, some of them
5 didn't like porridge, so I got them cereal instead.

6 "The children had their own clothes, which in those
7 days were bought in bulk. There was a room which had a
8 lot of clothes including kilts and spare uniforms for
9 school. I recall are on one occasion that four of the
10 children were going on a trip with the school so I took
11 them to C&A to kit them out for the trip. I don't think
12 the children shared clothes or wore hand-me-downs.

13 "On a Saturday the older children made their beds.
14 Me and the two women who helped me did everything else.
15 The two women were marvellous. The children didn't need
16 to do chores. The children would sometimes help dry the
17 dishes, but that was it as far as chores were concerned.

18 "There was a TV and books and magazines. The
19 children always knew the programmes they wanted to watch
20 and I always encouraged the children to read. They had
21 a lot of nice toys and games. Often these would have
22 been brought in by their parents or donated by big firms
23 in Aberdeen at Christmas.

24 "The children had their own lockers and cupboards
25 where they kept their own property. They got pocket

1 money each week and would spend it as they liked on
2 a Saturday.

3 "We all went out to the park a lot but I don't
4 recall going to the cinema or to pantomimes. During the
5 ten months I was there, four of the teenage children
6 went to, I think, Belgium on a school trip. During the
7 holidays I would take the children to the beach and
8 I recall that we took a lot of photos.

9 "Also, the home hired a hostel in the Highlands that
10 summer and we took up beds and sleeping bags and stayed
11 there for a fortnight. We had good weather and had
12 a great time up there.

13 "At Christmastime the older children decorated the
14 hostel in the way they wanted and we had a full
15 Christmas dinner that was sent over from the main
16 building. The children would write letters to Santa.

17 "Some of the big firms were very good to the
18 children and would donate presents and would sometimes
19 organise a party for them. We would wrap up the
20 presents and, where possible, we would try to get each
21 child the present they had asked for or as close as
22 possible.

23 "Whenever one of the [REDACTED] had a birthday, I would
24 make a party buffet and would get them a present.
25 Sometimes relatives would come round and take them out.

1 "If a child was needing attention during the night
2 then I would deal with it. One of the boys had
3 a problem with bed-wetting. I would wake him up before
4 I went to bed and take him to the toilet. Sometimes we
5 caught it in time and sometimes we didn't. If he had
6 wet the bed, I would wash him and give him fresh pyjamas
7 and remake his bed.

8 "A bus picked the children up at 8.30 am and took
9 them to school. Mrs Shaw was the headmistress at the
10 primary school, but I don't recall the name of the
11 school, although it must have been the local Catholic
12 school. At night the children would do their homework
13 in the dining room.

14 "If any of the children were sick I would call
15 a doctor. There was also a form that the social work
16 required us to fill in whenever the children needed
17 medical attention.

18 "A doctor and a dentist would come in to see the
19 younger children but I took the older children to a
20 surgery if it was required. All the children had to
21 have a medical examination once a year.

22 "One girl tripped and broke her arm so that required
23 a few trips to the local hospital. I remember her
24 passing out when she got the plaster off. I think I had
25 a logbook where I recorded such things. Each child had

1 their own file that I kept in the office although
2 I don't recall now where in the hostel my office was.

3 "My recollection is that the children liked to keep
4 their hair long and I don't remember ever going to get
5 their hair cut.

6 "No child ever died during my time in
7 Nazareth House.

8 "The children went to Mass every Sunday and I went
9 to prayers every day, but the only other time that the
10 children went to Mass that I recall was at Christmas.
11 Of course that was at midnight Mass and I remember the
12 children being desperate to get back to the hostel
13 because Santa was coming.

14 "Maybe at least one parent would come to visit most
15 weeks. It was a long way for the parents to travel as
16 most of the children were from Glasgow. The children
17 would always look forward to that. I would always speak
18 to the children after they had been out with family and
19 ask them what they had done. I would note what they
20 said in a logbook.

21 "I remember that the father of the twin boys and
22 their sisters was very good at visiting. He would come
23 every week and take them all out to the town.

24 "If official visitors came to the main building they
25 would also visit the children in the hostel and ask how

1 the children were doing. Our Counsellor from the
2 order's HQ came for a week during my time there. She
3 had no complainants about how I ran the hostel.

4 "We met with social workers regularly to see how the
5 children were getting on. It would always be noted in
6 the children's file that social work had attended.
7 I can't think of any occasion that any of the children
8 would have been left with anybody without somebody they
9 knew being there.

10 "During the 10 months I was in the hostel no
11 new children arrived there nor did any of them leave.
12 The 14 children there were there when I arrived were the
13 same 14 that were there when I left. I didn't know what
14 the procedure was for children arriving and leaving the
15 home other than one of the parents would be brought up
16 to arrange things.

17 "I kept the records on everything concerning the
18 children and these would be used for reviews with the
19 social workers. The younger of the two women who helped
20 me would have had access to the records I had, mainly
21 because things might happen when I wasn't there and she
22 would have to update the records.

23 "I don't know about what happened with discipline
24 and punishment in the main building but I don't think we
25 ever had to discipline any of the children in the

1 hostel. They were great kids and it broke my heart when
2 I had to leave. They were really sad when I left.

3 "I can say for sure that the children in the hostel
4 were never the subject of any form of abuse. The
5 children were lovely. We were like a family and I was
6 very protective of them.

7 "With regards to what happened in the main building,
8 I would not be aware of what happened there as the only
9 time I was there would be when I sometimes went over at
10 mealtimes. I never saw anything untoward as I was too
11 busy with my own group.

12 "I'm aware that the inquiry has received reports of
13 abuse in the main building, and if what happened was as
14 described then I would certainly be of the view that
15 that would be considered abuse.

16 "I was never the subject of a complaint of any sort
17 while I was in Aberdeen.

18 "Sister [REDACTED] LFB has since passed away. I'm not
19 aware of her having any other names. She was great.
20 She could drive and used to take the children to the
21 doctors or wherever else they needed. I don't know how
22 old she was and all I can say is that she was in the
23 main building when I worked in the hostel.

24 "I would sometimes see Sister [REDACTED] LFB when we were
25 both on duty on the school bus. We each took turns

1 going on the bus, two of us at a time, and sometimes our
2 turns would coincide. I don't recall seeing her
3 disciplining anybody on the bus, although I was usually
4 on the upper deck.

5 "Sister [FAF] had been in charge of the hostel
6 when it had been an industrial school. She had a room
7 in the hostel but I never saw her discipline any of the
8 children. I doubt if she ever had the chance to as she
9 really only slept there.

10 "Sister [LTX] was in the main building when I was
11 in the hostel. It was her group that I went to the
12 Highlands with. The little ones seemed to love her and
13 I never saw her discipline anybody. She had her own
14 staff which I had nothing to do with. She would take
15 her turn on the school bus but I never heard of any
16 wrongdoing by her.

17
18
19
20
21
22
23 "I wasn't really able to tell them anything because
24 we weren't allowed into each other's groups and the
25 hostel was very much separate from the main building.

1 FAJ worked with Sister LTX but I had
2 nothing to do with her.

3 "I don't know if the children in my care could have
4 spoken to anybody if something was wrong. I suppose
5 they could have spoken to the Mother Superior or one of
6 their social workers. It's nothing I ever experienced.
7 None of my children ever made any complaint about me or
8 the way I treated them.

9 "There was nothing I ever saw that I thought
10 constituted abuse or would have needed reported.

11
12
13 "I am aware that the inquiry has received
14 information about abuse at the main building in
15 Nazareth House Aberdeen and I can only suggest that
16 I was unaware of it simply because I was rarely in that
17 building. Also, I was only in Aberdeen for 10 months.

18 "The reason I moved from Aberdeen is that there was
19 a sister in Newcastle who was retiring and, the
20 religious life being what it is, I was sent there by my
21 order.

22 "I'll never forget the day I left. One of the
23 children was trying to pull my coat off begging me not
24 to go.

25 "I think when looking after children, it always

1 depended on the individual as to how they dealt with
2 children. My own mother had died when I was young and
3 I was raised by relatives so I could empathise with
4 children who were far away from their home. I think it
5 was that that made me so wanting to make sure the
6 children in my care got nothing but love.

7 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
8 published as part of the evidence to the inquiry.
9 I believe the facts stated in the witness statement are
10 true."

11 The statement was signed by Sister Larkin on
12 1 May 2018.

13 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. So does that complete the
14 evidence we're presenting today?

15 MS MACLEOD: That completes the evidence for today.

16 LADY SMITH: And tomorrow?

17 MS MACLEOD: Tomorrow we have three witnesses coming to give
18 oral evidence: two sisters and one former sister.

19 LADY SMITH: Very well. Starting at 10 o'clock tomorrow?

20 MS MACLEOD: Yes.

21 LADY SMITH: I'm going to rise now for the day and we'll sit
22 again at 10 o'clock tomorrow.

23 Thank you very much.

24 (12.20 pm)

25 (The hearing adjourned until

10.00 am on Thursday 7 June 2018)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

"SISTER ZARA" (sworn)1

Questions from MR MacAULAY2

Witness statement of SISTER OLIVER75

LARKIN (read)

1

2

3