

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

LBZ

Support person present: No

1. My name is LBZ. My date of birth is 1951. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into Nazareth House, Kilmarnock

2. I was born in St Francis maternity hospital. I think it was run by The Poor Sisters of Nazareth. My parents lived in Glasgow. My mother had children very young. It was the 1940's and 1950's. She was only fifteen or sixteen years old when she had me.
3. She had four children with my father. and are my older sisters and is younger than me. We were all put into care.
4. My mother went on to have two further daughters with another man, much later. I do not know my half-sisters. I did not know that I had any siblings at all until I was aged seven.

### Nazareth House, Kilmarnock

5. I was sent to Nazareth House in Kilmarnock as a baby, aged two. I do not really remember anything about my experience there. I left aged seven.

### **Bellsford House, Kilmarnock**

6. I was sent to a home called Belsa House in Kilmarnock for a few weeks. It was a stop-gap before going to Nazareth House in Aberdeen. I was always sent back there when I had a stop-gap between homes. It was run by a woman called Mrs Mckluskie. Everyone called her 'Gran Mckluskie'. She was the only person I ever felt close to.
7. I discovered years later that Mrs Mckluskie had tried to adopt me when I was aged five. My mother had refused her permission. My mother didn't want us, but she didn't want anyone else having us either.

### **Nazareth House, Aberdeen**

8. I have no memory of being taken to Nazareth House, Aberdeen.
9. The home was mixed. The boys and girls were kept separate. We were not allowed to mix with each other, or our siblings. The boys were kept on one side, the girls on the other. I did not know that I had sisters there.
10. The home was run by nuns and was steeped in the faith of the Catholic church. We were surrounded by religion, noon until night. It gave the impression of being "purely holy" and pious.

### **Routine at Nazareth House Aberdeen**

#### *First day*

11. I don't remember the details of the first day. My first memory is one of sharp shock. The nuns were vicious. I had never experienced anything like it. They were unbelievable.

*Mornings and bedtime*

12. If I had wet the bed, I had to have a cold bath first thing in the morning. All the bed-wetters lined up in the bathroom together. There were two or three baths and we would share the water.
13. I would then go to mass at 7am. I was an altar boy so I had to be there. Mass was for one hour. I had to go to mass twice on Sunday. I learnt the whole mass in Latin. I picked it up quite easily. There was an attitude of, "pick it up or else". I can still recite the mass in Latin today.
14. After mass, we would go for breakfast.

*Food*

15. The food was fine. There was enough of it. We all sat together on big tables. We ate in the dining room. I think it was also used as the playroom.
16. Breakfast was just porridge. It wasn't bad, especially if you managed to get the cream from the top of the milk. We had free meals for lunch at school.
17. Dinner was in the dining room. I was often excluded from dinner for being naughty. It didn't take much. It just depended on the mood of the nun in charge that day. Sometimes it was for bed-wetting the night before.
18. If I was excluded, I would go to the "dump" behind the home and scavenge for food. I would find brussel sprouts and eat them. We were not allowed sweets or any extra food. If treats were handed in by visitors, it was taken away by the nuns.
19. On "feast days", we would get treats and better food. If the feast day was the same name as one of the nuns, they would put on a big spread. Nobody wanted to get into trouble on those days as they would miss out. Feast days were sometimes two or three times a week.

*Siblings*

20. When I arrived at Nazareth House, I did not know that I had any brothers or sisters. I remember Mother Superior called me into her room one day. There were three girls standing in there. She told me that the girls were my sisters. There were also two men in the room. They were CID police officers. My father had been murdered. He was a gypsy. The police had photographs and they wanted [REDACTED] to identify him. She was thirteen years old then. I was seven or eight.
21. I learnt then that I had two older sisters and one younger one. I remember being excited because I had three sisters that I didn't know about. I don't know if [REDACTED] knew about me before that day. She made a special point from that day onwards to meet me at the gates to walk to school.

*School*

22. After breakfast, we would all go to school. I think it was called St Peters school. It was both a primary and a secondary school. The school taught children from Nazareth House and from the local area.
23. When we left the home in the morning, the girls would go out of one gate and the boys, out of another. [REDACTED] used to wait for me at the gate. She would comb my hair into a curl for me every day. She looked after me. We had to hide from the nuns so that we weren't seen together. We walked to school unsupervised so we could walk together. We knew what time we had to be at school. After school, I would walk home with the other kids.
24. When I got back to the home, I would have to learn my catechism and masses in Latin. It took an hour every day. I had to learn the masses otherwise I would have been registered as a "reject". You didn't want to be a reject. The nuns placed a lot of emphasis on that kind of thing.

25. We were allowed to play until dinner time. There was a play room but it didn't have any toys or games or books. There wasn't any TV or radio. We would play tic, kick the can or hopscotch. Sometimes on feast days the nuns would give us the toys that had been handed in by visitors to play with. The toys were always removed after the feast day.
26. After dinner, I had to learn my catechism.

#### *Holidays*

27. I can't remember there being any holidays or days out. School holidays came and went with no real difference to our daily routine. Every day was the same, except Sundays. On Sundays we would have mass twice.

#### *Birthdays and Christmas*

28. I was told that my birthday was [REDACTED]. It was never marked by Nazareth House. I did not have a cake or any cards or presents. The nuns didn't go in for that sort of thing.
29. When I got married years later, I discovered that my birthday was in fact the [REDACTED]. I got my confirmation lines from the Home and it was noted there. I never had any explanation about why they had told me my birthday was [REDACTED].
30. Christmas was a busy time at the chapel. I can't really remember anything else about Christmas. I don't recall ever receiving a Christmas present. I'm sure there would have been a party.
31. Easter was a purely religious holiday. We did not receive any chocolate eggs or anything of that nature.

#### *Visits/Inspections*

32. I never had any visits from my family. My mother never contacted me or came to visit. My grandmother was Irish and lived in Dublin. She never visited.
33. I was visited by a social worker maybe once a year.

#### *Healthcare*

34. I do not remember ever seeing a doctor or dentist whilst at Nazareth House. I did not receive any injections or vaccinations. I do not remember ever getting sick.

#### *Personal Possessions*

35. I can't remember ever having any personal possessions. If I had had a teddy bear, it would have been taken away and put in the bin by the nuns. We did not receive any pocket money.
36. Clothes and shoes were provided to us by the home. We didn't have a uniform for school. We were just given cast-offs from other boys. We never got anything new. I wore short trousers until I was thirteen.

### **Abuse at Nazareth House, Aberdeen**

#### *Physical abuse by* [REDACTED] LDS [REDACTED]

37. The abuse started not long after I had arrived at Nazareth House. I was seven years old. There was [REDACTED] who worked there called [REDACTED] LDS [REDACTED] I think [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I didn't know much about him and tried to keep out of his way.
38. I used to go to the dump near the boiler room to pick brussel sprouts to eat when I had been excluded from dinner. [REDACTED] LDS [REDACTED] worked in that area and would take me to the boiler room. I thought I was getting a slapped bum for wetting the bed.

39. In the boiler room, [LDS] tied me up. He put a gag in my mouth. He would caress me at first and then slap me. He would then beat me up. He always used his hands. I couldn't defend myself as my arms were tied up.
40. It did not always happen in the boiler room. Sometimes he would take me to one of the little rooms upstairs in the Home. He would tie me up and gag me in the same way as in the boiler room.
41. There were never any nuns present when the abuse took place but I am sure they were in collusion with [LDS] Sister [LDR] in particular. I would see her speak to [LDS] about me. It looked like she was instructing him to punish me. He would then come and take me to the little room or the boiler room. He was allowed to hit me. The nuns saw him hit me and didn't care.
42. After [LDS] had finished abusing me, he would give me sixpence to buy sweeties. [LDS] would abuse me at least once a week. It started when I was seven years old and went on until I was nine. I knew it wasn't right.
43. As an adult looking back, I would say that there was a sexual element to the abuse for [LDS]. The gagging and the hitting definitely gave [LDS] pleasure. I never heard any of the other boys mentioning similar experiences with [LDS]. I would be very surprised if I was the only one he was interfering with.

*Physical abuse by the nuns*

44. Sister [LDR] and Sister [FAF] were the two cruellest nuns. Sister [LDR] would slap me straight in the face and head. It just depended on her mood. At mass I was made to sit next to her. She would deliberately stamp on my feet with her heels during the hymns. She was also the one who would send [LDS] to punish me.
45. Sister [FAF] would use a hairbrush to hit us all the time. She would throw it at you too. We never did anything to deserve it.

46. I think Sister [REDACTED] FAF was more of a tyrant towards the girls than the boys .My sister told me that she hit them a lot.

*Emotional abuse*

47. The nuns would only talk to us about religion. Every aspect of life at Nazareth House was run by the nuns and steeped in religion. There was no affection of any description.
48. I remember having a deep terror of the Catholic church. It was instilled into us by the nuns. There was a chapel in the home. Downstairs in the chapel were the catacombs. It was where they kept the coffins. We were all scared of it. My sister had to help wash the bodies down there. The nuns would terrorise us with stories of what could happen to us.
49. When one of the nuns died, there would be a requiem mass. At requiem mass there would be an open coffin. The girls would have to line up to kiss the dead body. I remember some of the girls vomiting with fear.
50. I must have been a mischievous child as the nuns always singled me out. They would say I had, "the face of an angel and the nature of the devil". That phrase has always stuck with me.

*Bedwetting*

51. I wet the bed throughout my time at Nazareth House. There were two or three of us who would wet the bed regularly. We had to sleep with an electric machine under our sheets. It had an alarm that would sound when you wet the bed. It would give you an electric shock.

- 52. In the morning, the nuns would wrap the wet sheets around you. You were made to stand in front of the other boys to be ridiculed. We would then have to line up in the bathroom for a cold bath.
- 53. I tried not to sleep so that I wouldn't wet the bed. I was too scared to get up in the night to go to the toilet.

**Leaving Nazareth House**

- 54. I can't remember why I was moved on to another home. It was Kilmarnock social work that moved me. Maybe it was because I had run away a few times and the police had returned me.
- 55. No-one explained to me what was going on or why I was moving.

**Reporting of abuse at Nazareth House, Aberdeen**

- 56. I did not have anyone that I could tell about the abuse at Nazareth House. I never reported it to the social workers or to the police. When police then asked me why I had run away, I would just say, "I don't know". I knew fine well why I had run away but I didn't trust them. I didn't trust anyone.

Another Institution

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Another Institution

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**Bellsford House, Kilmarnock**

71. I was sent back to Bellsford House after Redhouse as a stop-gap until I reached secondary school age. Nothing ever happened at Bellsford House.

### **St Ninian's, Fife**

72. When I was twelve or thirteen, I was sent to St Ninian's. St Ninian's was a boys Home run by the Christian Brothers. It was run like a boarding school. It was divided into different houses. I was in Ramsay house. We were always competing against the other houses.

### **Routine at St Ninian's**

73. I do not remember my first day or the daily routine at St Ninians. I just remember following the timetable as instructed during the week.
74. On Sunday we went for a walk. We always had to walk with another boy.

### *Food*

75. The food was fine. It was edible and there was enough of it.

### *School*

76. The school was located within the home. The monks all lived and taught on-site. I was Head boy. I was also an altar boy and in the choir.

### *Holidays*

77. I remember going on holiday to France with the Home. We visited prominent Catholic places. We went to Lourdes and Notre Dame. It was exciting. We spent a couple of weeks camping under tents.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

78. I do not remember any Christmas or Birthday celebrations at St Ninian's.

*Visits/Inspections*

79. I did not have any visits from my family. The social work only visited me when I ran away or was being moved. My social workers were called [REDACTED] LHD and John Watson.

*Healthcare*

80. I remember having vaccination injections at St Ninian's. I do not remember any other healthcare.

**Abuse at St Ninian's**

*Sexual abuse*

81. A monk called Brother [REDACTED] LHC was in charge of Ramsay House. He singled me out as one of his favourites. He was always very nice to me. I am sure it was him who arranged for me to be Head boy. Being Head boy meant that the other boys looked up to me. I was a mischievous boy. I should never have got that privilege. Looking back now, it was all part of the grooming process.

82. Brother [REDACTED] LHC had his own room in the home. He would invite me to his room regularly. I had begun smoking at that time. We were not allowed to smoke.

83. To begin with, Brother [REDACTED] LHC would invite me and a few other boys to his room to smoke. After a while he would invite me to smoke in his room alone. He would tell me to undress. He would watch me take my clothes off. He would masturbate himself.

84. It was very opportunistic. He would take me to his room at any time of day or night. It would happen pretty regularly. The abuse started shortly after I had arrived at St Ninians and ended shortly before I left.
85. On four or five occasions, he made me masturbate him. I don't know if he abused any other boys in the same way.
86. On one occasion, Brother [REDACTED] LHC had shown me a tartan tin. The tin was full of rolled-up £5 notes. Later, I decided to steal one of the rolls of notes. I climbed out of the common room window ledge next-door to his room. I broke in through his room window. I took a roll of £5 notes and left.
87. When we went on the school trip to France, I had the £5 notes converted into French francs. I bought lots of sweets and cigarettes. I told some of the other boys. They must have told the monks. From that moment on, I was vilified as a thief. I was seen as the lowest of the low for stealing.
88. The abuse stopped after the French trip. Brother [REDACTED] LHC wanted nothing more to do with me.

*Physical abuse*

89. There was another monk who would physically abuse me and other boys. I can't remember his name. He was in charge of [REDACTED] He was also in charge of punishments.
90. When you were caught doing something wrong during the day, he would tell you to remind him later. He would be in the bath-house when you lined up to get washed. When you reminded him of what you had done, he would take out a leather strap. He would hit you very hard with it. I was always sore after a hiding from him.
91. He would hit you for pretty much anything. If you had been caught smoking, if you had wet the bed. He would also check for any masturbation or arousal when you

were in bed. He would wake you up in the middle of the night. He said he was checking for “impure thoughts”. He had a very deep voice. I will never forget hearing that voice in the middle of the night.

### *Bed-wetting*

92. I wet the bed at St Ninian’s too. It wasn’t as often as at Nazareth House and Redhouse because I was a bit older.
93. The same monk that dealt with punishments, would deal with the bed-wetters. He would creep around the boys rooms at night checking for wet beds. You would be ridiculed if he found you had wet the bed.

### **Leaving St Ninian’s**

94. The social work department were told to remove me from St Ninian’s. I left under a bit of a cloud because the police were involved again. I had been caught running away a few times.
95. My social worker [REDACTED] LHD was fed up with me. He said it caused him hassle having to do the paperwork every time I ran away. He said I was causing him trouble. He slapped me two or three times. He arranged for me to be moved.

### **Reporting of abuse at St Ninian’s**

96. I didn’t trust anyone. I didn’t know what would happen if I told anyone about Brother [REDACTED] LHC. When the staff asked why I had run away I would say, “I don’t know”. I was scared that whoever I told would start abusing me too. I didn’t report the abuse to the home, the social work or the police.

### **Life after being in care**

97. After St Ninians, I went to Orchardon House Boarding School. It was in Dumfries. I was there for eighteen months. No abuse happened there.
98. I remember being locked in my room. My room was on the third floor. I wanted to escape, so I threw myself out of the window. They thought I was trying to commit suicide. I think they got scared. That's how I ended up going to Crichton hospital in Dumfries.
99. Crichton hospital was a psychiatric hospital. I was sent there aged fifteen. I enjoyed it there. They looked after me. I spoke to psychiatrists regularly.
100. I stayed in Crichton hospital for a year, leaving when I was 16. I was worried about my time in care coming to an end. I had no idea where I would go or what I would do. The social work department just left me with no support.

### **Impact**

#### *Mental health*

101. The impact on my mental health has been devastating. I have learnt not to trust anyone. I have no confidence. I turned to drugs to try to block everything out. I was an addict for thirty years. I have a drug counsellor and a Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN). I see them regularly. I am clean now.
102. I have been diagnosed with historic, post-traumatic stress disorder. It has been attributed to the abuse I suffered in care; the abuse at Redhouse, in particular.
103. I have been seeing psychiatrists for years. It has been beneficial. It has brought me to the point where I can talk to the Inquiry. My drug counsellor and CPN have

encouraged me to speak about my experiences. I'm sixty-six years old and still need to talk about it.

*Prison*

104. I was completely institutionalised by the time I came out of Crichton hospital. I feel that I was broken before I even started. I had no qualifications at all. I started offending. It was always crimes of dishonesty. I never committed any crimes of violence. Generally, I would break into safes. There was no deterrent effect to committing crime for me. I felt safer in prison than in the outside world.

*Family and relationships*

105. My mother tried to contact me after my eighteenth birthday. She put an advert in the lost and found section of the newspaper. I went to see her. That is when I found out that I had two further half-sisters. They were only young girls at the time. I didn't like seeing them.
106. My mother told me about an armed robbery. She got me involved in it. Then she reported me to the police. I never saw her again after that.
107. I married when I was twenty five. We had one son and one daughter. The marriage lasted fifteen years. It fell apart because I was always in prison.
108. My ex-wife and children moved to Dumfries. I am not in contact with them. I didn't want to mess their lives up too. I believe I have grandchildren too. I have never met them. My son has indicated that he would like to see me at some point in the future. I am hopeful that we will meet soon.
109. I have no contact with my sisters [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is the only sibling that I have a relationship with. I was always closer to her, than anyone else.

110. I think [REDACTED] was abused during her time in Nazareth House. She never speaks about it. She breaks down if Nazareth House is even mentioned, especially if she has had a drink. I'm sure it would have been the same [REDACTED], [REDACTED] LDS [REDACTED]

### *Faith*

111. My experience in care has completely destroyed any faith I had. The nuns were vicious and totally incapable of looking after children. The brothers were priests. As far as I am concerned, they are a bunch of hypocrites. They taught me not to trust anyone. It has affected my whole life. I often wonder how I would have turned out if no abuse had happened and they had just done their job.

### **Records**

112. I have never seen any records from the care homes I lived in. I have been given details of Future Pathways who I hope will be able to help me locate my records.

### **Other information**

113. I know that [REDACTED] LHB [REDACTED] went on to work in other places where there were vulnerable boys. I met him again in Edinburgh in a place called Pontin House. It was a hostel for young boys who had come straight out of care. The hostel was supposed to help the boys with finding a job.
114. [REDACTED] LHB [REDACTED] left Pontin House under a cloud for some reason. I then saw him working at a place called St Leonards. St Leonards was a home for the deaf and blind. I couldn't believe it. He must have deliberately sought out jobs where there were vulnerable boys or boys from care.

### *Hopes for the Inquiry*

115. I hope the Inquiry fulfils its purpose. If there is anyone still working in care abusing children, I hope the Inquiry finds them. I hope the Inquiry stops them from ruining anyone else's life.

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

LBZ

Signed.....

Dated..... 8/9/2017.....