

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

John Bernard FARRELL

Support person present, No

Others present: Blair Johnston from Clyde and Co Solicitors.

1. My name is John Bernard Farrell. I was known as Brother Mark Farrell when I was a member of the Christian Brothers. My date of birth is the [REDACTED] 1942. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before joining the Christian Brothers

2. I was brought up as a boy in Dublin, Ireland. I was educated by the Christian Brothers in Dublin and at the age of seventeen I requested to become a member of the Christian Brothers Congregation. I understood that I had a mission to assist with the education of children throughout the world and in particular with under-privileged children.

Start of my career

3. I joined the Christian Brothers Congregation in 1959 at age seventeen. There were two processes to undertake, religious formation and professional training. I made my first commitment after my first year. There were annual commitments made at the end of each year until I became 25. At that age I made the lifelong commitment. That is the normal routine within the Congregation.

4. I undertook to obtain the educational standards required to teach along with the requisite training. I was educated by the Christian Brothers and in 1963 I attended Teacher Training College in Dublin. When I was at College I was a Christian Brother. I obtained the qualifications that enabled me to teach children in a school.
5. My first posting as a teacher was to a day school in Dublin. It was a Primary School with about 400 pupils. It was in an area that was less affluent and a lot of the pupils were less privileged.
6. In January 1967 I was transferred to South Africa as I had expressed an interest to serve in a foreign mission. I told the Brothers that I was prepared to go anywhere in the world and in particular to work with under privileged children. The decision to send me to South Africa was made by the Congregation I simply put my name on a list and the decision was made for me by the management as to where I was sent. I was never told how long I would be going to South Africa for.

Working in South Africa 1967 – 1977

7. I was transferred to South Africa in 1967. When I arrived there we were very much affected by the apartheid system that was in place at that time. It was a difficult time and made the Brother's presence there very difficult. I recall one placement I was at called St Columba's School. Because the school was in a non-white area I had to apply every year to the authorities to work there.
8. I was to remain in South Africa and Rhodesia for eleven years working at a series of different schools run by the Christian Brothers. Some of the schools were fee paying Catholic Schools and the others were for people of mixed race. Some of the schools were day schools and some of them were boarding schools.
9. I went to whatever school I was sent to by The Christian Brothers. The staffing decisions were made by the management according to the requirements. I followed the instructions I was given by the Provincial in South Africa and went where I was told

to go. I would usually get six to eight weeks' notice to change schools and don't recall any situation where I would have had to change schools more urgently.

10. I do recall that the two Provincial's in charge of the Congregation when I was in South Africa were Patrick Southwell and a Brother O'Neil who came from county Kerry in Ireland. I can't recall if their time in South Africa overlapped. I do recall that we had an annual visit from the Provincial who would inspect the schools. He would also check up on the members of the Congregation working there.
11. My time in South Africa came to an end when I requested that I be sent back home. My parents were getting elderly and keeping in touch with them in those days was not easy. I was unable to make a phone call as it was too expensive. You did get leave to go home initially every seven years and this was then changed to five years. I felt I needed to be in the northern hemisphere and nearer to my parents.
12. At no time was I made aware of any allegations of abuse made against me for the whole time I was in South Africa and Rhodesia.
13. As far as I remember the order of schools and the dates I was there were as follows, I cannot be sure of the exact dates:

From 1967 until 1970 I was at– Christian Brother's College, Welkom and Christian Brother's College, Pretoria in a teaching role.

Between 1970 and 1974 I was at St Columba's College, Greenpoint, Athlone, Capetown and Christian Brothers College, Greenpoint, Capetown. I performed pastoral and teaching roles.

From 1974 until 1976 I was at Christian Brothers College, Bulawayo, Rhodesia. I was there as a student attending the University of Rhodesia. I did not have a teaching role but resided with the Brothers at the college there.

Later in 1976 and into 1977 I was at Christian Brothers College, Boksburg Johannesburg in a teaching role. Later in 1977 I returned to reside with my parents in Dublin. In the winter of that year I went to St Ninian's School in Falkland for about nine months in a teaching capacity.

Memories of time spent working at schools in South Africa and Rhodesia

14. I first went to the Christian Brothers College in Welkom in the Orange Free State. This was a day school and I was not there for very long. The school was staffed by Christian Brothers and lay people. I was there in a teaching role.
15. I was then moved to Christian Brothers College in Pretoria. The school at the time was moving premises. It was a very large school for white only, fee paying Catholic boys. It very much was designed for middle class children. It was both a day school and a boarding school. I was there for about four years. It was staffed by men, women, some Brothers and some lay staff. It was a very a very successful school and was measured by its exam results and sporting achievements. I performed a teaching and a pastoral role. The school took pupils from Primary One through to school leaving age. My pastoral role was with the younger children. I was moved from Pretoria to Athlone on the instructions of the Provincial to cover staffing shortages.
16. St Columba's High School was in Athlone, Capetown for disadvantaged children. It was a mixed race school. It was more in keeping with the aims of the Christian Brothers. There was a Christian Brothers Congregation based at Athlone. The community consisted of about five or six brothers. You had to comply with the Apartheid Laws and it was very frustrating. This was a day school. The teaching staff were Brothers and lay staff and some of the lay staff were "coloured".
17. I then moved to Christian Brothers College in Greenpoint, Capetown. This was a Catholic day school run by the Brothers. It was for white males only and was a fee paying school. It was quite an exclusive school. The Christian Brothers had another school at Woodstock in Capetown but I had no association with that school.

18. I left South Africa and went to Rhodesia. I stayed with the Congregation of Christian Brothers at the Christian Brother's College while attended as a student at the University of Rhodesia in Bulawayo. I did not have a teaching role there.
19. Next I moved to Christian Brothers College, Boksburg, Johannesburg. It was another all white Catholic fee paying all boys day school. It was a huge property and was for privileged boys. I had a teaching role while I was there. It was at this time that I was making representations to the management of the Christian Brothers for a return to the northern hemisphere to be nearer my parents. I had been in Africa and Rhodesia for eleven years.
20. The management of the Christian Brothers acceded to my request for a return to the northern hemisphere and I flew to Dublin and spent Christmas with my parents. I was then told that I was being sent to a Christian Brothers School in Falkland, Fife, Scotland. I remember that it was 1977 and there had been a heavy fall of snow which lasted right through to the late spring.

St Ninian's School, Falkland, Scotland 1977 – 1978 as a teacher and 1980 – 1983 as Headmaster

First impressions

21. I will never forget arriving at Markinch train station and seeing six feet of snow. It was to be my introduction to Scotland. I had never been in Scotland before. It was a bad time to arrive as we were in the shadow of the Lomond Hills. It was very grim because there was so much snow. There were short days and long nights.
22. It was a complete change to what I had been used to. I did feel very comfortable there because I felt that this institution was the kind of place that the founder of the Christian Brothers, Edmund Rice, had in mind when he wanted to educate children. It was a very busy place.

23. There was no real induction process. I learned what to do by observation. I was a teacher and I felt that I was eased into the role. I had no responsibility for the welfare of the boys out with my teaching role.

Layout and history of St Ninian's

24. The house itself was a large country house in its own grounds. It was a haphazard arrangement. The school and grounds had been made available to the Archbishop of Edinburgh by the Crichton-Stewart family. During the Second World War it had been a base for Polish airmen. It was then made available to the Christian Brothers as it was felt that in the post war years there was a requirement for a school for orphans of the war. I think that this was in the 1950's. It did of course change in its primary roles as time passed.
25. St Ninian's was not a List D school but was described as a List G school. It was a sort of halfway house between home and List D Schools. Some of the boys were only there for a few months whilst others were there till they left at sixteen. It varied greatly.

The children at St Ninian's and funding

26. The pupils at the school were all boys. There were between 40 and 44 boys at the school. They were of post primary school age up until school leaving. I would estimate aged twelve to sixteen. The boys came from different parts of Scotland including Glasgow, Perth, Stirling and Edinburgh.
27. They were sent to the school by the local authority from the area in which they resided. The local authority from where the boy originated funded the stay of the boy at St Ninian's. They were sent to the school for a variety of reasons including truancy from school and committing petty crime. Some of the boys were out of parental control.

28. A large number of the boys were very behind in the normally lauded Scottish Education system. In my opinion the most important teacher at St Ninian's was the remedial teacher. We were fortunate in that we had a very good remedial teacher called Margaret Nichol.
29. During my second spell at St Ninian's I attended in my role as headmaster at most of the Children's Panels where boys were appearing. If I did not attend then the [REDACTED] from St Ninian's, [REDACTED] MBV, did attend. I knew the background of the boys from attending the panels.

My role at St Ninian's

30. My role when I first arrived at the school in the winter of 1977-1978 was to be a teacher. I had no pastoral role. I had no responsibility for the dormitories of boys. As it turned out the teaching qualifications I had obtained were not sufficient for a teaching role in Scotland. In the summer of 1978 I was sent for about two years to training college in Strawberry Hill, London and I lived at "The House of Study". I managed to obtain my teaching qualifications.
31. In 1977 I also was asked to do some refereeing or act as chauffeur to the boys to take them places in the minibus. In the mornings I sometimes took the children to Elmwood College in Cupar where they could study more advanced technical subjects that we couldn't provide at St Ninian's.
32. I returned to the school in 1980 after I had completed my qualification and took up the role as Headmaster of St Ninian's [REDACTED]
33. Even after I left St Ninian's and went on to study to become a priest, I maintained contact with a lot of the ex-pupils of St Ninian's. I attended some of their family events and they supported me when I was studying to be a priest.

Management structure

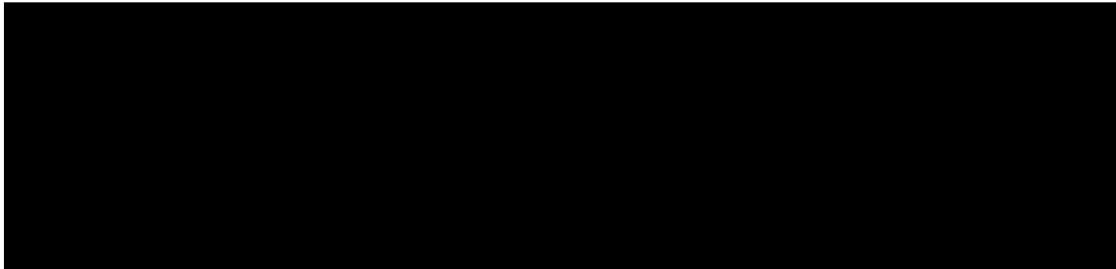
34. Brother [REDACTED] was the [REDACTED] He was also [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] In the summer of 1980 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] of the school and I remained there until 1983 when the school closed.
35. When I took over as Headmaster from Brother [REDACTED] there was a very brief handover period before Brother [REDACTED] left. There was no formal process and most of the systems to run the school were already in place. I didn't need much more information to run the school efficiently.
36. The structure of the Christian Brothers at St Ninian's in 1977 was that there was a Brother Superior who was in overall charge, a bursar and a headmaster of the school. Sometimes headmaster and Brother Superior were a combined role.

Personal Development for my role as Headmaster at St Ninian's

37. In late summer 1978 when it was realised that I was not properly qualified to teach in Scotland the Christian Brothers arranged for me to attend at Digby Stuart College of Education at Roehampton in Wimbledon, London. I was there for two years and completed my course at the end of term 1980.
38. Whilst I was at Strawberry Hill I resided with the Congregation of Christian Brothers who were resident there and I attended Digby Stuart College every day. I obtained the Certificate of Education which allowed me to teach in Scotland. I can only remember the name of one of the brothers who has since passed away. He was called Brother Hastings. I did not meet a Brother [REDACTED] MBP [REDACTED] and have never know a Brother [REDACTED] MBP [REDACTED] as part of the Christian Brothers Congregation.
39. I do recall that there was a house of studies run by the Presentation Brothers. Historically the Presentation Brothers were a breakaway group of the Christian Brothers who still acknowledge Edmund Rice as their founder. They owned a separate house in Strawberry Hill which catered for their congregation and their learning needs.

40. During my stay at Strawberry Hill in London I did not have any occasion to go back to St Ninian's School in Falkland. As part of the training I did have some placements at schools in England. They were organised by the staff at the training college and did not include St Ninian's. They were all day placements at schools in the London area. I can't recall the names of these schools.

41.



42. The routine at St Ninian's didn't really change although as my term of office continued I did make some changes. Most of the administration for the residents was completed by [REDACTED] MBV [REDACTED]

Staff at St Ninian's during 1977 – 1978 and 1980 – 1983

43. In 1977/1978 when I was first went to St Ninian's the Brothers I recall being there with Brother Harrington, Brother [REDACTED] MBS and Brother [REDACTED] LMZ. Brother [REDACTED] MHJ was the bursar.

44. In 1977 – 1978 there was also lay staff. I recall Margaret Nichol who was the remedial teacher, [REDACTED] MIK who taught [REDACTED] [REDACTED] BHB who had been there for a long time. He was a local villager and taught [REDACTED] He was involved in everything that went on in St Ninian's and was known to the boys as [REDACTED] BHB He had a great rapport with the boys. Mr [REDACTED] BHB was used by other members of staff as a person to release the pressure from any situation. If one of the boys got upset he would be sent to [REDACTED] BHB class to relieve the situation. He sadly passed away a few years ago.

45. There was also a [REDACTED] attached to St Ninian's. His name was [REDACTED] MBV and he had previously been a Christian Brother but then he was a lay employee. He was in touch with social workers all over Scotland to discuss the boys that came to St Ninian's.
46. I recruited a matron when I was Headmaster of the school. Her name was Jean Boylan and sadly she is now deceased. She was a trained nurse. I thought that this was an important role for the boys to have to have access to someone for medical or other problems. There was also a very good cook called Miss Brown who lived in the village of Falkland.
47. When I took over at St Ninian's, Brother Harrington and Brother [REDACTED] LMZ were still there. Brother Kelly and Brother [REDACTED] MHG also joined the staff. I don't remember more than about six Brothers being there at any one time. Brother [REDACTED] MBS was still the [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] SNR
48. I also remember three other Brothers who were there at St Ninian's when I was there. They were Chris Brown, Mike Halligan and James Burns. The staff came and went just like any other school.

Changes I made at St Ninian's during my spell as Headmaster. 1980 -1983

49. I was very keen to involve the families of the boys and wanted to change the philosophy of the school. I encouraged visits to the school from family members. During vacation time I based myself at a parish in the West of Scotland for a few days to enable me to visit families and check up on the boys. There was a problem at the time with glue sniffing.
50. Some of the boys were "lifted by the Polis" and I just wanted to ensure that they were not getting into a life of crime. A lot of the boys' families had absentee fathers and I think that this was a cause of a lot of their troubles.

51. I changed the way that the dormitories looked. I arranged for joiners to fit permanent beds with a bed board and storage place for each boy. There were lockers and they were separated to give some privacy. I would say that there were six boys to a room.
52. I had my own room where I slept on the top floor of the main building. I also had an office on the ground floor. The boys' dormitories were on the first floor and most of the classrooms were on the top floor. My room was some distance from where the boys slept.
53. I tried to ensure that I would attend at any of the Children's Hearings where one of our prospective boys were appearing or when there was a review of one of our existing pupils. I usually attended with the [REDACTED] MBV [REDACTED].
54. I used to help to organise a school show that we held in the home. We would invite the local villagers and the parents of the boys to come to these shows. In the past there had been incidents in Falkland village and relations with the villagers were not good. I tried to turn this round by raising money through a sponsored walk for the old people living in the village and involving the villagers in what was happening in the home.
55. There were regular staff meetings involving all the Brothers and the lay staff involved in teaching at the school. We would discuss particular problems and update the records kept on each child. We would also have to consider and implement the recommendations from the different Inspections that took place during the course of a year.

Routine and life at St Ninian's, Falkland, Fife

Admission

56. The boys would arrive with a local community social worker and a parent, usually a mother. When I became Headmaster I was keen to involve the parents and the

children in the process of coming to the school. I would arrange for preliminary visits to the school before they became residents. I would get one of the boys to show them round as I felt that this was important and they would be able to ask questions of the pupils. They would get a more down to earth assessment from a pupil of the school.

57. When I was the headmaster I ensured that the boy, his parent and the social worker would sit down with me and discuss what they had seen. I always asked the boy if he thought he could be happy at St Ninian's.

Daily routine

58. The first time I was at Ninian's I cannot be sure of the routine as far as the boys getting up out of bed. I don't know which Brothers were responsible for the day to day looking after of the boys. I think that Brother Harrington and Brother LMZ were among a number of Brothers over the years who were housemasters in charge of the dormitories.
59. Once the boys were up in the morning they would have short morning prayer in the chapel and then head for breakfast. After doing some light chores the children went to their classrooms.
60. At night time there was piped music played in the dormitories where the boys slept. I think that this was supposed to help get them off to sleep. It was already happening before I arrived.
61. The routine had not changed much when I returned to take up the post of headmaster. I think that the boys got up in the morning at about 7:45 am. They would all be expected to go to say a prayer at the chapel in the home. I would lead that Morning Prayer.
62. The boys would then head off to breakfast. After breakfast the boys did their chores and from there went to classroom. I also introduced a new routine at mealtime where a member of staff would sit at the table with the boys and socialise with them. The staff ate the same food as the boys.

63. I then took a morning assembly which took place between chores and school. I was also involved in organising the school shows. I spent less time teaching because of my other commitments.
64. I think that it was lights out for everybody at the same time. The boys would have a shower most nights after they had finished recreation. The boys would also socialise with each other before they went to bed.
65. There were no duty staff through the night. The matron and the housemasters would respond to whatever was needed through the night and they slept near to where the boys' dormitories were.

Sleeping arrangements

66. The boys slept in dormitories in the main building. When I came back for my second spell at St Ninian's as headmaster I arranged for joiners to erect partitions between the bed spaces to give some privacy to the boys. There were separate dormitories for the junior and senior boys.
67. I did not have responsibility for running the dormitories during both periods I was at St Ninian's. I had too many other duties to perform. This was done by the housemasters who had day to day responsibility. In the times I was at St Ninian's it would be Brother Kelly and Brother MHG who performed the housemaster's role.

Washing and bathing

68. I was not involved in supervising the boys washing or bathing on the first occasion I was at St Ninian's. I think that the showering of the boys was supervised by the Brother in charge of the boys and in the role of housemaster. I had no involvement when I was headmaster.

Siblings resident at St Ninian's

69. I do remember boys who were brothers who were at the school at the same time. There were not many. There were two [REDACTED] three [REDACTED] who were outstanding cross country runners and two called [REDACTED] They were not kept together but were put into dormitories according to age.

Food

70. In both my first and second spells at St Ninian's I took very little part in supervising mealtimes for the boys. During my first spell I would eat with the other Brothers in a separate area from the children. The food was all supplied by the kitchens and made on the premises. I think the Brothers got different food to the children and that it was better quality. I didn't have any complaints about the food that I was supplied. I never saw any force feeding.
71. When I was headmaster at the school I changed the dining arrangements and instead of having a large table I introduced smaller tables with a member of staff sitting at the table. It meant that the staff ate the same food as the children.

Clothes

72. There was no school uniform and the boys would arrive with whatever clothes they had at the time. Some of the boys were also provided clothing from the school when there was a need. There was staff who laundered all the clothes but I don't recall if the clothes had name tags. The dress was casual. If there was a requirement to purchase clothes or other items it would be referred to the family social worker to provide the funding for.

Chores

73. The boys did have to perform some light chores when they got up in the morning. They would do polishing or dusting and general cleaning of the house and their dormitories.

They were minimal chores and were done to give them a sense of housekeeping. The chores were done after breakfast and before school. It only lasted for about twenty minutes and they were rewarded with "tuck".

Leisure time

74. After the evening meal there was recreation available. Some boys played table tennis or pool and some watched television. In the better weather the boys could be outside playing football. Although it was not allowed some boys would also be outside having a smoke. My only duties were to be around and monitor the behaviour of the boys.
75. I don't remember any books or a library when I was there. I also don't recall board games or toys. The boys did not go into Falkland as they were not popular with the villagers who lived there.

Tension and bullying amongst the boys.

76. There were the usual 'fisty cuffs' and fall outs amongst the boys but no more so than any other school or playground environment. I do remember one incident when one of the boys went down to the kitchen and took a knife. He was very upset and it ended up with me getting into a wrestling situation with him to get the knife from him. That was the only occasion when it was more serious that I can recall.
77. There was not a big issue with bullying. The only real arguments would be over the currency for the home which was tobacco.

Possessions and pocket money

78. The boys were not given pocket money as such. They would earn credits to spend on "tuck". The tuck shop was run by the Bursar Brother MHJ and he would hand out the sweeties every week. If they had cash they could purchase extra tuck.

79. If the boys had any money when we went to church in Falkland on a Sunday they would go into the local shop to spend it although they were not made welcome there.
80. The boys didn't have many personal possessions and the only things that I can remember were the likes of a mouth organ or a personal pair of football boots as opposed to boots supplied by the school. The boys would look after their own personal possessions. The personal possessions were kept in their rooms and the rooms were out of bounds during the day. There was no pilfering among the boys. I would say there was a sense of solidarity. I recall one of the boy's mothers died and the other boys rallied round him.

Smoking cigarettes

81. A lot of the boys were smokers. Smoking was not allowed but was tolerated. The boys would smoke whenever there was a chance and they often rolled cigarettes. Tobacco was a valuable commodity but it was against the rules.

Children visiting home overnight or being taken out of the home

82. Most children went home at weekends to their families. If this didn't happen for some reason which could have been a punishment for behaviour or the simple fact that they had no place to go home to they would be taken on any trips that had been organised by the Brothers.
83. There were no other reasons that the children would be out for the night or being taken out of the home.

Holidays

84. Due to the network of Christian Brothers throughout the United Kingdom we would go on visits to Sunderland, Liverpool and Stoke on Trent where there were Christian Brother's schools. We would take the whole school when we visited these places. The children would meet and stay with other families of the pupils at these schools. The

staff at the establishment we stayed at would select the families although there was no formal vetting process that I was aware of. There would be football matches played against other teams who represented these schools.

Trips

85. There were trips to the swimming baths in Perth. At weekends when there were not so many children resident some of the children were taken to football in Dundee or the main swimming pool in Glenrothes.
86. We also went on trips to Glenshee for skiing during the school term and down to Wales for summer holidays. We would take a maximum of eighteen boys and they were usually boys we invited who were unable to go home. There would be necessary staff there to supervise them.
87. There was also a camp at Comrie in Perthshire which was an outward bound place run by the Army cadets. The boys in their final year as members of the senior would go there during the school term. They were experiences to which they would never be exposed to in their home environment.

Access to the boys

88. There were no visitors or other individuals who had access to the boys. The boys were never alone with visiting priests or Brothers who called at or stayed for a short spell at St Ninian's.

Running away

89. The home was never locked and if the children wanted they could just walk out. We did have some children that would abscond but it wasn't a major issue. If we had some absconders the Brothers would go out on a van and head towards the motorway to see if the boys could be tracked down. Sometimes the boys got back to their home towns and it would be up to the local social worker to bring them back.

90. I don't know why the boys ran away from school but I think that it was expected amongst the boys. It was a fashion amongst the residential school system and all the boys would talk about each other's experiences on the run. I can't recall interviewing the boys and asking them why they were running away although I suspect I would have had a cursory word with them.

Birthdays and Christmas

91. I don't think that we ever had a pupil on the premises at Christmas. Shortly after Christmas I do recall making home visits and sometimes bringing the boy back to the school. We didn't celebrate birthdays in any significant way.

Bed-wetting

92. There were some issues with bed-wetters but they were dealt with discreetly by the staff. They would replace the bedding and arrange for the boys to take the soiled bedding to the laundry. There were toilet facilities available throughout the night. There were night lights which worked off a low voltage and allowed the boys to see where they were going. There was no humiliation or punishment for bed-wetters.

Schooling

93. The classrooms were based in the house. In my first spell there I would teach a variety of subjects including English, maths, some science subjects and religious education. There was no homework.
94. The classes varied and as a teacher I would go to the classroom that the boys were working in. The remedial teacher Margaret Nichol had a huge role in this and any boys that were behind with their studies they would go to Margaret Nichol.

95. If there were any pupils who showed an academic aptitude or ability we would withdraw that individual from the daily school and tutor them on a one to one basis. I remember that most of these pupils were looking to join the army and sit the entrance exams. I recall two of them, one of which was called [REDACTED] although his real name was [REDACTED]. He contacted me when I was in Ireland and he was serving with the armed forces in Northern Ireland. I advised him that it would be a security risk for him to come and visit or contact me in Southern Ireland.
96. The other pupil I remember who went to the army was called [REDACTED]. I was invited by him to attend his 'passing out' parade in Aldershot and I went there as his guest.
97. Very few of the pupils went on to sit national exams but if they did we would have arranged for them to be sent to a local school to sit these exams.

Healthcare

98. Matron was on call for the boys. There was a GP who was on call in Strathmiglo and we also had the local Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy. I can only recall one visit to the Victoria Hospital when one of the boys badly cut his arm when he accidentally put it through a glass window.
99. There was a local dentist in Kirkcaldy that attended to the boys. I think we had to go to him as he didn't come to St Ninian's. It was not a regular visit.
100. I think that there would have been records of the medical treatment given to the children and I think they were kept in a filing cabinet but I don't know what happened to them.

Deaths at St Ninian's, Falkland, Fife

101. There were no deaths during my time at St Ninian's and I think that if one had occurred the first thing we would have done was to call the police. There was not a process in place but I think it would be common sense.

Religious instruction

102. There were prayers said before meals. [REDACTED] BHB [REDACTED] would supervise breakfast and he would lead the Grace. Every Sunday we would go into Falkland village where we would celebrate mass at The Royal Chapel which was a part of Falkland Palace.
103. There was also a mass said every Wednesday by a priest who would come into the school and perform it in the chapel. The boys were expected to attend this. The majority of the boys were Catholic although on the odd occasion we did have a non-Catholic boy. The boys would take it in turns to serve the mass even the non-Catholic boys took a turn.
104. I used to joke with two of the boys who were not Catholics who used to serve at the mass. I took a photograph of them and I threatened to send it to Ibrox in Glasgow. Sadly one of those boys called [REDACTED] passed away in Shotts Prison when I was there in my role as Chaplain. I recall I was cited to attend at the subsequent Fatal Accident Inquiry where the cause of death was found to be sepsis.
105. I have since read accounts of routines in statements supplied to the Inquiry where they highlight daily masses and religious instruction this was just not true.

Visitors

Visits from friends and family

106. Visitors could call at any time. A lot of the boys were allowed to go home on a weekend once a month. When I took over as headmaster I introduced home visits every second Saturday. As the rumours started about the school closing, the children would go home more often to try to engage with the local schools in the area they came from.
107. My own family used to visit from Ireland. I also had visits from friends from London. I used to have friends visit and I would go to watch the rugby internationals at Murrayfield.

108. Some of the boys who had been pupils at the school came back to visit and would stay the night. We had some accommodation near the dormitories and were able to put them up for the night. They were encouraged to come back and visit St Ninian's.

Visits from social workers and officials.

109. There were some social work visits although there was a bit of an atmosphere of out of sight out of mind. A lot of the social workers were very good but they seldom came to visit the boys more than once or twice a term. They would often go for a walk in the grounds.

110. There was a local policeman called John Todd who was a regular visitor to St Ninian's.

Preparation for boys leaving St Ninian's.

111. One of the teachers at the school called Ethel Philp used to do a bit of cooking with the boys. If some boys were getting ready to leave St Ninians then the last month of their time was spent getting work experience. We had a good network of local businesses who would take the boys for a month of work experience.
112. The boys would also have to get to their work under their own steam. They would have to get themselves up early and get to the bus to take them to their work. They were then responsible for making their own way home. I think that they enjoyed this as they were accepted and trusted. The boy's behaviour never let us down. We were not able to arrange employment for boys who were leaving and going back home. We left this up to the local social work of the area where the boys lived.
113. If one of the boys who was of school age was leaving St Ninian's we would make contact with the school he was going to and arrange a visit to that school. The local Social Worker from that area would also be involved.

Records and record keeping at St Ninian's, Falkland, Fife.

114. There were records kept on each boy and they were regularly updated. They were kept in a filing cabinet. We would keep feedback from the different inspections. The local authorities were keen to know that the money they were spending to have children housed at St Ninian's was being well spent
115. We were always asked to provide a report to the Children's Panel when one of the boys was up for review. We would have the records to refer to along with our own knowledge of the boy. Mr MBV would have first-hand knowledge of all of the pupils and he would normally prepare the report and in my role as headmaster he would run it past me before the Hearing. The Children's Reporter would always have a copy in front of him.
116. I can't recall a daily log book being kept at St Ninian's. I am unable to assist with what happened to the records that were kept at St Ninian's. I left when the school closed and I don't know what happened to them.

Inspections

117. I do recall during my time as Headmaster at the school that there were two annual inspections made by Fife Educational Department and Fife Social Work Department. Their findings and recommendations were then passed back to the local authorities in the area where the children came from. This ensured that these authorities would continue to fund the children they sent to us. St Ninian's also received feedback from these inspections. The inspector was usually of a senior level.
118. There was also an annual visit from a representative of the Scottish Bishops. He served on the committee for education and he would visit once a year. He spent time with the staff and the boys. That person was called Father Tom Gibbins.

119. We also received visits from the Christian Brothers Congregation. They tended to focus on the Brothers rather than pupils. They were happy that the local authority were inspecting the facilities and looking after the interests of the children.
120. All the Inspectors from the various organisations had free run of the home. I spoke to most of them at some stage during their visit. The inspectors would speak separately to the staff and the children.

Closing of St Ninian's, Falkland, Fife 1983

121. There were also rumours in the early 80's when fashions and trends were being changed that St Ninian's would close. Children's homes were no longer fashionable and it was felt by the Local Authorities that community based solutions were a better option. There was a direct appeal from the Social Services to the Christian Brothers to try to keep the school open. The other main reason for closure was that the staffing levels fell and there were not enough qualified Brothers left to staff the school.
122. I wanted the school to stay open as I felt that St Ninian's was doing a good job. I felt that the school was fulfilling the aims of the founder of The Christian Brothers in dealing with less fortunate children. At the time most of the schools run by The Christian Brothers in the United Kingdom were for the middle classes.

Complaints or dealing with issues at St Ninian's

123. If any allegation of sexual or physical abuse was passed on to me I would have contacted the local policeman and reported the incident to him and get him to deal with the issues. Fortunately this never happened.

Discipline and punishment

124. I was not a great supporter of corporal punishment. At the times we are talking about the belt was a popular method of punishment in schools. I was the only member of the

staff who was allowed to use the belt when I was headmaster. It was always when we were in St Ninian's applied to the hands. I wish that I had kept a log of the number of times that I used it because the occasions were few and far between. I never had occasion to use the belt at my first stay at St Ninian's as Brother LNA was the SNR then and he would have had that responsibility. I don't think that there was a written policy or at least I was not aware of one.

125. It is important to remember that customs and educational practices surrounding corporal punishment were very different back in the 1970's and 1980's. It was evident to me that excessive corporal punishment was very much a part of the boys previous education. I felt that St Ninian's had to offer something different.
126. We used to exclude boys from classrooms. I used to take the boys out of the class and into the class run by BHB because of his rapport with the boys. There, BHB would find a way to calm them down and refocus their attention.
127. If boys were excluded from the dining room or the dormitories they would be taken into the main hall where they would be made to stand for a period of time until they calmed down. I would tell the boys every morning at assembly what was allowed and what was not permissible. Despite what I have read in some of the statements I have been shown from the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, there was never an occasion when a boy was punished at assembly in front of the whole school.
128. If anything I would spend more time heaping praise on some of the pupils who were engaged with the local community. I recall one group of boys who would go to Glenrothes swimming pool where they would help with disabled swimmers.
129. There were accepted rules about conduct and I recall that if the boys had been fighting they would stand opposite each other in the main hall. If the boys were rude to staff members they would also be made to stand on their own in the main hall.

130. If the boys absconded I didn't see that as an occasion to use the strap. If the boys misbehaved in the village or were caught shoplifting I considered them to be reasons to use corporal punishment.

Recollections of other staff discipline

131. No other member of staff while I was headmaster at the school was permitted to administer corporal punishment. The other members of staff would always refer boys to me if they thought it was appropriate.

Recollections of specific incidents of discipline and punishment

132. I recall one occasion when we were on holiday in Wales and two of the boys wandered off. They came across a motor cycle which was unattended while the owner was engaged in fishing or whatever else he was doing. The bike was damaged and the man knowing that we were about the only people in this remote area came to me to make a complaint. I didn't have my official school tawse with me so I used the belt that I had holding up my jeans to administer punishment to the backside of both boys. We also had to make a monetary payment to pay for the damage.
133. There was another occasion when we were on holiday and one of the boys got onto the bus wearing a cowboy hat which he had stolen as he had no receipt. I went with him back to the shop and returned the hat. That boy was also punished with the belt.

Abuse in St Ninian's – specific incidents witnessed or heard of by me.

134. I did not witness any abuse on any of the boys by the members of staff I worked with. None of the boys ever came to me with complaints of abuse that had been caused by members of staff. I was unaware of any discussions amongst the staff or the boys about abuse within St Ninian's. If there had been a complaint of a criminal act it would

have been reported to the local Policeman. This never happened in my time at St Ninian's.

135. I am aware that in reading the statements from the Inquiry a lot of the boys state that the abuse was rife amongst them. The truth is if that were the case in a small community like ours the talk would get out. It would have been impossible for it to have been kept quiet. The boys had access to social workers and lay members of staff along with their parents. If anything had been happening it would have come out. The boys knew everything that was going on in St Ninian's. I maintain that these events never took place.

Specific allegations of abuse against me

136. I have been given notice of all the allegations made against me prior to this meeting and I have had time to think about them and recall the individuals involved.

Recollections of [REDACTED] MHK

137. [REDACTED] MHK was not with us very long at St Ninian's. I also recall that [REDACTED] MHK came to visit me on a few occasions at my Parish in Strathaven in South Lanarkshire. He was working at Castle Craig Hospital as a counsellor and on his way home to Glasgow he would drop in to see me. For a St Ninian's boy he was academically more gifted.

Allegations made against me by [REDACTED] MHK

138. [REDACTED] MHK has said he observed a boy getting a "hell of a beating" from me for touching a motor cycle when we were on holiday in Wales. He describes me hitting him with a belt. I can't recall if [REDACTED] MHK was on that trip. I do not agree that I gave him a "hell of a beating" although I have described the incident to you.

Recollections of LCH

139. I am aware that LCH has made an allegation against me in his Inquiry statement. I have no recollection of LCH who was born in 1963. I think that he would have been too old to have been there when I was headmaster. He could have been there during my first spell in 1977 but I can't remember him.

Allegations made against me by LCH

140. LCH states that he was battered by the Brothers who were on trial and were found guilty.
141. That would be Brother Kelly and myself but as I say I have no recollection of this boy.

Recollections of MGW

142. I am aware that MGW has made allegations against me in his Inquiry statement. MGW and I were not in St Ninian's at the same time. I have no recollection of him although I do remember his brother MOF. The police made enquiries with the Christian Brothers and they were able to tell them that I was not at the school at the same time.

Allegations made against me by MGW

143. I have no idea why MGW is complaining about me as we were not at St Ninian's at the same time. I know that MGW was a complainer against two other prisoners that are currently in Saughton Prison and who were involved in caring for him at Children's Homes. I know that he alleges that I sexually assaulted him but as I said I wasn't there when he was.
144. MGW alleges that the Brother LNA Brother MBP and I would loitering about the shower room where boys were naked.

145. This in fact would be true as the showering was supervised by the Brothers although I was not personally involved in that role and was not at St Ninian's when [MGW] [MGW] was there.
146. He mentions that some of the Brothers would put shampoo into the boys' hair and rub it in and that Brothers would stand next to the boys while they showered. Again I have no knowledge of this.
147. He makes allegations against a Brother [MBP] but I can confirm when I was at St Ninian's there was no Brother [MBP] working there and I think [MGW] is getting mixed up with the time he was at St Joseph's in Tranent when he was in the care of the De La Salle Congregation. I have never worked with a Brother [MBP] and I am not aware of a Brother [MBP] who was a member of the Christian Brother Congregation.
148. He alleges that on an occasion he was in the chapel and drank some alter wine and that Brother [LNA] and I caught him. He says he was dodging us, that it was a chase and they let go. He says that night that was in Brother [LNA] went into his dormitory and pulled him out of bed and took him to his room. He says he was sexually abused by Brother [LNA] and that Brother [MBP] was sitting in the corner masturbating himself. He said that at that time I, Brother Farrell, came into the room. He says he "got shunted to the middle of the bed and Brother Farrell got on the bed." He says "Brother [LNA] and Brother Farrell were sexually abusing me simultaneously." He says that "Brother Farrell went further than Brother [LNA] and that Brother [MBP] just sat watching.
149. I can't recall if this was mentioned at the trial but as I have said I wasn't at St Ninian's with [MGW]

Recollections of Alexander Shannon

150. I am aware that Alexander Shannon has made allegations against me in his Inquiry statement. I do remember Alec. I do recall that he gave evidence at the trial. When he

was at St Ninian's he was not troublesome [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I don't recall any incidents or causes of concern involving Alec.

Allegations made against me by Alexander Shannon

151. Alexander states that when he was showering, that myself, Brother Kelly and Brother LNA would be standing watching. The soap would be taken from him and I and the other Brothers would show him how to wash by rubbing the soap on his body including his buttocks.
152. Alec was certainly a pupil and I don't know if he was still a pupil when Brother LNA was there. My memory is that Brother Kelly and Brother LNA were not at St Ninian's at the same time. As I have already said I had nothing to do with the boys showering and I didn't see any of incidents that Alec Shannon has described.
153. Alec alleges that he went on an outing to Dundee with some of the other boys. He states that they got stranded and had to make their own way back. He said that it was 11:00 pm at night. The boys managed to get a train back to Markinch and they were picked up in the school mini bus which was being driven by myself. He alleges that I had been drinking.
154. The boys when they went on this trip were not supervised to the same degree. They were left to their own devices to a certain extent. It is quite possible that they missed the transport home and that I would pick them up from the railway station. I have no recollection of that incident.
155. Alec states that if he was unwilling to act as an altar boy he would be struck across the bare back side. He would get three strokes from the cane administered by Brother LNA or Farrell.
156. None of the boys were ever forced to serve as an altar boy at mass.

157. Alec alleges that when he ran away and was brought back to St Ninian's, usually by the police, he would receive three strokes of the cane on his bare backside. This caning would take place in front of all the other boys.
158. If he is referring to the time I was there with Brother [LNA] it would have been dealt with by Brother [LNA]. If it was during my time as headmaster I would have dealt with it but I would never administer punishment in front of the other boys. The cane was not an instrument of punishment.
159. Alec states that on several occasions he saw other boys [REDACTED] getting the cane for running away. Alec states that he jumped in to try to prevent it from happening. He states that it was always the same four Brothers who administered the cane namely Brothers [LNA] Farrell, Kelly and [MBV].
160. That can't have happened as [MBV] was the [REDACTED]. No it didn't happen.
161. Alec says in his statement to the Inquiry that he was moved out of his room and into the senior dormitory and he still had a bed wetting problem. He says the senior dormitory was near to where I slept and that I would get him up through the night and take him to the toilet. He says I would stand behind him and hold his penis and that I would masturbate him. He says he didn't know what I was doing to myself as I was behind him and it was like he had been passed on from Brother [LNA] to Brother Farrell after Brother [LNA] left.
162. I never had any role with the boys through the night. I did not have a room near to where the boys slept.
163. Alec mentions in his statement that he had written an autobiography called the 'Underworld Captain' and that he wanted me to read this book. He had passed it on to another boy [MHK] to pass to me. He wanted me to read the chapter on St Ninian's and to take note.

164. I knew that he had written the book as [MHS] told me about it but I have never read it.

Recollections of [MHS]

165. I am aware that [MHS] has made allegations against me in his Inquiry statement. [MHS] had the surname [MHS] when he was in St Ninian's. He was a very quiet insecure boy. He was not very popular amongst his peers. He was no trouble to us. When I read his statement I was amazed what was included in it. He got on very well with the female member of staff Ethel Philp. I think that he was one of the catering squad.

Allegations made against me by [MHS]

166. [MHS] says I was the headmaster. He alleges that if you were to be punished you would be taken to the headmaster's office and he would use the belt on your hands. He doesn't recall being belted in front of the other boys.
167. I don't think that [MHS] was the type of boy to be punished and I can't recall ever giving him the belt.
168. [MHS] mentions that when he was bathing he would be touched up by the other boys who were doing it on the instructions of Brother Farrell and Brother Kelly. He says he complained to Brother Farrell about this and he then became one of his favourites. He says he would go to Brother Farrell's room with the other boys and they would be given sweeties. He says they would all be touching each other up and that Brother Farrell would masturbate him and he would masturbate Brother Farrell. He says "we acted as a group" and that the sex always happened at the weekend when the "coast was clear" and there were no other staff to disturb you.
169. [MHS] says there were two different "camps" in the school and that you were either in Brother Kelly's camp or Brother Farrell's camp.

170. That was one of the reasons that the showers were supervised to prevent any abuse. Placing me at the showering is again wrong because that was the responsibility of the housemasters. The junior boys would have had their showers in a group and likewise the senior boys did so there would be no mixing together. It just didn't happen that the boys came to my room. The events described by MHS did not happen.
171. MHS states that when Brother MHG came to St Ninian's he tried to be affectionate towards him. MHS complained to me and I had a word with Brother MHG to tell him to leave him alone.
172. I have no recollection of that whatsoever.
173. MHS states that he was very emotionally attached to me and looked up to me as a father figure and he would have been upset if I stopped abusing him as he thought that he was one of my favourites. He thought that he was receiving love and attention that he had not had growing up.
174. It is very sad to hear his experiences described in these terms but again I have to say that there is no basis for him alleging that these things took place.
175. MHS states that just before leaving St Ninian's he was taken into an office with Brother Kelly and myself and I told him "in no uncertain terms" that there were three reasons that he could not tell anyone what had happened at St Ninian's. He was told that no one would believe him, they knew where our families lived and that the Brothers had the backing of the Catholic Church.
176. No, that never happened.
177. MHS states that he went back to visit St Ninian's after he had been away for a few months. When he met me he felt that all the feelings that he thought I had for him did not exist anymore and that he was treated differently. He felt that he was now too old to interest me and he felt very badly let down.

178. I have no recollection of MHS coming back to visit the school. There is no basis for that allegation. I don't think that I would remember any specific boy who came to visit.

Recollection of MNC

179. I remember MNC. I don't recall him being a difficult pupil at any time. I thought that he was one of the more mature pupils.

Allegations made against me by MNC

180. MNC alleges that after his mother left him at St Ninian's that I sorted him out putting him into plimsoles a vest and shorts. Telling him that he had to prove himself to get his clothes back.

181. I have no recollection of that whatsoever.

182. It is alleged that I was temperamental and would hit MNC on the hand with a ruler. I always smacked him on the arse or kicked him on the arse across the room if I lost my temper.

183. I have no recollection whatsoever of having to punish MNC. If I had it would have been with the regulation school belt.

184. It is alleged that I was really touchy feely and had favourites. It is alleged that I was forever touching MNC by patting his arse or when tucking his shirt in I would feel his arse or his privates.

185. I totally deny those allegations.

186. It is alleged that I was very strict and aggressive and that I would slap, punch or strike MNC with a big wooden pole.

187. I totally deny those allegations.

188. MNC also alleges that I was aware that Snoopy who was Brother Kelly was sexually and physically abusing him.

189. I was not aware of any sexual or physical abuse.

Specific allegations of abuse against staff at St Ninian's

Time spent working with Brother LMZ

190. LMZ was known as LMZ. He was a very easy going individual and was on the staff during my first spell at St Ninian's. He was very good with the younger boys. He was only with me at St Ninian's when I was headmaster for a short period of time. His nickname at St Ninian's was LMZ. I don't know why. He was a class teacher and would take pupils for games. He was not a housemaster in the time I was there. I would estimate that he was in his late 30's when I was there. I didn't know him very well but he seemed to have a good relationship with the boys. I never saw him discipline the boys.

191. I never saw Brother LMZ disciplining any of the boys at St Ninian's. I never saw or heard about and incidents of abuse involving Brother LMZ. I am unaware of any allegations of abuse against Brother LMZ. The passage of time has not affected my memories of Brother LMZ.

Time spent working with Brother MBS

192. He was the SNR of the Christian Brothers when I first arrived at St Ninian's. He was avuncular and did what was required very efficiently. He did extra tuition on behalf of the boys. He must have been in his 60's when he worked there. He didn't have as much to do with the boys. He was there the whole time I was at St Ninian's.

193. He always had a bit of banter with the boys but don't think that he saw his role as being a disciplinarian or involved in the pastoral role. I never saw him punishing any of the

boys and I never saw or heard of him abusing any of the boys. The passage of time has not affected my memories of working with Brother [MBS]

Time spent working with Brother [MHJ]

194. Brother [MHJ] was the bursar during my time at St Ninian's. He was very avuncular and ran the tuck shop and did all the finances. I recall that he played golf. I don't think that he had a teaching role in the time I was there. He was well liked by the boys. I never saw him disciplining any of the boys and never witnessed or heard of any incidents of abuse involving him. I don't think that the passage of time has affected my memories of Brother [MHJ]

Time spent working with [MBV]

195. [MBV] was the [] while I was at St Ninian's. He was very professional and efficient. I found him very easy to work with. He was very supportive of the aims of the school. He was in his early 40's when I was at the school. I did observe him interacting with the boys but it was always in his capacity as a social worker. [MBV] became a Brother but not at the time that I knew him at St Ninian's. I never saw or heard of him disciplining or abusing the boys at St Ninian's. The passage of time has not affected my memories of [MBV] He was the member of staff I worked with most.

Time spent working with Brother Paul Kelly

196. Brother Kelly was a key member of staff and was very involved with the boys in his role as a housemaster. He was very easy to work with and shared the same philosophy of what the school was trying to achieve. He also drove the bus back and forward to Glasgow to facilitate the boys visiting their families.

197. He was a sports master and was very keen on cross country running and was a runner himself. He was very enthusiastic for the school. I did observe him interacting with the boys and he was very relaxed and had good banter with the boys. They called him "Snoopy" because he was always trying to catch the boys smoking.
198. I know that he was one of the co-accused at the trial. I had no inkling at all of the things that this man was alleged to have done. As I have already explained to you the circumstances being as they were I feel that if these things were going on I would have heard about them because it would have been talked about by the boys and got back to me.
199. I never saw Brother Kelly disciplining any of the boys with corporal punishment. He would have almost certainly sent some of the boys to stand in the hall. I never saw him or heard about him abusing any of the boys. I know that the passage of time has not affected my recollections of Brother Kelly.

Time spent working with Brother [REDACTED] LNA

200. He was very dedicated to his role and I couldn't find fault with his attitude. On the odd occasion I saw him interacting with the boys I would describe him as very relaxed. He was responsible for discipline in his role as [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] I never saw him discipline the boys and I never heard or saw him abusing any of the boys. [REDACTED] in the role as headmaster at St Ninian's. The passage of time has not affected my memory of Brother [REDACTED] LNA [REDACTED] The window of opportunity I had for any interaction with Brother [REDACTED] LNA [REDACTED] was very small.

Time spent working with [REDACTED] MCG

201. He was very efficient and got on with his work. He would take on all work and extra tuition if it was required. He was very good at organising and also coaching sports. He coached the boys to play rugby. He was a very important member of staff. He was a bit more regimented with the boys and wouldn't stand them messing about. I never saw him punishing the boys and I never heard of or saw him abusing any of the boys

that would cause me concern. Again I don't think that the passage of time has affected my recollection of [MCG]

Time spent working with [BHB]

202. I am not aware of any allegations against [BHB] and I never saw him or heard of him punishing or abusing children. The passage of time has not affected my memories of [BHB] who has since passed away.

203. [MNC] alleges in his statement that a [] teacher would slap him on the back with a lump of wood.

204. The [] teacher was called [BHB] It would surprise me greatly if [BHB] [BHB] had used any violence towards the boys as it was not in his nature.

Time spent working with Brother [MHG]

205. I remember [MHG] He was efficient and compassionate. He was known in the Congregation as being someone who would be known to have a sensitivity about justice and social justice. I thought that he got on well with the boys. He was a Housemaster at the school. I had no concerns about Brother [MHG] interaction with the boys. I am not aware of any allegations against Brother [MHG]

Leaving St Ninian's, Falkland, Fife in 1983 and my career thereafter

206. I left when St Ninian's closed in 1983. I oversaw the closure of the school. I was then moved to The Christian Brothers School in Plymouth where I had a teaching role. It was a partially residential school and I was resident there for one academic year. I was already making arrangements to apply for theological studies to allow me to apply for the ministry and become a Priest.

207. I returned to Ireland in 1984 where I commenced my studies and was ordained as a Priest in 1987. My studies were being sponsored by The Bishop of Motherwell and so when I completed my studies I went back to Motherwell in Scotland. In January 1988 I was assigned to a local parish until in the summer of that year I became Prison Chaplain at Shotts Prison where I was to remain for five years.
208. I moved into full time ministry as assistant to the Parish Priests in two different Parishes in Coatbridge. From there I took up my own parish in Strathaven as Parish Priest. I remained at Strathaven until my retirement in 2012.

Police investigation and subsequent trial into allegations of abuse at St Ninian's

209. In 2014 I first became aware of the allegations against me when I received a letter from the Bishop of Motherwell. At that time I was working part time as a chaplain at a nursing home in Bognor Regis. This letter told me that I was suspended from priestly ministry. I returned to Scotland.
210. I was living in a flat on Haddington when I was contacted by the Police. I was shocked at the allegations and I was taken on two occasions to Kirkcaldy and Glenrothes to be interviewed. I was still part of the Motherwell Diocese and had the support of my fellow Priests and the safeguarding officer from there. I still have this support while I am in jail.
211. I never discussed any of the allegations with any of the safe guarding officers. I think initially the safeguarding officer to the Bishop of Motherwell was a lady then there was a man and finally the lady I deal with now.
212. During the Police interviews the allegations were put to me which I completely denied. I moved back to Motherwell and the trial started in 2016 at the High Court in Glasgow.

213. I felt totally disillusioned. I could not understand how the evidence of some complainers was dismissed against three of my co-accused while the evidence of some of the same complainers was upheld against me and Brother Kelly. I was very unhappy as I felt that the jury were prejudiced with a mention of the Catholic Church and child abuse. I felt as an Irish Catholic there were feelings of hostility towards me from the jury.
214. I think historically that there is still evidence within Scottish Society that there is prejudice against Irish Catholics after all it is only one hundred years ago that the Assembly of The Church of Scotland voted to repatriate all Irish Catholics living on Scotland. I felt that the chances of the jury reaching a verdict on my favour was remote.
215. I reiterate that these allegations never happened. I don't know why these witnesses are saying that they did happen. I suspect that there may have been some collusion and that some of them jumped on 'the band wagon'. I felt that the language used in the trial statements were influenced by the Police and Social Workers. The statements made to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry are similar to the statements from the trial.
216. I am asked why people are making such allegations to the Inquiry if these things did not happen. I don't know why the Inquiry witnesses are saying these things but I suspect that they could be influenced by redress from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. I really don't know why they are saying these things about abuse. I am asked why some people have told the Inquiry that they continue to suffer the long term effects of abuse if the abuse did not happen. I don't know why these people are suffering from long term effects from their time in care.

Comments on statement of safeguarding officer William Crawford.

217. Mr Crawford provided a statement to the Police dated the 12th March 2014. Mr Crawford states in that statement during an interview with you me the 16th February 2014 he asked some questions and took some notes. He wrote " 11 charges 8 complainants" "2 reason, 6 not". Mr Crawford took these notes and recalls that I told

him that I had been charged by the Police with 11 charges relating to 8 complainers. He recalls that I said that 2 had a reason for complaint and that 6 did not.

- 218. These notes also bear the comments "times of inappropriate touching- 2 right" and the "others fictional". "Abuse by other Christian Brothers – abused"
- 219. His statement goes on to say that I told him that there were times of inappropriate touching and that two complainers were right to make accusations and that others were making it up.
- 220. He recalls that in regard to the note about abuse by other Christian Brothers that I had said there had been abuse carried out by other Christian Brothers.
- 221. I can only say that on the advice of my legal team I would not have discussed the impending case with any other person. I can confirm that prior to the trial I had meetings with Bill Crawford on a regular basis in his capacity as a "safeguarding adviser" to the Bishop of Motherwell.

Hopes for the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

- 222. In terms of hopes for the Inquiry, I don't honestly know what to think. I am only concerned with St Ninian's in Falkland and I know that I want to defend what I achieved there along with the rest of staff. It is why I am happy to give my statement to the Inquiry. I feel the need to balance what is being said about the place and the parents, the Social Workers and the boys themselves who had a positive experience with St Ninian's.
- 223. A lot of these boys who had positive experiences did not give evidence at the trial. I stress that if abuse had been going on at St Ninian's everyone would have been talking about it. I recall one comment from the boys that they all knew when the next boy was going to abscond.

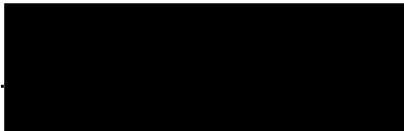
Final thoughts on St Ninian's in light of allegations

224. I maintain that these events never took place. I know that I have stood trial for these offences and along with another Brother was found guilty. One of the Brothers and three of the lay staff were found not guilty as the evidence provided against them was considered to be unreliable. The same people whose evidence was found to be unreliable gave evidence against me and I was devastated to be found guilty. I am not angry with these witnesses as I am too old to be angry although I am very disappointed and hurt.
225. In my time at St Ninian's I never heard of or witnessed any of the staff abusing children. I never abused a child during the time I was at St Ninian's. I never had any sexual activity with the any of the children.
226. A number of the young men from St Ninian's who gave statements to the police did not turn up at my trial. In my heart of hearts I would like to think that in spite of having given a statement to the Police they had second thoughts about what they were doing. I know that the police also trawled through the list of pupils that were at St Ninian's and a lot of the boys did not offer to give statements.
227. Many of the boys I looked after in St Ninian's kept in touch with me. One of the young men from St Ninian's called [REDACTED] MOF [REDACTED] travelled to Dublin for my ordination to the priesthood. A dozen of the boys were present at my diaconate ordination in Coatbridge. I attended a wedding of one of the boys called [REDACTED] Another of the boys called [REDACTED] invited me to spend time with him and his family on the Isle of Barra.
228. I spent thirty years in Ministry as a Parish Priest and there were never any allegations about me or abuse. I worked closely with the local schools and prepared children for sacraments without any issues.

229. I know that I can cope with where I am in prison as I joke with myself that if you can survive the seminary training you could survive anything. I was a prison chaplain and so I know what is expected of you in prison.

Identification of old photographs from St Ninian's.

230. You have shown me a photograph of a class at St Ninian's School which has your reference number WIT.003.001.2279 and from that photograph I can identify the staff member as being Brother LNA
231. You have also shown me a photograph of some St Ninian's pupils and a member of staff which has your reference number PSS.001.007.4386. I can confirm that the member of staff is Brother LNA
232. You have shown me a staff photograph bearing the reference number PSS.001.007.4522 and I can confirm that I am sitting on the front row on the extreme right.
233. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..........

Dated.....31 May 2019.....