

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

MGA

Support person present: No

1. My full name is MGA. My date of birth is 1959. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. I was born in Dumfries. My father was and my mother was I had an older sister called who was older than me.
3. I had a happy and normal childhood. My father and mother both worked locally. I went to primary school in a nearby town in Dumfriesshire, where I passed my eleven plus exam. I then had the option of a scholarship to go to St Joseph's, College.
4. St Joseph's College had a very good reputation in those days and you could only go if you passed your eleven plus exam. My parents pushed for me to go there. There wasn't any other Catholic secondary school around the Dumfriesshire area so there was a lot of competition to get me in there. My parents also thought that going there would give me a better chance in life.
5. I had the option of catching the bus every day, but it would have been three hours on the bus, or I could have stayed as a boarder there from Sunday to Saturday.
6. I went to St Joseph's for my secondary education in 1971. I had heard all these stories that if you went there then you would make something of your life.

7. I think I might have visited once before I started, because my parents had got a book about the things I needed before I went there. There were lots of things like cricket bats and equipment. It was for rich kids and I remember my dad saying to the guy that we couldn't afford all that. The guy had said that I just needed football shorts and they would provide the rest.
8. In 1971, St Joseph's decided to take in all the kids from Dumfries schools. They must have made a deal with the local council who paid them to do it. This completely changed the composition of the college. They still had the structure but had an overload of kids. The college did not make parents aware of this prior to it happening.

St Joseph's College, Dumfries

9. I think I was eleven years old when I started St Joseph's. The college was ran by monks known as the Marist brothers, which are a religious order under the Catholic Church.
10. I remember it was quite daunting going to the college. There were two buildings within the grounds. I went in to the main building and got settled in. I was shown my room with two other boys, and we each had a locker beside our beds to put our things in. I had my clothes, including pyjamas, dressing gown and slippers. We were given numbers for our clothes, so that we got our own clothes back.
11. We were told that we wouldn't be going home for the first three weeks. They said it was to get us used to the place, but I think it was to get us indoctrinated. During those three weeks, I learned that what happened in the college, stayed in the college. The mail was censored too. The monks checked the letters we wrote before they were sent to our parents.
12. I remember on the first or second day, I was walking up the stairs and a prefect hit me on the head and knocked me out the way. I knew then to just keep my head down. I

remember the boy's surname was [REDACTED] and he was about seventeen years old. His younger brother, [REDACTED] was a year older than me.

13. The first years slept at the top of the main building. There was a main dormitory with rows of beds on each side of the room. I think there were about twelve beds in the dormitory. Then there were three rooms coming off one side of the dormitory, and three off the other. I think there were about two or three boys in each of the rooms.
14. The house master, who was Brother MFU [REDACTED] had a room just off the top corner off the dormitory. There were washrooms at the bottom of the dormitory.
15. I was in one of the rooms in first year and then in a different room in second year. I got moved to the main dormitory in third year because I had become rebellious by then, and I was always in the main dormitory after that.
16. Second and third years were also in the main building, then you got moved in fourth year to the other building, which was called 'the mount.' The monks also stayed in the mount. They were downstairs and the senior boys were upstairs.
17. The boys in year one were called 'plebs'. I remember being called that as a first year by the other boys. Then there were the 'inters' and the 'mids'. The fifth and sixth years were the 'seniors.' There was also a pecking order within those groups. There were the rich kids, then the civil servant and army kids, then the rest of us kids from the local community. There were also the day boys who didn't stay the night.
18. There were some younger primary six and seven boys, but not many.
19. There were hundreds of kids there the year I went in. The set up and structure was for a boarding college, but then they had all these kids coming in at once from local Dumfries schools, and they couldn't cope.
20. The boys were split up onto four houses, which were called St Andrew's, St George's, St Patrick's and something else.

Staff

21. The monks all wore long black robes with a chord, and a white collar. They also wore a cross.
22. The ^{SNR} [REDACTED] was Brother ^{MYZ} [REDACTED] when I first arrived there. During the time I was there, Brother ^{MLX} [REDACTED] and Brother ^{MMK} [REDACTED] were also ^{SNR} [REDACTED] but I don't remember in which order. Brother ^{MLX} [REDACTED] also taught [REDACTED], and was a bully.
23. [REDACTED] who was a lay teacher, was the ^{SNR} [REDACTED] ^{SNR} [REDACTED]. He was a former pupil and taught the [REDACTED] class as a teacher.
24. Brother ^{MFU} [REDACTED] was the house master, and he looked after all the boys in the first year. He was a drunk but he never did me any harm. I could smell the alcohol from him and from his room. I felt he was a bit lax and just went through the motions. Brother ^{MPL} [REDACTED] was my housemaster in either second or third year. I don't remember him teaching me anything.
25. Brother Damien was a French teacher in first year, and was weird. There was a Brother ^{AKS} [REDACTED] who never did anything to me but he made me feel uncomfortable. There was something weird about him; he was too tactile. I kept my distance from him.
26. Brother ^{MFI} [REDACTED] was handy with the belt and you could smell the drink on him but he wasn't weird in a sexual way.
27. Brother ^{MLU} [REDACTED] played the [REDACTED] and was the [REDACTED] teacher. Brother ^{AKV} [REDACTED] was my housemaster in fourth year.
28. There were also lay teachers who just wore normal clothes. There was a [REDACTED] teacher who was ok, then when he left, ^{MYX} [REDACTED] took over as the [REDACTED] teacher. ^{MLY} [REDACTED] taught [REDACTED]. Mr Rinaldi taught history and was a football coach. He was great. ^{MNT} [REDACTED] taught [REDACTED] and he was alright.

Routine at St Joseph's College

29. We got up at 7:30 am or 8:00 am in the morning. We got washed and changed in the washroom at the end of the dormitory. That was in first year. Brother MFU was my housemaster in first year. He would just leave us to it, but he would sometimes come by and tell us to make sure to clean our teeth. We had hot water and soap, to get washed so that was all fine.
30. We went downstairs for breakfast, and then had some play time before starting classes at 9:00 am. We then had a break at 12:30 pm, and had our dinner in the refectory. Then we went back to classes until 4:00 pm or 5:00 pm.
31. We had a little bit of time to do what we wanted after school. You could go out of the college when you were a bit older, but I don't think first years were allowed out. Then there was a study hour from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm, which was supervised by the monks in the classrooms.
32. We had some time to ourselves after the study hour and before bed time. The bed time did get later as you got older but I don't remember the times. I think we said a prayer at bed time.
33. I can't remember there being any issues with bed wetting.
34. We had a half day on Wednesdays, and did sports in the sports field on a Wednesday afternoon. On a Saturday, we had classes in the morning, and sports in the afternoon.
35. I would go home on Saturdays after sports, and come back on Sunday evening.

Mealtimes / Food

36. Years one, two and three had meals in the main hall. Then there was a different dining room for years four and above. There was no supervision for the seniors, but the

brothers sat at the top table and watched the juniors. We had to say prayers at mealtimes.

37. All the boys had the same food and it was atrocious. We had corn flakes and a roll, or porridge for breakfast. The porridge was like wallpaper glue, so I would have the cornflakes and roll. I think there was scrambled eggs at the weekend but I wasn't there very often at weekends.
38. At dinner time, we would sometimes have chips. The ones at the top of the bowl would be hard, but everything under that would be grease. I would rush to try and get the chips at the top. We had fish fingers sometimes. The food was not good. I would have been annoyed if I'd had to pay for it.
39. The brothers had better food than the boys. They would get the best part of the meal, and we would get what seemed like the rubbish.
40. The brothers didn't care if you didn't eat your food. There was a chippie down at the bottom of the road, and the boys would go there to buy food. I started to bring cakes and things back from home on a Sunday, and would share them with my pals. The monks never said anything to me about it to, but I didn't advertise it either.
41. At about 7:00 pm you would have a roll and a cup of tea or something.

Clothing / uniform

42. We were given numbers for our clothes, so that we got them back.
43. We wore a uniform, which was a blue blazer, black trousers, a white shirt with a tie, and black shoes. We had to wear that all the time. We wore casual clothes in the evening. We had football gear to play football in.
44. My parents bought all my clothes. The scholarships just covered the college.

Schooling

45. I think the education was generally ok, but they just couldn't handle the numbers when the influx of extra students came in 1971. I think there were about forty kids per class. They were big classes and we squeezed in. the numbers got less in 5th and 6th year.
46. The quality of the education varied. It really depended who your teacher was.
47. I didn't like French because of Brother Damien. I didn't mind [REDACTED] when the first [REDACTED] teacher taught it. Then he left and a lay teacher, [REDACTED] MYX [REDACTED] took over.
48. We had an hour study time to do homework from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm, which was supervised in the classrooms. If you had no homework, then you sat and read a paper, but you had to be there. You would be punished with the belt if you didn't go.
49. There was a boy who I had been academically similar to. Then his marks went up and mine went down. It turned out that Brother [REDACTED] MLX [REDACTED] the [REDACTED] teacher, was going to this boy's house on Sundays. I knew this because his mother had been locally bragging about it.
50. My dad went to the headmaster and queried whether there was preferential treatment going on because this teacher was visiting this family at the weekends, and possibly giving the boy extra help.
51. Brother [REDACTED] MLX [REDACTED] stopped going to the boy's house after that, but he made my life a misery every chance he got. He started to use any excuse to give me the belt. I didn't like going to his class, and he is the main reason I failed [REDACTED] in fourth year. Brother [REDACTED] MFI [REDACTED] told me I wasn't daft, and to forget [REDACTED] and do [REDACTED] instead.
52. I didn't do well with schooling because I rejected the whole place after first year because I didn't like it. I wasn't a bad student, the college just turned me off it. They weren't interested in educating me after that. As long as they could keep me in line, they were happy.

53. I got ill during my O'levels and failed them. I then did my O'levels and Highers at the same time. I left shortly after.
54. I liked history, which was taught by a lay teacher, Mr Rinaldi. He was a good guy and encouraged you. He just took you for what you were, instead of putting you down if you weren't good at something. I wasn't stupid because I got an 'A' in accounts in fourth year, and an 'A' in history.

Leisure time

55. We had about an hour to ourselves after school to get changed out of our uniform and do what we wanted, and then some time after our supper. We could play football, watch television or play table tennis in the recreation room.
56. The college had good rugby and football teams and I played in both. The monks would sometimes not let me play as a way to get at me for something.
57. I don't think you were allowed out of the college in first year, but you could after that. Then you were able to go out to the shops and leave the grounds if you wanted to.
58. I started drinking alcohol when I was about fifteen. Me and my friends would sneak drink into the dormitory. I got caught once and I wasn't allowed to leave the premises for a few days. Then Brother ^{AKV} was also out drinking with some of the prefects so he would turn a blind eye on my drinking.

Trips / visits / inspections

59. The college did take boys on excursions, but I never really went. There was a trip to Wolverhampton, which was meant to be a football thing. Brother ^{AKS} had taken over at that time and he didn't like me so I wasn't allowed to go, even though I was one of the better players.

60. I got home at the weekends. I would leave on Saturday after sports and would get home at about tea time, and I had to be back by 7:00 pm on Sunday, so I only had enough time to get my washing done.
61. My dad used to bring me back on a Sunday, and he would speak to MFU to ask how I was getting on. I think he was making it known that I wasn't alone. My dad never hung around when he dropped me off, but some people did.
62. Some people were allowed to just go into the dormitories unsupervised. A man called Mr MZZ, who was the uncle of a boy called used to sit in bedroom when he dropped them off. He would hang around for an hour or so and was never challenged for being there. Looking back now, he was gentry, and higher up the pecking order. I think a working class parent would have been challenged for being there.
63. I wasn't allowed to have friends visit at the college but I got to see them when I was home. I was lucky that I got all the normal state school holidays and was home for them.
64. We did get regular visits from priests from the Catholic Church. I think there was also a Bishop there once.
65. Nobody ever came to check the college. I don't remember anybody external visiting. Nobody ever took me aside to ask how things were at the college.

Birthdays and Christmas

66. I was always home for Christmas. I had birthdays when I was at the college but they didn't acknowledge it or do anything. I would get cards sent from home and I would celebrate it when I was home at the weekend.

Healthcare

67. We had a doctor come in to do health checks. There was nothing untoward about all that.
68. There was a nurse in the college. She was a dodderly old bat and wasn't very good. She was supposed to refer you to the doctor if she thought you were ill enough to go to the doctor.
69. I got appendicitis when I was fifteen years old. I had been going to the nurse for ages, but she just kept giving me aspirin. One day I couldn't move off the steps, and one of the teachers, ^{MNT} [REDACTED], said I needed to get to the doctors.
70. I remember a member of staff giving me a lift to the doctors, which I think was on Charlotte Street, and leaving me there. The doctor saw me and told me to go to hospital, so I had to walk to the other side of town.
71. When I got to the hospital, the doctors needed to operate on me because my appendix was about to burst, but they couldn't get a hold of my parents. Brother ^{MMK} [REDACTED] was contacted and he came to hospital and signed the authorisation forms, and they operated on me there and then.
72. I had been seeing the nurse about the pain so it should never have got to the stage that my appendix was about to burst. If ^{MNT} [REDACTED] hadn't suggested I go to the doctors, then it could have, because the hospital insisted on operating on me straight away.

Religious instruction

73. Religion was rammed in to you. We had morning mass, evening mass, any kind of mass. We said prayers before every meal and also at bed time.

74. There was a chapel in the college and we were taken on a regular basis. The boys were also made to go on a Sunday, but I was never there on a Sunday.
75. They had these groups called the Knights of St Columba and the Legion of Mary. The boarding kids who were in these groups were made to go to chapel with the monks all the time. Something could have happened to those boys, because one boy told me I was lucky that I wasn't involved in the choir. I don't know what he meant by that.
76. There was a wee monk when I was in first year who was quiet effeminate and played the piano. He took boys away for private sessions to play the piano, and had the boys do all these shows dressed up as girls. I wasn't involved with any of that.

Abuse at St Joseph's College

77. At St Joseph's, the boarding part of the college was like a mini society, and within that there were rules and regulations you had to stick to. If you didn't, then you were punished physically and your life was made hard. The brothers ruled the place.
78. The culture there was such so that the staff could get you if they wanted to. If they couldn't get you one way, they would get you another. They would belt you, or stop you playing football if they knew you liked playing football.
79. I skipped the 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm study hour quite a few times. I would get the belt as a punishment. It could be given by the teacher who was supervising the study time, or any other teacher.
80. When the door to MFU room opened, in the dormitory, you could smell the alcohol come out of it. It smelled like a pub. He was always drunk but he never did anything bad to me. I could also smell alcohol from Brother MFI all the time. I never saw either of them actually with a bottle or drinking.

81. Brother^{MLX} was a bully. After my dad complained about him going to another boy's house on Sundays, he started to use any excuse to give me the belt. He did this regularly.
82. Brother^{AKV} was my housemaster in fourth year, and also a [REDACTED] teacher. He gave me a dog's life. He was really bitchy if he didn't get his own way. He would belt me, but I would laugh because I was older then. He then got me by not letting me play football.
83. There was a brother that made me stand in the wash room all through the night, instead of going to bed, as a punishment. This was if I was caught doing something wrong. One time it was because boys were chucking paper at each other and I got caught three times.
84. I think it was Brother^{AKV} or Brother^{MPL} who told me to stand in the wash room. I stood there all night and then was told to get ready and go to school in the morning. That happened to me a few times, when I was in third or fourth year.
85. I don't know if this happened to other boys because every time I was in there, I was by myself. I would just be wearing pyjamas and slippers and it would be cold.
86. I remember one incident when I was at the college dance and I sneaked a girl into the dormitory. Nothing happened because^{AKV} caught us. The girl had to go out with her bag, and he went to take her bag to his office. I was sixteen years old and had been working on the building sites during the holidays, so I was about his size. I put my foot in the door of his office and took her bag and gave it to her, so she could leave.
87. ^{AKV} said he would have me expelled in the morning. I told him to pack his bags too, because I knew he had been taking his cronies, who were prefects and other boys, out drinking. He was too scared to say anything about me after that.

88. The discipline officer who was also the [REDACTED], [REDACTED] heard about it and I wasn't allowed to play first team football again even though I was quite good and played for the county.
89. There were about five boys in [REDACTED] AKV group who had secret parties and went drinking together. They were about the same age as me, sixteen years old. They were mostly prefects. I found out because someone told me they had seen them in a local club.
90. There was a lay teacher called [REDACTED] MYX. He kept within the rules and gave people six of the belt, which they were allowed to do. I think he was trying to make a name for himself because when the boys got rowdy in the music teacher's class, [REDACTED] MYX would offer to belt the boys for the music teacher.
91. The music teacher tried to belt me once and I wasn't having it, so [REDACTED] MYX came in and offered to do it. He came into the room and belted me in front of the whole class. This happened to other boys too. He would belt you six times on the inside of your wrist, above your hands. I also knew I would get the belt every time I went into his class. It was like he got some sort of kick out of belting the boys.
92. All the teachers and brothers had their own belts, which were leather and had three prongs.
93. [REDACTED] MLY taught [REDACTED]. He also like to belt the boys hard. You didn't have to do much to get the belt. Any minor infringement like talking in class would get you six of the belt from [REDACTED] MLY and [REDACTED] MYX. It was like they were in competition with each other about who could belt the hardest. I only got belted by [REDACTED] MLY once, but he gave other boys the belt regularly.
94. This wasn't the way with all the teachers. Mr Rinaldi, the history teacher, never gave anybody the belt at all. [REDACTED] the [REDACTED] SNR, would give you the belt if he had to, if you had been fighting or something. You would

be sent to him, but that was very rare. It happened to me, but he didn't take any pleasure out giving the belt. He would explain to you why you were getting it and you knew you had been in the wrong if you got the belt from him. He was ok, and straight down the middle.

95. Halliday, the art teacher in fourth year was a drunk. I saw him with a half bottle once when we were taken to the park to draw.
96. I think, generally, the brothers singled out the boys who didn't go home at weekends. ██████████ got home at weekends so it was surprising that he got picked on by the brothers.
97. The playing fields were about a mile and a half away from the college, and just out of badness, Brother MPL would tell me I couldn't play football unless I sprinted to it in a specific time. Other brothers would do that as well, and they would threaten me with not being allowed to go home if I didn't comply. I think Brother AKS did that to me when I was in first year.
98. One day, a boy was climbing up a window from the inside of the building, which was really high. My dad saw this and said to a monk that he should tell the boy to get down. The monk responded by saying it wasn't his responsibility. It was a very grey area, what they thought they were responsible for.
99. The college never recorded any physical punishment that was given out. There was that much of it, that they couldn't have. They would have needed someone full time to record every time someone got the belt.

Sexual abuse

100. I built up my resistance at the college. There were the teachers who belted you and were physical, and then there were the weird ones, who were weird in a sexual way. They were Brother Damien, Brother AKV ██████████ and Brother MPL ██████████ I thought Brother AKS ██████████ was weird too but there was no proof of that, that I knew of.

101. Brother Damien, who was the French teacher in first year, would walk up and down the class. He had some sort of mechanism under his robe to play with himself. He had the chords arranged under his robe so that he could play with his penis.
102. When he walked passed you, you could see into his robes, and see his penis. He did this regularly. One day, he walked past me and another boy, the boy hit him with something. He made a noise and walked away, and didn't come down our aisle again.
103. One of the boys made a complaint about Brother Damien, and Brother **MMK** had an inquiry into what Brother Damien was doing in class. I was away home at the time but I heard he had held some kind of meeting and boys were asked what they had seen, and then Brother Damien was found innocent. It was some sort of internal inquiry.
104. Brother **MMK** called me and a couple of other boys into his office when I got back, and asked me what I had seen in class. I don't remember the names of the other boys. I told him that I had seen Brother Damien playing with his naked penis, and **MMK** replied by saying: "You are insignificant in this world. What you say means nothing." He was basically saying that the organisation was bigger than us boys. So nothing happened to Brother Damien and he carried on teaching.
105. Brother **MPL** had a beard and was my housemaster in second or third year. His nickname was **MPL**. His thing was that he liked to wrestle kids on a big mat in the dormitory. He would take on five or six boys to wrestle. He did that quite often, about once or twice a week. It would happen just before bedtime so we would be in our pyjamas.
106. Looking back, he was trying to make out he was powerful. I thought he was a bit touchy feely in the wrong places. He did that with me. I remember an incident happened, but I can't remember exactly what it was. I think I've tried to block it. I think he touched me in the wrong place. I remember that I got up and kicked him in the head. He never said anything but he never bothered me again.

107. Brother ^{MPL} also liked to take boys back to his room, if he caught anyone messing about or making a noise. His room was in the dormitory and he would take a boy in there and shut the door. He would be in there for about twenty minutes. It never happened to me, but I remember thinking they were in there too long to be getting the belt. I never heard whether he did anything to the boys but you never know.
108. Brother ^{AKV} had a broken arm once, and a boy said that he had done it to ^{AKV} when ^{AKV} had tried to tackle him. I took that to mean that he had tried something sexual with him.
109. After the first year, I rejected the whole place I just played football and kept out of the way. If anybody annoyed me, then I would hit them.
110. When you went to a Catholic school, you were brought up to think of the Pope and the priest as being next to god, and the monks weren't far behind them. This left us a bit confused about what to think about their behaviour. The environment was unhealthy in the college.
111. In first year, a boy called [REDACTED] would go home at the weekends and his uncle, Mr ^{MZZ}, would bring him back on Sunday afternoon. ^{MZZ} would hang around in [REDACTED] room, which he shared with a boy called [REDACTED].
112. Word went round the college in first year that ^{MZZ} was giving them nude women magazines. At that age, a few of us wanted to see the magazine. I went into the room once or twice. Other boys were also going in and out too. Most of the first year boarders knew about it.
113. The first time I went in the room, I just had a look and left. The second time I went in the room, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were in their beds and ^{MZZ} was standing. They were passing the magazines around, and ^{MZZ} asked the boys to play with themselves, and to measure their penises against each other. When I heard that, I left and never went back. I can't remember if there was anybody else in the room, but there may have been one other boy with me.

114. I wonder what ^{MZZ} [REDACTED] was doing with those two boys when I wasn't there. Looking back, he reminded me of Jimmy Saville with white hair. I thought he was old, but he could have been just in his forties.
115. In first year, I was away home one weekend and when I came back on Sunday, the boys in the dormitory were kicking off. A boy called [REDACTED] had caught two boys, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in bed together. He must have told all the other boys, and they wanted to belt them.
116. The ^{SNR} [REDACTED] Brother ^{MYZ} [REDACTED], came to us and gave us a lecture saying that we would be worse than them if we hit them. When I think back, I think that normalised the behaviour of the other clowns, because we didn't know what was right and what was wrong.
117. The boy [REDACTED] used to work for a wee guy in the tuckshop. He was involved with the brothers in the Order of the Sacred Heart, which was a secret society. I never joined it.
118. There was a lad called [REDACTED] who went really into himself and changed completely. He was sixteen years old, the same age as me. He was quiet and studious. I saw how he changed and went into himself overnight. I later found out, as an adult and via a [REDACTED] that he had been raped at St Joseph's. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Reporting of abuse at St Joseph's College

119. What happened in St Joseph's was just a way of life to us. Getting the belt and being made to stand in the wash room all night was just a part of normal everyday life. I didn't know any different, so I wouldn't have reported anything at the time.

120. The only time I ever said anything was when I was asked by Brother MMK about Brother Damien. I had told him that I had seen him playing with his penis in class and nothing was done about it.
121. I never spoke to my parents about what was happening at the college. My mother was a devout Catholic, and my father had always told me to kick someone and run if they made me feel uncomfortable. Nobody did put a hand on me that way. I knew if anything happened like that to me, and I had told my dad then he would have pulled me out.
122. As young boys, we were embarrassed about the sexual things and didn't want to feel like we were grassing. It had been built into us that what happened in the college stayed in the college.

Leaving St Joseph's College

123. I got a job in the summer when I was sixteen, on a building site. When I went back to college after that summer, I had grown up a lot and things changed. I wasn't taking any rubbish from the monks after that.
124. Rinaldi gave me careers advice before I left. He got me an interview for a job, which I got. I left just after the exams in fifth year, just before I was eighteen years old, and started that job.

Life after attending at St Joseph's College

125. I had a job, and got engaged soon after leaving the college. I left the job not long after as I couldn't handle anybody giving me orders.

126. I got another job in a factory, and was just making money to drink. I was drinking too much. I had a few minor brushes with the law, for breaches of the peace. It was nothing serious.
127. I went back to working. I went off the rails because I found it so hard. I was drinking heavily and getting into barnies. I then moved away and was moving around the country doing manual work for many years. It was a hard and cruel environment, and I had a lot of anger.
128. I then met my wife, had two kids and changed my life around. I went back to college and university for a few years and got qualifications.
129. I drifted back into manual work and drinking again. I don't work now due to ill health.


Impact

130. I never did well at school because I rejected the place. I blame St Joseph's for that. If I had bene nurtured the proper way, I would have gone to university at the proper time, and not years later, as an adult. I wasted the majority of my life because of St Joseph's.
131. Even though I got qualifications later in life, I have always felt like a failure, and that I never reached my full potential. I hold St Joseph's directly responsible for this.
132. I had an alcohol problem and a violent nature, and brushes with the law. I have always had problems mixing with people.
133. I started drinking at fifteen years old, and didn't stop until I was about forty. It wasn't healthy. I had a lot of anger while I worked around the country, which I think I got out of my system then.

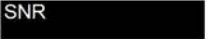
134. My first relationship failed and I have a kid from it who I only saw once after birth.
135. I don't trust males and have a disrespect for authority because the monks were supposed to be respectable people with authority. If they could act the way they did, then what's to say other people with authority can't also act like that. It affected my whole outlook on life.
136. I have no respect for religion because these monks were supposed to be religious and they did these things, and were corrupt. I am now more of a casual Catholic, and I just see the priests and monks as nothing more than social workers, who aren't holy and can do bad things like anybody else.
137. At a medical examination as an adult, I was described as an intelligent person with a flawed personality. I put that down to my time at St Joseph's.
138. I have a lot of blanks in my mind. I remember the cruelty but there are a lot of things I don't want to remember.
139. I wonder where my life would could have gone if I had been treated better at St Joseph's.

Police reporting

140. Brother Damien, whose real name was Donald McCann, was reported to the police in the 1990's. It came about because a guy in Dumfries was charged for playing with himself in front of his children. He said in his defence that he learned it from Brother Damien, who was his teacher in school. The police then did an inquiry and chased up the people the guy had named as being in the class, including me.

141. The police traced me and I went to the police station in 1997 and gave a statement about seeing Damien play with himself in class. I know other people from the Glasgow area also gave statements against him.
142. A letter was sent a letter to my lawyer dated 29 January 1997. The letter states that an internal investigation was held in 1973 in St Joseph's about Damien exposing his penis in class.
143. Damien admitted that he had been playing with his penis in class, and his excuse was that he had picked up some kind of disease in Africa. He denied the charges. I was cited to attend court as a witness at trial, but then the action was dismissed as Damien was deemed unfit to stand trial on medical grounds.
144. I made an application for criminal injuries compensation towards the end of 1996, in relation to Brother Damien. I was later awarded £1000 in compensation, sometime before August 1998
145. 

Other action taken

146. I tried to raise a civil action against Brother Damien and the Marist Brothers in 1997, but legal aid was refused due to time bar and other things.
147. I wrote to various people within the church, including the Archbishop, diocesan officers and to Rome itself.
148. Bishop Taylor, who was the Catholic Bishop for Dumfries and Galloway, wrote back to me and sent me the Working Party report of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland. He also sent ^{SNR}  who was the Galloway Diocesan Officer, to see me.

149. I wrote to and received a letter from Thomas J. Cardinal Winning, the Archbishop, in March 1998. He also told me to write to Mr ^{SNR} [REDACTED] who was the Galloway Diocesan Officer.
150. I received a letter from ^{SNR} [REDACTED] in April 1998, after he had come to see me. He wrote that he had discussed the matter with Bishop Taylor, who said that he'd already sent me a report. This letter stated that Bishop Taylor had also given me the address of the congregation of Religious in Rome, who I could write to regarding my concerns about the Marist Brothers. The letter also advised me that the Marist Brothers have the status of being "exempt," which means the Bishop of Galloway has no jurisdiction of authority over the Marist Brothers.
151. This was the first I had heard of the Marist Brothers being separate from the Catholic Church. Me and my parents had always believed they were the same. If they were separate, then it made no sense that there was a Catholic Church in the middle of St Joseph's College, and that priests and bishops visited there.
152. The letter went on to say that Bishop Taylor has also written to the Provincial Superior suggesting that the order may wish to consider whether they wished to do something in a pastoral sense, but this was for the Marist Brothers to decide, as Galloway Diocese could not directly intervene.
153. I received a letter back from Rome in February 1999, stating that the Marist Brothers are regulated by the Code of Canon Law and by their own constitutions.
154. The Marist Brothers wrote to me and told me to report matters to the police, and that they would co-operate with police proceedings.
155. I wrote to an Irish organisation called Faisoemh. They wrote back in June 1999. They stated that they had spoken to the Marist Brothers on my behalf and would organise a counsellor for me to speak to, which Faisoemh would pay for, and get reimbursed from Marist Brothers. I didn't take them up on this. I gave up with it all at that stage.

Treatment and support

156. I had some counselling when I was at university, to help with my drinking.
157. I spoke to a Community Psychiatric Nurse around the time I made the Criminal Injuries Compensation application.
158. I like to think that I can draw a line under it all now. I am considering seeing professionals, to see if it would help me.

Records

159. I have never seen or asked for any records from St Joseph's. If they did have anything on me, it would probably say that I was rebellious and a poor student. It is not something I am interested in seeing.

Final thoughts

160. This was a school run as a micro-society, where secrets were common place, wrongs hidden, and children abused.
161. In the 1960s and 1970s, the government promoted a flawed Catholic education provision. They left the operation of that to local authorities, who then sub-contracted the education of Catholic kids to religious orders promoted by the Catholic Church. These organisations are responsible for the physical, mental and sexual abuse that took place in these schools.
162. The Marist brothers who ran St Joseph's college failed in their duty of care to us, and they ruined lives. They were more bothered about protecting their order than protecting the kids.

- 163. The Marist Brothers were just left to run St Joseph's, and we were left in the care of drunks and bullies. The council or government should have carried out checks on the people running it, and on our health and wellbeing while we were there. The Marist brothers should have been found out and reported to the police for what they were doing to us.
- 164. You have the Catholic Church as the top organisation, and all these orders are working under them. If one causes trouble, then they just fold it and it makes no difference to the main organisation. It is just a business.
- 165. What happened to children in these schools is a national shame. Lessons should be learned, institutions penalised, and checks put in place to ensure that this never happens again.
- 166. In order for the Marist Brothers and the Catholic Church to be accountable now, it is not enough to just say sorry. They also have to help the victims and compensate them. The Scottish Government should follow the Republic of Ireland's government, who put their hands up and materially helped the victims, instead of hiding behind legal time bars.
- 167. 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.

MGA


Signed.....

Dated..... 18/FEB/2019.....