

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

LCP

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is LCP My maiden surname is LCP and my date of birth is the 1949. My contact details are known to the inquiry.

Background

2. I was born and brought up in a tenement in Glasgow. My mother died in childbirth when I was eight years old. My brother, who she was carrying at the time, was stillborn. My father died in 1982. I am the oldest child and I have three other sisters and one brother who are alive. I had another step brother but he has died.

Life before going into care

3. I don't really remember much before my mother died. I remember that a while after she died my Aunt who was my mum's sister, moved in to the house. After my mum died my dad took to drink and at one point even attempted suicide. I used to have to look after all the other children because I was the eldest. My dad used to tell me to look after them and get them washed and that sort of thing. He would spend most of his time in the pub and if we wanted to see him we would have to go to the pub. He would come home later on. My dad would often hit us, especially me and with a belt. That's just what happened then.

4. When I was ten, me and [REDACTED] one of my other sisters, got put in to Nazareth House in Paisley Road West, Glasgow but I don't really know why. Looking back I thought we were there for about a year but when I went to a lawyer a few years ago he told me that my records say I was only there for about two weeks in [REDACTED] 1960. I think we were all supposed to go there but I don't know why it was only me and [REDACTED] that did actually go.

Nazareth House - Paisley Road West, Glasgow

5. I have no doubt that we all needed some care and protection but I am not sure why we were placed there. Nazareth House, Paisley Road West was run by nuns from the Catholic Church and there were other helpers there. [REDACTED] went to a nursery and I went to a bigger place. There were a lot of children there, although I only remember there being girls where I was. I went to the school which was directly across the road; I think it was called Lourdes or the Rosary.
6. We were in dormitories and we were in individual beds. I can't really remember much about that house. I wet the bed when I was in Nazareth House in Paisley Road West; in fact I wet the bed before I went in there and probably started doing it after my mum died. I used to wet the bed a lot and when I did there was a helper woman, not a nun, who used to hammer me with a stick. She would put me in the cold bath then afterwards I would have to wash the wet sheets in the bath then hang them out. They were thick cotton sheets and my hands used to be cold and all cut from the cold. After I had done that the woman would then beat me with a stick on my back or on my bottom but I can't remember if it was through my clothes or not. I think this happened nearly every day because I regularly wet the bed. This happened to other children who wet the bed, although I never saw anyone else get hit. After I had hung the sheets out I was allowed to go down and get my breakfast. I got taken to the doctor at some point because of my bed wetting and I was given some green medicine but it didn't stop me.

7. One time, when we were in the playroom and some of the girls were playing music, one girl dropped a violin out of the box, and I was told by Sister [REDACTED] LFH who was second in charge just below the mother, to go and get the stick from behind the toilets. When I took it back Sister [REDACTED] LFH hit the girl on the hands for dropping the violin.
8. I decided one day that I had had enough of the beatings and hanging out the sheets and all the rest so I ran away to my dad's house. My dad found me sleeping at the bottom of his stairs and I told him about what was happening to me at Nazareth House. He came straight up and took me and [REDACTED] out and we went back home with him.
9. I am not sure how long we were back home living with my dad but the police got involved a few times because we got caught outside on the street playing with friends at a time when we shouldn't have been out at our age. They saw that my dad didn't have food for us and things like that. They involved the social work department.
10. I think it was an order of the court that me and [REDACTED] were put to Nazareth House in Aberdeen. We all sat round a table like this and I can't remember how many people were there but there might only have been one person, a man but I don't even know who he was. My dad was there with my granny, me and [REDACTED]. My dad tried to fight against it because he didn't want us to go but the social work decided we were going.
11. My dad's brother and my Auntie [REDACTED] live in Aberdeen and we were told by my granny that if we went to Aberdeen they would come and visit us. All the other children stayed in my dad's house and Aunt [REDACTED] moved in to the house to look after the other children.
12. [REDACTED] and I were put in to a place called Beechwood House, and I think it was in Glasgow. We were there overnight, maybe two nights but nothing really happened there. I think we were just placed there until we got taken to Aberdeen.

Nazareth House, Aberdeen

13. It was a social worker called Miss Knot who picked us up and took us on the train to Aberdeen. I think she was based in Glasgow. Me and my sister [REDACTED] the second oldest child, got taken up and put in Nazareth House in Claremont Place, Aberdeen on the [REDACTED] 1960. I remember it was this date because that is the date of the [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
14. I don't remember much about my first day at Nazareth House in Aberdeen but remember going on the train because we hadn't been on a train before so it was nice.

First Day at Nazareth House, Aberdeen

15. The day that we arrived it was Sister [REDACTED] FAF who met us. First of all she took us in to a sitting room where she told us not to tell anyone what we were in for. She then took us in to the dining room and introduced us to the other children in group one because that was the group that we were going to be in. There were three groups, and there were about thirty girls in each. Sister [REDACTED] LGN had group two and Sister [REDACTED] LJD had group three. There were boys at Nazareth House too but they were across the way in another department and we only ever saw them at church or on the way to school on the school bus. Sister [REDACTED] FAF would probably have been in her fifties then, because one time she told me she was the same age as my granny.

Routine

16. The convent had a big, big house in the grounds and there was a church inside the house. The dormitories were upstairs and were all linked with doors between them.

17. Sister [FAF] was in charge of our group and she looked after us. There was another nun under her but I can't remember her name. There was one nun in charge of each group, apart from group one which had two. There was a mother superior there too initially but I can't remember her name. She was only there for a short while until Mother [LKM] came. She was actually nice, but didn't really have anything to do with us, but would occasionally come and visit. There was another lady called [FAJ] who lived in a house in the grounds and she came up to help wash the younger ones, and get them ready for bed.
18. I was in dormitory number one with [REDACTED] and there were four of us in this dorm. The other two girls were older, maybe about thirteen or fourteen so I would sometimes go to them for help or advice.

Chores

19. Saturday morning was cleaning day so we cleaned the bedrooms and we took turns doing this. My role was mopping and cleaning the floor. [REDACTED] was supposed to dust but we weren't allowed to do our job until the dusting was done. I had trouble with our [REDACTED] getting her to do it as she was a law unto herself. I had a bit of a bad temper and a few years later Sister [FAF] commented on it saying I would end up in jail one day because of it.
20. After we had finished cleaning the bedroom we went up to Sister [FAF] office and she gave us some wax to polish the corridor, and we used a 'Ronix' floor polisher, then a mop to shine it. We then had to take our turns to clean the toilets in the playroom. I was also in charge of the washing up in the kitchen for our group.

Mealtimes

21. Food was alright I suppose, but if you didn't eat your food you would get hit by Sister [FAF] or whoever was there. [REDACTED] didn't like potatoes so I ate her potatoes so she didn't get hit. I didn't have a sweet tooth so [REDACTED] ate my

pudding. If you got hit it would be a slap to your head. I saw it happen to others too. If you didn't eat your main course you didn't get any pudding, and you would get made to stand up at the table. We got the bus home at lunch time, had our lunch then got the bus back to school.

Bedtime

22. The younger ones got taken up to get ready for their bed by [redacted] FAJ [redacted] about seven o'clock at night. The older ones watched the television until about nine o'clock but Sister [redacted] FAF [redacted] was there and if anything came on like people kissing she would close the shutters and say that we were not watching that filth. At nine o'clock we all just went up and got washed and ready for bed. We used to get a hot drink before we went to our beds. The nun would heat up a big pot of milk and we would get a cup of cocoa and a bun.

Bed Wetting

23. I continued to wet the bed in there and it happened most nights. I used to sit up in my bed and try and not sleep so I wouldn't wet it. I used to take the wet sheets off the bed and dry them on the radiators but when you put them back on the bed you could see the stain.
24. There was one girl who was in bedroom five and she used to wet the bed and the nun would bang on the office wall which was between the office and her bedroom and the girl would get up. She sometimes got me up and I went to the toilet too. Often by the time she came to get me up it was too late because I had already done it.

Pocket Money

25. They used to have a book and if you were bad they would record black marks in this book. When Saturday came they would count up the black marks and take

money off your pocket money. I think I got two shillings a week, but the amount you got depended on your age.

Leisure Time

26. After we got home from school we got changed out of our school uniform, did our homework, had our tea then watched the television. We all sat and watched the children's programmes.
27. On the Saturday afternoon, after lunch, Sister FAF would sit and we were given our pocket money. We were then allowed out in the afternoon with the other girls to go to the shop to buy sweeties. I had a nice friend and I would go with her. I didn't have a sweet tooth so I would buy stamps and envelopes and paper to write letters to my granny and my dad. We weren't allowed to go beyond the shop. The rest of the day we could more or less do what we wanted so I read books. I enjoyed reading. We sometimes played with toys, like ropes, spinning tops and outside there was a big playground. You were allowed out there on a Saturday after tea in the summer. I don't really remember playing any sports but there was a maypole.

Trips and Holidays

28. We used to go to the beach every summer and we had to walk there. We had eight weeks holidays at summer so we walked to the beach every day for six weeks. We were allowed to walk ourselves. I think the nuns went down in a van. The nuns had two beach huts where we could get changed. We spent the whole day down there and made up sandwiches for lunch to take with us.
29. In the summer holidays most of the kids went home but we weren't allowed so and I went to my Aunt in Aberdeen. We were told we weren't allowed to go home because my Aunt was living in the house with my dad and they weren't married.

30. I remember at some point, but I can't remember exactly when it was, we went through to Fraserburgh on a bus, and another time we went to Peterhead, but can't remember going anywhere else.

Schooling

31. I used to get the bus to school which was St Peter's School, but it's not there anymore. I think it was on Nelson Street. It was a primary and a secondary school. The school was okay and you used to get the belt, but all the schools did that. At Nazareth House we kept our sand shoes in our own cupboards with our name on it. If someone stole your sandals and you were late you got the belt. The nun would phone ahead and tell the school who was running late so the head master, Mr LFA would be waiting to give you the belt when you arrived. If you turned up and you had P.E. that day and you didn't have your sand shoes you got the belt too, so sometimes you got the belt twice on the same day.
32. The school was open to people from Nazareth House and children from outside. We weren't treated any differently because we were in a home, apart from sometimes we were called the 'insiders' and they were the 'outsiders'. Children were punished regardless of where you were from.
33. At school the only practical skill I remember getting taught was we were given a doll and taught to wash it as if it was a baby.

Washing and Bathing

34. We got a hot bath once a week and it was on a rota, and there were other big sinks we could get washed in so we were always clean.

Healthcare

35. A doctor came in to Nazareth House every six months and gave us medicals. There was always a nun there so you couldn't really say anything. Apart from that our medical care was okay.
36. There was a dentist there too but I hated it because he used to give you fillings without any injections. I was terrified to go there. He would say that if you need a break put your right hand up. There was a nun standing there and if you tried to put your hand up but she would slap it down and tell you the quicker you got it done the quicker you would get out of there.

Christmas and Birthdays

37. At Christmas time they made us beautiful fluffy hats, all different colours. I think the nuns may have knitted them. We also had nice new outfits for Christmas Eve for going to mass. On Christmas Eve we were put to our beds early then they got us up for the mass which was at midnight. We all had our new clothes and berets on for mass. When we came back we went straight to bed.
38. There were presents for us on Christmas morning, and I probably got a game or something like that but can't really remember. There would be one present each because there were a lot of us but I don't know where it came from. We also had a stocking which had an apple and an orange in it.
39. We would get a nice dinner but I can't actually remember what it was. We had a Christmas tree up and there were decorations but it wasn't that much different really from any other day.
40. Birthdays weren't celebrated before Mother LKM came which was about six months after I went there. I was sent to see her and she spoke to me for a while then gave me a set of rosary beads and a prayer book and told me it was for my

birthday. I was delighted. We didn't get any birthday cards, or cake or a special meal. I think there were too many of us.

Running away

41. I ran away once with [REDACTED] when I was at Nazareth House in Aberdeen. We hadn't been there that long and the nuns came out in a van and found us. We weren't that far away. We didn't even have any money. I know that [REDACTED] and I planned to run away, and we were back before we knew it. I wanted away because of the beatings I was getting.

Religion

42. We said the rosary every night at six o'clock with one nun who did it with us. On a Sunday we used to go to a rosary and benediction when the bell went about 6pm or the Angelus was said at that time. Sister [REDACTED] FAF would make sure that we said our prayers when we got up in the morning and before we went to bed at night. We all had turns to go to mass as well. My bedroom went on a Monday before breakfast. There was a lot of emphasis in Nazareth House on religion. We got religious education at school but it wasn't a big part there.

Visits / Inspections

43. Miss Knot was supposed to be our social worker all the time we were in there, but she was based in Glasgow. After she took us to Aberdeen I don't think I ever saw her again.
44. I never saw my brothers and sisters for five years. They never came to visit us and we weren't allowed to go home. My dad wrote the odd letter and we wrote back. Our letters were always opened by the nuns. I know that because my granny would write regularly and send us postal orders and they said that they would save it for us.

45. My granny visited us a couple of times on her own. My dad didn't come. I don't know why but supposedly he didn't have the money because he was too busy drinking. I am sure some of the other children in the home got visitors.
46. Me and [REDACTED] used to get out every third Sunday. My Aunty [REDACTED] and Uncle [REDACTED] used to go to church and they would come to Nazareth House and take us out for our dinner or go to Cove Bay or something like that.
47. No one ever came to inspect Nazareth House as far as I am aware and no one came to speak to the children about how things were in the house.

Abuse

48. Sister [REDACTED] FAF would come in to our bedroom in the morning to waken us up and we knelt down beside our beds and said a prayer. She pulled the beds back and would see that I had wet it. She made me take the sheet off and put me in a cold bath in the bathroom. She would shut and lock the bathroom door then go away to Mass and was probably away for between thirty minutes to three quarters of an hour. When she came back she brought a hairbrush and thrashed me on my body with the hairbrush in the cold bath. I would have to wash the sheet I had wet in the bath. I might have had to hang the sheets up but can't remember. I then got dressed and went down for my breakfast. I had to stand and eat my breakfast and wasn't allowed to sit down.
49. I don't remember any time when I wet the bed that I didn't get the cold bath and beaten by Sister [REDACTED] FAF with the brush.
50. One time [REDACTED] was running up and down the stairs and I think it was Sister [REDACTED] FAF who caught her and hit her in the face. She would get you to look to the side and slap you on the face. [REDACTED] didn't get hit very often because she didn't wet the bed. [REDACTED] would often cry after she was hit. The other nun, the one

younger than Sister [FAF] hit me once on my arms when we were at the beach. I can't remember what I did to deserve that.

51. At night time if you were supposed to be sleeping and you were talking or carrying on, you would hear Sister [FAF] shouting and asking who was talking or whatever. You had to admit it if it was you and she might make you go along and kneel outside her room door and say prayers like the rosary or something. Sometimes she would forget you were there and you had to cough to make sure she knew. You had to stay there until she told you that you could go back to your bed, you might be there for a couple of hours and this happened several times, and it was very cold because the floor was tiled and I would only have my pyjamas on.
52. Another time we were out in the corridor downstairs outside the dining room and I have a feeling we may have been trying clothes on because I only had my vest and pants on. I always used to stand with my knees bent but I don't know why, and Sister [FAF] came up and punched me on my knees and told me to stand up straight. Eventually later on at a school medical they found out I had something wrong with my back and I had to go every week for a while to get physiotherapy.

Impact

53. My dad just didn't cope with the five of us after my mother died and he didn't have a clue what to do with us. No one expected my mum to die and he just turned to drink and basically forgot about us. I don't think I have ever got over the death of my mother.
54. We were well clothed and well fed at Nazareth House and the only thing was that my sisters and brothers at home weren't well clothed but they maybe had the love of my father although I am not sure that they did. I certainly didn't get any love in Nazareth House. I never saw any affection apart from in November when I

was in the bathroom and Sister **LGN** was there, I started crying and I told her I was crying for my mum. She told me not to worry that my mum and my brother were in heaven. She was nice and that was the only affection I remember. I didn't see it from anyone else, especially Sister **FAF** who just beat you with a brush.

55. Throughout my working career I have always felt that I had difficulty speaking to anyone with more authority than me and I have always been very nervous. That is why I have changed my jobs so often. I worked in a hospital and I was taken in to a room once and someone didn't really give me a row but explained something to me and I felt intimidated and after that it just wasn't the same for me.
56. Because of what happened to me this affected my faith in the church and I stopped going for about eight years or so. I started going back about seven years ago now.
57. When I was in my thirties I started to get depression, just after I got my gall bladder out. I remember for a while I really wasn't well and I was lying on the couch crying all the time. My daughter told me recently that when I was like this she said that she was frightened to come home because she thought I wouldn't be there because I was talking about committing suicide. I have since told my daughter what had happened to me and she now understands.
58. I did go through a very bad period and I did consider suicide but went to see my doctor and then a psychologist to try and help me.
59. One time I remember lying on the couch and I was breaking my heart, crying. Even though my granny had passed away by then it was as if she was there and she was telling me I was to get myself up and get organised and that she couldn't help me because she wasn't there anymore. That's when I went to my doctor and he referred me to the psychologist.

60. I was very strict on my children, I slapped them and I wouldn't get away with it now the way that I treated them. I never hit them the way that I was hit. The way I treated them was because of the way I was treated at Nazareth House.
61. I know Nazareth House has affected my relationships with people in authority but it has also affected my own personal relationships. It hasn't really affected my relationship with my friends and I have a few good friends.
62. My early life has had a big impact on my relationship with my husband. We have had marital issues but not to the extent that we would split up. Sometimes I thought that he didn't love me but to be honest I think he loves me more than I love him. I think this has been caused more by what happened with my father before I went in to Nazareth House. I think Nazareth House has had more of an impact on my relationship with my children.
63. I have very low confidence in myself and won't speak up for myself. I have depression and am on medication. I am always very anxious and still get very nervous at times. I think life before my mum died was fine but when she died and with what happened in the convents, everything just went to pot because too much happened for me to be able to cope.
64. Sometimes there are triggers like certain programmes on the television which brings things back to me and this just really makes me quite angry, usually at myself.
65. I went to college and in one of the arithmetic classes the teacher, he wasn't shouting but I felt he was a bit over powering. I didn't stay and I think this related to my dislike of authority and left after about two weeks and didn't go back. I went to an assertiveness class when I was in my early thirties but it didn't work. I have also done other modules on counselling and psychology and I enjoyed that and thought it was beneficial.

Reporting

66. There was no one in Nazareth House that I could tell what was happening to me. I never told my aunt when I saw her and later on she told me that she didn't know what was going on and she asked me why I never told her. I never told her because there was nothing she could do about it anyway so there was no point. If she did try and do something then it would probably have just made it worse for us, and nobody would have believed us.
67. I couldn't tell my granny because I didn't want her worrying because she was the sort that would, and also she was a strong believer in the Catholic Church. I did tell her when I was about seventeen years old but I still don't know if she believed me or not.
68. I couldn't tell the social worker Miss Knot, because after she dropped us off at Nazareth House on the first day I never saw her again. Nobody came in to check up on us.
69. When I went to work at Nazareth House in Paisley Road West when I was thirty-eight that's when I told my close friend [REDACTED] about what happened to me in Aberdeen.
70. Sometime in the 1980s I heard something about a lawyer willing to fight our case. I contacted the lawyers' office, Ross Harper and I only ever spoke to them on the phone. I gave them some details about what happened and that's when I learned that I was only in Nazareth House, Paisley Road West for about two weeks. I went to another psychologist who was organised by the lawyer and it cost me £250. She did a report for the lawyer. She eventually decided I was suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.
71. The case went on for a while and Mother [REDACTED] FAF had died by then and I was told by the lawyer that my case was time barred.

72. I think it was the lawyer who told me that I should report what happened to me to the police, so I did. They came to my house and took a statement from me.

Life after Care

73. Because I turned fifteen in [REDACTED] that meant I could leave school at Christmas. I wasn't clever enough to stay on at school and I am not sure if I could have stayed on longer at Nazareth house anyway. When I left Nazareth House I couldn't go back to live with my dad so I lived with my aunt for a while and I got a job in a supermarket in Aberdeen. There was no meeting to tell me anything, and I just remember getting told that I was under their care until I was eighteen and that was all. I didn't get asked if I wanted to leave. Sister [REDACTED] FAF just told me that I was leaving. I never saw the social work before I left.
74. I was fifteen years of age when I left but I still wet the bed sometimes when I went to stay with my aunt. She would often tell me some mornings that I must have been having nightmares and was shouting in my sleep. That was when I told her what happened to me in the convent. My aunt believed me and after that she often got me up through the night to go to the toilet.
75. After being at my aunt's for about six months I went on holiday to Glasgow and stayed with my granny. When I was there I went I went to my dad's door. My sister [REDACTED] answered the door and she asked who I was, she didn't even know me. That was the first time I had seen my brothers and sisters.
76. When I was seventeen I went to live with my granny and I got a job in Glasgow. I tried to help my brothers and sisters, by taking them for haircuts, and I bought one of my sisters a school blazer. I met [REDACTED] when I was eighteen and we got married when I was twenty years old and I moved out of my granny's house three months later. [REDACTED] and I have two children.

77. I think it would have been when I was about thirty-eight years old that I got a job at Nazareth House in Paisley Road West, where I had been when I was ten. It was no longer a children's home by this time and was caring for the elderly. It didn't really cross my mind about having been there before because I was there as a carer for older people and not children.

Other action taken

78. I have been back up to Aberdeen to visit my aunt and when I was there I went to where Nazareth House was and found that it has closed and has been made in to flats.

Treatment / Support

79. In my thirties I went to my doctor and told Dr [REDACTED] what had happened to me, and he sent me to a psychologist, who I saw for about six months. I hadn't told my husband by then and the psychologist wanted me to tell him but I couldn't. I think I was worried he would leave me. I think at the time I felt seeing the psychologist was helpful but now I don't because it is all still with me.
80. I went back to see another psychologist around 2008 through my GP because it was all coming back to me again. This psychologist did things differently and one thing he did was he got me to write letters to both my mum and dad, even though they were both deceased. When I went back he asked to read the letters and then asked me what I wanted to do with them. He said my choice was to either destroy them or keep them. I kept my mother's letter but ripped up the letter to my father. Things were better with this psychologist and I saw him for about a year.
81. I am on anti- depressants. I am also on pain killers as I have problems with my neck and on medication for my angina. I also get sleeping tablets because since

my bad times in my thirties I don't sleep well. I still have some periods when I get depressed but I just try and get on with it and deal with it myself.

82. I have not been in touch with any kind of support group.

Records

83. I don't have any of my records but I wrote to social work to see if they could send me any records but I never got an answer from them.

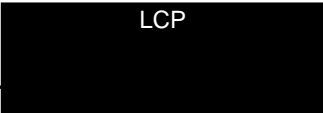
Lessons to be learned

84. I think things have changed for the better and protection has been put in place and children do get help now. I think a lot of the problems relate to their parents being on drugs or stuff like that. I think a lot of children aren't being brought up well in their own home.

Hopes for the future

85. I would like to think that things are put in place like the thing Esther Rantzen has set up and children can phone in anonymously to get help or advice.

86. 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..... 18-1-17