

## **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

MFZ

Lawyer present: Yes. Hannah Beaumont, Levy and McRae solicitors

1. My name is MFZ My date of birth is 1960. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### **Personal background and qualifications**

2. Between 1972 and 1977 I went to school at St Mungo's Academy in Glasgow. The head teacher was a Marist Brother as were several of the teachers who taught me. The rest of the teachers were predominately lay staff. The head teachers that I remember were Brother Joseph, who was at St Kentigerns, which was an annex of St Mungo's. The other head teachers that I remember were Brother Gaul and Brother Adrian, who was head when I left.
3. At that time I had never been involved or heard of St Columba's College in Largs. At this time I was aware of the existence of St Joseph's College in Dumfries.
4. In 1977 I attended the University of Glasgow. I graduated in 1981. After university I did a bit of fund raising for the Marist Brothers.
5. After leaving university I became a with an international firm of I worked with this firm until 1992. I then started my own firm, One of my first clients was the Marist Brothers and Kinharvie. Kinharvie was originally set up in 1980 as a unincorporated association. I wasn't involved with them at that time.

6. Around 1992 I was involved in some voluntary work with Kinharvie and provided advice to the Marist Brothers about [REDACTED] Kinharvie.
7. In [REDACTED] I was asked to take up a [REDACTED] role with the [REDACTED] that conducts the activities of the Marist Brothers in the United Kingdom. Around the same time I also commenced a similar role with the Kinharvie Institute. At present I still undertake both these roles on a part time basis. My actual title is that of SNR [REDACTED]. This is an [REDACTED] role. It is not a governance role.
8. My present main role is still that of a [REDACTED] with my company. I carry out work for both the Marist Brothers and Kinharvie Institute in terms of their [REDACTED]

#### **Knowledge of St Columba's and St Joseph's Colleges**

9. In my current role I have attended a number of safeguarding meetings that have been held by the Order. My role in these meetings was administrative in terms of my current role as SNR [REDACTED] of [REDACTED]. Also to assist with current safeguarding matters.
10. I have never visited St Columba's College. I didn't know of St Columba's College in Largs until recent years. I can't be certain when this was. This was when I was involved with the safeguarding meetings. It was then that I became aware of a number of historical sexual abuse claims and court cases. My understanding is that St Columbus College closed in 1982.
11. I have had no direct involvement with either St Columba's or St Joseph's Colleges prior to being present at the safeguarding meetings where these allegations were discussed.

12. I have no knowledge about any of the daily routines at either St Columba's or St Joseph's Colleges.
13. If someone was to phone the Marist Brothers and claim that they had been abused then I would contact the police and the Scottish Catholic Safeguarding service and make them aware of the claim. I know there have been some calls regarding this to the Marist Brothers. I don't know how many calls there have been. It would generally be the safeguarding officer, Ronnie McEwan who would take these calls. I have only ever received one call in relation to a claim of abuse. This was when I was working in the Marist Brothers offices. The person said that his name was [REDACTED] MGQ? I would have logged this on an internal report.
14. Normally it would be the Provincial or safeguarding officer who would deal with these claims. There would be an immediate report to the police and Scottish Catholic Safeguarding service. An offer would be made to meet with the person making the report. This would be with the Provincial or safeguarding officer. The person would be told to make a report to the police. I am sure that this is something we would also say to them that we would be doing.
15. I know there was a court case involving Marist Brothers from St Joseph's College. This is public knowledge. My only involvement with any case such as this would be dealing with [REDACTED] I don't know when I became aware of this.
16. If counselling sessions were arranged for persons claiming to have been abused then I would be responsible for setting up the contract between the Marist Brothers and the counsellor. The counsellor would contact me to ascertain how long the counselling would last for and how payment would be made.

#### **Knowledge of Aldo Moroni**

17. I have been made aware that the Inquiry has been provided with a statement that suggests I was the step father of a pupil at St Columba's named Aldo Moroni. I have

never been a step father to any pupil at St Columba's College. I have never met or known anyone by the name Aldo Moroni.

18. The statement suggests that this would have been around 1978 or 1979 when I was around eighteen years old. At this time I was at university. It would not have been feasible for me to be this boy's step-father.
19. I am aware that a boy named Aldo Moroni died whilst he was a pupil at the Marist school in Largs. My understanding is that this actually happened in his own home. I know about this due to a person who continuously [REDACTED] about Aldo Moroni's death. These [REDACTED] suggest that the Marist Brothers were involved in the boy's death. The Kinharvie Institute has also been mentioned in these [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] try and associate the abuse committed by Marist Brothers years ago with the Institute. The [REDACTED] have been incessant over the last few years. I understand from the content of the [REDACTED] that this person [REDACTED] is LZW [REDACTED] I don't know who this person is.
20. As a result of my attendance at the safeguarding meetings, where members at these meetings had been in contact with the police, I understand that the police have fully investigated the matter. The police ascertained that there were no suspicious circumstances around the boy's death. They were clear that his death was due to natural causes and the Marist Brothers were in no way involved with this.
21. I have no knowledge of what the procedures would be in relation to the death of a pupil at the time Aldo Moroni died. As I have said I would have still been at university when his death occurred.

LZS [REDACTED]

22. LZS [REDACTED] is a member of staff at the Kinharvie Institute. She has worked with me for around ten years. I have only ever known LZS [REDACTED] as a work colleague with the Kinharvie Institute. I have never had a relationship with LZS [REDACTED] other than through work. LZS [REDACTED] is in her mid-sixties. I have [REDACTED] of

LZS [REDACTED] myself and others [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

23. [REDACTED] is continually being [REDACTED] by I understand LZW [REDACTED]  
It tries to associate the people [REDACTED] with abuse committed by the Brothers at St Columba's College. The Kinharvie Institute is in no way connected with St Columbus College in Largs and these historical abuse allegations.
24. The police have been informed about the [REDACTED] both by myself personally and the Institute. They have said there is little they can do. This is despite the person [REDACTED] also targeting my son. This was through my sons works email, which I do not know how they obtained.
25. I know that LZS [REDACTED] has also provided a statement to the Inquiry. She was very upset at being associated with the allegations as she has no knowledge of any of the people mentioned.

### **Allegations**

MGQ [REDACTED]

26. I have been asked if I know of anyone by the name MGQ [REDACTED] who has given evidence to the Inquiry. I think I may have spoken with this individual on the phone. This is when he contacted the Marist Brothers and made allegations against the Marist Brothers. At this time he only gave his name as MGQ [REDACTED] After this I contacted the safeguarding officer and made him aware of the allegations. After the safeguarding officer had spoken to the person making the report it would have been raised at a safeguarding meeting. I think I would have then seen the allegations when they were raised at this meeting. I would then have heard his full name.
27. This is actually the only call I have ever taken from someone contacting the Marist Brothers to report an allegation of abuse.



28. I have never met **MGQ** personally. I had no contact with him when he was at St Columba's College.
29. In his statement to the Inquiry **MGQ** states, *"I remember once, when **MFZ** turned up at the school, I was outside playing and Aldo Moroni was outside as well. The kitchen door swung open and Brother Germanus shouted for Aldo to go in. **MFZ** appeared behind Brother Germanus and I remember Aldo saying how much he hated **MFZ**. At that time I didn't know who **MFZ** was, but Aldo went inside with them."*
30. *"I went round the front and into Landour House to see what was going on and I saw Germanus and **MFZ** at the foot of a staircase. They were in some sort of embrace, like they were kissing but they weren't actually kissing. Aldo was standing with them and **MFZ** told him to go upstairs and to get ready. Aldo said he didn't want to but Germanus shouted at him to do what his dad said. **MFZ** then stared at me and whispered something to Germanus, but I remember Germanus saying that I wasn't for him and he told me to go outside and play."*
31. *"Later that day, noise went round the school that **MFZ** had been thrown out the school because he and Germanus had been found in bed with Aldo."*
32. *"We sometimes had visits from groups of kids who came with other brothers. They were from Glasgow, I'm sure, and from broken backgrounds or care home establishments. That happened occasionally, but definitely throughout the first two years I was at St. Columba's. It stopped after Brother Arthur arrived."*
33. *"I remember when they once visited, I was in Landour House talking to one of the boys and I asked him if he wanted to go outside and play football. He said he couldn't because he had to go to bed. It was the middle of the afternoon and they'd only just arrived so I couldn't understand why they were going to bed. I remember this brother who came with the kids, who I didn't know, came up to me and took my hand. He told me to go to a bedroom but I said I wasn't going in any bedroom. I was*

*on the first floor and I saw four men in the hallway, in a line, and they all seemed excited. One of the men in the line was MFZ I never went in, I was sent outside by Brother Germanus."*

34. I have been made aware that these statements relate to a time period between 1978 and 1982. At that time I was at the University at Glasgow. I can say that the person mentioned in the statement is definitely not me. As I have said I have never been to St Columba's College. I have absolutely no knowledge of anything that has been stated within MGQ statement.

MGH

35. I have never met anyone in person by the name MGH who has given his evidence to the Inquiry. However I am aware of the name MGH through my work with the Marist Brothers. This is through the safeguarding meetings where his name has been discussed.

36. In his statement to the Inquiry MGH states, *"When Aldo was dropped off at school by his step-father, Brother Germanus and the step-father told all the boys that they were allowed to hit him because he was a bad boy. We were told we were allowed to hit him, but not too hard. I also remember Aldo's step-father being in the bed with Brother Germanus and Aldo. I saw Aldo's head popping up over the covers. I'm almost 100% certain that I recognised Aldo's step-father and that he was MFZ MFZ I also saw a lady that I'm sure was LZS at the school and that she was Aldo's mother."*

37. I am not the person referred to in this statement. As I have said I know LZS LZS but not anyone called LZS I don't know anyone else called MFZ with a connection to the Marist Brothers.

38. I understand that two witnesses have brought a [REDACTED], to the attention of the authorities. These witnesses have stated that they LZS [REDACTED] as having visited St Columbus

College in Largs around 1978 or 1979. This is absurd as I have never visited the school. It is pure fantasy. I also know that [LZS] did not become involved with the Marist Brothers until she joined the Institute.

### **Knowledge of Marist Brothers at St Columba's between 1977 and 1983**

#### *Brother Germanus*

39. I knew Brother Germanus before he died. My first knowledge of him would be sometime after 1992 when I started working with the Marist Brothers. I was aware that allegations were made against him. This was as a result of participating in the safeguarding meetings and dealing with [REDACTED] around these matters. The actual nature of the allegations is not something I would want to retain if I was informed what they were at that time. I couldn't therefore comment on these now.

Brother [CIPHE] Brother [MJZ] Brother Arthur Joseph, Brother Angelo Cyril, Brother [MY] and Brother Nilus

40. I have no knowledge of any Marist Brothers with the names Brother [CIPHE] Brother [MJZ] Brother Arthur Joseph, Brother Angelo Cyril, Brother [MY] or Brother Nilus.

#### *Brother Robert Lee*

41. I know Brother Robert Lee. I believe that he is still alive and living at a nursing home. I had some contact with him when he retired and prior to arrangements being made for him to go into a nursing home.

Brother [MNQ]

42. I know of Brother [MNQ] He stayed in a retirement house next to a school that the Marist Brothers had in Wolverhampton.



Brother <sup>AKS</sup> [REDACTED]

43. I have met Brother <sup>AKS</sup> [REDACTED]. This would have been sometime after 1992. He was another of the Brothers who lived in a retirement home after leaving St Joseph's. I think he is dead now.

Brother <sup>AKU</sup> [REDACTED] or <sup>AKU</sup> [REDACTED]

44. I am aware of <sup>AKU</sup> [REDACTED]. I know that he has been <sup>AKU</sup> [REDACTED]. I think that I may have met him when I was about eighteen. I can't think of the exact date. It was around the time when I was either just about leaving school or about to start university. I went to a retreat in Ireland with some of the Brothers. One of them was Brother <sup>AKU</sup> [REDACTED] or <sup>AKU</sup> [REDACTED] as he is also known. I can't be certain but Brother <sup>AKU</sup> [REDACTED] might have been with the Marists at Marist House in Glasgow.
45. We travelled by minibus to the retreat. We drove to Liverpool then to Dublin by ferry and car. Brother <sup>AKU</sup> [REDACTED] and Ronnie McEwan, who is also a Brother, were in the minibus with us.
46. The first time I met Ronnie was when he came to the St Mungo's School and asked who was interested in going to Hetland House near to Dumfries. This was also a retreat.
47. I have met <sup>AKU</sup> [REDACTED] quite recently when I was at a funeral. I know that he worked at St Columba's College in Largs. The only reason that I know this is as a result of being involved with the safeguarding meetings. I also provided records to the police when they requested these in relation to <sup>AKU</sup> [REDACTED].

**Police contact**

48. I have never been asked to provide a statement to the police in relation to the allegations against the Marist Brothers or in respect of any allegations against myself.
49. If someone does contact the Marist Brothers making an allegation of abuse against the brothers then we would make them aware that we will inform the police. We would also advise them to contact the police. Over the years most of our dealings with the police have been through DCI Hogg from Police Scotland. DCI Hogg is based at Kilmarnock.

*Other information*

50. I want to record that my experience of the Marist Brothers has been overwhelmingly positive as I understand it has been for the vast majority of people that they have educated.
51. I have no objections to my statement being used as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I do not want my witness statement to be published. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

MFZ

Signed.....

Dated..... 25/6/19 .....