

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

MGH

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is MGH. My date of birth is 1967. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My family home was in Renfrew. I had sister, and a brother, who was four years older than me. My dad liked nice things in his life. He liked his cars. He was the kind of man who worked seven days a week. He had an My mum would tell him his dinner was ready and he'd ask how long it would take to eat it because he needed to get back to work. He was a lovely man. He just wanted the best for us.
3. My mum worked in until she was ready to give birth to each of her children.
4. My father had an affair. My mum had a nervous breakdown. She was incapacitated and she couldn't look after us. She was in hospital for three months. She had to be sedated for three days as well. I think she was just in shock.
5. I attended St. James' Primary School in Renfrew for four or five months. The first day I was there, I was doing sums. I think my dad had taught me good arithmetic so I did

well. The teacher, Mrs Anderson, came out with a grey box full of midget gems. I like the red ones so I took them. She was a lovely teacher. She used to look after us at the weekends.

6. I remember travelling to school in the car with my brother and sister. We were going to normal school but then we found out the bad news. My mum was in hospital and my dad was driving the car. My dad told us that this would be the last day we attended St. James' Primary School.
7. I think my dad had a picture in his mind that he wanted to send us to boarding school to get the best education. My sister was a great singer. She was always singing in the car. My dad wanted my sister to go into music and my brother and me to become airline pilots. My dad took all three of us down to the school in Girvan and dropped us off there. I was about five and a half years old. From there, everything just started to spiral downhill.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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45. We found out that the school was shutting down after we'd been there for two and a half years. The nuns told my parents it was closing because it was too expensive to run. I remember my dad saying to my mum, "You'd think, [REDACTED] with all the money we're giving to them, it wouldn't need to shut down." My dad found it very odd at the time. There were a lot of pupils and the classes were full.

46. My parents had a discussion with the nuns about where we should go next. They followed the nuns' advice. My brother was a bit older than me. He was sent to St. Joseph's in Dumfries. [REDACTED] was sent to Wellington School in Ayr. I was sent to St. Columba's in Largs. I don't think any of the pupils from [REDACTED] Secondary Institution went to St. Columba's. I think it closed at the end of term, maybe around Easter time.

St. Columba's School, Largs

47. St. Columba's was run by Marist Brothers. They wore white collars over a habit. It was a school for boys just outside Largs as you head towards Wemyss Bay. There was a building where boarders stayed, called the Landor, and a second building, called the North building, where we got our education. There was a pitch across the

road from the school where we played football. The pitch was all rocky. It had goal posts at either end. Just further on from there was the seaside.

48. There were day pupils as well as boarders. I think about 60 to 65 per cent of the pupils at St. Columba's were from Italian families. I think it went up to primary 7 and then pupils were prepared to go to St. Joseph's in Dumfries, where my brother went.
49. Brother David Germanus was one of the Brothers who taught in the school. He was in charge of my dormitory and a number of the other rooms. I'm pretty sure he said he was the same age as my mum, which was about forty at the time. Once, we went down to Glasgow for a special night to commemorate St. John Ogilvie, who was stoned at Glasgow Cross. He showed us where he was born. He came from the Gorbals.
50. After Brother [REDACTED] Brother AKU [REDACTED] was SNR [REDACTED]. At different points, Brother [REDACTED], Brother MJZ [REDACTED] and Brother MNQ [REDACTED] were also SNR [REDACTED]. It's hard to remember the ages of the brothers because I was so young at the time. Brother MJZ [REDACTED] was quite young. AKU [REDACTED] was one of the youngest brothers, apart from a [REDACTED] teacher called Brother CIPHER WITH [REDACTED]

Routine at St. Columba's

First day

51. My first day at school was spent getting organised and getting all my stuff together. I was shown my bed and introduced to some of the brothers. I was introduced to Brother CIPHER [REDACTED] Brother Nilus, Brother MLA [REDACTED] and Brother Germanus.

Mornings and bedtime

52. There were six or seven boys in my dormitory, who were roughly the same age as me. There were younger pupils in the rooms next door. We were woken by a bell at

7.30am – 8.00am. When we got up in the morning, we'd often be taken to one of the punishment rooms and beaten. We then went back upstairs and got ready. We went back downstairs, got our breakfast and went into a prayer room. After that, we were walked across to the North Building, which was where we got our education.

53. Lights out was at about 10pm. The beds were horrible. They were quite high up. We had to climb to get up on top of them. They weren't like normal beds, like at home. I couldn't sleep at night because I knew I'd be taken out of my bed to be abused.

Mealtimes

54. For breakfast, we had cornflakes and cereal. At dinnertime, we had soup. It was green and really salty but I did enjoy the soup. I think I liked it because I liked the chef so much. He was called Frank and he worked in the kitchen with his wife. They were both nice to us.

Washing / bathing

55. We did a general wash at night time. We washed our face and brushed our teeth before we went to bed. Sometimes we had a shower in the morning, but more often in the evening. Brother Germanus and a couple of other brothers were always waiting, ready to dry us with a towel. We could dry ourselves. It wasn't a thing that we wanted.

Clothing

56. I had plimsolls that were too small for me. I'd had them since St. James' Primary School. Everybody was looking at me because everybody else had shoes that fitted them.

School

57. All the teachers were Marist brothers, although I do remember a lady who used to come in and play the guitar. She liked us all. She used to say that she wished she could take us all home. She was a really nice woman. She came in for music. We would play tambourines and the triangle. I found playing the triangle boring, but that was my part in the orchestra.
58. I remember doing a play at the school. Brother Germanus thought I should do it about shoes. I wrote a rhyme, "Blue shoes, these shoes, tell me what you would choose." My mum brought my Uncle [REDACTED] up to the school to see it, but I didn't win the competition.
59. When I was at school, I was taught by the [REDACTED] brother, Brother [REDACTED] CIPHER WITHD [REDACTED]. He taught us italic writing. I remember he taught us a sentence that used all the letters of the alphabet, "The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog." We had to write it in italics. I enjoyed doing that, but I didn't enjoy him hitting us over the knuckles with a ruler when we got something wrong.
60. I got top marks for being the most intelligent at arithmetic. I also got an award for doing the two to the six times table in the quickest time. I remember going home to my mum and dad's house. They had all this Action Man stuff set around my room as a reward for doing so well. I remember the Action Man had a parachute outfit and I would fling him up in the air and he would come down.
61. Brother David Germanus started to abuse me not long after I arrived at the school. He used to come round to my bed at night time. Because of this abuse my school work started to deteriorate. I found it really hard to focus in the way that I should have been. My reading started to go downhill.

Leisure time

62. Usually, we had the evenings to ourselves. I had a friend from outside of the school who used to give me Commando comics. There was always a picture of a military figure on the front. I really liked all those comics, but Brother Germanus took them off me.
63. I was good at football. My brother told my mum. Before I knew it, I had Celtic Boys' Club and Greenock Morton coming to scout me. I played on the rocky pitch with plimsolls half the size of my feet. I was scoring goals from the half way line. The brothers got to know about it. One day, there was a chap at the door and two guys from Largs Waverley Football Club asked me to come and play for their team. The whole school came to watch me play at the Largs Waverley ground, which was near the swimming pool. It was a big deal, but I didn't play very well on the night because I was getting abused.
64. We used to go out on walks. We would walk along the pier at Largs. I remember Brother Germanus would nip over to Oddbins or Haddows. He'd come back over with a brown paper bag in his pocket. He must have been away getting a bottle. Brother ^{MFY} used to take us to the swimming pool.

Chores

65. I think we helped brush up the leaves in the grounds. We were expected to wash up the dishes and dry them. Our beds had to be perfect. We had to fold our dressing gowns and leave them at the very end of the bed. I always wondered why I couldn't put my dressing gown on my bed as an adult, but that was why. If our beds weren't perfectly made, we would get a doing.

Peers

66. There were younger boys in the dormitories next to mine. Coming from a school where I had been abused, I preferred to play with younger boys. I was very

vulnerable and I didn't want to play with older boys. I played with [REDACTED] and MGQ [REDACTED], who were about a year younger than me. At the time, there was a programme on television called "The Professionals, CI5". I used to love it. [REDACTED] would play the part of Doyle because he had [REDACTED]. MGQ [REDACTED] had [REDACTED], but it was straight so he was Bodie. I wanted to be the governor, played by Gordon Jackson, but [REDACTED] wouldn't have it at all. He only allowed me to play the part of Gordon Jackson on one occasion. We practiced all these moves from the programme.

67. I remember a boy called [REDACTED]. He was taller than Brother Germanus. I'm sure he battered Germanus. Everybody was scared of him. He came from a showground background. I think he was related to the [REDACTED] family. There was a boy called [REDACTED]. I think he might have had some learning difficulties, but he was a lovely guy. There was a boy who used to bully me called [REDACTED]. He was friends with [REDACTED] who hated me after we got into a fight during a Celtic versus Rangers game.
68. [REDACTED] became a good friend of mine. He ran away a few times. He got brought back by the police all the time. Every time I left the school to go home, he left with me. We would get the bus together to my mum's shop. She would take him to the airport and he went back down to Newcastle. She asked him to look after me. She knew I was vulnerable and he was a bit older and taller than me.

Trips

69. We went to Dumfries for Brother Nilus' funeral. We thought it was amazing because we were getting a day out. We were going to a funeral so we were told to be serious. The other trip was when I went to Dunoon for Aldo Moroni's funeral. I remember Aldo's mum and sister being there. I'm pretty sure MFZ [REDACTED] was at the funeral.
70. I got friendly with a boy called [REDACTED] who came from Gourrock. His parents asked my mum and dad if I could stay at his house one night. He was in the cubs and I thought it was great because I'd never been to anything like that in my life. I asked

him what he did there and I couldn't believe all the activities he got to do. By the time it came to Sunday night, I was terrified to go back to school. I had the most terrible feeling, being in [REDACTED] house, knowing that [REDACTED] was a day pupil. I thought, "Why can I not be like [REDACTED]? Why do I need to go to boarding school? Why does this need to happen to me?"

Religious instruction

71. We went to Mass on holidays of obligation and saint's days. On Sundays, we were taken down to the parish church [REDACTED]. It was called something of the sea. Father [REDACTED] CIPHER WITHDRAWN was the priest there.

Birthdays

72. My birthday fell on [REDACTED]. Sometimes, my mum and dad would come and take me out for a fish tea. My mum and dad had a babysitter and cleaner called Mrs [REDACTED]. Her daughter and her partner came up and took me to Nardinis on one of my birthdays. She got me an American police car and a Starsky and Hutch car.
73. My parents were unable to come and visit on my birthday one year, so they gave my present to Brother [REDACTED] MJZ to carry on the bus. I was wondering what it was because it was quite a large box and it was oval in the middle. It was a machine gun, helmet and a strap with grenades and a pistol. I gave the pistol to [REDACTED] so I could be in his gang. I gave the hand grenades to [REDACTED] MGQ but I always wanted to keep the machine gun.
74. The present was wrapped in brown paper and given to me in the kitchen. It was one of the happiest days of my life, getting that. My dad used to tell me stories about the war and what happened to him when he was a wee boy. I used to relate to some of the sad moments and tell the boys at school about them. Brother Germanus took the machine gun off me.

Personal possessions

75. I had my own underwear. My mum made sure they had my name label sewn into them. When I came back to the house, my mum would say, "I gave you four or five pairs of under pants and you've only come back with two. Where are they?" I told her I didn't know where they were. It always seemed to be pants that went missing. We had a wee locker next to our bed where we could keep our personal possessions.

Visits and contact with family

76. My brother used to write me letters. He always drew aeroplanes, like jumbo jets, on the letters. It was his dream to be a pilot.
77. I remember ^{MGQ} parents attending a parents' night. My dad was there, wearing a suit and my mother was wearing a lovely evening dress. ^{MGQ} mum was telling him he should be friends with me because I didn't have many friends. Brother Germanus and the other brothers didn't want us playing with the other kids. They didn't want us knowing what was happening round about us. They were trying to isolate us.
78. My dad had a ^{MGQ} at the time. ^{MGQ} dad was admiring it. I remember him sitting on the passenger seat, touching the wood and admiring all the fabric. ^{MGQ} and I were in the back of the car. We got into trouble for popping our heads out of the sun roof. We went up to Nardinis that night with Mr and Mrs ^{MGQ} and ^{MGQ}. I think we had an evening meal. I think I might have been taken home after that because it was the end of term.
79. Brother ^{MJZ} was a great cook. He used to make an Indian curry and banana fritters for us. He organised a parents' night. We weren't allowed downstairs, but they had a barbeque for the parents. All I could smell was garlic bread. My dad had never tasted garlic bread before. Brother ^{MJZ} made it with foil over the barbeque. My dad brought me a wee bit up to let me taste it.

80. My parents didn't visit very often. I think my dad came up with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on one occasion. Brother Germanus wasn't happy about it. He didn't like Italians. He used to say to me, "You're nothing but an Italian bastard."
81. Mostly, I spent the term time at St. Columba's and only went home in the holidays. However, Brother MJZ used to take me home for breaks at weekends when he found out what was happening to me. Every year, I cried and said I didn't want to go back to the school at the end of the holidays.
82. I don't remember any formal inspections of the school. Things did start to change a bit when Brother Arthur arrived at the school. Brother Germanus was frightened of Brother Arthur. I think he became the house master and headmaster.

Healthcare

83. I saw the doctor at St. Joseph's. The doctor came up to see me when I was very ill with diarrhoea and vomiting in April 1975. My records say that there was an outbreak of Sonne dysentery in the school at that time. I think I might have been prescribed nerve tablets before I left St. Columba's. My doctor, Doctor McColl, told me to half them and quarter them so I did that myself.

Bed Wetting

84. A lot of children wet the bed. I think it was quite common. It only happened to me once. I think there was a cleaning lady who came in and cleaned up the bed. I remember my bed being disinfected. She opened a window and turned the mattress over.

Abuse at St. Columba's

Physical abuse

85. Brother CIPHER WITH would come around the class with a metal ruler. If we made a mistake, he would hit us over the knuckles with the ruler. It was really, really sore and we would burst into tears. Brother MJZ was quite physically abusive as well. He was alright, but when he gave you a doing, he really gave you a doing. He would use his hands. We would get beaten up if we didn't make our beds properly.
86. Brother Germanus was the most horrible man I've ever met in my life. He used to call me an Italian bastard. He battered everybody. He would often take us to punishment rooms and beat us after we woke up in the morning. There would be no reason for it. It might have been because he was hung over or because he felt guilty about what he'd done the night before. Everybody walked around with bleeding noses. We just thought that was normal. It was the way life was and we got used to it.
87. Brother Germanus would punch us. He was supposed to have been a boxer when he was younger. He used to do all these funny boxing moves and then all of a sudden hit one of us on the nose. He'd take us into rooms and batter us. He would really punch the living daylights of us. He loved the cane. He could hit us for no reason at all, so could Brother AKU.
88. On one occasion, Celtic were playing Rangers. We were all asked to pick a player out of the hat. I got a player called Tom Forsyth, who was a Rangers defender. I'd always supported Celtic, but I was supporting Tom Forsyth that day because I wanted to win the prize. I knew he was a defender so he was never going to score. [REDACTED] started fighting with me because I was supporting Rangers. We were pulling each other's hair.
89. Brother Germanus heard about the fight. He came in and dragged me out of the room. He pulled me down onto the floor. He was trying to choke me. I grabbed his

collar. It must have had a staple inside it and I cut my hand. [REDACTED] came around me and pulled Germanus off me. Germanus started fighting with [REDACTED]. From then on, people looked up to me in the school. Before that happened, they used to tell me to stick up for myself.

90. My dad used to severely discipline us for misbehaving. It never did me any harm. I could take it from my dad, but I didn't want to take it from these people.

Sexual abuse

91. [REDACTED] stayed in the same room as me. I remember he was called into Brother Germanus' room, which was on the first floor of the boarding school. [REDACTED] came running back in. He wouldn't tell anybody what had happened to him. Eventually, he told us that Brother Germanus took his dressing gown off and he was naked. He put his penis in between [REDACTED] legs.
92. Brother Germanus would always come in when I was having a shower. He'd be waiting, ready to dry me. He used to do something to me that he called his little secret. He used to put his hands over my face to distract me from what he was doing to my genitals. He would try and masturbate me. He also tried to have intercourse with me and he raped me.
93. I remember Brother Germanus wanted us all to do breathing exercises naked. There was a window at the front of the dormitory. He would pull all the beds together and try and get all of us into the bed, naked. I think other brothers were there as well. Brother [REDACTED] AKU was there. I wouldn't get into the bed. I remember [REDACTED] being in the bed and I'm pretty sure [REDACTED] was in the bed as well, along with some of the other boys. Brother Germanus was touching the boys. I just went out of the room. I didn't know whether it was right or wrong because I was so used to getting abused myself.
94. Brother Germanus was abusing me all the time. On one evening, he was abusing me in the bed and Brother [REDACTED] MJZ came in and told him to stop. He carried me

downstairs. He was quite a big, strong man. He sat me in the kitchen area and said, "I'll tell your mum and dad about this. Don't worry about this." Germanus came down after him. The two of them were having a full scale argument by the door. Germanus was smoking a pipe. Brother MJZ said, "You know you're not allowed to smoke your pipe inside the school building. Go outside. You're just drunk. You've been drinking too much. And leave MGH alone."

95. I remember Brother Germanus saying he was going to Canada. I remember that because my Uncle was going to emigrate to Montreal around that time. I told him my uncle was emigrating and he said, "I'm going to Canada for a holiday." When he came back, I remember him talking to the brothers. They asked how he was feeling and he said, "I'm feeling a lot, lot better." It wasn't a response as if he'd had a holiday. He just wasn't a well man.
96. Some nights, we would be prepared to go over to the educational building. I think it was an older pupil who got us organised to go over. We were taken over there in our dressing gowns. It was very early in the morning. It was misty and cold and I was chattering. I was going over there to get abused. Some Marist brothers who weren't allowed on our side of school stayed in rooms in that building. They were all drunk. There was a lounge area. I can remember going there on my own once, but usually there were two of us. I can count on more than one hand the number of times I was taken over there. It happened to me between the ages of eight and eleven.
97. I used to wake up every morning with my pyjamas down at my ankles. I was terrified to bring them back up. I was in shock because I didn't know what had happened to me the night before.
98. I was easily distracted at school because of all that was going on with Brother Germanus. I wasn't studying the way I should have been. Brother CIPHER took me into a room after my reading started to go downhill. It was about a year after I started at St. Columba's. I'm sure MGQ was in the same room, along with another couple of boys. Brother CIPHER pulled a seat right beside me and start touching my genitals. I tried to take his hand away.

99. Brother CIPHER WITH was the youngest brother. He was very abusive towards us. He used to try and teach us [REDACTED]. He would bring us to the front of the class and I remember his hands going down the front and down the back of us. He would do it with certain boys at certain times in front of the class. It happened to me.
100. Brother MFY [REDACTED] used to take us swimming. He would meet up with the parish priest from [REDACTED] there. His name was Father CIPHER W [REDACTED]. He was the parish priest for St. Columba's and he used to meet up with Brother MFY [REDACTED]. Things used to go on in the spectating area upstairs. I didn't see much, because I was down swimming. When I was ready and my hair was wet, I was upstairs and they'd be talking to each other. I think things were done to other pupils. I remember Brother MFY [REDACTED] and Father CIPHER V [REDACTED] had a polaroid camera and they would take pictures from the spectating area of the boys swimming. I think they might have taken photographs of the boys inside the changing rooms as well.
101. MGQ [REDACTED] had a younger brother, MGR [REDACTED] and an older brother, [REDACTED]. They were altar boys for Father CIPHER [REDACTED]. I remember the priest being very verbally abusive towards MGQ [REDACTED], MGR [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] but I never saw any acts of a sexual nature.
102. I remember playing billiards on a snooker table. Brother AKU [REDACTED] would come into the room and put the cue right up the back of me. MGQ [REDACTED] was there once. A boy was hiding under the table. He tried to put the cue into me and MGQ [REDACTED] but we both managed to run away.
103. Brother AKU [REDACTED] would make us watch horror movies, like The Texas Chainsaw massacre, Frankenstein and Dracula. He would masturbate in front of us, in the same room. Just before ejaculation, he would run out of the room. He would call us up to his bedroom upstairs. He would touch us and get us close. The films were to put fear into us, to get us close. He would also give me wee bottles of juice and Cadbury's chocolates from a machine. He'd have two or three of us on top of his bed, where he'd touch our legs and try to masturbate us.

Aldo Moroni

104. 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. I also saw a lady that I'm sure was LZS at the school and that she was Aldo's mother.
105. I remember the most terrible thing happened. I was standing on the stairs. and MGQ were further up on the stairs, creeping up as if they had guns on them. They were pretending to be the Professionals, CI5. I was being the governor, although didn't know it. and MGQ told me that Aldo Moroni was in a room upstairs, being battered by Germanus. I didn't see that happen, but I could hear Aldo screaming and I saw Brother Germanus come out of the same room.
106. As I stood down the stairs, I heard shouting. I'm sure Brother MJZ had to pull Brother Germanus off Aldo. I didn't see that happen, I just heard them shouting and bawling at each other. I remember a doctor, wearing a grey suit and carrying a doctor's bag, walking past me on the stairs. I remember seeing him walk back down the stairs to leave, shaking his head.
107. I was curious to know what was going on. I went to the boys' toilets. They were covered in blood. There was blood in the toilet and drops all over the floor. I ran the water and watched the blood disintegrate into the drain. I never saw Aldo again. He died two days later. They told us that he died of natural causes. I went to his funeral in Dunoon.

Reporting of abuse whilst at St. Columba's

108. One night, we were all down at the shore. We were killing crabs. I think we were all angry and upset. We were putting boulders on the poor little creatures. To this day, I wish I hadn't done that but I was only a young boy. I hate to kill anything. I said to some of the boys that we really needed some help. We found a bottle. A boy, whose surname was [REDACTED], pulled a pen out of his pocket. I suggested that we write a message. He asked me what I wanted to write and I said, "Help me." I put it inside the bottle, put the lid back on and away it went.
109. Three or four days later, the police came up to the school. They said the bottle had been found by an old couple. They asked if the kids were okay. The police were concerned at that point.
110. Once, we were all walking from the school to the amusement arcade in Largs. We bumped into my Uncle [REDACTED] and my Aunt [REDACTED], who were with my mum's close friends, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. My Uncle [REDACTED] spoke to me. I was shocked and I didn't know what to do. I just stood there for about two minutes. I never said a word. Germanus was saying, "Your uncle's trying to speak to you. Are you not going to speak back to him?" After that, every day for about six weeks Brother Germanus would point at me in the prayer room, intimidating me in front of everybody. He was telling me not to say anything about what he was doing to me.
111. My Uncle [REDACTED] had recognised that there was something wrong. When I came home one year for the holidays, he said to me, "What are those monks doing to you? Are they being aggressive? Is there anybody you don't like there?" I told him I didn't like Brother Germanus and some of the other brothers. He asked what Brother Germanus did to me. I told him that he battered me. I didn't tell him about the sexual abuse. I was too frightened. Brother Germanus told me that was our secret and that if I told anybody, I wouldn't go to heaven. I believed God wouldn't take me up to heaven if I told anybody what Brother Germanus and other people had been doing.

112. My Uncle [REDACTED] wanted to kill Germanus. He told my dad not to send me back to the school because I was crying every time I had to go back. My Uncle [REDACTED] was quite hot headed. He came down to the school with my dad. All the boys were in the hall area. [REDACTED] came in with my dad, took off his leather jacket, rolled up his sleeves and put Germanus against the wall. He said something like, "If you touch any of these boys ever again, I'm going to come back and deal with you severely." Everybody looked up to him straight away. My dad gave me a cuddle. Both of them told me that they loved me and they drove away. I think I was well respected after that. Nothing was reported to the police, but I was taken out of the school shortly after.

Leaving St. Columba's

113. I left St. Columba's when I was eleven or twelve. I went to do my last few months of primary 7 at St. James' Primary School, where I had started my schooling. I went to Trinity High School in Renfrew after that.

Life after being in care

114. I didn't really get a good reception at high school. I didn't know anybody. Everybody else had carried on straight from primary school to secondary school. They used to come up to me in school and say, "Do you eat spaghetti for your dinner?" They didn't like me, for some reason. I think it was because of the war. At that time, people did hold a lot against Italians because of the war. I didn't have a good time in that school and I didn't do very well. I left school when I was sixteen.
115. After school, I went to Reid Kerr College to do a catering course. I did another course at Reid Kerr College, but I had to pull out of it. I couldn't study. The abuse didn't stop when I left school. My brother had attended another school ran by Marist brothers, St. Joseph's in Dumfries. He was abused by the same people as me because they interacted from one Marist school to the other. He knew Brother

Germanus and Brother ^{AKV} [REDACTED] who were also at St. Columba's. There was also a Brother ^{MMK} [REDACTED] that went between the two schools. He was another monster.

116. My brother sexually abused me and my sister within the family home. He copied the behaviour of the Marist brothers. I was about fourteen when I first endured sexual abuse by my brother and [REDACTED], who was a neighbour. My sister was abused for longer than me. She was abused for four years. I reported it to the police about seven or eight years ago. I've only done two identity parades in my life. The first was for my brother and the second was for Brother ^{AKU} [REDACTED]. My brother was charged. DC Alan Docherty was dealing with that case. My sister decided to drop the charges so I dropped the charges as well. It was at that point that my dad took ill with cancer.

Impact

117. I didn't do very well in school because of everything that had happened to me. Instead of becoming an airline pilot, I became an [REDACTED]. My sister is living with all the trauma of being abused. My brother is living in Larbert with his head full of mince. He is preventing me from sorting out my dad's will. He used to do all his [REDACTED] in front of me and he did the same to my sister. Abusers don't stop unless they're stopped.
118. It makes me angry. I'm not a Catholic. I don't want to be a Catholic. I don't want anything to do with Catholics. The minute anybody mentions the Catholic Church, I associate it with paedophilia. I have some interaction with my sister, but it's not great. She is against me coming forward to the Inquiry because she's a Catholic. She follows the rules of St. Francis. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] aren't strong enough to come forward. I've had to talk about my siblings as well because I feel like I have to carry them.
119. When I told my dad about the abuse, it put a lot of strain on him. Shortly afterwards, he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and he died as a result of that illness. My mum died before Christmas of a broken heart. She'd lost my dad and she couldn't

live with what had happened to her children. She asked why I hadn't told her at the time and I told her we were made to be full of fear. She died because of what happened to us at the school. I lost my mum and dad because of the abuse.

120. For years, I lived with fear and shame and I didn't have a voice. I used to go through depression after depression. Just after coming out of the school, I was prescribed nerve tablets. I used to get spasms at the back of my ear. I was fifteen, sixteen and going up to Burtons in Paisley and all of a sudden I would have this pressure at the back of my ear. I thought I had a brain tumour, but the doctor told me it was called a nerve spasm. It was really, really sore. My head would go hot. My dad would feel the side of my head and tell me it felt warm. After that, I would go into deep depressions at Christmas time. Sometimes it would be two times a year; sometimes it would be three times a year.
121. I have made a claim for Criminal Injuries Compensation. My lawyer instructed a psychiatric report from Doctor Martin Livingston. I have provided a copy of that report to the Inquiry. He diagnosed me as suffering from persistent depressive disorder (DSM5) and complex post-traumatic stress disorder, consistent with a major depressive disorder. I started to pick up things and little by little, I'd remember more of the things that happened to me. I've been on anti-depressants for 33 years.
122. I had a cannabis habit for eight years. I used cannabis to block out all my problems. When I was in my thirties, my dad told me to give it up for Lent one year. I phoned a place up and I was appointed to [REDACTED] as a counsellor. I worked with her on and off for about eight years. Initially, I saw her at the RCA Trust in Paisley. Then I started working again and I saw her privately.
123. When I lived in Kilmarnock, I started seeing a sexual abuse counsellor, [REDACTED] of In Care Survivors Service Scotland hosted by Break the Silence, which later became Wellbeing Scotland. I'd just finished with [REDACTED] because she moved to Ireland. I needed somebody that knew something about sexual abuse to counsel me in order that I could get on the path that I am on now. I'm not there yet. I'm still travelling on this journey.

124. I started to see a spiritual counsellor, [REDACTED]. I didn't know where I was. I didn't know if there was a God above. The abuse had messed me up so much. I wanted to see a spiritual counsellor and somebody who was good with meditation. I found [REDACTED] on the internet and I went to see her in her house in Troon. I found that very useful. I am grateful to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for the help they have given me.
125. Future Pathways arranged for me to go for Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing Therapy and psychotherapy with [REDACTED] at the Anchor Medical Centre. I didn't feel ready to do that but [REDACTED] of Future Pathways kept urging me to do so. She phoned my doctor's surgery without my permission. Future Pathways have now advised that I am no longer getting any more funding and told me that I have had enough money from them. [REDACTED] told me that she had been in another victim's house and that he had no floor boards. She said it looked as if I was in a better position than him. I don't know why she told me that. They no longer fund my support from my spiritual counsellor, [REDACTED]. I wanted to speak to [REDACTED] from Future Pathways on a number of occasions and she just ignored me. I have provided a copy of a letter I received from [REDACTED] of Future Pathways dated 10 May 2018. I feel as if I have gone backwards since making contact with Future Pathways and I feel like I'm being treated like a child again.
126. I wonder how long this is going to last, this suffering? I just want to get on with my life. I've never been able to marry because I can't hold down relationships. I've been engaged twice. I always wanted to have a nice wife and children and I couldn't have that either. I wanted to have a nice job and I couldn't have that. I wanted a lot of things in life and I couldn't have them.
127. If I don't get any accountability or reparation, I feel I may have to take the law into my own hands. There is no way, under any circumstances, that what happened to me at St. Joseph's or St. Columba's was right. It's destroyed my whole family. It's destroyed my whole life. It's destroyed my sister's life as well. My sister's ill, my brother's ill and their kids are ill. It has a ripple effect.

128. The biggest impact of the abuse is that every single day, from when I get up in the morning, it's there. When I go to my bed at night, it's still there. I don't sleep every single night. I live in depression every single day. Everything's black outside. It's not the way I should have lived my life from childhood. I've not even grieved my mum and dad yet because it's not given me the chance. I'm fed up. I'm now fifty years old. All my life, I've been unable to work. I've lost businesses, I've lost cars, I've lost houses, I've lost everything. The only thing I haven't lost is my dignity and the strength to carry this forward, to fight this battle till the very end.

Reporting of Abuse

129.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

130. I approached the safeguarding people at the Catholic Church. They sent me to the bishop. The bishop sent me to the Marist Brothers. The Marist Brothers sent me back to the bishop. I was getting thrown about like a ping pong ball.
131. I went to speak to the Marist brothers regarding redress and accountability. The first time I spoke to them, Ronnie McEwan was the provincial of the Marist Brothers. I remember him being at St. Columba's as a young man, training to be a brother. Ronnie McEwan told me to come back and see him if I ever wanted to do anything about it. Three or four years later, I tried to get an appointment. I phoned a place called the Kinharvie Institute in Glasgow. A lady called LZS answered the phone. I'm sure I saw her at the school when I was there. She wasn't there for very long, but I think she was there because of something to do with Aldo Moroni.

132. The Marist Brothers funded twenty sessions with a psychologist, [REDACTED], in 2012. They then withdrew funding. I have provided a copy of a report he submitted to the Marist Brothers dated 10 December 2012 to the Inquiry. Graeme Pearson, a Member of the Scottish Parliament for the South of Scotland, wrote to the Marist Brothers on my behalf on 4 December 2013. I have provided a copy of that letter to the Inquiry. I never received any response. I did receive a letter from the Bishop of Galloway, John Cunningham, dated 31 December 2013 which I have provided to the Inquiry. He advised me to go back to the Marist Brothers. Around that time, Tina Campbell the safeguarding officer for the Catholic Church in Scotland, told me over the phone that if I stopped working with my solicitor, Sean Lynch, there would be a special wee place in heaven for me.
133. MFZ [REDACTED] was the [REDACTED] at Kinharvie Institute. I spoke to him a few times on the phone. He said he'd need to speak to Brendan Geary, who was the provincial by that time. Brendan Geary has written four books about paedophilia, but I haven't read them. Although money wouldn't fix anything, it would have helped me. I was struggling and I couldn't get to my work because of depression. I wanted to move forward and bring the abuse out into the open. I was still religious at the time and I didn't want to do it publicly. I wanted the organisation to address what happened.
134. I was working with my counsellor, [REDACTED] at the time. Ronnie McEwan told me Brother Brendan Geary was visiting London and he was going to fly up to see me and speak about what happened at the school. I met Brendan Geary and I disclosed what had happen to me. [REDACTED] was with me. I broke down. It was my first time talking to the organisation. LZS [REDACTED] was coming in with the biscuits. We spoke about Brother Germanus.
135. Brendan Geary said, "MGH [REDACTED], Brother Germanus is dead." I said, "Yes, but your order is not dead and somebody's got to be held responsible for this." He said, "Yes, but we're sick of paying people fifty, eighty and a hundred thousand pounds. All they do is keep coming back in five or ten years' time, saying that it's still there. What do you want us to give you?" I said, "How much is it from your childhood up until now?" He

said, "We couldn't afford that. We'd need to start selling buildings." When I went and told my father about the meeting, he said, "What a shame that they'd have to sell buildings. Look at all the work and effort that we put in for you to go to that boarding school and look what we got."

136. The first report I made to the police was in relation to my brother. The reason for that was that I couldn't remember everything that happened to me at St. Columba's at that point. I could only remember bits and pieces, like Brother Germanus putting his hand over my face and touching my genitals. I'd buried stuff so deep at the back of my mind. Little by little, things started to come out and I started to become clearer about what had happened at the school.
137. I reported Brother Germanus to the police. Initially, uniformed police officers came to see me. Then police from Kilmarnock child protection unit came to see me to take a statement. The name of the officer was Ann Love. I was back and forward after that and I just felt disbelieved every time I went to the police station. I would tell them I had remembered something else. They couldn't comprehend that that was the way these things work. Sometimes [REDACTED] came with me. He met Lyndsay Watters of the Child Protection Unit. [REDACTED] Lastly, I reported Brother [REDACTED] AKU to the police.
138. I've been down to see Brother Germanus' grave. It said he died in 1999. Somebody told me he died in 1992, but I also have a photograph of him with a group of retired brothers which was taken in 2015. I did try and tell the police, but they told me to let them get on with their investigation. I was trying to contribute to their investigation. I was told to back off by Colin Jones and another officer who worked at Kilmarnock. He was the officer who took the statement from me. I felt a bit unwanted by them. All I was trying to do was help.
139. I brought to Colin Jones' attention a picture of Ronnie McEwan [REDACTED] LZS and [REDACTED] MFZ I think they know something about Aldo Moroni's death. I'm not happy with those people at all. It makes me very upset and angry. Colin Jones and his colleague had to calm me down.

140.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I understand other pupils have also come forward to speak about their experiences at the school.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

141. For three years, Sean Lynch of McCluskey Browne Solicitors in Kilmarnock tried to bring my case to court. I was beaten by the time bar. [REDACTED] AKU [REDACTED] wasn't charged and I was looking for redress and accountability. I was going to have to take it to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority. I went to see a lawyer called Stuart Fraser of Glasgow Law Practice. Money won't fix anything and it certainly won't fix my life, but they offered me absolutely silly money. The first offer was £3300. I've been on anti-depressants for 33 years and they wanted to offer me £3300. £3300 for being abused. It's not on. We appealed against that. My lawyer instructed a psychiatrist, Doctor Martin Livingston, to prepare a medical report about me and give me a diagnosis. My claim had not previously been supported by medical evidence.

Meeting former pupils of St. Columba's

142. I've met up with some of the boys from St. Columba's as an adult. The first person I went to meet was [REDACTED]. I arranged to meet him at Nardinis in Largs for a coffee. He took me down to the school. I couldn't remember where the school was because it was so long ago. We walked all the way round the back of Largs and back down to the school, the way we used to walk when we were at school. I asked him if he had been abused at the school. He said he couldn't remember anything. I've seen photos of him on Twitter and he looks very, very depressed. He mentioned something about liking the Catholic Church but him not liking some of their followers.

143. I also met [REDACTED] and his partner. I got in touch with him through my sister, as she got in touch with [REDACTED] sister. She was a lot older than [REDACTED]. She used to drop him off at the school. She'd spend a bit of time with him because he was so home sick, he didn't want to leave her. I was driving my [REDACTED] one day and [REDACTED] phoned me. He spoke about Brother Germanus and asked if I remembered stretching exercises. We met up at Braehead shopping centre and I shook his hand. I apologised for the fight we'd and he told me not to worry about it, as we were only children. He told me that a lot of things troubled him in his life that troubled me as well.
144. The third person I went to see was [REDACTED]. I met him down at a pub in Shawlands called O'Neill's. He reckoned it would take a couple of drinks for him to tell me what had happened at school. There were a lot of things he didn't want to tell me. He said he was embarrassed and he didn't want his name published in the paper.
145. I managed to get in contact with [REDACTED] by phone. We were going to meet up, but he got cold feet. He said that he'd been speaking to his counsellor and if he was to go back into it again, it would make him more unwell. He's disabled now. He was battered so many times. I think he was battered even more than me.
146. I was trying to gather up information to try and find out what actually happened at the school. I wanted to deliver some kind of evidence to the police. Every time I went to the police, I felt as if I was rejected and disbelieved. I went out my way to find people. It wasn't easy.

Records

147. Colin Jones questioned dates when I was at school. I went to the local archives to try and retrieve some information. When I went to the archives of the Marist brothers to request my records Ronnie McEwan said he only had a small shoe box with

information to do with St. Columba's. I found that to be unusual. I would have thought that should be against the law. I know why they only have a shoe box.

Hopes for the Inquiry

148. I think there should have been regular checks of the school. I think the police should have looked into St. Columba's a bit more when the bottle was found, asking for help. That bottle should have raised alarm bells, coming from children.
149. The Pope promised that there would be a zero tolerance attitude to child abuse. I don't think he's stuck to his agreement. I think these people are outright liars. I really hope I get the opportunity to speak in front of Lady Smith. I want to speak up on behalf of all the victims from St. Columba's. I'm here about MGH and I'm here about Aldo. I should be taking Aldo for a run in my car. Instead, here I am, talking about what happened to me as a child and talking about what happened to Aldo.
150. I would like to think that the Inquiry will make things better for children in the future. I want to bring things to a close as far as accountability and redress are concerned. I hope the Inquiry can tell people what's right and what's wrong. I don't think the Catholic Church knows what's right and what's wrong and it goes on and on.
151. I'm upset with the system. I'm begging for help. I feel as if I've had to wait all this time just to get a tiny bit of help, like Future Pathways. They cast up to me that they'd given me £19,000. I don't think that's what a victim wants to hear. It would have been nice if they'd helped me to keep my business afloat and to keep my car. I don't think it's an organisation that wants to help people. I hope things change in Scotland to make it a more attractive country.

Final thoughts

152. St. Columba's was a home for retired brothers before it became a school. I wonder if they were retired because they were genuinely finished with their ministry and

settling down for the remainder of their lives or because they were paedophiles. There are a lot of questions that I feel the Catholic Church is not being honest about.

153. The building that formed St. Columba's has now been sold by the Marist brothers and turned into apartments. The Marist brothers moved further up and re-opened as a home for retired brothers, like it had been in the beginning. The school shut down at the same time as St. Joseph's in Dumfries in 1982.
154. Purgatory doesn't exist. It was invented by an Italian scientist who imagined that it was a place you went to for your sins. I wonder if my abusers are in hell now, or are they still living inside retirement homes?
155. When I was fourteen or fifteen, my mum asked me to phone directory enquiries. I was looking for a number for her. The person who answered said, "Is your surname MGH [REDACTED]?" He pronounced my name correctly, [REDACTED]. He asked if he was speaking to MGH [REDACTED]. I told him he was and asked who I was speaking to. He said, "It's Brother MJZ [REDACTED]. You can now call me MJZ [REDACTED] because I've left the brotherhood." My mum couldn't believe it.
156. Brother Germanus' brother used to come and visit. He was a well looking man, not like Brother Germanus. I have a photograph that was taken in Valladolid, Spain in 2015. Brother Germanus is in it and his brother is holding his shoulder. According to Catholic canon law, if somebody has abused children he shouldn't be allowed to work with children ever again. I wonder why Brother Germanus kept coming back to the school and was allowed to teach?
157. My personal belief is that the Marist brothers have trained for this time, for the things that have happened coming to light. Ronnie McEwan and Brendan Geary are trained in psychology. I think the Kinharvie Institute is connected to all of this and being put forward as a business. I think they are employing more lay people to defend the whole empire, which is the Catholic Church. They can't get away with this. They've been caught out. The victims are the resistance of them. They can't fool us. I might have been a child when they abused me but I'm an adult now.

158. Once this is all over, I'm going to run from Scotland as fast as I can. I feel as if I'm being locked up in this country as a hostage, just as I got locked up as a child at boarding school. If nothing is done about it, I'm going to take it to the European courts to fight it. I want to get Italian lawyers involved. I hope the government will hear our voices. Australia and America have dealt with it, now New Zealand and Europe are dealing with abuse by Marist brothers.
159. I think the Catholic Church is a cult. They're not who you think they are. They're people who came and sponged money off people for years. My mum and dad gave them money for years. These people are absolute monsters and they've got to be brought to justice.
160. 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.

MGH

Signed

Dated 31-05-2018