

Witness Name **GRO-A Mr F**

Statement No.: WITN0025001

Exhibits: WITN0025002 – WITN0025007

Dated: 21/09/2020

ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO ABUSE IN CARE

WITNESS STATEMENT OF **GRO-A Mr F**

I, **GRO-A Mr F**, state:

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. My full name is **GRO-A Mr F**. I was born on **GRO-A** 1939 in **GRO-A** and I am 81 years old.
- 1.2. I was sexually abused by Frank Durning, priest and rector of St. Patrick's College, Silverstream, in Upper Hutt.
- 1.3. The abuse took place in June and July 1953 when I was 14 years of age and a year nine student at the boarding school. Durning was 38 years old at the time.

Early life

- 1.4. My parents **GRO-B** and **GRO-B** had a dairy farm in **GRO-B** on the land where I live today. I was born in **GRO-B** Hospital and have an older and a younger sister.

- 1.5. My parents were both devoted Catholics, attending the local parish in **GRO-B** called St Joseph's. We attended Mass every Sunday and the Catholic Church was very much part of their life. At home we performed the rosary and prayed as a family every night.
- 1.6. My parents were very traditional; they had a lot of respect for the clergy. We would never discuss the homily on our return from Mass and my parents were very guarded about relationships.
- 1.7. I started school at age 5 and attended the local Catholic primary school, St Joseph's, run by the Mission sisters. At primary school, I was a prefect and captain of the rugby team. I was also a prefect on the school bus, which we all travelled on to get to school.
- 1.8. I have good memories of growing up and attending primary school. There was strict discipline—students were strapped over the hand for misbehaviour—but I didn't break the rules so was never punished in this way.
- 1.9. Before leaving primary school, my father gave me a talk about "the birds and the bees" so I was aware of my own sexuality.
- 1.10. My parents decided that after primary school I would leave **GRO-B** and go to boarding school. This was mainly because there was no local Catholic high school. My older sister also went off to boarding school.
- 1.11. From my primary school, there were only two of us that left **GRO-B** to go to boarding school. My good friend **GRO-B** went to Hato Paora College in Feilding, and I went to St Patrick's College in Silverstream, Upper Hutt (**Stream**).
- 1.12. By leaving **GRO-B**, I basically severed my relationships with my primary school friends who became rather hostile when I later returned to **GRO-B** and played against them in rugby.

St Patrick's College, Silverstream

- 1.13. In 1953, I began my schooling at Stream as a 13-year-old, and I turned 14 in **GRO-A** of that year.

Refer Exhibit WITN0025002 – School Photo aged 13

- 1.14. Initially my time at Stream was enjoyable.
- 1.15. I was lead soprano in the college choir and when the orchestra rehearsed, I took the opportunity to learn our songs. On some of these occasions, Durning, the rector of the school, would sit down beside me and discuss the music. He knew me quite well and called me by my Christian name. I remember even the Cardinal came to the musical.
- 1.16. On arrival at Stream, we had an intelligence test and I was placed in the top stream at the College. We had the best teachers, the best classrooms, and the best dormitory with our own library.
- 1.17. With respect to discipline, I only got the cane once for talking after lights off. The whole dormitory got it and we all had to line up to be caned by Father Fox. That was the only occasion for me as I tried not to break the rules. I was aware of other boys getting caned regularly and you would often see the marks and bruises on boys when we showered.
- 1.18. I remember going home at Easter and being a very happy, responsible, independent young person.
- 1.19. At this stage I trusted and respected Durning.

Refer Exhibit WITN0025003 – Photo of Frank Durning, Rector at St Patrick's**2. THE ABUSE**

- 2.1. After a few weeks of grooming, in or around June or July of my first year, Durning was talking to me outside his office door one morning and asked me if I had been circumcised, to which I responded, yes. He said that there was no need to talk to other boys about our conversation as they would not understand. He then asked me if I was having any trouble with it, to which I responded, no. He told me to come into his office, so he could check it out.
- 2.2. The inside of his office was dark except for a desk lamp; he had the curtain closed already. When I was inside, he grabbed me and tried to masturbate against my body. This was despite my attempts to hold him off me with my knees and elbows.

He became more and more excited and repeated over and over the words, "I don't know what to make of you". The attack went on for a long time. He eventually said, "whip it out and let me have a look at it".

- 2.3. I was very frightened and in deep shock. When I walked from his office to my study, I felt that my feet were not touching the floor.
- 2.4. The next time I saw Durning he walked past me and the other boys in the corridor with a red face.
- 2.5. I never cried as a boy, but I cried for several nights after Durning abused me. When I woke each morning, I was surprised to find that I had stopped crying and fallen asleep. After being a happy and secure student, and achieving in the top 10% of the stream, I slipped academically, socially and workwise. This was a sign of how traumatised I was.
- 2.6. The next time that I met Durning, he approached me from behind and stopped me to tell me that he had noticed my stalling academic progress. He threatened that if I did not improve, he would cane me. In his face I saw fear and then I saw power. It was a very frightening experience for me.
- 2.7. At the school we had a system where teachers gave us a mark out of five each week for discipline and application. I needed to get a three or above to ensure I didn't have to go to Durning's office. This made me terrified that I wouldn't achieve the right score each week.
- 2.8. I believe the discipline master Pat Minto would have known that Durning abused me. Minto was standing outside Durning's office when I left on the day of the abuse. He was aware of what went on all over the school. In my mind I am sure that he must have known of Durning's abuse but did nothing. Minto was frequently standing outside Durning's office reading his breviary.
- 2.9. In recent years, I have spoken to a friend and ex-pupil of Stream, GRO-B-1. He advised me that he witnessed another pupil, GRO-B-2 walking out of Durning's office and stating, "you are not going to get your hands on me you filthy bastard".

- 2.10. I am also aware that in 1954, the year after I left, two prefects— **GRO-B-1** and **GRO-B-3**—went to the bosses of Stream wanting to report Durning to the Provincial of the Marists, and Durning still stayed there another year.
- 2.11. I have recently spoken to **GRO-B-4** and asked of his knowledge of Durning's abuse. **GRO-B-4** told me that about 15 boys knew that Durning was an abuser.
- 2.12. **GRO-B-4** also told me that a fellow student named **GRO-B-5** was a victim of abuse by Durning. **GRO-B-5** who was a bright student but was caned by Durning for failing School Certificate.

After St Patrick's College

- 2.13. In May 1954, I walked out of St Patrick's at the age of 15. I went home to my father's farm and hid for two years even though there was not really any job for me.
- 2.14. I did have to return to Stream a short time after I left to return some study books. I did not have an appointment with Durning, but he was waiting for me. I remember Durning asking why I was leaving. Then he went to put both his arms out to touch me, but I put my fists and arms out in a barrier. He leaped back, with a red face and I felt I had him.
- 2.15. When I was 21 my father provided a guarantee to the bank to allow me to borrow money to purchase a farm property. I borrowed 100% of the capital and paid off all the debt in two years. I have been farming ever since.
- 2.16. When I was 22, I met my wife **GRO-B**. Initially she was not Catholic and had been to a Christian boarding school for girls in Marton. Through her own interest, she explored the Catholic faith and visited Monsignor Gurnard many times. It was from this interest, and her involvement helping with music, that she became a practising Catholic. **GRO-B** and I were married in **GRO-B** 1963, two months short of my 24th birthday.
- 2.17. She has always been very involved playing the organ at Mass and helping with fundraising and many community events. In 2013 Pope Francis awarded **GRO-B** the **GRO-B** medal for services to Church music.

Abuse of my son **GRO-B-6**

- 2.18. In 1981, when my son **GRO-B-6** was 14 years old and a boarder at Chanel College, Masterton, he was home for the weekend during a public holiday. I was sitting in the lounge and **GRO-B-6** walked past and whispered in my ear. He told me that Brother **GRO-B-7** had come to his bed at night and that he did not like it. He then left and went to his room.
- 2.19. After some thought of what to do, I followed **GRO-B-6** to his room and told him that I would talk to **GRO-B-7** when I took him back to Chanel College on Monday.
- 2.20. On the Sunday I went to the parish priest in **GRO-B**, Kevin O'Sullivan, and told him what had happened. He told me I didn't want **GRO-B-7** guts, I just needed him to stay away from **GRO-B-6**.
- 2.21. Once in his office, I confronted **GRO-B-7**, stating that he had abused **GRO-B-6**. **GRO-B-7** asked if I believed **GRO-B-6** and I said yes, I do.
- 2.22. **GRO-B-7** then sent for **GRO-B-6** to come to the office and explain what happened, in front of **GRO-B-7**. At this point, two boys walked past the office and I heard them say "you are going to get what's coming to you now you fucking wanker," directing their comments to **GRO-B-7**, who said nothing.
- 2.23. When **GRO-B-6** came to the office and accused **GRO-B-7** of the abuse, **GRO-B-7** broke down and howled, saying, "you will tear this place apart". I replied that he was tearing the place apart and he should leave my son alone.
- 2.24. After **GRO-B-7** composed himself, he dismissed **GRO-B-6** and then told me he was not homosexual because he had recently gone to a meeting and had an attraction to a girl.
- 2.25. Within a week, **GRO-B-7** approached **GRO-B-6** at school and told him that he would leave the school by a certain date and asked **GRO-B-6** to check with me if that was all right.
- 2.26. In fact, **GRO-B-7** was lucky he had not been beaten up because the boys in **GRO-B-6** dorm knew he was visiting **GRO-B-6** at night and had been waiting to turn the light on the next time he came. They had a baseball bat and were fired up. Two of the boys from his dorm reported what they knew to the school principal and their local parish.

- 2.27. In the late 1990s, the Police approached **GRO-B-6** in Wellington to ask about potential abuse after a complaint was made by another boy against **GRO-B-7**. My son was newly married at the time and had just started a new professional job in **GRO-B**.
- 2.28. **GRO-B-6** declined to make a statement but put his complaint on record.
- 2.29. **GRO-B-6** later made a complaint to the Police in 2011 and when he did this, I contacted the spokesperson for the Catholic Church, Lyndsay Freer. I contacted her and advised her about **GRO-B-7**'s abuse, but she never got back to me.

3. THE IMPACT OF THE ABUSE

- 3.1. The attack on me had the effect of destroying my formal education at the age of 14. My sense of self-worth was very low despite having been a school leader in years 7 and 8.
- 3.2. I did not experience normal formative teenage years. I could not use a public toilet because of fear. If someone came in I would run out. When I did join a sports club, I could not step off the field and shower after the game.
- 3.3. I returned to Stream nineteen years later. The same floor covering was there that I had walked on from Durning's office to my study that morning. I looked for the marks of my feet on the floor covering even though in my mind on that morning my feet did not touch it. Nineteen years later, in my mind, I did see my foot marks and my instinctive reaction made me think of and smell Durning. An instinctive 'influence' made me step over the line of the foot mark. I did not get rid of Durning's smell on me until I reported his attack to the Society of Mary 49 years later, in 2002.
- 3.4. My sense of anger at the invasion of my sexuality drives me to report this abuse. Documents accompanying my statement are an important part of my statement to the Royal Commission. They provide more detail about the abuse I suffered, the effect it has had on me, the trauma of finding out about the abuse of my son, and the many problems and further abuse I suffered when I reported the abuse to the Marist Priests and Brothers that went on for many years. I have commented on the document list where the Marist record is not accurate.

- 3.5. I now feel how important it is to protect our children. I have found it is difficult to form relationships with men. As an example, I do not feel comfortable ever greeting men with an embrace. This is a direct result of Durning's abuse.
- 3.6. I am quite resilient and have achieved a lot, but the abuse led me to leave Stream with an incomplete education. I also believe that it moulded how I parented my children—I put a huge importance on education, and I understood clearly the importance of normal formative teenage years.
- 3.7. I still have anger at the Church, and whilst I have faith and support other survivors, I feel the outcome of my complaint has been unjust. Reporting abuse to the Church has been traumatic not only for myself but also for my family. The Church's "A Pathway to Healing", National Office for Professional Standards (NOPS), and Protocol Committee process did not work for me. Rather, it added to my trauma.
- 3.8. The abuse has caused me internal shame for many years. I was unable to tell my wife **GRO-B** for 36 years and when I did advise her of my abuse in 1999, she at first said she was very surprised and stated she was amazed I had stayed in the Catholic Church. **GRO-B** told me she now understood why I put so much importance on the education of our children, knowing my education was cut short.
- 3.9. I have separated the abuse from my faith and the revelation of what occurred did not really affect **GRO-B** faith either. We share the belief that the abuse was not an act of God but of man.

4. REDRESS

Initial complaint and meeting

- 4.1. In 1999, some friends of ours gave **GRO-B** and I a subscription to the Marist messenger magazine. One day I was reading it in the lounge when I came across the obituary for Durning. When I saw this, I burst out loudly, shouting to **GRO-B**, "the buggers knew!" In the obituary there was no mention of his posting at Stream which to me clearly showed they knew he was an abuser but did nothing.

Refer Exhibit WITN0025004 – Copy of Durning’s obituary

- 4.2. On 17 July 2002, I phoned the Society of Mary helpline to report Durning’s abuse. My complaint was taken by Kitty McKinley, a social worker for the Society of Mary. I also mentioned the abuse of my son [GRO-B-6] by [GRO-B-7] on this call.

Refer Exhibit WITN0025005 – Help line complaint form

- 4.3. Kitty told me that she would refer the matter regarding [GRO-B-7] to the Marist Brothers, as they are not part of the Society of Mary and are responsible for Chanel College.
- 4.4. On 1 August 2002, I met in Palmerston North with Tim Duckworth, the then Vicar Provincial for the Society of Mary, and Kitty McKinley.

Refer Exhibit WITN0025006 – Summary document of meeting 1 August 2002

- 4.5. At the meeting we discussed the abuse by Durning and what [GRO-B-7] did to [GRO-B-6]. I was offered counselling, an apology and an ex-gratia payment.
- 4.6. Tim Duckworth told me that Durning had abused other boys. Also on the 1st of August 2002, Duckworth told me that Durning was a scumbag and referred to by his fellow priests as “Fred the Fidler” but then his obituary written on his death on 13 April 1991, refers to Durning as a man of profound integrity and a faithful priest and religious.
- 4.7. Duckworth later denied making this comment when interviewed by Phil Pennington of Radio New Zealand.
- 4.8. In 2018 Duckworth had told me that, after Stream, Durning had no further contact with boys. This is clearly not true.
- 4.9. Kitty McKinley told me that if I had told someone about the abuse at the time, it would not have made a difference. She said, “you wouldn’t have been believed” and “they would have walked all over you”.
- 4.10. At this first meeting they accepted that the abuse had occurred and stated that no investigation was required. I was told I was going to get an apology letter from the Provincial, Hoban. I was happy at this response and would have likely not gone any further had this occurred.

Follow-up phone calls

- 4.11. The day after the meeting, on 2 August 2002, I called Kitty to say that I was concerned that other boys at boarding schools might be vulnerable to abuse and that a process needed to be put in place to respond to these issues. I also noted my belief that some of the masters at St Patrick's were aware of the abuse that was going on. I said that I thought it was important for those who were abused to receive a formal, written apology from the Church, from a Bishop for example, and that these letters should be publicly accessible.
- 4.12. On 5 August 2002, I phoned Kitty again. We spoke about the possibility of counselling and going to the Police regarding the abuse of my son by GRO-B-7. Kitty said both were options to consider.
- 4.13. On 16 October 2002, I phoned Kitty expressing disappointment that I had not yet received an apology letter from the Provincial. I asked if there were any other complaints against Durning and Kitty said from memory there were two. I discussed my worry that I had not said anything at the time to prevent it from happening again. Kitty told me that it may not have made a difference and I shouldn't blame myself.

Apology letter

- 4.14. In December 2002, I received a letter from Tim Duckworth, dated 9 December 2002, in which he acknowledged the hurt that I suffered from Father Durning and formally apologised on behalf of the Society of Mary. I noticed that the letter did not acknowledge that what occurred was sexual abuse and was careful not to even use the word "abuse".

Refer Exhibit WITN0025007 – Apology letter

2003

- 4.15. On 25 February 2003, I again phoned Kitty and stated that I needed compensation. We also discussed counselling options. I mentioned that my son had made a complaint to police about five years ago, but nothing happened.
- 4.16. I began attending counselling sessions and attended several sessions of counselling with Joan Daniels, which assisted me in getting over the smell I had of Durning and helped with my trauma.

- 4.17. In May I discussed compensation with Kitty again and she suggested that I put a formal request in writing.
- 4.18. In July 2003, I received a letter from Kitty suggesting that we meet in person to discuss the issue of compensation. She also suggested that it might be useful for me to obtain independent legal advice prior to the meeting.
- 4.19. In August 2003, I received another letter from Kitty regarding a possible meeting.
- 4.20. On 18 November 2003, I met with the Palmerston North Protocol Committee, including Bishop Peter Cullinane, accompanied by my Counsellor, Joan Daniels, as a support person. I stated that I was abused by Durning and my belief that Pat Minto had known that abuse was occurring and covered it up. I also stated that my son was abused at Chanel College by GRO-B-7. I asked that Bishop Cullinane relay my request for compensation to Tim Duckworth. I also stated that my main concern was that the Church was not dealing effectively with the issue of sexual abuse, and that they needed to communicate the work of the Protocol Committees more clearly with other Catholics.
- 4.21. The following day I received a phone call from Kitty, and we discussed the meeting. I stated that I would probably need to obtain legal advice before taking any further steps. She agreed that this might be a good idea.

Grant Cameron

- 4.22. In 2004, I contacted Grant Cameron of Grant Cameron Law to discuss my situation. He agreed to represent me. On 8 June 2004, I signed a statement requesting and authorising the Society of Mary, the Ministry of Education, and the Diocese of Wellington to provide to my solicitors any personal information held about me.
- 4.23. In July 2005, Philip Cody wrote to my solicitors regarding the issue of compensation. He stated that the Society of Mary “does not make and has never made compensation payments in respect of sexual abuse”, but that they do make “ex gratia payment gifts” to acknowledge a person’s suffering and assist them with rehabilitation. The Society offered me an ex gratia payment of \$5,000, which he stated was the amount offered to a complainant when the respondent is dead.

The National Office for Professional Standards

- 4.24. On 13 March 2009, I wrote to John Jamieson, the National Director of NOPS requesting a review of the complaint that I submitted to the Society of Mary.
- 4.25. Towards the end of March 2009, I received a letter from John Jamieson dated 23 March 2009 in which he stated that he had received documents about my complaint from the Society of Mary and that the next step was to meet with him.
- 4.26. I met with John Jamieson to discuss my concerns and then In August 2009, I received the final report from John Jamieson reviewing my complaint.
- 4.27. In September 2009, I received a letter from Philip Cody of the Society of Mary Sexual Abuse Protocol Committee stating that the Protocol Committee had received the final review from John Jamieson in August and considered his report. He reaffirmed the apology offered by the Society of Mary and offered to meet again.
- 4.28. On 1 December 2009, I met with Philip Cody and Judith McCormack. I remember Judith's response was that all the money in the world couldn't repair the damage of my sexual abuse. I found Judy McCormick hostile and aggressive. When I said to her "they knew" she replied, "what could they have done".
- 4.29. When I had a second meeting with Judith McCormack and Neil Vaney, at this meeting I felt they felt they did not know how to deal with me. When Neil Vaney looked at my file, he said there was no case for Durning to answer. He trivialised and minimised the abuse. He said what happened to me was not against the law.
- 4.30. Judy wanted me to discuss the mistakes that I had told them were in the notes of the protocol committee meeting, I asked her if I was a typical victim. Judy said "no", lost her temper and said why are you behaving so differently from most victims. I assume she meant why don't you take the \$5,000 offered and go away.
- 4.31. We also discussed other abuse from the media in relation to Fred Bliss. Again, their view was his action would not meet a criminal threshold and tried to minimise it. Their attitude was totally not survivor focussed. I asked how much of my details would go to Bill Kilgallon and I was told it was only my name.
- 4.32. In December 2010, I received a letter from Philip Cody stating that the Protocol Committee had met to consider my request and had decided to continue to offer

an ex gratia payment of \$5,000. He stated that this was not intended as compensation but as “a symbolic gift or koha intended to recognise and express our sorrow at the harm caused to you”.

4.33. Around September 2013, I received a letter from Bill Kilgallon, National Director of NOPS, dated 26 September. He stated that from his review of the report produced by John Jamieson, and the records of the Society of Mary, he considered that the Society of Mary had implemented the recommendations set out in the Jamieson report.

4.34. However, despite this early acceptance, the process was strung out over a very long time and was not resolved until 2019.

4.35. I was never given a copy of the process or procedures that would be used to deal with my complaint. As a result, I never had an opportunity to question this process.

4.36. After going through the extra trauma of reporting the abuse that took place, I received a formal apology in a brief, pro forma letter, and an offer of \$5,000 “koha”, which I found insulting. This offer was not commensurate with the hurt and damage that I suffered.

4.37. I have received no compensation for:

- The loss of my education as I was a top student until I was abused.
- The loss of other life opportunities, including employment opportunities.
- The years I believed I was the only one abused and couldn't tell anyone, even my wife, until 1999, some 36 years after we married.

4.38. With respect to **GRO-B-6** abuse case, as Kitty McKinley initially stated, she passed my complaint on to the Marist Brothers. From that referral I had a visit to my house from Brother Brian Wanden and Brother Henry Spinks from Auckland. Spinks had been principal of St Peter's College, Palmerston North. Wanden told me “of course they knew **GRO-A Mr F**”. He told me Cardinal McKeefry said to him “if you have any trouble with this issue, I can put them offshore”.

4.39. I also queried why, after complaints were made to Police in the late 1990s, **GRO-B-7** was able to continue in practice and was put in charge of the **GRO-B**

GRO-B Auckland. Spinks told me they had received a lawyer's letter from **GRO-B-7** to say they had to leave him in ministry unless he was charged by the Police. They knew about **GRO-B-7** but moved him.

4.40. I have finished the redress process without the relief of knowing abuse in the Church will stop. I have no reassurance that other children will not be abused in Church institutions. I have no reassurance the Church is looking after victims. I have no belief that the Church will make sure what happened to me and my son will not keep happening to others and is not still happening. Lastly, I have found no evidence of action or commitment from the Church to prevent it happening to others, which I had hoped for when I reported the abuse to the Church.

4.41. The process does not lead to compensation for harm and loss. The complaints process does not stop the perpetrator from abusing others. Both Durning and **GRO-B-7** were moved to other places where they had access to other children and victims.

4.42. Since **GRO-B** and I learnt of the Royal Commission we both proactively approached both Bishop Lowe of Hamilton and Bishop Drennan of Palmerston North. Our purpose was to get support for the Royal Commission and for fellow survivors.

4.43. At our meeting with Bishop Lowe we talked about the need for survivors to be listened to and believed. There was another survivor present and Virginia Noonan from NOPS. I felt Virginia was rather naive about what was going on and was not across what all the Bishops actually knew.

4.44. An example of this was a short time later I rang Virginia when **GRO-B-8** **GRO-B-8** was removed from **GRO-B**. This had occurred after **GRO-B-8** had been reported to the NOPS office for unacceptable behaviour. **GRO-B-8** had come to our parish and I was concerned. When I rang Virginia, her response was not of any concern but that I should just contact the Bishop. I rang and spoke to Bishop Drennan and he was only concerned at how I knew of this rather than taking any action. He denied there was any abuse happening in his Diocese.

4.45. Later we wrote to Bishop Drennan and requested a meeting. He came to our house and I talked of my abuse and showed him the obituary of Durning. His response was "8 jobs in 11 years, they must have known".

- 4.46. My son **GRO-B-6** and I also sought and were able to have a meeting with Cardinal John Dew. The purpose was to encourage him to be part of the Royal Commission as to date he had been making no public comment.
- 4.47. At the meeting Dew said he had things in place and boys were better in the seminaries. He made the point he was not in charge of the Marists. He did admit there was no downside of being part of the Royal Commission. We talked openly about his lack of control over abuse within the Catholic Church and we came away from the meeting feeling he was weak and had no control or influence to stop the abuse.
- 4.48. **GRO-B** and I both agree we would not have known of the prevalence of abuse within the Catholic Church if I had not been abused myself. The laity within the Church do not talk about abuse and the Church just hide it. To talk about it is a sign of criticism and trying to weaken the Church.
- 4.49. As an example, recently, Barbara Dreaver from Television New Zealand has reported on abuse in Fiji by the Marists. This has really shocked our local parish.
- 4.50. I have also been on Radio New Zealand three times supporting the need for faith-based institutions to be part of the Royal Commission. As a result, many survivors rang Phil Pennington to advise they were abused by Durning and to support my effort.
- 4.51. I rang Tim Duckworth in 2019 to get a copy of the file on Durning. I was told and assured by Duckworth that after Stream, Durning had no more access to students. I know this not to be true. I have talked to fellow survivors who have contacted the radio stating they were abused when Durning was moved to St Patrick's in Wellington. This just shows Tim Duckworth again minimises and covers up the truth.

5. LOOKING FORWARD

- 5.1. In summary, I am a committed Catholic who still has a strong faith despite my experience as a survivor. I am aware of other survivors and also parents of survivors who are alive. I also know of survivors who **GRO-C**. The process is difficult to come forward and there are many barriers for people to

disclose their abuse. This needs to change in New Zealand. We need a system to support survivors to disclose, to be believed and feel safe when they speak out.

- 5.2. With respect to transformative change, I do still feel that boys at boarding schools are at risk. I believe there needs to be a helpline or similar outside of the school, a dedicated avenue that provides an independent way to ask for help.
- 5.3. I am encouraged that the Royal Commission has the power of the Government behind it because the Church has a sense of entitlement. The Royal Commission needs to open up all the files. We need an open environment where survivors can speak out and the Church listens rather than closing down and defending themselves.

Statement of Truth

This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and was made by me knowing that it may be used as evidence by the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care.

Signed

GRO-C

Dated:

24.9.20