

Witness Name: **GRO-A Ms DN**

Statement No.: WITN0870001

Dated: 30/09/2021

ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO ABUSE IN CARE

---

WITNESS STATEMENT OF **GRO-A Ms DN**

---

I **GRO-A Ms DN** will say as follows:

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 My name is **GRO-A Ms DN**. I was born on **GRO-B** 1958. I currently live in Auckland, New Zealand.

1.2 I spoke to the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care on 16 August 2021.

1.3 I am providing this statement **about** my brother, **GRO-A Mr DO** **GRO-A Mr DO** is unwell with cancer. I believe from exposure to anal sex at a young age **GRO-A Mr DO** has expressed a desire to not be involved in the Royal Commission process. As his sister, I respect his wishes. He has allowed me to speak on his behalf about his time at

Marylands, the impact that it has had on his life, including his health, and the intergenerational impacts on us as a family.

- 1.4 Before my mother died, she expressed her concerns for GRO-A Mr DO welfare and ongoing care. He needs financial assistance as well as supervision. That, combined with the public disclosures of sexual abuse, neglect, and his lack of care and supervision while at Marylands, are things that need to be addressed and acknowledged. There needs to be some accountability for everything that happened to him and to others.

## 2. WHO I AM

- 2.1 I am one of 11 children to GRO-B-1 and GRO-B-2.
- 2.2 My brother GRO-A Mr DO is the seventh child, and I am the eighth GRO-A Mr DO was born on GRO-B 1957.
- 2.3 GRO-A Mr DO attended Marylands School between 24 May 1965 and 21 August 1974. Marylands was a school run by the Hospitaller Brothers of St John of God in Christchurch, New Zealand. The school was set up to educate boys with learning disabilities.
- 2.4 I am currently a GRO-B nurse GRO-B at GRO-B, in GRO-B. I have been a nurse since 1977 and have 44 years' experience.
- 2.5 I am the spokesperson for my family on matters that relate to GRO-A Mr DO and the sexual abuse he suffered at Marylands School.

### Family background

- 2.6 My father, GRO-B-1 was born in England in 1903, raised in Manchester. His older siblings were all born in the Republic of Ireland, but due to famine and times of hardship, the family emigrated to England. During the war, he managed to join the New Zealand Army corps while in England.
- 2.7 My mother, GRO-B-2, was born in 1918 and raised in GRO-B, near Hamilton, New Zealand.

2.8 My parents were set up by my Mum's best friend **GRO-B** in 1944. **GRO-B-1** had come over to visit, and **GRO-B** told my mother that he had done time in the war. They joked that **GRO-B-1** may know **GRO-B-2** brothers as they had served in the same area – turns out they did know each other.

2.9 One month later, they married at the Ellerslie Parish. They moved into my late grandparents' house, due to the war having finished not long before. It was not uncommon for a man to marry a much younger woman at that time – if you did not marry before the war, you had to wait seven years to when it was over.

2.10 My oldest sister **GRO-B-3** was born in 1946 followed by my sisters **GRO-B-4** (born in 1948), **GRO-B-5** (born in 1950), **GRO-B-6** (born in 1951), **GRO-B-7** (born in 1952) and **GRO-B-8** (born in 1953). Then my brother **GRO-B-9** was born in 1956, followed by **GRO-A Mr DO** (born in 1957), me (born in 1958), **GRO-B-10** (born in 1960) and **GRO-B-11** (born in 1961).

2.11

**GRO-B**

2.12 After the war, my father started working as a commercial traveller. I believe that this would be the equivalent to a travelling sales representative these days. He sold furniture and plumbing supplies for large companies and spent a lot of his time away from home.

2.13 He provided well for us, and my mother was able to devote her time to raising us children. He was away Monday to Friday travelling.

2.14 We grew up as a middle-class New Zealand family, we owned a home in **GRO-B** a house that we rented out in **GRO-B** and a holiday home on the **GRO-B**

2.15 My father was a heavy smoker and passed away due to lung cancer in 1971 at 68. What contributed to his lung cancer was growing up in England around large factories

where he inhaled the smoke and fumes. All his siblings died of lung cancer too due to this exposure.

2.16 My mother died in February 2008 at 90.

**GRO-A Mr DO**'s early years

2.17 My mother told me that when **GRO-A Mr DO** was born, her doctor, Dr **GRO-B** told her that he was not "like your other children" **GRO-A Mr DO** didn't meet his milestones when other children "usually" did. He did not start talking until he was three, he was a very active child, and he was difficult to keep occupied.

2.18 My parents had **GRO-A Mr DO** assessed by numerous specialists, but he never received a proper diagnosis. He was given the term "slow" or "behind". We, as a family, were always disappointed that he never received a proper diagnosis as it would have helped us help him.

2.19 These days, I believe he would never have been classed as "slow" and would probably be diagnosed with some form of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), or similar.

2.20 At that stage my mother was led to believe that he would catch up with mainstream schooling. We later learnt that he was born with a congenital intellectual disability. However, this was never formalised.

2.21 There was no genetic testing for these things back in those days.

2.22 My mother was a strong believer in education. She wanted us all to receive the best education possible.

2.23 As children, my sisters and I would try to read to **GRO-A Mr DO**. We thought that if we read to him, he would catch up.

2.24 In order to help him learn, my mother sent **GRO-A Mr DO** to kindergarten. I can't remember the name of it, but it was just around the corner from where we lived. None of us other

children went to kindergarten, but my mother was dedicated to ensuring he received a proper education. She tried to start this when he was young.

2.25 The first school he attended was a very small school based in Grafton. I can't recall the name of it, but believe it was for children with learning disabilities. This was a State-run school.

2.26 When GRO-  
A Mr  
DO was about eight years old my mother was very concerned about his education. She went to see the local Catholic parish priest. She also went to see Archbishop Liston. I believe that it was Archbishop Liston who told her of Marylands School run by St John of God Brothers in Christchurch.

2.27 At the age of eight, GRO-  
A Mr  
r DO was sent to Marylands, Christchurch. He remained there until he was 16 years old.

2.28 When the opportunity to attend this "so-called amazing boarding school" arose, my parents were thrilled. What was even better than it being a school to educate boys with disabilities was that it was Catholic.

2.29 It was financially demanding, but for both my parents the opportunity to educate GRO-A Mr  
DO and find future employment was the answer to their prayers. It also meant that it would reduce the stress that GRO-  
A Mr  
DO put on the rest of the family.

2.30 GRO-A  
Mr DO desperately wanted to go to the same school that we attended but I can remember telling him he was lucky to go to a "special school", that would provide everything for him. We always thought it was so cool that he could go away on a plane – none of us other children did that, and flying was not as commonplace as it is today.

### **Catholicism in our family**

2.31 I will elaborate on my mother's strong Catholic faith in further detail below but will discuss it in relation to my whole family here.

- 2.32 Because my father was Anglo-Irish, being Catholic was basically part of his cultural identity. As for mother, she was extremely devoted to her Catholic faith.
- 2.33 As a result, we were all raised Catholic and we had strong links to the Catholic community – it was very small in Auckland at that time, everyone knew everyone.
- 2.34 We attended Church every Sunday. We were not allowed to have breakfast or anything to drink before Church, as we had to have the host first. When we got home, we would have a big breakfast. Sunday was a day of modesty (for example, we could not go to the beach and wear a bathing suit), prayer, and contemplation.
- 2.35 Some of my siblings are still very devout Catholics and struggle with understanding how this could have happened to GRO-  
A Mr  
DO I do not care about my faith these days, but the one thing I am grateful for is that being raised a Catholic gives you a good social conscience. I have raised my children on the same morals that my mother ingrained in us.

**GRO-B-2**

- 2.36 My mother played a very important part in our lives, including GR  
O-A  
Mr  
DOs. She raised us all to be who we are today.
- 2.37 My father was an excellent provider, he was well read and of sharp intellect, but due to many years of doing his own thing (he was 41 when he married my mother, had been to war and was well-travelled whereas Mum was 26 at that time), he was not the most patient man in the world.
- 2.38 At that time, it was the man's job to provide for the family and that is exactly what he did. He struggled with understanding how to handle GRO  
A Mr  
DO but just did what he was told to do by my mother. That was what men did in those days.
- 2.39 His job involved a lot of travel, so my mother was left at home to care for us. But as a lot of large families did, the older children looked after the younger siblings.

2.40 My mother was a hardworking and a devout Catholic. She came from a generation that trusted the Church. The generation that viewed them as above us all, close to God, deep thinkers and well educated. She believed that being a member of a religious order, you have a vocation; it was special and a privilege to serve God and serve that community.

2.41 As time went on and in later years, she experienced a real doubt of faith. GR  
O-A  
Mr  
DOs treatment at Marylands troubled her greatly, but she felt ashamed and did not know how to express her concern and discontent. She placed so much trust and had so much belief that the Catholic Church was an institution that cared for the most vulnerable. Her life was the Church; she prayed constantly and attended Mass most days.

2.42 I cared for her in the later years of her life. Her doubt of faith worried her greatly and she had so many regrets for how things had turned out for GRO  
A Mr  
DO but felt she could not question the Church.

2.43 When GRO  
A Mr  
DO was at Marylands she had concerns about his lack of education, poor personal hygiene, and poorly developed interpersonal skills.

#### GRO-A Mr DOs life and education at Marylands

2.44 When travelling for work, my father used to visit GRO  
A Mr  
DO regularly and would share stories about absolute chaos at Marylands. There was so much noise with out-of-control children screaming everywhere. He observed no rules of discipline at the school – which was completely different to how we were raised at home. We were taught good manners and my father would strap us if we were naughty.

2.45 My father had some meals there and described the food as awful. More importantly, he said there was no structure, mealtime was totally disorganised. Children ate with their hands and there was no such thing as table manners.

- 2.46 He told my mother about his visits to Marylands. Her response was always “well, they need a woman’s touch” and “well, what can we do? The Church says this is the best place for GRO-A  
Mr DO
- 2.47 My mother wrote letters regularly to GR  
O-A  
Mr D  
O and sent special parcels to him to share at school. She would cook or do baking for him; she always wanted him to feel as though he was still part of our family even though he was not able to be with us. I specifically remember packing up boxes of citrus fruit and sending it to Marylands. I now wonder if the boys ever got to eat any of the food or fruit we sent.
- 2.48 We did not receive replies to our letters from GRO  
A Mr  
DO at Marylands. Very occasionally, we would receive a scribble in return. We thought that the Brothers would read our letters to GRO  
A Mr  
DO and help him come up with or write a reply. In hindsight, we realise this was not happening.
- 2.49 I personally never visited GR  
O-A  
Mr D  
O in Christchurch. A couple of my older sisters trained to be nurses in Christchurch and would occasionally visit him. I did ask one of my older sisters what it was like, and she said it was always difficult to visit him. It could never be spontaneous, it had to be booked. She said you met in a cloakroom, and what she remembers most vividly was the terrible noise. There was screaming and shouting and no evidence of organisation and a programme running.
- 2.50 The St John of God Brothers at Marylands made out as if they were running some type of highly specialised programme that could not be disturbed. That was, of course, untrue. I am sure that the Brothers never wanted children to be seen interacting with them in case there was something that could raise suspicion.
- 2.51 My mother told me that in all the years that GRO-A Mr  
DO was there she never received a school report of him or anything to inform how he was progressing without her asking for it.

- 2.52 When report cards came, they were just tick boxes with absolutely no guidance on how he was progressing and what we could do for him during the holiday break. In comparison to my school reports, I remember looking at them and thinking that they were really lacking in details and information on progress.
- 2.53 When GRO-A Mr  
DO was 12, my mother visited the school and asked to see his file. They refused. She was really starting to question the quality of GRO-  
A Mr  
r DO's education at that time and was getting close to the end of her tether.
- 2.54 My mother went to Marylands a couple of other times too. She would take GRO-  
A Mr  
DO out for the afternoon or for lunch. She was never happy with what she saw at the school. She was absolutely appalled at the noise levels and the total lack of supervision. She was aware that most of the children had disabilities. She was appalled that there was no matron or nurses, which is what she expected given that she thought some of the boys would need specialist medical care.
- 2.55 She was told that several Brothers were trained as nurses (psychiatric nurses and psychopaedic nurses). She asked where they trained as there are five nurses (or now, former nurses) in our family. She was told that they trained in Australia.
- 2.56 It appeared that the older boys were working in the kitchen instead of the staff.
- 2.57 My mother made every effort to express her concerns. She was not a person who was ever frightened to come forward for something she felt strongly about. She held out so much hope. She often asked the school how things were progressing and whether we needed to do anything further.
- 2.58 She spoke to Archbishop Liston and our parish priest after one of her visits to Marylands. She raised concerns about Marylands. They stated, "You don't know how lucky you are, Mrs GRO-B to have these Brothers caring for your child." I know my mother went away feeling humiliated when Archbishop Liston and the parish priest said that to her. It was easy to feel humiliated by these men back then. I always found it

sickening when I was growing up. I often used to say to my mother, "They are only human; they can make mistakes."

2.59 I know that she would not have taken it any further than that because you just did not question "authority" like that back then.

2.60 It is well known that the human brain can be taught certain skills but often that needs to be done when young. I now believe that we were lied to about these St John of God Brothers being trained as child psychologists and specialists in intellectually handicapped education (that was the terminology at that time). Out of anyone, at that time, they should have been the ones with the skills to educate GRO  
-A M  
r DO and the other boys at Marylands School.

2.61 I often think about the poor education GRO  
-A M  
r DO received, in the same way that a service under the Consumer Guarantees Act (CGA) is treated. If a service is not up to standard under the CGA, you would be able to get your money back GRO  
-A M  
r DO's education was not up to standard. Yet, school fees were paid for him for the entire time (as mentioned above, it was not cheap) and we believed he was being taught, so why could my parents not get their money back?

2.62 The school was not cheap, and it involved air flights each school holidays. Those days there were only three term breaks – in May, August and December (the Christmas holidays). Air travel was not as accessible as it is today and along with the expensive flights, I clearly remember having to prepare and pack for his return to school. It involved everything from school uniform, weekend wear, underwear, and toiletries (for example six cakes of soap, six tubes of toothpaste etc.). The list was long and expensive.

2.63 When he turned up at the end of term his suitcase would be almost empty, he would have hardly any clothes, and we would have to start all over again, despite it all being named when he left. He would often arrive off the plane in an unkempt school uniform,

he would be wearing someone else's shoes, no socks, and no underwear. There was obviously a complete lack of guidance and supervision.

2.64 My mother requested an IQ test part way through GRO  
A Mr  
DO's time at Marylands, probably when he was about 12, and it came back stating his results as a "before and after". He had not made much progress in that time. The justification for the results was that "he has not stood still for the past five years". It was a basic test, nothing like they do today, where you draw shapes, read sentences etc.

2.65 My mother asked the Brothers if they could teach him how to read and write because "that was going to be important for him later on" and they replied, "Oh yes, that will come." Sadly, it was too late, they did not start young enough.

#### **Personal hygiene and behaviour**

2.66 Before GRO  
A Mr  
DO went to Marylands, he did throw tantrums, but that was because he was not able to express what he wanted. He was very frustrated. My mother always had to know where he was because he often caused mischief.

2.67 My mother said that as soon as GRO  
A Mr  
r DO woke up in the morning it was full on, all go. He could not entertain himself the way we could. He was not able to read a book or play with toys. He always wanted us to play with him or entertain him.

2.68 He always had a fascination with taking things apart. Even from a young age, before he went to Marylands, we would catch him in the garage taking things apart (for example the lawnmower), but sadly he was not able to put things together again. I always thought that maybe if he was taught how to use that skill more, he would have been able to do that for a job.

2.69 His behaviour changed significantly for the worse when he went to Marylands.

2.70 When GRO  
A Mr  
DO came home for the holiday it was usually awful for the first week. He would have rages but be unable to articulate what was wrong. He would ask why he could not

go to the same school as his brother. He would eventually settle down but would start up again when he was aware he would be returning to Marylands. It got to the point that we would not tell him it was time to go back to the school to avoid the behaviour. He thought he was bad and that is why he was sent to Marylands.

- 2.71 It was particularly hard on GRO-B  
9 because, as he was the only other boy, it was expected that he would entertain GRO-A  
Mr DO. We would play with him; we would include him in our games of "House" for as long as he was able to participate.
- 2.72 GRO-A  
Mr DO hated seeing us read. He would tear up our books. He liked it when we took him to the movies, which was a special treat because he could look at the screen. He continues to enjoy old movies to this day.
- 2.73 When GRO-A  
Mr DO had these rages, my mother would say "he does not understand". We tolerated it, but it was so disruptive in our lives.
- 2.74 GRO-A Mr  
DO would throw tantrums if his brother or sisters were going out without him. He couldn't understand why he couldn't be like us. Sometimes he would get violent and break windows. Then he would go sobbing to my mother. We never felt frightened by his violence as we loved him.
- 2.75 Whenever he was home and taken to Mass he would scream and scream and scream. When he got into Mass, he would lay down and kick the seats, poke us and was very reluctant to go. He was adamant that he didn't want to. Eventually his behaviour became so disruptive that one of us would have to sit at home with him.
- 2.76 We could never have anybody over to our house when he was home for the holidays. We had no idea how his behaviour, his personal hygiene and toilet skills would be. We were never sure how the toilet would be left after he had used it.
- 2.77 Looking back now, it was obvious he was experiencing bowel problems. He would go from constipation to diarrhoea. I clearly remember having to soak his underwear and bed linen as he had weeping secretions from his bowels.

- 2.78 I was too young to think about why and certainly did not ask my mother; we just accepted it. She always thought by her cleaning his underwear and by giving him a shower every day that would resolve the issues. Sadly, it was a medical condition and could not be washed away – it was probably anal trauma. He had no issues like that before he went to Marylands. I remember having baths with him.
- 2.79 When GRO  
A Mr  
DO was home for the school holidays he would often weep. Especially after a period of rage or lashing out, it was his way of asking for forgiveness. He could not articulate what was wrong and why he was so distressed.
- 2.80 He appeared to enjoy having consistent mealtimes and a daily timetable, as you do with family. But his poor table manners were often more than we could bear. It was like there was no guidance about acceptable behaviour, table manners, personal cares and what we now call activities of daily living (ADL).
- 2.81 GRO-A  
Mr DO's personal hygiene and skills were sadly lacking. After leaving Marylands, it was a big job to teach him all those skills. When we finally found him a permanent residence, which he has now been in for more than 40 years, the supervisor stated, "I don't know where he has been and what he has been taught, but it appears it has been a lot of bad habits."
- 2.82 We never expected for him to be at Marylands for that long and to be unprepared to live in the outside world. He could hardly use a knife and fork. His oral and dental hygiene was truly appalling.
- 2.83 Every school holiday we spent a significant amount of time and money taking him to the dentist. He had no dental care and I suspect never even cleaned his teeth. The dentist stated several times that we should contact the school and get some programme organised on how to manage his oral hygiene. That was ignored by Marylands.

- 2.84 One of the school holidays, when my mother had deep concerns about GRO  
-A M  
r DO's bowel habits, she took him to the GP. This was an elderly GP who had known the family for many years. He stated that he had nothing to advise my mother, but he shook his head and said, "something has happened at that school", but he did not elaborate. My mother did not know how to interpret that response.
- 2.85 From about the age of 10, GRO  
-A M  
r DO's antisocial behaviour became obvious. Our suburb in Auckland was full of forgiving people but my mother received lots of reports from neighbours about GRO  
-A M  
r DO's behaviour.
- 2.86 He used to try and get young boys to come into the shed. He would pull his pants down and ask them to stroke his penis.
- 2.87 One neighbour was terribly upset after this incident. She was a lovely woman from Hong Kong and the incident in the shed was with her only son. She said she would not report it to the Police so long as we kept GRO  
-A M  
r DO either locked indoors, or, when he did come out, be accompanied by one of us. That was an impossible task.
- 2.88 It was then advised that GRO  
-A M  
r DO should go on medication to somehow control this behaviour. That was what happened back then. Again, no support from Marylands and no support as to what my mother should do and how we should manage this behaviour.
- 2.89 I have a memory of GRO  
-A M  
r DO being about 11 or 12. I looked out the window and saw him walking down the road. I was concerned as we always needed to know where he was at all times. What shocked me was he was smoking like an adult. I thought he looked like a pro-smoker. I ran after him and asked him about his smoking, and he shared with me that he managed to get cigarettes at Marylands from the older boys. It was useless to try and stop the smoking, it was obviously part of his life at Marylands.
- 2.90 I suspect that he either stole those cigarettes from my father, or he had stolen money from my parents and went down to the dairy and picked some up for himself.

### Medication at Marylands

- 2.91 When he was 13 or 14, he came home one Christmas. He had put on a whole lot of weight in the space of a term. We subsequently found out that he had been put on medication. It was like a tranquillizer, called Pericyazine or Mellaril. I don't think my parents were consulted with putting GRO-A Mr DO on medication.
- 2.92 The only other reason I can think of for why he was put on the medication was because of the incident with the neighbour. If it was because of the incident with the neighbour, my mother had forgotten about it or had not made the connection between the two events because she was absolutely shocked when she found out about it.
- 2.93 She learnt this during the Christmas school holidays.
- 2.94 The Brothers at Marylands told us he was on the medication because he was "difficult".
- 2.95 My older sister GRO-B-4 has since suggested to me that one of the Brothers at Marylands was a pharmacist and she believes that he most likely arranged the medication prescription for GRO-A Mr DO at that time.
- 2.96 I understand that some children were taken off for ECT (electro convulsive treatment), but I do not believe GRO-A Mr DO was one of them.

### After leaving Marylands

- 2.97 It was by accident that we found out GRO-A Mr DO was no longer attending classes. There was an article about Marylands in the *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, or maybe it was an IHC newsletter (as it was known at the time), singing the praises of Marylands and the specialist education the boys were receiving there.
- 2.98 Alongside the article was a photo of GRO-A Mr DO working in the laundry. My mother queried the school and was told they could no longer educate him. This had been going on for some time with my mother still paying expensive school fees. We believe that it was over a year without him receiving an education.

- 2.99 Within no time of my mother complaining, he was sent back to Auckland with no skills to prepare him for what was in front of him.
- 2.100 He was 16 when he returned to Auckland. My mother went back to the Church to see if there was any religious housing for him and was told no. She was told of a boarding house in Onehunga that was run by Mr GRO-B. By this stage, my father had died, and Mum still had seven children living at home. GRO-A Mr DO went to live there and worked at the Sheltered Workshop in GRO-C. He lived there for a couple of years.
- 2.101 Mr GRO-B contacted my mother and said that he wanted GRO-A Mr DO to see a social worker because of concerns he had for him. He commented that GRO-A Mr DO had picked up "bad habits".
- 2.102 The social worker referred him to a GP for sexual problems. I do not know who this social worker was or how the referral worked. I have been told most of this by my mother. My mother took GRO-A Mr DO to our family GP who was Dr GRO-B in Campbell Road, One Tree Hill. Dr GRO-B said that he was shocked, but he didn't examine GRO-A Mr DO. The doctor said there was nothing he could do about GRO-A Mr DO's problems, as they were all of a sexual nature.
- 2.103 Overall, placement was difficult. All the places he went to, rang my mother and said his behaviour was unacceptable. He was sexually inappropriate and unsuitable for any living places currently available.
- 2.104 We desperately hoped he could have some type of employment but again the lack of skills in reading, writing, or telling the time made it impossible. Of course, the Church was not in the least bit interested in helping in any way.
- 2.105 As mentioned above GRO-A Mr DO had terrible oral hygiene at Marylands. When he returned to Auckland and lived with us full time, we took the step, had his teeth removed and he got dentures.

- 2.106 The dental treatment he required was well beyond what was funded by the dental scheme.
- 2.107 The dentist has claimed it was one of the worst cases of dental neglect he had ever seen. He had several situations where he had serious gum and tooth abscesses. The dental staff shook their heads in disbelief that he had this much pain and it was both neglected by the Marylands staff and was not treated until he returned to Auckland.
- 2.108 Through a cousin, we were eventually able to find a permanent place for [GRO-A Mr DO] to stay, where he has remained ever since. The owner was a very strict man, who did not tolerate a lot of [GRO-A Mr DO]'s behaviours. [GRO-A Mr DO] has now calmed down in his ways.
- 2.109 [GRO-C] [GRO-A Mr DO] was never in paid employment but helped with the horses as a stable hand. He would groom the horses and I believe that it was a very calm and therapeutic environment that did wonders for him.

### 3. IMPACT OF ABUSE

Impact on [GRO-A Mr DO]

- 3.1 In 1981 he presented with a high temperature. They examined him, and he was admitted to Greenlane Hospital with an ischiorectal abscess. It was down to traumatic anal sex.
- 3.2 What was significant for me at that time was he had on his file in bold writing "practicing homosexual despite being low IQ". [GRO-C] many nurses would not go near him as it was the time of HIV. He was treated by surgery (for draining) and dressing and prescribed antibiotics. I had to do his dressing as some nursing staff refused and doctors did not seem to care.

- 3.3 He was also treated at the time for genital warts, a form of the herpes virus. The physician at Greenlane Hospital told us about the genital warts.
- 3.4 When he was finally discharged, my mother came in and brought boxes and biscuits to the ward. I witnessed nurses saying, "Don't touch those, they come from that man who is retarded and a homosexual." I never told my mother as she would have been deeply hurt.
- 3.5 **GRO-A**  
**Mr DO** left Marylands and could not read or write. He had periods of heavy drinking and what could only be described as inappropriate sexual behaviour. He was caught committing a crime – having oral sex in a public toilet with a male prostitute in Auckland City in about 1983 or 1984.
- 3.6 My mother was so incredibly sad with what had happened, and she had no explanation. Going to court would have been awful for her so I went on her behalf and supported **GRO-A**  
**Mr DO** throughout that process. Fortunately, the judge took **GRO-A**  
**Mr DO**'s situation into account. **GRO-A**  
**Mr DO** was told he was lucky he had a caring and supportive family, and he got a suspended sentence.
- 3.7 His sentence was at the time the homosexual law reform was happening, so it seemed an appropriate outcome. Imprisonment for a person with a disability would have been very inappropriate.
- 3.8 At that time, he was referred to the psychiatrist, Dr **GRO-B** at **GRO-B** on Great South Road. I remember the report was read in court and referred to **GRO-A**  
**Mr DO** being of low intelligence and being exposed to sexual abuse in his childhood. We were concerned about this and wanted to do something about it.
- 3.9 My mother believed that it may have been the boys at the school and never thought it would have been the Brothers. I decided not to do anything until after she died. She was aware that I was going to do something about this at some stage.

- 3.10 GRO-A Mr DO has also been known to frequent homosexual nightclubs. All I can say is that all his homosexual activities have not been non-consensual. I spoke with him once about his sexual preferences and he told me that he was not fussy.
- 3.11 I believe that his sexually inappropriate behaviour is learned and stemmed from the abuse he suffered at Marylands.
- 3.12 As required, to fund GRO-A Mr DO's care, and him being classed as having an intellectual disability, we needed to have an assessment done through Cornwall House, attached to Greenlane Hospital. This would have been in about 1998. The psychiatrist told me that GRO-A Mr DO had revealed to him some of the abuse that he suffered as a child while at the school.
- 3.13 The decision was then made to put GRO-A Mr DO on medication which stopped him from having erections. We have subsequently taken him off this medication due to potential side effects on his heart.
- 3.14 GRO-A Mr DO has never had employment. He lives in an amazing environment, that we have paid for, as a private boarder in a mental health facility. Because of his sexual behaviour, he has strict conditions on where he can live.
- 3.15 He has attended courses for people with intellectual disabilities at GRO-B. He learned more there than he did in his whole schooling.
- 3.16 In the past, he has relied on drugs and alcohol as a coping mechanism for his abuse.
- 3.17 A few years ago, he was hanging out at the local park where they had public toilets. We suspect there was more than the buying and selling of marijuana going on. I had to tell him clearly that he was not to hang out at parks and public toilets due to his past behaviour and the risk of how he could have a serious conviction. As he has gotten older his sexual behaviour of going to public toilets has stopped.
- 3.18 Despite all this he is a lovely lad. He can be very funny, and I think he has done amazingly well despite limited to no education. The living environment has been

amazing for him. There are clear guidelines and expectations of what is acceptable behaviour. He is the longest resident they have there.

### Current prognosis

3.19 My sister **GRO-B-4** and I attended a doctor's appointment in **GRO-B** 2021 and were told of **GRO-A Mr DO**'s prognosis.

3.20 **GRO-A Mr DO** has a complication from having herpes. He has a very low tumour growing in his anus. The tumour is a form of rectal cancer. It is a squamous cell carcinoma of the HPV virus.

3.21 **GRO-B-4** and I discussed between ourselves, and then with **GRO-A Mr DO** whether we could tell Dr **GRO-B** what happened to him as a child at Marylands. Doctor **GRO-B** listened to us and then made the comment "there's the reason", or words to this effect. He gave us the impression that he was satisfied that **GRO-A Mr DO**'s condition was consistent with the abuse he suffered as a child at Marylands and being exposed to the HPV virus.

3.22 Because of its low position in the anal area, the specialist has taken many biopsies of it and was able to link it to HPV. Sadly, rectal swabs are not taken frequently, so he would not have known that there was an issue until a tumour started growing.

3.23 Since **GRO-A Mr DO**'s diagnosis with rectal cancer and subsequent surgery, he has changed significantly. He is unhappy and extremely irritable. The look on **GRO-A Mr DO**'s face when he said, "I have cancer, don't I?" just broke my heart.

3.24 The tumour sits low in the anal canal and weeps constantly. He is forced to wear large nappies. He personal hygiene has since deteriorated again. It seems like he has regressed and feels little hope for the future. In the words of another sister, "he has lost his spark".

- 3.25 He has a colostomy and has just completed a course of radiotherapy, which is working to shrink the tumour. We hope that this reduces symptoms. However, the doctors believe that it has tracked to his hip bones. Even though the tumour has shrunk, it is still weeping quite a lot. The doctors are quite worried that the tumour is going to come right out of his buttocks. He is currently having lots of dressings to prevent this.
- 3.26 Because the tumour was so large, life for him is miserable, with faecal incontinence almost all the time.
- 3.27 The treatment that he is currently receiving is palliative care, there is no curative intent to what he is receiving. We do not know how much longer we have left with GRO-  
A Mr  
DO but I would be surprised if it was two years, but you can never know how long you have.
- 3.28 We have explained to him that he will die from this, somehow. We explained that it will either be from this tumour, or what is common from something like this, is getting a secondary cancer elsewhere. We have done a full body scan to see if anything else has shown up.
- 3.29 Sadly, this treatment is very traumatic for him, which means if or when another tumour grows, we will have little intervention. We do not want him to go through this suffering any more than he needs to.
- 3.30 We explain everything to him, so that we get his consent before we do any treatment on him. In my career as a nurse, I do not think that any amount of explaining you do to someone ever prepares them for what they are going to go through. We did not start him on chemotherapy, as we saw little benefit and it is not fair to keep putting him through this trauma.
- 3.31 What GRO-  
A Mr  
DO's going through is painful, and his end of life will be the same. It saddens me deeply to know that his life will be cut short because of what happened at Marylands.

### **Impact on the family**

- 3.32 As children, at first, we were excited to have GRO-A Mr DO home for the holidays, we missed him and loved him dearly. However, we soon realised that his behaviour had deteriorated. He would scream when we confronted him about it. In the end, we dreaded him coming home for the holidays because his behaviour was so disruptive.
- 3.33 He would rip our books up and break our toys. He would use the bathroom and wipe his bottom with a hand towel – he was fully toilet trained before he left for Marylands. We would spend the holidays retraining him and it would get better towards the end of each break, but that was not enough to counteract the influence or lack of guidance going on at Marylands throughout term time.
- 3.34 We would count down the days until he left again for Marylands. We were too young to understand why he behaved that way. I know some of my siblings still feel guilty for thinking that way.
- 3.35 As a result of what has happened to GRO-A Mr DO we are all very caring and loving towards him. We take turns visiting him at his residence and each of us is on a roster to take him to his doctor's and radiation appointments.
- 3.36 My sisters GRO-B-5 and GRO-B-7 were training to be nurses at GRO-B while GRO-A Mr DO was at Marylands. They often get quite upset and felt that they should have known what was going on due to how "gloomy" Marylands was as a place, and how his social skills just were not there. GRO-B-4 says, "I should have visited him more often."
- 3.37 When I told the family about the Police investigation in 2003 (which I set out below), my mother was very upset. My brother GRO-B-9 was also upset due to his close Catholic community. My sister GRO-B-11 lives in Sydney, where the Catholic community is much larger and less forgiving. She is fearful of what they would think about what happened to GRO-A Mr DO the Catholic community over there is ruthless and she is afraid of the backlash she would get if anyone found out.

3.38 The media in relation to the Catholic Church in Sydney and the amount of abuse it has covered up is truly frightening.

3.39 It has been stressful on our family at times, finding him a place to stay after being rejected from so many due to his inappropriate sexual behaviour. Additionally, finding funding for him. He receives a disability benefit in order for him to stay at his care facility.

3.40 All in all, GRO-  
A M  
r DO loves telling everybody he has nine sisters that fuss over him. He says sometimes all they do is talk and he needs a break from us, which is probably true.

### **Redress process with the Church**

3.41 GRO-  
A Mr  
DO has never told me about the abuse that he suffered at Marylands. I do not think he wanted to upset me. I have had to explain to him that I am a nurse and his sister, so he can tell me anything. He is very good at keeping secrets, so I do not think I will ever know what truly happened.

3.42 I have had to put the pieces of the puzzle together. I wondered from a young age whether something was going on and after all the abuse at Marylands had come to light, I asked him whether the Brothers touched him inappropriately.

3.43 I contacted Lyndsay Freer who gave me the 0800 number in Australia. Brother Peter Burke, the Provincial of the Order at the time, contacted me. As a result, we had a meeting on 21 July 2002 in Auckland.

3.44 GRO-  
A M  
r DO was pretty closed around Brother Burke – he introduced himself as a Brother and was wearing a collar, which GRO-  
A M  
r DO recognised. He opened up to Michelle Mulvihill more when Brother Burke was out of the room. She was more descriptive with him, she used scenarios that he was used to, because she was familiar with other survivors' stories and the environment and layout of the school.

3.45 [REDACTED] is more trusting in general of women, I am unsure why – I wonder if it is because he has so many sisters and we have never let him down before.

3.46 At that meeting I outlined the allegations of abuse against [REDACTED] Brother Burke encouraged us to report to Dave Landreth at the Hornby Police station.

3.47 Brother Burke suggested a formal record of the complaint be taken by the Police. He advised us that St John of God would take responsibility for [REDACTED]'s pastoral care. Brother Burke explained that the action taken by the Police, and their investigation, was independent from Michelle and his redress process.

3.48 Brother Burke told me that the people who did this have been taken out of their role and have been placed under 24-hour supervision.

3.49 I know Lyndsay Freer in a personal capacity, and she always made me self-conscious about going forward with the complaint. Lyndsay Freer put it in my head that we may not be believed because it was such a long time ago. I felt like my motivation for why I was coming forward now was being called into question. What was I after? Why now? Implying that I was trolling for money.

3.50 At the end of the day, I was wanting some compensation for [REDACTED] because he's never going to have a job, he needs constant care and we had to (at that time) pay for his care, so he deserves something from the institution that allowed people to abuse him.

3.51 My motivation for coming forward initially was that I was pissed off that he was subjected to that as a child. The flow-on impact of that abuse meant that he has serious health complications. Ultimately, it is not fair.

3.52 [REDACTED] received \$121,000.00 from the Brothers of St John of God. [REDACTED] was able to have a holiday with that money and the rest was put in a trust fund for his long-term use.

### **Police prosecution process and criminal trial**

3.53 During the lead-up to the trials of the Brothers, both GR  
O-A  
Mr D  
O and I had to give Police statements to various officers. It did feel like we were being passed around from person to person and I never understood why we had to give so many statements. Every time, I had to explain to GR  
O-A  
Mr D  
O that we were going to tell the Police what had happened again. I think he must have also thought we were not believed.

3.54 This was quite difficult to explain to GRO-  
A Mr  
DO and because of his own run-ins with the Police in the past, he was already very cautious around authority. He knew that the Police were trying to help though; he kept saying throughout the process that, "they're good men, aren't they?".

3.55 I started to get a bit paranoid with being passed around the whole time. I started to question whose side the Police were on, was it ours or the Church's? Because the Catholic Church is such a big entity, I wondered if they were questioning us so much to determine whether we were lying about the Brothers and what our intentions were.

3.56 The most animated I have ever seen GR  
O-A  
Mr D in expressing himself about the abuse he suffered was when he was giving evidence during Brother Moloney's trial in 2008. He was on the stand and proceeded to gesture with his hands that he was anally penetrated; it was not a soft gesture, it was aggressive and violent. I was a bit taken aback. Throughout him giving his evidence, I was so proud of him getting up there and doing it, but I felt that he was unprotected and looked so vulnerable. I desperately wanted to be up there with him.

3.57 We were not allowed to be together beforehand, due to suggestibility and contamination of evidence, but I do think that if I had had been able to assist him with his evidence, it would have led to a better outcome. I know how to communicate with him and can help him articulate his thoughts.

3.58 Unfortunately, the judge told the jury to set GRO-  
A Mr  
DO's evidence aside because his intellectual disability meant he was open to suggestibility. I know that when GR  
O-A  
Mr gets put

in situations where he is stressed, under pressure or feeling overwhelmed, he becomes very agreeable. For example, any propositions put to him would have meant he would have just said "yes" and not answered the question properly. If I had had been there with him, helping him answer the questions, I believe his answers would have been true.

3.59 GRO-A  
Mr DO knows the outcome of the trial because one of my sisters and I explained what had happened to him. He asked, "did I make a mistake?" and "did I do something wrong?". I told him that it was always going to be difficult because they were old men and they had the strength of the Church behind them, I told him that it was all right because we had done everything that we could.

3.60 He asked if they were going to go to prison, and I explained that they were too old, and it was so long ago that the Police could not prove that it had happened. I reassured him that he would never see those men again.

3.61 The evidence that GRO-A  
Mr DO gave in the criminal court was consistent with the statements he had made to Police on 4 March 2003 and 24 April 2003.

### **Sensitive claims**

3.62 One of the oncologists at the hospital suggested that we go down the sensitive claims route to get funding for GRO-A  
Mr DO. We could get taxi chits to get him to and from the hospital. We were not keen to do that as he has been through enough and we did not want to re-traumatise him.

3.63 We also were not sure how long the sensitive claims process takes and whether GRO-A  
Mr DO would be around to receive the benefit of that funding.

3.64 I also do not trust them. The people that resolve these matters are bureaucrats and I know that putting GRO-A  
Mr DO through that process is not in his best interest.

3.65 Our current system works, where we GRO-  
A Mr  
DO's siblings, are on a roster, so we thought that it was best for us to stick to that.

#### 4. LOOKING FORWARD

##### Thoughts on the Catholic Church

- 4.1 I don't think anything could be done to make up for what has happened to a young person with disabilities, but I think there is a lack of honesty on the part of the Catholic Church – we are talking about a place of faith and trust. I want them to look us in the eye and say, yes, we did do that and yes, we did cover it up.
- 4.2 The worst thing about the Church for us, are the patronising comments – you do not know how lucky you are, and we know everything – that is just bullshit. The dirty, crusty, old men didn't know a thing about nurturing or caring, why would they not listen to us? Why would they not think, there is something really wrong here, and not do anything about it?
- 4.3 I do not feel guilty, but for those people who have put family members into care, and feel so incredibly guilty, it is not fair that they feel that way because that person was abused, neglected, beaten or went on to offend themselves. I want them to know that it is not your fault, it is the Church's.
- 4.4 I do not think the Church has learnt from it; they are still so arrogant. Some of the stories you hear from other parts of the world, they just do not listen to what has happened in the past.
- 4.5 My mother said towards the end of her life, and I happen to agree, that there is no society where one gender is dominant or the boss, that works – regardless of whether the boss is male or female.

- 4.6 One of the things that I do not think that works about the Catholic Church is this total domination by supposedly celibate men.
- 4.7 Celibacy is quite different to sexual deviancy – it is having no interest in sex. These people that work in lay positions in the Church are great, they have relationships, which is a normal thing to want to have. The Catholic Church, with its position on celibacy, is not normal, nor is it a reflection on society, and does not reflect the people that they are supposedly advising.
- 4.8 I know that there is a screening process that you must go through to get into an order now, and not just anyone can get in like they used to. But these people need to be part of the community, if they want to advise us on how to live our lives.
- 4.9 They need to listen to us when we go to them with things that we are not happy about.

#### **Thoughts on education in general and disabilities**

- 4.10 For the future, I want the Church to be, as with any institution, culturally sensitive and culturally appropriate. I see too much of this disregard for people's culture, their language, their identity and everything that makes a person a person. It is not acceptable for a person's identity to be beaten out of them. We have to accept and embrace it when someone speaks Samoan or Te Reo, or any other language for that matter.
- 4.11 Educators, institutions and the Church have got to listen to the families and what they have to say, and they must involve families in decision-making. I know that a lot of families can be dysfunctional, but I know that they are often like that because they have had awful things happen in their upbringing. But most families want the best, and they want love and care. Even if they cannot provide the care, they want someone else to do it, but they want to know that everything is okay and be part of what is happening to the family member in care.

4.12 We as a family are very committed to embracing diversity. When I was growing up, New Zealand was not overly diverse, but now, I have nieces and nephews who are married to people from different ethnicities. I believe that we, as a family, are reflective of a modern Auckland and that is how a family should be.

4.13 I believe that these are the people we want as educators, people who are reflective of the population. They need to include appropriately qualified and trained individuals and physical and psychological therapists. People who understand children's behavioural issues and who know how to nurture them.

4.14 They need to be transparent and accountable.

#### **Final thoughts**

4.15 I am angry and bitter. I always said ~~A Mr~~ <sup>GRO</sup> was never going to be a rocket scientist, but he is funny, charming and loved by all his siblings. He could have achieved something if he had had been educated appropriately for his capabilities. My parents paid a lot of money to this institution, but the Brothers did not educate him.

4.16 He is now aging, and I feel sad as to how his life will end. It will be painful, and his life will be short and much of this is undoubtedly caused by this group of dysfunctional creeps and their outrageous behaviour that was covered up by the Catholic Church.

4.17 What I am grateful for is my mother is no longer alive to go through all this. She had so much guilt because she did what she thought was the right thing to do. She was always told by the Catholic hierarchy that she was lucky the St John of God Brothers were there to help boys with disabilities; but sadly, they did not live up to their name and have destroyed so many lives.

**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: 30/9/2021

**GRO-C**