

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
FAITH-BASED REDRESS INQUIRY HEARING**

Under The Inquiries Act 2013

In the matter of the Royal Commission of
Inquiry into Historical
Abuse in State Care and
in the Care of Faith-based
Institutions

Royal Commission: Judge Coral Shaw (Chair)
Dr Andrew Erueti
Ms Sandra Alofivae
Ms Julia Steenson

Counsel:
Mr Simon Mount, Ms Hanne Janes, Ms Kerryn Beaton, Ms
Katherine Anderson, Mr Joss Opie, Ms Echo Haronga, Ms Tania
Sharkey, Mr Michael Thomas, Ms Jane Glover and Ms Lorraine
MacDonald appear for the Royal Commission

Ms Sally McKechnie, Mr Alex Winsley, Mr Harrison
Cunningham and Ms Fiona Thorp appear for the Catholic
Church

Mrs Fiona Guy Kidd, Mr James Anson-Holland and Ms India
Shores appear for the Anglican Church

Ms Jenny Stevens and Ms Helen Thompson appear for the
Salvation Army

Venue: Level 2
Abuse in Care Royal Commission
of Inquiry
414 Khyber Pass Road
AUCKLAND

Date: 1 December 2020

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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1 (Opening mihi and waiata)

2

3

4 **CHAIR:** Ata mārie koutou, tēnei te mihi ki ā koutou katoa (
5 Good morning everyone, welcome back). Mr Thomas?

6 **MR THOMAS:** Good morning, Madam Chair, Commissioners.

7 Counsel's name is Michael Thomas and I appear as Counsel
8 Assisting.

9 **CHAIR:** Kia ora. And we have Mr F?

10 **MR THOMAS:** We do. Should we take the affirmation?

11 **CHAIR:** We will do that first.

12

13

14 **MR F - AFFIRMED**

15 **EXAMINED BY MR THOMAS**

16

17

18 **CHAIR:** Good morning.

19 A. Good morning.

20 **CHAIR:** Welcome to the Royal Commission.

21 A. Thank you.

22 **CHAIR:** I see you are being supported there by Ms Tonks?

23 A. I am.

24 **MR THOMAS:** The witness will be anonymous and will be going
25 by the pseudonym Mr F for the purposes of this hearing. He
26 is happy for those attending the hearing room today to see
27 his face. However, his face will be blurred on the
28 livestream and audio only to be broadcast to the public in
29 the area outside the hearing room.

30 **CHAIR:** Thank you. You are comfortable with that, Mr F?

31 A. Yes, thank you.

32 **MR THOMAS:** As you've noted, Mr F is attending with his
33 support person Ms Tonks.

1 Q. Mr F, can you confirm that you have prepared a statement
2 for the Royal Commission dated 21 September 2020 and you
3 have a copy of that in front of you?

4 A. Yes, I have.

5 Q. Can you confirm that statement is true and correct to the
6 best of your knowledge and belief?

7 A. Yes, I do.

8 Q. I'm going to shortly invite you to read from the beginning
9 of your statement and I will ask you to pause at various
10 points during that reading so that I can ask you further
11 questions and the Commissioners may do the same and we have
12 discussed that you're quite comfortable and welcome any
13 questions from the Chair and the Commissioners during the
14 course of your evidence.

15 A. Yes, I am.

16 Q. Thank you. I will just get you to begin reading your
17 statement when you're ready from paragraph 1.1.

18 A. My name is Mr F. I was born on GRO-A 1939. I am 81
19 years old.

20 I was sexually abused by Frank Durning, Priest and
21 Rector at St Patrick's College Silverstream in Upper Hutt.

22 The abuse took place in June and July 1953 when I was 14
23 years of age and a year 9 student at the Boarding school.
24 Durning was 38 years old at the time.

25 My parents lived in GRO-B where I live today. I
26 was born at a hospital there and have an older sister and a
27 younger sister.

28 My parents were both devoted Catholics attending the
29 local parish Church every Sunday. At home, we recited the
30 rosary prayer as a family every night. My parents were
31 very traditional, they had a lot of respect for the clergy
32 and were very guarded about relationships.

33 I started school at age 5 and attended the local
34 Catholic primary school run by the Mission Sisters. At
35 primary school I was a prefect and captain of the rugby

1 team, I was also a prefect on the school bus which we all
2 travelled to school on. I have good memories of growing up
3 and attending primary school. There was strict discipline,
4 students were strapped on the hand for misbehaviour but I
5 never broke rules and was never punished in this way.

6 After leaving primary school, my father gave me a talk
7 about the value of reproduction. My parents decided after
8 primary school that I would leave GRO-B and go to
9 boarding school. The main reason was because there was no
10 local Catholic high school. My sister also went off to
11 boarding school.

12 From my primary school there were only two of us who
13 in GRO-B went off to boarding school. My closest
14 friend at primary school went to a college also run by the
15 Society of Mary in Feilding. I want to refer to my close
16 friend again. He was a patient in a mental hospital in the
17 Central North Island and I saw him two days before he
18 [died] and he said to me that day, "I will write to you.
19 Do you still belong to the Catholic Church?". He did write
20 to me. He had difficulty explaining to me when I saw him
21 face-to-face two days before he died that I must get out of
22 the Catholic Church because it's possessed by Satan.

23 By leaving GRO-B I basically severed my friendships
24 with my primary school friends. They were rather hostile
25 to me when I returned and played rugby against them.

26 In 1953 I began my schooling at Silverstream as a 13-
27 year-old. I turned 14 in March that year.

28 **CHAIR:** You just have to be mindful that your evidence is
29 being typed and also the signers have to keep up with you.
30 I don't want to interrupt but if you just be careful about
31 that. Thank you.

32 A. Thank you. Initially my time at Stream was enjoyable. I
33 was lead soprano in the college choir and when the
34 orchestra rehearsed I took the opportunity to learn the

1 songs. On some occasions Frank Durning, the Rector of the
2 school, would sit beside me and we would discuss the music.

3 He knew me quite well and called me by my Christian
4 name. The common practice at the school was to refer to
5 everyone by their surname.

6 At the concert of the choir and orchestra that year
7 Cardinal McKeefry attended.

8 When I arrived at Stream, we had an intelligence test
9 and I was placed in the top stream at the college. We had
10 the best teachers, the best classrooms, the best dormitory,
11 with our own library.

12 With respect to discipline, I only got caned once for
13 talking after lights out. The whole dormitory got caned
14 and we were all lined up outside Fr Fox's bedroom door to
15 get the cane. It was the only occasion I got caned because
16 I did not break the rules.

17 I was aware of other boys getting caned regularly. I
18 often saw the marks and bruises on their bodies in the
19 shower.

20 I returned home at Easter at the beginning a very happy,
21 responsible and independent young person.

22 At this stage I trusted and respected Durning.

23 **MR THOMAS:**

24 Q. I am just going to pause you there and we will bring up
25 Exhibit 3 which is a photo of Fr Frank Durning.

26 If I can just summarise at this point, is it fair to say
27 that you trusted Fr Durning, you were doing well at school,
28 everything was going pretty well for you up to this point?

29 A. Yes, very well, thank you.

30 Q. Do you want to move on to the next section, "The Abuse",
31 starting at 2.1?

32 A. Okay, thank you. After a few weeks of grooming, on or
33 around July and June of my first year, Durning was talking
34 to me outside his office door one morning. He asked me if
35 I had been circumcised to which I responded yes. He said

1 there's no need to talk about this to other boys because
2 they would not understand. He then asked me if I was
3 having trouble with it, to which I responded no. He told
4 me to come into his office so he could check it out.

5 Q. Just pausing there. You mentioned a few weeks of grooming,
6 looking back on it now can you give any examples of that?

7 A. Yes, I can. One Friday evening when I was going out for
8 the weekend, the teacher of the last class that was
9 teaching us, we all left the room before he had left the
10 room. He called us all back in again and told us to write
11 so many hundred lines before next Monday morning to present
12 to him. When I got back on the Sunday evening, I went into
13 my study, turned the lights on and started to write my
14 lines. Frank Durning came in and asked me what I was doing
15 and he said I'll explain to Fr Fox there's no need for you
16 to do this and told me to go to bed. I saw this as
17 particular favour and showing his regard for me.

18 Q. Thank you. When he told you to come to his office, did you
19 feel you had a choice?

20 A. I believe I had no choice. I trusted and respected him and
21 he, being the Rector, had total control over the whole
22 college. Can I carry on?

23 Q. Continue, please.

24 A. Inside his office was dark except for the desk lamp. He
25 had the curtain closed already. When I was inside he
26 grabbed me and tried to masturbate against my body. This
27 was despite my attempts to hold him off with my knees and
28 elbows. He became more and more excited and repeated the
29 words over and over "I don't know what to make of you".
30 The attack went on for a long time. Eventually he said,
31 "Whip it out and let me have a look at it". I was very
32 frightened and in deep shock. When I walked back from his
33 office to my study that morning, I felt my feet were not
34 touching the ground. The next time I saw Durning he walked

1 past me and other boys in the corridor and scuttled off
2 with a red face.

3 I was the boy who never cried but for several nights
4 after Durning's abuse of me I woke each morning surprised I
5 had stopped crying and fallen asleep. After being a happy
6 and secure student and achieving in the top 10% of the
7 stream my academic and social and work-wise suffered. This
8 was a sign of how traumatised I was. There is no litmus
9 test for trauma, so this is my reaction to the abuse.

10 The next time I met Durning, he approached me from
11 behind and stopped me to tell me that he had noticed my
12 stalling academic progress and threatened if I did not
13 improve he would cane me. I was nearly as tall as Durning
14 and I looked him in the face and I saw fear and power,
15 which was a very frightening experience for me.

16 Q. Just pausing there, sorry. Was caning a normal thing that
17 happened at the college?

18 A. Caning was a normal thing in the college and Durning had a
19 reputation for being the most violent caner in the school.

20 Q. Thank you, yes please continue at 2.7.

21 A. At the school we had a system where the teachers gave us a
22 mark out of 5 each week for discipline and application. I
23 needed to get 3 or above to ensure I didn't have to go to
24 Durning's office. This made me terrified that I would not
25 achieve the right score each week.

26 I believe the discipline master Pat Minto will have
27 known about Durning abusing me. This was confirmed
28 yesterday when Paddy Cleary, a fellow student of mine, his
29 daughter told us here that Minto had abused her father and
30 also Durning. I found her evidence yesterday afternoon
31 traumatising, that these two men had abused my close friend
32 Paddy Cleary.

33 Each morning, Minto stood outside and near Durning's
34 office reading what was referred to as his breviary. One
35 of the requirements of being a priest, is that you

1 read - they read so many chapters from the Bible every day.
 2 So, Pat Minto was always standing there reading his
 3 breviary.

4 At that time, I always sat in the front row in my study
 5 and one evening Pat Minto came into the study and stood at
 6 the back of the study and started speaking the word "scum"
 7 over and over. Got the attention of all the boys in the
 8 study and eventually started walking towards the front of
 9 the study while we were sitting and stopped behind me and
 10 said into a boy's face the word "scum" over and over. I
 11 was sure he was going to do it to me and he did. He turned
 12 in my face and said the word over and over "scum, scum",
 13 "Like the scum on the side of the swimming pool, it's life
 14 but very low life" I found that extremely intimidating.
 15 One of my friends said, "When he did that to you, did you
 16 feel evil?"

17 Q. Do you just want to pick up at 2.9?

18 A. Thanks, Michael. In recent years, I have spoken to a
 19 friend, an ex-pupil of Silverstream and he advised me he
 20 witnessed another student walking out of Durning's office
 21 and stating "you are not going to get your dirty hands on
 22 me, expletive, expletive". The same student, when he was a
 23 prefect in 1954, with a fellow prefect, went to the bosses
 24 at Silverstream and reported Durning's abuse and the bosses
 25 said, the bosses would have included Minto, the discipline
 26 master who was also abuser, and GRO-B
 27 GRO-B To my knowledge, they didn't do anything about
 28 Durning's behaviour. He stayed in the school for another
 29 year.

30 Paddy referred to in his letter yesterday that Durning
 31 was put on the side-line and became the water boy. Paddy,
 32 I believe, didn't realise that the water boy post was only
 33 a short pathway to becoming Deputy Rector at St Patrick's
 34 Town and Spiritual Director there. When I spoke on Radio
 35 New Zealand to support the Catholic Church contributing

1 towards this Commission of Inquiry, I am not sure where I'm
2 going here.

3 **CHAIR:** You are talking about the water boy.

4 A. Oh yes, thank you. One student at St Patrick's Town where
5 Durning was - I am going to refer to him as abusing because
6 he was a confident and practised abuser, paedophile. When
7 he found out, talked to Phil Pennington to support me, he
8 said Durning ran a virtual harem at St Patrick's Town. He
9 had boys leaving and coming to his bedroom in a row. I
10 said to a person who found out to support me, "I believe at
11 63 years a priest he would have abused 100 students" and he
12 said "More like 200".

13 A fellow student of mine I talked to recently said that
14 he knew of Durning's abusing, he gave me two names of boys
15 being abused, one boy who was a bright student returned to
16 the school after failing School Certificate and Durning
17 caned him for failing. So, he was abusing and caning
18 students.

19 I walked out of St Patrick's Silverstream at age 15,
20 went home to my father's farm and hid for 2 years, even
21 though he didn't really have a job for me. I did not
22 return to Stream - sorry, I did return to Stream a short
23 time afterwards to return my study books that I had hired
24 from the office.

25 **MR THOMAS:**

26 Q. Can I pause you there? Sorry, going back to returning
27 home, was there any discussion that you had with your
28 parents around that time?

29 A. When I went home for the May holidays that year, I said to
30 them that I was home and I wasn't going back. I think
31 their shock was displayed by their silence. I felt guilty,
32 I felt a failure, my self-esteem was very low. From the
33 time of my abuse, I could smell Durning and the smell
34 didn't leave me until 2002, 49 years later when I reported
35 my abuse to the Society of Mary. If you asked me to

1 describe the smell, I couldn't describe it to you because
2 it's gone.

3 **CHAIR:** Did it go when you reported the abuse?

4 A. Yes, it did.

5 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

6 A. My counsellor, Joan Daniels from Palmerston North said that
7 she had another client who experienced the same phenomenon,
8 a smell from the fear.

9 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

10 **MR THOMAS:**

11 Q. I believe I interrupted you at 2.14.

12 A. Okay. I did not have an appointment with Durning and I
13 wanted to avoid him when I went back to return my study
14 books I had hired from the office. I made an appointment
15 with a person called the bursar at the school, a man called
16 Noel Durham, I returned the books to the office. Durning
17 was waiting for me around the corner by the door, he came
18 towards me and asked me what I was doing leaving school.
19 He tried to put both his arms around me and I put my arms
20 and elbows and fists out towards him and he leapt back with
21 a red face and I felt that I had him. I referred to - when
22 I initially phoned the Marist Helpline, Society of Mary
23 Helpline, I said that to Kitty McKinley and she said,
24 "Don't feel guilty that you hadn't dealt with the situation
25 because they wouldn't have believed you and they would have
26 walked all over you".

27 When I was 21, my father provided a guarantee at the
28 bank for me. I borrowed 100% of the purchase price of a
29 farm and paid off all the debt. When I was 22, I met my
30 now wife. Initially she was not a Catholic and had been to
31 a Christian boarding school in Central North Island.
32 Through her own interest, she explored the Catholic faith
33 and visited a local priest many times and it was from this
34 interest that she became involved in helping with the music
35 and she became a practising Catholic.

1 We were married in 1963, two months short of my 24th
2 birthday.

3 She has always been involved in playing the organ at
4 Church and helping with fundraising and community events.
5 In 2013 Pope Francis awarded her with a medal for her
6 services to Church music.

7 In 1981, when my son was 14 years old and a boarder at
8 Chanel College in Masterton, he was home for the weekend
9 during a public holiday. I was sitting in the lounge and
10 he walked past me and whispered in my ear that Br GRO-B
11 GRO-B had come to his bed at night and he didn't like
12 what GRO-B did.

13 After some thought, I followed my son to his room and
14 told him that I would talk to GRO-B when I took
15 him back on the Sunday evening.

16 Q. Just pause there and take a breath. Just a reminder that
17 the brother you referred to, his name is subject to an
18 order.

19 A. Yes, he is still alive.

20 Q. I just politely ask you if you can just refer to him -

21 A. Oh, the brother, okay, thank you. Sorry.

22 Q. Sorry, I think you were at 2.20.

23 A. Yes. On the Sunday, I went to the parish priest in my town
24 and told him what had happened. He told me that I didn't
25 want the brother's guts, just to leave my son alone.

26 **CHAIR:** Did you tell him that you didn't want the brother's
27 guts?

28 A. No, he told me.

29 **CHAIR:** He told you?

30 A. Yes.

31 **CHAIR:** Okay.

32 A. Can I just refer to my reaction to my son being abused? As
33 I was, within two and a half days I was sitting in front of
34 the brother confronting him and accusing him of sexually
35 abusing my son.

1 **MR THOMAS:**

2 Q. Para 2.21.

3 A. Once in his office, I confronted him stating that he had
4 abused my son. He asked me if I believed him and I said,
5 yes, I do.

6 The brother then sent for my son to come to the office
7 and explain what had happened. Sorry, my son explained
8 what had happened in front of the brother. At this point,
9 two boys walked past the office, I heard them say out loud
10 "you are going to get what's coming to you now you
11 expletive, expletive", two swear words, directed their
12 comments at the brother who said nothing and hung his head.

13 When my son was in the office, the accused, the brother
14 of the abuse, the brother broke down and howled saying to
15 us "you will tear this place apart". I replied that he was
16 tearing the place apart and he should leave my son alone.
17 After the brother composed himself he dismissed my son and
18 told me he was not a homosexual because he had had recently
19 gone to a meeting and felt some attraction towards a woman.

20 Within a week, the brother approached my son at school
21 and told him that he would be leaving the school at a
22 certain date and to ask me, his father, to check with me if
23 that was all right. In fact, the brother was lucky he had
24 not been beaten up because my son had told other boys in
25 the dormitory what had happened and they were waiting for
26 him to return once he turned the lights on and one had a
27 baseball bat. They were fired up. Two boys' mothers from
28 the dormitory reported what they knew to the school
29 Principal and the local parish priest.

30 In the late 1990s, the Police approached my son in
31 Wellington to ask about the potential abuse after another
32 complaint had been made about the same brother. My son was
33 newly married at the time and had just started a
34 professional job in GRO-B At that time, I contacted
35 the spokesperson whose name was appearing in the media

1 about abuse of children by the Catholic clergy, her name is
2 Lyndsay Freer, and reported the abuse to her. She never
3 reported back to me.

4 Q. If I can just pause you there before we move on to the
5 impact of the abuse on you.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. At this point, you were abused at one Catholic school, you
8 sent your son to another school and he was abused there;
9 what impact did that have on you?

10 A. I was deeply concerned by the abuse and I was very
11 concerned for the formal education of my son.

12 Q. The next section, "The impact of the abuse" on you, I
13 understand you're comfortable speaking to this section, so
14 if you're happy to, can you just perhaps summarise the main
15 impacts that the abuse had on you?

16 A. I have mentioned the smell that I had from the fear of the
17 experience and the smell lasted until I reported the event
18 to the Society of Mary 49 years later.

19 The attack on me had the effect of destroying my formal
20 education at the age of 15, my sense of self-worth was very
21 low despite having been a school leader in years 7 and 8.
22 I did not experience the normal formative teenage years. I
23 could not go into a public toilet because of fear. I would
24 come out if anyone came in, I would run out. When I did
25 join a sports club, I couldn't step off the field and strip
26 off and have a shower.

27 I returned to Stream 19 years later for the first time
28 after I walked out of there. The same floor covering was
29 there in the pathway between Durning's office and my study
30 that morning. I looked for the foot marks on the floor
31 even though in my mind that morning I felt they did not
32 touch it. 19 years later in my mind I could see my foot
33 marks and my distinct stiff reaction made me think it
34 smelled dirty. My distinctive reaction made me step over
35 the line which I could see on the floor covering.

1 My sense of anger at the invasion of my sexuality drives
2 me to report this abuse. Documents accompanying my
3 statement are an important part of my statement to the
4 Royal Commission. They provide details about the abuse I
5 suffered, the effect it has had on me, the trauma of
6 finding out about the abuse of my son, and the many
7 problems and further abuse I suffered when I reported - I
8 will go back and read it again. And the many problems the
9 further abuse I suffered when I reported the abuse to the
10 Marist priests and brothers has gone on for many years. I
11 have commented on the documents where the Marist record is
12 inaccurate.

13 Q. At paragraph 3.5, you describe another impact that the
14 abuse had on you; can you explain the difficulties you had
15 with relationships with men?

16 A. Yes. Even now, I have problems of embracing a man, another
17 man with his arms around me. I am quite resilient and
18 achieved all right but the abuse led me to leave Stream
19 with an incomplete education. I also believe it moulded
20 how I parented my children. I put a huge importance on
21 education and understood clearly the importance of normal
22 formative teenage years.

23 I still have anger at the Church and whilst I have faith
24 and support for survivors, I feel the outcome of my
25 complaint has been unjust. Reporting to the Church has
26 been traumatic, not only for myself but for my family. The
27 Church's A Pathway to Healing, National Office for
28 Professional Standards, the Protocol Committee process has
29 not worked for me. It added to my trauma.

30 I will refer back to the abuse again. The abuse has
31 caused me internal shame for many years. I was unable to
32 tell my wife about it for 49 years when I reported it to
33 the Society of Mary. When I did tell her of my abuse, she
34 said she would never have guessed and stated how amazed she
35 was that I stayed in the Catholic Church. And she now

1 understood how much importance I placed on education for
2 our children.

3 I have separated the abuse from my faith belief and the
4 revelation of what occurred did not really affect my wife.

5 Q. Has this been difficult for you to reconcile the abuse you
6 suffered at a Catholic school with retaining your faith?

7 A. No, it hasn't because the Church I belong to is the people
8 and not a paedophile priest or brother, they are not
9 included.

10 Q. When you're ready, we will move to the next section on
11 redress at 4.1.

12 A. In 1999, some friends of ours gave us a subscription to
13 what is called the Marist Messenger magazine. One day I
14 was reading it in the lounge and I came across the obituary
15 for Durning. When I saw this, I burst out loudly shouting
16 "the buggers knew!". In the obituary, there's no mention
17 of his posting at Silverstream which to me clearly showed
18 they knew he was abuser but did nothing.

19 Q. We will just bring up the obituary, it's exhibit number 4,
20 on the screen.

21 A. Thank you.

22 Q. If we just take a look at that, can you see that?

23 A. Yes, I can. The reference in there to his profound
24 integrity shocked me.

25 Q. So, that's I believe the second to last paragraph, perhaps
26 highlight that.

27 A. There's no reference to him being Rector at Silverstream,
28 one of the prime jobs in his Ministry, there's no reference
29 to it. Thank you. There's a reference to him in 11 years
30 of his service having 8 appointments.

31 Q. If we just go back down to the main document, you mention
32 no reference to Silverstream. If we look at the
33 appointments there, are you referring to the period that's
34 marked "Wellington"?

35 A. Yes.

1 Q. Sorry, you were adding further comment?

2 A. I haven't got any further comment. I think the information
3 displays there very clearly.

4 Q. Thank you. Moving on to the making of your complaint at
5 4.2.

6 A. Thank you. On 17 July 2002, I phoned the Society of Mary
7 Helpline to report Durning's abuse. My complaint was taken
8 by Kitty McKinley, a social worker with the Society. I
9 also mentioned the abuse of my son by the brother on this
10 call.

11 Kitty told me that she would refer the matter regarding
12 the brother to the Marist Brothers as they are not part of
13 the Society of Mary and are responsible for Chanel College.

14 On 1 August 2002, I met in Palmerston North Tim
15 Duckworth, who is now the Provincial of the Society of
16 Mary, appointed last January, and Kitty McKinley.

17 I took with me two of my school reports signed by
18 Durning. I was doubtful that they would accept me as a
19 credible person. I was offered counselling, an apology and
20 an ex gratia payment. I was believed, for which I was very
21 grateful and relieved.

22 Tim Duckworth told me that Durning had abused other
23 boys. He told me that Durning was a scumbag and was
24 referred to by his fellow priests as "Fred the Fidler".
25 Tim Duckworth has denied saying that to me in a statement
26 that he made to Phil Pennington of Radio New Zealand.

27 In 2018, Tim Duckworth told me that I should realise
28 that when Fred Durning left Silverstream he had no further
29 contact with boys. That is clearly untrue.

30 At the first meeting they accepted the abuse had
31 occurred and stated no investigation was required. I was
32 told that I was going to get an apology from the Principal
33 of the Society of Mary, a man called Hoban. I was happy
34 with this response and would not - likely would have not
35 gone any further had this occurred.

1 The day after the meeting on the 2nd of August 2002, I
2 called Kitty and said that I was concerned that other boys
3 at boarding schools might be vulnerable to abuse and a
4 process was needed to be put in place to respond to these
5 issues. I also noted my belief that some of the masters at
6 St Patrick's were aware the abuse was going on. I said I
7 thought the importance of people who were abused receive a
8 formal apology from the Church.

9 On 5 August 2002, I phoned Kitty McKinley again. We
10 spoke about the possibility of counselling and going to the
11 Police regarding the abuse of my son. She said both
12 options were worth considering.

13 On 16 October 2002, I phoned Kitty McKinley again
14 expressing my disappointment I had not received an apology
15 from the Principal of the Society of Mary. I asked her if
16 there were any other complaints about Durning, she said she
17 knew of two. She told me I needn't worry about my concern
18 and shouldn't blame myself.

19 In December 2002, I received a letter from Tim Duckworth
20 dated 9 December in which he acknowledged the hurt that I
21 had suffered from Fred Durning and formally apologised on
22 behalf of the Society of Mary. I noticed the letter did
23 not acknowledge what had occurred, it was sexual abuse, and
24 was careful not to use the word "abuse".

25 Q. We will just bring that apology letter up as Exhibit 7.
26 Perhaps if we could highlight the third paragraph from the
27 top, thank you.

28 You highlight that this apology, in your view, didn't
29 adequately highlight the abuse you suffered?

30 A. Yes, I do, Mm.

31 Q. Is there any other comment you wish to make on that?

32 A. When I reported my abuse to the Society of Mary in 2002, I
33 was very diffident about making the approach. I was unable
34 to meet them on Church ground. A suggestion that we met in
35 a meeting room behind the cathedral in Palmerston North, I

1 rejected. We met in the home of the investigator of sexual
2 abuse instances in the cathedral parish in Palmerston
3 North. I spoke to him and subsequently, he said, "Would
4 you like to meet our Committee in Palmerston North?" to
5 which I said, "Yes, I would". So, I attended there with my
6 counsellor as a support person. The Chairman of the
7 Committee had not informed them that we were coming. We
8 introduced ourselves, at the meeting there were two
9 Bishops, two priests and two married couples. I refer to
10 that later on in my notes.

11 Q. Paragraph 4.15, moving on to 2003.

12 A. On 25 February 2003, I again phoned Kitty McKinley and
13 stated that I needed compensation. I also discussed - we
14 also discussed counselling options. I mentioned that my
15 son had made a complaint to the Police five years ago but
16 nothing happened.

17 I began attending counselling sessions and attended
18 several sessions of counselling with Joan Daniels who
19 assisted me in overcoming the smell I had of Durning and
20 helped with my trauma.

21 In May I discussed compensation with Kitty McKinley, she
22 suggested that I needed to write a formal request in
23 writing.

24 On July 2003, I received a letter from Kitty McKinley
25 suggesting that we meet in person to discuss the issue of
26 compensation. She also suggested that I would - it would
27 be useful for me to obtain independent legal advice prior
28 to the meeting. She said to me that the Society of Mary
29 would have their lawyer sitting beside them.

30 I found that comment very intimidating.

31 On 18 November 2003, I met the Palmerston North Protocol
32 Committee, including Bishop Peter Cullinane, accompanied by
33 my counsellor, Joan Daniels. I asked Bishop Cullinane to
34 relay my request for compensation to Tim Duckworth, I also

1 stated my concern that the Church was not dealing effective
2 with issues of sexual abuse by the clergy.

3 Q. At that meeting, what if anything did the Bishop say to
4 you?

5 A. Bishop Cullinane took notes of the meeting and he said to
6 me very clearly, "You must realise, Mr F, that I have very
7 limited authority over the Society of Mary". I believe
8 that's not accurate. I know the Bishops employ the Society
9 of Mary members in their Ministry and I know that they
10 could remove that Ministry from them.

11 Q. After that meeting, at 4.21?

12 A. The following day I received a call from Kitty McKinley.
13 We discussed the meeting. She stated that I would probably
14 need to obtain legal advice before taking any further
15 steps. She agreed this might be a good idea.

16 In 2004, I contacted a lawyer who was appearing in the
17 media as representing victims of sexual abuse by the Church
18 and he agreed to represent me and on the 8th of June 2004 I
19 signed a statement of request authorising him to get from
20 the Society of Mary and the Ministry of Education, provide
21 our solicitors any personal information about me.

22 In July 2005, Fr Phil Cody wrote to my solicitors
23 regarding the issue of compensation. He stated the Society
24 of Mary "does not and never has made compensation payments
25 in respect of sexual abuse" but did state that they would
26 make "ex gratia payment gifts" to acknowledge a person's
27 suffering to assist them in rehabilitation. Grant Cameron
28 told me that I was unfortunate on two levels. One, I was
29 abused, sexually abused by a member of the Catholic clergy;
30 and number two, I was abused by a member of the Society of
31 Mary. He said they are the most difficult to deal with, he
32 said I have to threaten them with exposure in the media to
33 get them to attend a meeting.

34 Q. And what was the offer made to you?

35 A. \$5,000.

1 Q. How did you feel about that?

2 A. I felt that it was insulting, especially when it was
3 considered that Fr Phil Cody said to me, "Of course you
4 realise if you take the \$5,000 you will be required to sign
5 a Deed which will be delivered to you personally
6 recognising that the money is not compensation".

7 Q. If we turn over the page, para 4.24, this section concerns
8 the National Office for Professional Standards.

9 A. On 13 March 20009, I wrote to John Jamieson, the
10 ex-Commissioner of Police for New Zealand, the National
11 Director of the National Office of Professional Standards
12 for the Catholic Church requesting he review my complaint I
13 submitted to the Society of Mary.

14 Towards the end of March 2009, I received a letter from
15 John Jamieson dated 23 March 2009 in which he stated he had
16 received the documents about my complaint and the next step
17 was to meet with him. I met with John Jamieson to discuss
18 my concerns and then in August 2009 I received a final
19 report from John Jamieson reviewing my complaint.

20 In John Jamieson's notes he mentioned he was grateful
21 for my courteous and considered way that I presented my
22 case.

23 In September 2009, I received a letter from Fr Phil Cody
24 of the Society of Mary stating that the Protocol Committee
25 had reviewed - had received a final review from John
26 Jamieson in August and considered his report. He
27 reaffirmed the apology offered to me.

28 On 1 December 2009, I met Fr Phil Cody and Judith
29 McCormack, both were representatives of the Society of Mary
30 Protocol Committee.

31 I remember clearly Judith McCormack's statement to me
32 that all the money in the world would not compensate for
33 the sexual abuse that I had suffered. She also said that
34 she was angry that her Church had done that to me. I said

1 to her that they knew sexual abuse was occurring and her
2 reply was, "What could they have done?".

3 Q. And how did that comment make you feel?

4 A. It made me feel that they were displaying an air of
5 entitlement and were saying to me that they made the rules
6 and they used this air of entitlement as a shield.

7 Q. You had a second meeting with Judith McCormack and Neil
8 Vaney at 4.29?

9 A. Yes. It was on the 20th of May 2015. Can I explain the
10 day and the period of time that had lapsed? I was clearly
11 finding the treatment that I was receiving traumatising.
12 At the second meeting with Judith McCormack and a man
13 called Neil Vaney, at the beginning of the meeting after
14 introductions, first of all I must refer to the situation
15 Judith McCormack arrived at the meeting very late. It was
16 on the 9th floor building in Wellington. She was about to
17 walk past me waiting outside her door, turned and came back
18 and greeted me. After introductions, me to Neil Vaney, I
19 asked Neil Vaney if he had read my case notes to which he
20 said yes. Judith McCormack made no reference to her being
21 late. I complained to her about the lack of accuracy in
22 the notes of our first meeting in 2009. I asked her, for
23 instance, who received the report of our meetings. We only
24 had two meetings with her. She said a report goes to Bill
25 Kilgallon, the National Office for Professional Standards
26 for the Catholic Church and she said only my name would go
27 forward.

28 During that meeting, when I was able to ask for higher
29 level of compensation, she stated very strongly that no-one
30 receives from the Catholic Church large amounts of money in
31 compensation, to which I said, "What about the St John of
32 God in Christchurch?" she lost her temper at me and
33 shouted, "They pay huge amounts of compensation".

34 During the meeting, Neil Vaney, after telling me that he
35 had read the notes of my case, said that what Durning did

1 to me was not against the law. My case had been reviewed
2 by John Jamieson, ex-Commissioner of Police, and he
3 accepted what - John accepted what I said and so, here I
4 have a man called Neil Vaney saying to me twice at the
5 meeting that what happened to me was not against the law,
6 this is in 2015, he said it twice. When I referred to Alan
7 Woodcock, the abuser who got extradited back to New Zealand
8 and sent to jail for abusing students at Silverstream, Neil
9 Vaney said he had read the transcripts of the case and he
10 believed that Fred Bliss, the Rector, would not have been
11 charged with being an accessory to the crime, as I know the
12 Policeman said if he'd been in New Zealand he would have
13 been charged as an accessory to the crime but Neil Vaney
14 said he had read the case notes and said this was not the
15 case.

16 **CHAIR:** Sorry to interrupt, do you mind telling me what
17 role did Mr Vaney have or Fr Vaney have in this meeting?
18 What was he representing?

19 A. He was representing the Society of Mary Protocol Committee.

20 **CHAIR:** So, he was part of the Protocol -

21 A. Yes, there were two people present.

22 **CHAIR:** He was part of their redress system?

23 A. Yes.

24 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Mr F, can I just ask also, so John
25 Jamieson was the national Director of NOPS?

26 A. Yes.

27 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** So, you've got these two committees
28 that are looking at your request and one is believing you
29 and the other is not?

30 A. Well, Neil Vaney claims it wasn't against the law.

31 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Yes, that's correct.

32 A. So, he's contradicting John Jamieson's decision.

33 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** And, in your mind, of the two which
34 was the higher authority?

1 A. I believe the attitude, this air of entitlement which the
2 Society of Mary displayed, overrides everything.

3 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** The attitude?

4 A. Yes.

5 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you for that.

6 A. At that meeting, when Judith McCormack quoted that they
7 were doing the directions of Pope Francis with care and
8 compassion for survivors, and then to say to me that what
9 had happened was not against the law; it makes their
10 apology worthless.

11 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you.

12 **MR THOMAS:**

13 Q. Shall we move - is there anything else you'd like to add
14 from that meeting?

15 A. Yes. I got a report of the meeting and immediately phoned
16 Judy McCormack and asked her did she write the report, to
17 which she said no, Neil Vaney had written it. So, she gave
18 me his telephone number and I phoned Neil Vaney and told
19 him of the ten mistakes, which included omissions and
20 errors a very short time after the meeting. The report
21 contained no evidence that Neil Vaney was present, except
22 in the introductions. There was no reference to anything
23 he said at the meeting. He produced at least half the
24 input in the discussions. And so, when I told him the
25 errors and omissions, he said he was hazy about the
26 meeting. It was within a week of the meeting.

27 Can I go now to 2017, two years after the meeting. My
28 feeling about the meeting was I was very unhappy with the
29 meeting. I felt this air of entitlement was being used as
30 a shield, they could say and do what they felt they should
31 do to - I am not going to use the word "cover up". Where
32 am I going?

33 **CHAIR:** You are going to 2017.

34 A. Oh yes, okay. I got a phone call from Judith McCormack, so
35 I asked her the purpose of the phone call and she said she

1 had received from a man called Phil (Irish Christian name)
2 O'Leary through Tim Duckworth, and I can refer to that
3 because Duckworth had prompted - O'Leary was the Society of
4 Mary representative on the Protocol Committee of the
5 Society of Mary. So, Judith McCormack phoned me and told
6 me that she was told I needed a phone call but that's not
7 accurate. It was two years later, I said what's the
8 purpose of the meeting, and she said you've complained
9 about 21 errors and mistakes in the report. I think she
10 tried to confuse me and annoy me. She tried to engage me
11 in an argument. After a while I said, "I think we should
12 end this conversation", she said "Why?" I said, "We're
13 sword fighting, we're getting nowhere". And she said, "I
14 can assure you my sword is not up", those were her words.
15 She reported that discussion that we had on the phone as
16 one hour 20 minutes which I was trying to get out of. A
17 phone call two years after the meeting, so I'm presuming
18 that her Protocol Committee had voiced some discontent
19 about my process and how it was being handled.

20 **CHAIR:** Had you received nothing before that, over those
21 two years?

22 A. No.

23 **CHAIR:** Not a word?

24 A. No. I felt traumatised, I felt dissatisfied. At the end
25 of 2017, I sent two emails to a priest called David
26 Kennerley who appointed the Protocol Committee, clearly
27 stating my discontent with the process and asked him who
28 are they responsible to. He sent both my emails to Judith
29 McCormack. I asked for a meeting with Bill Kilgallon, I
30 said I invited him to a meeting, and Vaney and McCormack.
31 I got a letter back from McCormack saying the Society of
32 Mary has total faith in my operation.

33 **CHAIR:** The names you have mentioned McCormack and?

34 A. Vaney.

35 **CHAIR:** Vaney we have heard before. Who was McCormack?

1 A. She was the personality I met previously in Palmerston
2 North in 2005.

3 **CHAIR:** Oh, Judith McCormack, thank you.

4 **MR THOMAS:**

5 Q. Thank you, Mr F, if I could bring you back to paragraph
6 4.32, taking you back to 2010, following I think that
7 second meeting you described, you received a letter from
8 the Protocol Committee, can you tell us about that?

9 A. 4.32?

10 Q. Yes, thank you.

11 A. Okay. In December 2010 - that's going back to 2010, isn't
12 it?

13 Q. Yes.

14 A. I received a letter from Phil Cody stating the Protocol
15 Committee had met to consider my request and decided to
16 continue the offer of an ex gratia payment of \$5,000. He
17 stated it was not intended as compensation but as a
18 "symbolic gift intended to recognise and express our sorrow
19 of the harm caused to you".

20 Q. How did you feel about receiving the same offer at the same
21 level?

22 A. I received the offer in total six times over the years.
23 And in the conversation with McCormack when she phoned me
24 after a two-year delay, she said why aren't you like
25 everyone else? Why are you so different? This was during
26 her attempt to draw me into an argument. Why don't you
27 take - I presume that meant, why don't you take the money
28 and go away?

29 Q. And then 4.33, a few years later, September 2013, you
30 received another letter?

31 A. Yes. When Bill Kilgallon was appointed head of the
32 National Office of Professional Standards I phoned him and
33 asked him what his role was and he told me that the Society
34 of Mary had signed a contract with him to co-operate. He

1 said next time you're in Auckland, drop in for a cup of
2 tea, which I did.

3 One of the things I asked him, I said "Will you give me
4 a letter of support to join the Society of Mary Protocol
5 Committee?" And he said, "Yes", so he gave it to me in my
6 hand. I saw a need to try and influence their behaviour
7 with support for survivors. Are you right there, Michael?

8 Q. Thanks. I think we are either at 4.33 or 4.34.

9 A. 4.34. However, despite an early acceptance of the process,
10 it was strung out a very long time. It was not resolved
11 until 2019.

12 I found the process traumatising and unsatisfactory. I
13 have never been given a copy of the process of procedure
14 that would deal with my complaint, as a result I have never
15 been in a position to question the process.

16 Q. Just to clarify that, were you aware of the existence of *A*
17 *Path to Healing* when you made your complaint in 2002?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. You were aware of it?

20 A. No, in 2009 it was offered to me.

21 Q. Did you receive a copy of the document *A Path to Healing*?

22 A. Yes, I did.

23 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Sorry, when did you receive a copy of
24 *A Path to Healing*?

25 A. 2009.

26 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** 2009.

27 **MR THOMAS:**

28 Q. I guess, what did you understand of the process for
29 handling your complaint going back to - at the time you
30 made the complaint in 2002, did you feel you had a good
31 understanding of the process to be followed?

32 A. No, not at all.

33 Q. If we could then move on to 4.36, please.

34 A. After going through the extra trauma of reporting the abuse
35 that took place, I received a formal apology in a brief

1 pro forma letter and an offer of \$5,000 "koha" which I
2 found insulting. This offer was not commensurate
3 compensation for the hurt and damage that I had suffered.

4 I have received no compensation for the loss of my
5 education as a top student until I was abused; the loss of
6 other life opportunities, including employment
7 opportunities; the years I believed I was the only one
8 abused and I couldn't tell anyone, even my wife, until
9 1999, after 36 years of marriage.

10 Q. Moving on to 4.38.

11 A. With respect to my son's abuse, as Kitty McKinley initially
12 stated, she passed the complaint on to the Marist Brothers.
13 From that referral, I had a visit to my house of Br Brian
14 Wanden and Br Henry Spinks from Auckland. I said to them
15 during the meeting that I believed the hierarchy of the
16 Church has known about the abusing and Br Brian Wanden said
17 to me, "Of course they knew, [GRO-A] of course they knew.
18 When I was Principal of a Catholic school in Palmerston
19 North", there was only two, he was Principal of one,
20 "Cardinal McKeefry said to me, [GRO-A] if I have any
21 trouble with this issue I can put them offshore".

22 **CHAIR:** What did you understand by "offshore"?

23 A. Out of New Zealand.

24 **MR THOMAS:**

25 Q. At 4.39, talk to that.

26 A. I also queried why, after complaints were made to the
27 Police in late 1999, that brother who abused by son was
28 left in what he called his ministry. When I said to Henry
29 Spinks that day, "Why didn't you talk to my wife and I when
30 that happened, when the Police came to my son in Wellington
31 and said do you want to lay a charge against the brother" I
32 said to Henry Spinks, "Why didn't you talk to my wife and
33 I?". He said, well, what happened was the brother sent him
34 a lawyer's letter stating that if you don't charge me, put

1 me back into my Ministry. So, the brother became head of
2 GRO-B Auckland.

3 **CHAIR:** This is the brother who had abused your son?

4 A. Yes.

5 **MR THOMAS:**

6 Q. When you're ready, you have a bit of a summary at paragraph
7 4.40 of your experience of the redress process?

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

18 The process does not lead to compensation for harm and
19 loss. The complaints process does not stop the perpetrator
20 from abusing others. At the meeting with Vaney and
21 McCormack in Wellington, I said I am very critical of the
22 bosses at Silverstream who did not respond to the two
23 prefects' request to report Durning and I hold them
24 responsible for the continued abuse which has happened at
25 Silverstream since. The Network knows of abuse continuing
26 through the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. In fact, if you went
27 to Silverstream in those years, you were lucky not to be
28 abused.

29 When I spoke on Radio New Zealand, I got a phone call
30 from a person who supported me and he said he witnessed
31 abuse going on in the dormitory where he slept and he said,
32 "I put up on the notice board in the college the words 'the
33 phantom raider strikes again'". Most of the school would
34 have known about the notice, they crowded around and looked
35 at it. Two boys, including this boy, reported the abuse to

1 the Rector Fred Bliss and Bliss told them that they were
2 lying.

3 **CHAIR:** Was that during the time you were at school?

4 A. No, 1970s and 1980s.

5 **CHAIR:** It was later?

6 A. Yes. His impression was the reputation of the school was
7 paramount.

8 **MR THOMAS:**

9 Q. At 4.41, I think you're up to the start of the second part
10 of that paragraph.

11 A. Both Durning and the brother were moved to other places
12 where they had access to other children.

13 My wife and I, when we learnt about the Royal
14 Commission, we both proactively approached both Bishop Lowe
15 in Hamilton and Bishop Drennan in Palmerston North to
16 encourage them to contribute to the Commission of Inquiry.

17 Our purpose was to support the Royal Commission for
18 fellow survivors.

19 At our meeting with Bishop Lowe, we talked about the
20 need for survivors to be listened to and believed. There
21 was another survivor present and Virginia Noonan from NOPS
22 office. I felt Virginia was rather naive about what was
23 going on and was not up with what the Bishops actually
24 knew.

25 Can I refer to our Network became aware of a priest from
26 **GRO-B** who was moved to the cathedral parish and we knew
27 that he had been reported to the NOPS office of Virginia
28 Noonan for sexually devious behaviour.

29 **CHAIR:** Can you tell us when that was roughly, even the
30 decade would do if you knew?

31 A. About four years ago. I said to her, I mentioned the
32 person's name, I said, "You have received a complaint about
33 him". I said, "I am concerned that he's still in active
34 service. What should I do?" and she said, "I'll go and
35 talk to my Committee". She phoned me back the next day and

1 said, "We believe you should discuss this with your
2 Bishop". So, I contacted the Bishop and his main concern
3 was how did I find out. Has the NOPS office been leaking?
4 I know the parish that he came into, this person who had
5 been reported to the NOPS office, and he said he was
6 prepared to get the media to the Church next time he came
7 to the parish and we said we should be able to deal with
8 this easier than that.

9 **MR THOMAS:**

10 Q. I think you were up to around 4.45, thereabouts.

11 A. My wife and I and two members of the support network,
12 including my support person here, got an appointment with
13 Charles Drennan, the Bishop of Palmerston North, to
14 encourage him, as well as Bishop Lowe in Hamilton, to join
15 the Committee Inquiry. I showed him Durning's obituary and
16 he said, "8 jobs in 11 years, they must have known what he
17 was doing" and he said, as far as he knew, there was no
18 abuse taking place in Palmerston North Diocese.

19 **CHAIR:** And again, was that about 4 years ago?

20 A. Yes.

21 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

22 A. The second to last time my son was back in New Zealand, we
23 got an appointment, supported by my local parish priest, I
24 told him of the situation and he gave a letter of reference
25 that we get a meeting with Cardinal John Dew. Initially he
26 said at the meeting, "You all believe I'm responsible for
27 the Society of Mary", he said, "I'm not". I don't believe
28 this is accurate because he employs the personnel in
29 New Zealand, he's got the authority to dismiss them. It's
30 very confusing for the general laity if they believe that
31 no-one is in control of the Society of Mary.

32 **MR THOMAS:**

33 Q. Picking up on your meeting with Cardinal Dew at 4.47.

34 A. Okay. Cardinal Dew said things are in place and the boys
35 are better vetted coming into seminaries. He made the

1 point he was not in charge of the Society of Mary but he
2 did admit there was no downside to becoming part of the
3 Commission of Inquiry. At that stage, he would not make
4 any statements or have any meetings about joining the
5 Inquiry.

6 We came away with a statement he was not in charge of
7 the Society of Mary. My wife and I agreed that we would
8 not have known about the prevalence of abuse in the
9 Catholic Church if I had not been abused.

10 Fellow parishioners are not aware of what's going on
11 with regard to abuse. They were very concerned when
12 Barbara Dreaver from Television New Zealand wrote a
13 statement about the abuse of clergy removed from
14 New Zealand into the Pacific Islands and abusing children.
15 The laity of New Zealand, I believe, are very concerned
16 about that but they don't know what's happened in
17 New Zealand and what's happening. Survivors are very
18 reluctant to talk, they feel very guilty, they feel very
19 embarrassed, they feel traumatised and are reluctant to
20 come forward. When people come to our Network, we support
21 them strongly. We don't want them reporting and walking
22 into a vacuum.

23 Most people try and get on with their lives. One of the
24 report things that Neil Vaney wrote about me, he said I
25 believe the abuse has blighted my life. I don't agree with
26 that. He's trying to make me look like a suffering
27 confused person.

28 Can I just mention one thing? I believe when I walked
29 out of Silverstream I achieved some resistance but the
30 suffering and trauma since has been very strong. I didn't
31 know what a normal teenage life was like until my children
32 were teenagers. And when I complimented my oldest daughter
33 on her choice of a fiance, she said, "What do you expect,
34 Dad, with a father role model like you?", so my life was
35 not blighted by this event.

1 Where are we up to, Michael?

2 Q. You are at 4.51, I think. You are referring to a 2019
3 interaction with Mr Duckworth.

4 A. Okay. In 2019, I wrote to Tim Duckworth to get a copy of
5 my file to present my submission to this Inquiry and I was
6 told by Duckworth that day that of course after
7 Silverstream Durning had no more contact with children.
8 2019, He is now the Provincial of the Society of Mary in
9 New Zealand, Tim Duckworth. It shows Duckworth minimises
10 the effect and covers up the truth.

11 **CHAIR:** Mr Thomas, it's 11.30. I have the feeling, the
12 suspicion, that there may be some more questions for Mr F
13 from the Commissioners and I am wondering if we should take
14 the morning break, give you a chance, Mr F, to take a break
15 and have a cup of tea and gather your strength, and then
16 maybe we could come back and finish your evidence and ask
17 some questions. Is that suitable to you, Mr F, you are the
18 one in charge here?

19 A. Thank you, yes.

20 **CHAIR:** You would like that?

21 A. Yes.

22 **CHAIR:** Good. We will take the morning adjournment at this
23 stage and come back after some refreshments.

24

25 **Hearing adjourned from 11.30 a.m. until 11.52 a.m.**

26

27 **MR THOMAS:**

28 Q. We're hopefully not far from completing Mr F's evidence. I
29 will just ask if he wants to finish off his evidence
30 starting at 5.1.

31 A. Thank you. In summary, I am a committed Catholic who still
32 has a strong faith belief despite my experience as a
33 survivor. I am aware of other survivors and also parents
34 of survivors who are alive. I also know of survivors who
35 have [died]. The process is difficult to come forward and

1 there are many barriers for people to disclose their abuse.
2 This needs to change in New Zealand. We need a system to
3 support survivors to disclose, to be believed and feel safe
4 when they speak out.

5 I believe the Church has a responsibility to be open
6 about the abuse which their endeavours have been doing.

7 With respect to transformative change, I still feel that
8 boys at boarding schools are at risk. I believe there
9 needs to be a Helpline or similar outside the school, a
10 dedicated avenue that provides an independent way to ask
11 for help.

12 I am encouraged that the Royal Commission has the power
13 of the government behind it because the Church has a sense
14 of entitlement. The Royal Commission needs to open up all
15 the files. And needs an open environment for survivors to
16 speak out and the Church listens rather than closing down
17 and defending themselves.

18 Q. Thank you. Before you take questions from the
19 Commissioners, is there anything - I guess, put it this
20 way, is there anything that you'd most like to see the
21 Catholic Church do in New Zealand in response to abuse?

22 A. Yes. I believe the Church has a responsibility to protect
23 our children. With modern social media, the Church has a
24 responsibility to act to cope with that. Sadly, children
25 are more vulnerable to grooming with modern social media
26 and I think the Church should respond to that.

27 Q. Is there anything else you would like to add before you
28 take questions?

29 A. No, thank you.

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MR F

QUESTIONED BY THE COMMISSIONERS

CHAIR: The Commissioners do have some questions. I will just ask them one by one. Commissioner Steenson, do you have any questions?

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: I do. Tēna koe, thank you for telling your experience. I just have one question and it's around you mentioned that there was a meeting in the redress process, I think it was a Palmerston North meeting, and it was held at a place that you knew to be somewhere that abuse had occurred. I just want to clarify whether that's what I heard correctly?

A. No, I did not mean to say that.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Okay, thank you.

CHAIR: Were you reluctant to meet on Church property, was that the problem, that was the issue that you had? You wanted to meet on neutral ground, rather than Church property?

A. Yes, it was, yes. Sorry, that was it, yes, thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER ERUETI: Tēna koe matua (Greetings to you). My question is about your question of independence with the committees you met with. When you met in Palmerston North in 2009 with McCormack and Vaney, that Protocol Committee I think it's called, was your understanding that that Committee was a Committee independent of the Society of Mary or Catholic Church?

A. No, no, it represented the Society of Mary.

COMMISSIONER ERUETI: Okay, yeah. And that was clear in your mind?

A. Oh yes, yes.

COMMISSIONER ERUETI: And do you have any comments on that, about the fact that it was closely associated with the

1 Church and not an independent process? Was that a concern
2 for you?

3 A. The meeting I referred to when Bishop Cullinane said to me
4 at the end of my appeal for support there was, "You must
5 realise I have very limited authority over the Society of
6 Mary" which I don't agree with because he employs them, the
7 personnel in his Diocese. He has the power to employ them,
8 he has the power to dismiss them, but he claims to have
9 this inability to have authority over them.

10 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Okay, I understand. Can I ask one
11 further question about your - it's about your son, the
12 allegations when he came to you and then you both went to
13 speak to the parish priest and also the Principal of the
14 school, about when you reported your concerns and your
15 son's concerns about whether these two figures said that
16 you should go to the Police with your concerns?

17 A. No, they didn't say that, no.

18 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Are we right in thinking that the
19 Police spoke to your son later because there were other
20 allegations about this brother?

21 A. Yes.

22 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Okay. Thank you, they are my
23 questions, kia ora.

24 **CHAIR:** My question, Mr F, is about the apologies.
25 Clearly, you were dissatisfied with the apology letter that
26 we were shown. Two aspects to this. First of all, from
27 whom do you think it is appropriate that an apology should
28 come from the Catholic Church? What would be acceptable to
29 you as the level of seniority that would give you some
30 comfort?

31 A. I would accept as being adequate an apology from the
32 Cardinal or any Bishop of the area where I was living. It
33 depends on the attitude and the change of influence with
34 regard to being open and asking for forgiveness by them.

1 **CHAIR:** That goes to the second part of my question. So,
2 the first, the answer to the first part, from whom you
3 would readily accept, you would find it acceptable to get
4 an apology, you're saying Cardinal, Bishop, somebody of
5 that high level within the Catholic Church?

6 A. Yes.

7 **CHAIR:** And then moving on to the next point, the content
8 of the apology. Plainly, you didn't find what you got was
9 acceptable. What, in your view, should an apology letter
10 cover for somebody in your situation?

11 A. Sincerity, asking for forgiveness, admission of the events
12 happening.

13 **CHAIR:** So, by that you mean acknowledgment that what you
14 said happened, did happen?

15 A. Yes, and also the admission of the force of the cover up,
16 covering plural, covering ups, Mm.

17 **CHAIR:** Thank you for that. I will leave you now with
18 Commissioner ALOFIVAE.

19 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Good morning, Mr F, just a couple
20 of points of clarification, if I may. It came across very
21 well how frustrated the process was to go from NOPS back to
22 the Society of Mary. Was there a clear understanding for
23 you about the roles that they played and how they were
24 perhaps supposed to influence one another?

25 A. I am aware that the Bishops appoint the NOPS office and
26 when I reported that I knew a certain person had been
27 reported to the NOPS office, the response of the Bishop was
28 "How did you find out? Has the office been leaking?" So,
29 I find that a very strange attitude.

30 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** So, in terms of The Pathway to
31 Healing process, that wasn't helpful at all for you, was
32 it?

33 A. Not when I was being challenged and not believed.

34 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** And just my last point of
35 clarification is, you referred to the laity and the

1 perception of the laity of who's in charge, right? So,
2 you've referred to your Cardinals and your Bishops and the
3 role of the different committees. So, when the abuse
4 happened, you were reporting through a process that you
5 understood was the right process. I wanted to just ask if
6 you were able to expand on how just the average Catholic
7 person or community that you were very familiar with in
8 Whanganui, how they understand who's the boss in the
9 Catholic Church, so to speak, when it comes to these
10 complaint processes?

11 A. Well, when the Bishops of New Zealand wrote a letter of
12 apology to all the parishes in New Zealand, we were told
13 the letter would be available in the gathering area of the
14 Church that I attend. Within a couple of weeks, we were
15 told the meeting was in the presbytery where the priest
16 lives, it was not in the gathering area. For me to find a
17 copy of it was difficult. So, what's your point again,
18 please?

19 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** So actually, they say one thing but
20 they make it quite difficult for you to actually access?

21 A. Yes.

22 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you. Mr F, can I just thank
23 you on behalf of our Chair and my fellow Commissioners for
24 the very honest and forthright way in which you've given
25 your evidence this morning. Thank you for being a stoic
26 champion, for not being afraid to step up and to step out,
27 and obviously at an enormous cost to yourself but such as
28 your quest for justice within a faith that clearly still
29 you value very much.

30 A. Thank you.

31 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you so much on behalf of our
32 Commission or your honesty and just for your heart for our
33 nation and Catholic communities.

34 A. Thank you very much.

35 **CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr F.

1 **MR THOMAS:** Madam Chair, I don't mean to prolong things but
2 I just have one minor clarifying question in light of the
3 Commissioner's questions.

4 **CHAIR:** Please.

5

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1 **MR F**

2 **FURTHER QUESTIONED BY MR THOMAS**

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5 Q. Mr F, I just wanted to clarify your point about the Bishop.
6 I think you referred to him as employing Society of Mary
7 individuals within his area. I just want to clarify, do
8 you mean allowing them to operate in his area, as opposed
9 to a more traditional employment relationship with a
10 contract?

11 A. I'm not sure what the content of the question means please,
12 Michael.

13 Q. I guess it's just a small point, just to clarify, try and
14 clarify your point about, I think, the Bishop. I'd have to
15 check the wording but I think you said employed the Society
16 of Mary people?

17 A. Yes, yes.

18 Q. I just wanted to clarify your description of that?

19 A. Well, my understanding is the appointment is a form of
20 employment. So, once a person appoints someone, they have
21 the right to dismiss them.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. So, that's a form of contract, isn't it, like you asked me?

24 Q. Thank you.

25 **CHAIR:** And that is your understanding of the situation?

26 A. Yes.

27 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

28 **MR THOMAS:** Thank you for clarifying that.

29 Madam Chair, just one small point as well, I am just
30 wondering for the benefit especially of the media present,
31 if it might be appropriate to reiterate that the named
32 brother and at one point Mr F I think referred to his own
33 name by accident.

34 **CHAIR:** Yes.

1 **MR THOMAS:** If it is just clarified that those are not
2 for -

3 **CHAIR:** Not for publication, yes, certainly, and I am sure
4 the press is aware but anybody else in the room also, that
5 the names are subject to non-publication orders and for
6 everybody to be mindful of that. Thank you, Mr F, you are
7 now free to go, if you wish.

8 Please feel free to leave, if you like. (Witness
9 excused).

10 Ms Haronga, would you like to take a break before the next
11 witness?

12 **MS HARONGA:** I certainly would, thank you, Madam Chair.

13 **CHAIR:** For the benefit of the public, approximately how
14 long would you like?

15 **MS HARONGA:** 10 minutes.

16 **CHAIR:** Whatever suits.

17 **MS HARONGA:** 10 minutes would be ample.

18 **CHAIR:** We will take the adjournment.

19

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21 **Hearing adjourned from 12.08 p.m. until 12.20 p.m.**

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1
2 **ANNE HILL - AFFIRMED**
3 **EXAMINED BY MS HARONGA**
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6 **MS HARONGA:** Tēnā koutou e ngā Kai Kōmihana. Tēnei te mihi
7 atu ki ā koe (Greetings to Commissioners, greetings to the
8 witness). Anne, can I please ask you to introduce yourself
9 to the Commissioners, this morning.

10 **CHAIR:** Just pull the microphone up a little bit, please,
11 Ms Haronga.

12 A. Hello, my name is Anne Hill.

13 **CHAIR:** I will give you the affirmation. (Witness
14 affirmed). Thank you very much.

15 **MS HARONGA:**

16 Q. Thank you, Anne. Just confirm for the public, your
17 preference is to be called Annie?

18 A. Annie.

19 Q. Would you like to introduce your support person seated with
20 you?

21 A. This is my sister Marcelle.

22 **CHAIR:** Welcome, Marcelle.

23 A. She is my support person but we are also both part of the
24 same abuse story.

25 **CHAIR:** Just make sure you talk into the microphone as
26 well, so we can all hear you.

27 A. Okay. If I look this way?

28 **CHAIR:** Yes, look at her.

29 **MS HARONGA:**

30 Q. Marcel, I understand you would like to provide some
31 photographs before we begin the evidence this morning, some
32 photographs of you and your sisters as children to be
33 presented to the Commissioners to frame their listening to
34 your evidence. If I could ask Madam Registrar to take
35 those photographs. (Photographs handed to Commissioners).

1 **CHAIR:** Would you like to explain who we are looking at
2 here?

3 **MARCELLE:** What is there is our family, it is my little
4 sister, the little one is Annie, and I am the middle one,
5 Marcelle, and that is my oldest sister Claire and there's
6 one there with our mother Daphne.

7 **CHAIR:** Thank you for that. I will pass them to my
8 colleagues and then we will return them straight to you, if
9 you like.

10 **MS HARONGA:** Just for members of the public, it is not our
11 intention to exhibit those photographs.

12 **CHAIR:** Thank you very much for sharing with us, it brings
13 your whole family to life.

14 **MS HARONGA:**

15 Q. Annie, you are here to give evidence today that relates to
16 a statement prepared in September for this Commission?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Do you have that statement before you?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. As you are aware, that statement can be taken as read by
21 the Commissioners who have it available and for the benefit
22 of those watching either here in the hearing room or over
23 the livestream, that statement will be available publicly
24 at the conclusion of your evidence today.

25 What we will do now is just read parts of your statement
26 so that the people can hear it from you directly. I
27 understand there are some things you would like to add
28 along the way and we will pause as necessary for you to be
29 able to do so and expand on any points. I may also ask you
30 questions as we go along as well. The Commissioners, as
31 you've indicated to me, are welcome to ask you questions or
32 Marcelle questions throughout and at the end also.

33 So, again, we can take a break at any time and for as
34 long as you need. So, shall we get started?

1 If I could invite you to read paragraphs 1.1-1.6 from
2 the introduction section?

3 A. So, my name is Anne Louise Hill (nee Byrne), I am 58 years
4 old and I was born in England in 1962. I live in Whangarei
5 and I am a New Zealand citizen.

6 I was sexually abused by Fr Michael Shirres from the age
7 of 4 until the age of 12. Some of the abuse occurred while
8 I was in the care of the Star of the Sea Orphanage in
9 Howick, Auckland, which was run by the Sisters of Mercy.
10 The orphanage came under the Diocese of Auckland.

11 I have complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, known as
12 PTSD. This affects my memory, concentration, and ability
13 to work. I have also experienced other health problems
14 which may be discussed further.

15 I trained as a primary teacher and a secondary teacher.
16 I have a Fine Arts degree. In recent years I have done
17 voluntary work like visiting elderly people in rest homes,
18 giving people foot massages, helping out with dog training.
19 I am no longer able to pursue the career that I had
20 envisaged.

21 This is the background. Our father, Alfred Byrne, was
22 an Irish orphan and our mother, Daphne, was a World War II
23 refugee from Burma. My mother survived the 1941-1942
24 bombings of Rangoon, after that she lived in India and then
25 England where she met our father. I have two sisters,
26 Marcelle and Claire.

27 Q. Actually, Annie, I'm sorry, I did forget. Did you want to
28 make a comment acknowledging your sister Claire who can't
29 be here today?

30 A. Yes, that might be -

31 Q. A good time.

32 A. A good moment. My sister sent me a very beautiful letter
33 which I will pass on to the Commissioners later. But for
34 now I just want to say she has a couple of questions. What
35 she said here is, "What is redress? To restore, to fix, to

1 heal, to make whole or better. Who can give us back our
2 relationship with our father, our mother or restore a
3 broken family to us?"

4 Q. Thank you for sharing those words from Claire, Annie. We
5 are back up to section 1.6.

6 A. So, in 1966 we travelled as a family to New Zealand on an
7 Italian ship called the Flavia. We moved from a North
8 London environment. My father sold the family home to come
9 to New Zealand believing our family, and in particular our
10 mother, would have a better life here.

11 Q. What was it about life in the UK that was difficult for
12 your father and your mother?

13 A. At that time in the 60s, attitudes to racial minorities
14 were beginning to become evident. I think both to be
15 Irish, or to be an Asian migrant were challenging things to
16 be. I think he looked at his children and wondered if he
17 could do something better for them.

18 Q. And that was the solution, was to come to New Zealand?

19 A. (Nods).

20 Q. You detail your journey over and then the next section that
21 we're going to turn to is the section around the abuse.
22 Again for the benefit of those listening, moving to that
23 second statement which outlines the abuse you suffered as a
24 child and young person from age 4 through to 12, you've
25 said to me that you would like for me to set out the
26 context for the abuse and for you to share in addition to
27 your statement, some important points about the abuse.
28 You've suggested this so that those watching who won't get
29 a chance to read your statement until after this evidence
30 has streamed understand the context but without you having
31 to detail what went on again, as you have already bravely
32 done in your written statement, thank you.

33 So, I'm now to summarise the abuse section. From your
34 arrival in this country, you found yourself with your
35 family in Auckland and your main perpetrator, Fr Michael

1 Shirres, Dominican Priest, had regular access to you and
2 your sisters in your family home where he abused you. At
3 that point, you were 4 years old.

4 Shortly after, you and your sisters were placed in an
5 orphanage called Star of the Sea run by the Sisters of
6 Mercy. Shirres had access to you as well there and he
7 continued to abuse you there. You were still 4, you left
8 the orphanage aged at around 7 approximately because you
9 can't be sure and went back to the care of your mother.
10 Still, Michael Shirres, your perpetrator, was involved in
11 your family life. At this point, he had begun a
12 relationship with your mother and he continued to abuse
13 you -

14 **CHAIR:** Speed.

15 **MS HARONGA:** Too fast?

16 **CHAIR:** Yes, thank you. You just got to the part about the
17 relationship with Annie's mother.

18 **MS HARONGA:**

19 Q. At that point when you returned to your mother's care,
20 Shirres had begun a relationship with your mother. He
21 still had access to you, he continued to abuse you up until
22 age 12.

23 So, some of the key points that you want to discuss this
24 morning, can you speak about the pattern of ingratiating
25 that was used by Shirres?

26 A. Yes. The reason I have talked to you about it being a
27 pattern is that when I made our family's story public,
28 other families contacted me. Up until then, although to be
29 clear, there are strange bits of information that float
30 around when you live in a family like that but if someone
31 had asked me, I would have said that in some way we were
32 special, even though obviously by the time I'd gone to the
33 media I knew he had abused other children. What he had
34 done with our family had become something quite different,
35 where our father was alienated, and remember he's called

1 'Father', and there was a sense that he could possibly be
2 our father one day, so that's a little bit different to
3 what happens in a straight abuse.

4 Q. Are you talking about the relationship between him and your
5 mother?

6 A. More the way he conducted himself in the family home. So,
7 when he arrived at home, we would be excited. When I say
8 "we" I'm talking about one of my sisters, about us. We
9 were almost programmed to go "this is wonderful, he's
10 here".

11 So, when I made my story public, I was really shocked to
12 have other people say similar things, that he had
13 ingratiated himself into their families. So, the pattern I
14 saw, from listening to people who do not want to speak, is
15 that a vulnerable family in need of ministry would, if you
16 like, become a target. And while ministering, he was also
17 abusing children in the family. What happened over the
18 years for us, I think this is the right time to explain, is
19 there was a sense that there was a good child and maybe a
20 not so good child. And, again, we found this, I've seen
21 this echo with other people. One family member might still
22 be inclined to have pity.

23 **CHAIR:** Pity for whom?

24 A. For Michael. So, when people talk about what a family
25 should do, it's important to remember that we don't know
26 who these families are when we talk about "families". But
27 in our family, for example, my father was excluded. I had
28 a positive view of Michael. Our oldest sister I think saw
29 through him quite quickly and raised an issue but it wasn't
30 three people that were adults responding. We're talking
31 about three children who didn't talk to each other. Does
32 that make sense?

33 **MS HARONGA:**

1 Q. Completely. So, you're talking there about the confusion
2 in hindsight that Michael Shirres had such a role in your
3 family whilst also being your abuser?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Is that what you are talking about?

6 A. Yes, and the status, that we were a family that had a
7 priest visiting in a car.

8 Q. Were there other elements of status that you were proud of
9 as a young girl relating to Michael Shirres?

10 A. When we were in the orphanage, I think I saw that as a
11 positive thing that he visited because the nuns would get
12 excited and I think I thought that meant we were, you know,
13 a little bit special.

14 Q. What did you learn of Michael Shirres and his impact on or
15 patterns of behaviour with other cultures, particularly
16 Māori, at that time?

17 A. When we first were visited, if you asked me to describe the
18 man who visited, he was a European New Zealander. He had
19 lived overseas with other nation and Pacific communities, I
20 believe, but the man who came to the door was a Pākehā. My
21 mother because of her experiences had assumed that when she
22 came to New Zealand she would learn Māori, that that would
23 be the first thing, and she had said this to him and
24 encouraged him. So, they actually went together to Kingi
25 Ihaka's lessons and I think from there, Michael became more
26 and more involved with Māori people. The Church sent him
27 to, you know, learn the language in an academic sense.
28 When I think back, we witnessed this change. So, the man
29 who came to our house in Mangere, which is when I'm over 8,
30 starts to speak with almost a Māori accent. He arrives
31 with Māori treasures, greenstone, and I mean big
32 greenstone, beautiful objects that he has been given by
33 Māori because of the respect they have for him. And he's
34 quite eloquent. I remember a lot of table discussions
35 about what he was learning. And so, it's as if this Pākehā

1 person morphed into something quite unique and, as I got
2 older, I became aware that other people had given up quite
3 a lot of respect for this.

4 Q. Thanks, Annie. We're just going to move now for you to
5 introduce your memories around Star of the Sea and the
6 Sisters of Mercy. You have spoken briefly about the sort
7 of status that Michael Shirres would have when he visited
8 you there. Did you hold any blames towards the nuns about
9 anything that might be perceived as a failure to protect
10 you from him?

11 A. That specific issue, no.

12 Q. Can you tell us about why you think that?

13 A. Because the nuns had nearly as little power as we did.
14 They worked for the Auckland Diocese. They struggled, as
15 far as I understood, to feed us adequately. They were
16 poor. They didn't have a car. Sorry about the 'ums'.

17 And, again, what is "they", this is a group of women.
18 The woman in charge to my dying day I will think of with
19 love and respect. This was a good woman but she was in
20 charge of a group of people who came from all sorts of
21 different experiences and they were supposedly, we say a
22 community. But if you think about what that might have
23 actually been like, a group of women with very few
24 resources caring for traumatised children. Mainly I feel
25 sorry for them.

26 Q. So, your statement mentions one incident where you and
27 Marcel witnessed some physical abuse against or abuse by
28 the nuns to two Māori girls. Can you talk to us a little
29 bit about those girls before we talk about the abuse
30 incident? What their experience was, as you saw it, in the
31 orphanage?

32 A. Okay. I need to -

33 Q. Yeah, take your time.

1 A. There's just one thing I want to qualify. In my memory,
2 the nuns were mainly Pākehā. That's important when people
3 imagine a community of nuns in those days.

4 So, these - to explain their situation, I have to
5 explain a little bit about mine. So, when we went to the
6 orphanage, my sisters were separated from me because we
7 lived in dorms and they went to day school, so I was left
8 alone in a room that was part of the convent, and that was
9 for, you know, an extended period of time. There was
10 nothing in the room.

11 When these two little girls arrived, they obviously had
12 a big impact on me because there were children and I
13 was - I just remember being at first, you know, just the
14 shock that I wasn't alone. And now a memory that is really
15 more from now, when I think back now I can remember things
16 like they had, I am not sure if they were scars or stabs
17 but these children were clearly not privileged and they
18 were distressed. But we talked to each other and we gained
19 impressions.

20 Then one day there was an event, part of it is my
21 memory, part of it has been filled in for me but my
22 childhood experience was some lollies had been stolen and
23 the lollies were found under the pillow of one of those two
24 children. The nuns had decided that they would get a
25 confession. What I literally experienced was going past a
26 room and seeing those two girls being hit. Now, being hit
27 was not an unusual thing but this was more like a - you
28 have to kind of bear with me please and imagine a group of
29 people in black habits, someone had a shoe in their hand,
30 someone was hitting one of the children and then this was
31 going on with another nun. So, it was like a group of
32 people continuously - I can't even think of a word for it.

33 **CHAIR:** It sounds like taking turns?

34 A. Yes, yes, yes. And there was some discussion. You know,
35 you could hear distressful noises. Now, I don't remember

1 at what time my sister became involved or whether we were
2 together, I just have this memory of seeing the girls and
3 then my sister seeing the girls and I think that then, this
4 is from our discussion, some time must have gone by because
5 we went past the room again and it was still happening.

6 **MS HARONGA:**

7 Q. Was that unusual?

8 A. This happened, this is the only time I experienced this.

9 So, this was like - it was, you know, we were little but
10 seeing children continuously hit is different from a
11 punishment being given. Anyway, my sister, who was older,
12 was really upset and I was really upset and she literally
13 went into the nuns area. So, you know, it's separated out
14 but she broke through into where the head nun was in bed,
15 she was recovering from some sort of heart problem, and my
16 sister got her out of bed and made her come to stop this,
17 which she did.

18 Q. Would that have been normal for a child at the orphanage to
19 go and wake the head nun?

20 A. No, no, no, that broke every, you know, it's a mythic story
21 now, the girl that went in. She was in trouble with the
22 other nuns for doing that. Can I just explain? They
23 wanted the girls to confess to stealing the lollies. I
24 later talked to the nun that was in charge of my dormitory,
25 and I remember saying to her, "Why has this happened?" as
26 you might when you're 4, and her telling me that they were
27 very bad girls because they had stolen and they must admit
28 it. And we're talking children under 4, little.

29 **CHAIR:** Yes, I was going to ask you what sort of age were
30 these two little girls?

31 A. Well, the reason they were with me is -

32 **CHAIR:** They were pre-school?

33 A. Yes, we were all pre-schoolers. But coming up, one of us
34 at least because I went to school a month or so later. Old

1 enough to know what's happening, young enough not to have
2 any status.

3 **CHAIR:** Yes.

4 **MS HARONGA:**

5 Q. Just to drill down on this ethnicity issue, you're also
6 part of a minority ethnic group, what did you interpret
7 from the nuns' treatment of those girls?

8 A. It might sound a little odd but I actually think we became
9 politicized is probably not the right word but I know from
10 then that things did not go well for you if you were Māori,
11 they really didn't, they didn't. It was an unspoken
12 reality. Some people may have had positive experiences, I
13 think our oldest sister speaks fondly of good experiences,
14 but there was a hierarchy of who was favoured and
15 traumatised little minority children were not high in the
16 hierarchy and it was just a given.

17 Q. Had you ever experienced that in your life before?

18 A. No.

19 Q. So, just moving to the effect of going to the orphanage
20 actually for your family unit. So, what happened to your
21 relationship with your father from there?

22 A. I consider that my relationship with both my parents broke
23 then. So, just to explain, my family, my father and mother
24 had a domestic, in my mind it was over the priest and some
25 other issues. When I say in my mind, I am just
26 acknowledging that time and history may change things but I
27 can still run like a movie in my head of my father coming
28 to the door having been estranged, my other sister and I
29 opening the door, there's a domestic, my mother goes into
30 the bathroom. The Police arrive. My father is just
31 waiting quietly for them. They take my father away. I do
32 not know where my mother is. Then I'm somewhere on my own.
33 We recently talked about it and we all think we were at
34 chicken farms, so I don't know, the chicken farming
35 community must have helped out. But then we were in a car,

1 we were driven to the door of the orphanage and, in my
2 memory, the woman driving us says, "Get out of the car, you
3 go there now".

4 Q. Was there any influence over that, in your memory, from
5 Michael Shirres?

6 A. Yes, he'd been at the house. When the Police came, in that
7 sort of, what would you call it, in that movie in my head,
8 I never questioned why he was there but now I suspect maybe
9 someone in the neighbourhood maybe contacted him or maybe
10 it was a Sunday and he was coming anyway but he was there.

11 Q. The next section that we were going to talk about is the
12 impact of abuse beginning at paragraph 3.1 on page 8.

13 **CHAIR:** Can I just confirm because I have your brief of
14 evidence here which will go up on the website but you were
15 there for two years at this orphanage; is that right?

16 A. Yes, but we have the date of entry, I haven't been able to
17 access the date of exit.

18 **CHAIR:** That's all right, I am just wanting approximate.
19 It wasn't a short-lived experience?

20 A. No.

21 **CHAIR:** This went on for some time?

22 A. Yes.

23 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

24 **MS HARONGA:**

25 Q. Were there any other remarks - it could also be an
26 appropriate place to talk about the web page, if you wanted
27 to, otherwise we can talk about that later.

28 A. Yes, because in a way I'm here for two reasons.

29 Originally, I went to the Commission not so much to give an
30 account of our abuse but because of the circumstances that
31 happened later in my life. Just for now, one of those was
32 that I did a Facebook page for Star of the Sea, partly
33 because I was looking for my childhood and that - I think I
34 called it something like the Star of the Sea Orphans
35 Survivors Howick because there's lots of Star of the Seas

1 and over time people would write in with questions and I
2 became aware that the questions are quite tragic, you know,
3 "I want to know something about my great aunt. I want to
4 find out what happened to my mother in the 50s", you know,
5 and you would have these conversations with people.

6 Q. We will touch on the website maybe again as well. The next
7 section was going to be a significant part of reading, so
8 this is an appropriate time to stop.

9 **CHAIR:** I think it probably is. Is that all right with
10 you? It's lunchtime, it gives us an opportunity to have a
11 break and then for us to come back after lunch; does that
12 suit you?

13 A. Yes.

14 **CHAIR:** Thank you, Annie.

15 **MS HARONGA:** What time would you -

16 **CHAIR:** How are we going for time? 2.00 seems to be a good
17 time, so if that suits everybody, we will come back at 2.00
18 and resume your evidence then. Thank you, Ms Haronga.

19

20

21 **Hearing adjourned from 1.00 p.m. until 2.00 p.m.**

22

23

24 **MS HARONGA:**

25 Q. Annie, where we got to before the lunch break was you were
26 about to read the impacts of abuse section beginning at
27 paragraph 3.1 on page 8. Just take your time getting
28 there.

29 A. Oh, okay, yeah. The impact of the abuse. I have struggled
30 with the effects of abuse for my entire life.

31 The education system also failed me. I have no
32 expectation of being safe in a school. That is why I did
33 not disclose the abuse from Michael while at school. I am
34 referring to secondary school. I was treated with
35 antidepressants at the end of my secondary schooling for

1 what they then called emotional exhaustion. Nowadays I
2 think they call it a breakdown.

3 Family. The abuse at times caused major rifts and
4 breakdowns in all my relationships within the family.

5 My relationship with my mother was totally broken down.
6 My relationship with my father was awkward, having been
7 separated at 4 years old. It was also affected by his lack
8 of response to one of his friend's abuse of me. With my
9 father, he and I would talk about politics and ideas but
10 not family issues. I had become proficient in keeping
11 secrets.

12 I need to explain that we took a case, I don't know if
13 you call it a case but my father put a complaint to the
14 Bishop and to the Dominicans when we were adults, it caused
15 all sorts of problems that will become clear. So, we're
16 talking post that.

17 Except for two visits after that came up, I didn't see
18 my father for the rest of his life. 1997, he died in 2003,
19 I think. I feared his anger, his depression and his
20 frustration. I know my father challenged the Church in the
21 1990s, it's recorded in The Tablet newspaper. He went to
22 great lengths to document history.

23 Q. Can you pause there and maybe, and take a moment if you
24 need but also, could you characterise when you say
25 "challenged the Church", what kinds of things was he doing
26 in that newspaper?

27 A. Yes. I need to explain, as I said, our relationship had
28 broken down. I spent a little bit of time with him when I
29 was about 16. You know, there were times when it was not a
30 complete disaster. But when I found out more about my
31 abuse as an adult, I was really, really traumatised and
32 ashamed and I didn't want my father to know any of the
33 details. So, when I heard that he was making a complaint
34 about my abuse, I reacted by trying to shut him down
35 because when you all talk about your fathers, you might be

1 talking about an intimate relationship, but this man was
2 removed from my life at 4, apart from those kind of visits
3 that you have. I would no more have told him about my body
4 than - that in itself would have been traumatic because we
5 had nothing to build on because it was broken.

6 So, when I say he went to great lengths, he took it upon
7 himself to stand up at St Benedict's in Auckland and call
8 Fr Shirres out to say he was abuser but I had no part in
9 that. He wrote about the Dominicans and he went to many
10 better-informed people, so a number of lawyers in Auckland
11 would have known on a social level that my father, Alfred
12 Byrne, felt that this man was a criminal. It was one of
13 those, you could call it like an open secret, so "there's
14 Alfie and he's that problem man who keeps saying bad things
15 about the Church and even his daughter doesn't support
16 him". I think that's a fair picture. Is there anything
17 else?

18 Q. No, we can continue on.

19 A. Okay. I ended up having a relationship with my school
20 teacher that started when I was aged 14, and that's just to
21 provide context. I am still ashamed of my teenage self and
22 my lack of ability to speak to anyone honestly in my family
23 until very recent years. I feared Michael, I feared my
24 father's friend and I literally had no-one to turn to in
25 the adult world.

26 I did bring up two excellent stepchildren and my only
27 son and I am proud of them.

28 Some of this is repeating, so if I jump that's why.

29 In 1977, when I was 15, I first saw a psychiatrist. It
30 was Dr Ogg. My ex-husband allowed me to visit Dr Ogg but
31 told me not to tell him about the abuse.

32 I only spoke about the neglect at Star of the Sea, I
33 don't think I would have even used the word "neglect" and
34 not the abuse of Michael. I saw it as separate, the nuns
35 having provided the basic shelter and food we needed. Any

1 little kindness was magnified, such as a nun giving me
2 three guavas to eat. I was starved for affection or any
3 touch.

4 Medical impact. I suffer from complex PTSD. I have a
5 description here but I would just like to say complex PTSD
6 is indescribable. You will hear descriptors but like right
7 now I am having trauma, that's okay, that's fine because I
8 could possibly, you know, stand on my head while having
9 trauma and some people wouldn't notice. It affects my
10 memory, concentration, especially my ability to work and to
11 make successful friendships and relationships. I also have
12 intermittent aphasia which was the result of a stroke and
13 other health problems. I have Graves' disease and I needed
14 medical repair and management of my reproductive system.

15 I developed a serious lung infection in my 20s and at
16 age 27 I had part of my lung removed. I had an operation
17 at Mercy Hospital in Auckland to remove a lobe. During the
18 operation, there was a discussion as to when I had started
19 coughing. It was then that it was suggested that I had
20 pits in my lungs due to pneumonia I suffered from and never
21 got treated as a child at Star of the Sea. The thoracotomy
22 operation was a real trigger for all the abuse that
23 occurred in the orphanage. The next time I was booked for
24 surgery there I cancelled it while I was already in the
25 prep room.

26 In 1991, I had major surgery that took four hours. The
27 surgeon told me afterwards that he could tell I had been
28 sexually abused as a child. I had signs of an untreated
29 sexually transmitted disease, P, what's it called, pelvic
30 inflammatory disease, which I had had symptoms of since age
31 7. This had caused considerable damage. It took the
32 surgeon a long time to remove the scarring but he was
33 pleased I would be able to conceive a child.

34 After my surgery, I became depressed. My surgeon told
35 me that I needed to get help. He was the first person to

1 ask the right questions about what I had gone through but
2 unfortunately he died not long after that. I was then
3 referred to a psychiatrist and from there, he referred me
4 to a female counsellor. I feel like there's things I need
5 to explain but I can't think what they are.

6 Q. Do you want to have a glass of water?

7 A. Every time I go to the doctor, not my GP but every time I
8 have a medical intervention, I end up having to explain my
9 surgical history. Actually, I even have a red bangle that
10 they put on me at hospital to identify me as PTSD. So, if
11 they're not already treating me like a minority, I'm also
12 treated like a bit of a nutter.

13 **CHAIR:** You feel labelled?

14 A. Yes but I have to do that or it's worse.

15 So, I have received treatment for years. Because of
16 this, I was unable to continue working as a teacher. I
17 continued to not be able to hold down work to this day.
18 Can I just add to that, that I have a Masters Degree in
19 Fine Arts from the Royal Institute of Technology in
20 Melbourne but I actually would not be able to hold down the
21 most limited job, although I'm sure some people think I
22 should.

23 **MS HARONGA:**

24 Q. Just pausing there, Annie. The impacts of abuse that
25 you've bravely gone through with us just now, can you add
26 to that any impact on your faith or as you might describe?

27 A. I kept trying to be faithful, sometimes. So, there were
28 periods of my life where I would have said, "Oh no, I'm not
29 related to Church" but I would find myself going back.
30 After the lung surgery, I moved from Auckland, where I
31 worked in a state school, to Northland, where I worked in a
32 Catholic school. So, at that point I was very impressed by
33 the Rector Fr Darby and I began to think of myself as maybe
34 a lapsed Catholic who had married a divorced person but
35 this was my culture. And I think if you understand the

1 fragmentation of the family, that was one thing I was
2 allowed to identify with. No matter how broken, at least I
3 could say I was that.

4 **CHAIR:** Is that because that was the least shameful thing
5 in your life? Is that what you're saying? It's sort of
6 socially acceptable to come from a broken family?

7 A. It was - I think it was partly the lack of self that comes
8 with this. You get very lost about who you are and even
9 though I knew that this priest had created so many
10 problems, I tried to separate it from what I saw as the
11 good things. And one of the good things was Fr Darby who
12 was very intellectual and very gentle with me and would
13 talk about high theology in a low kind of way. So, yeah,
14 it was something I could participate in.

15 **MS HARONGA:**

16 Q. At the time you were working at Pompallier College,
17 Catholicism was part of your identity back again at that
18 point?

19 A. It was kind of, I suppose other people judge - I don't
20 know. I know for me going to Mass on Thursday morning,
21 listening to the priests who were on the staff relating to
22 the Catholic kids and other kids, I felt like I was trying
23 to rebuild some sort of life.

24 Q. I think that does explain it for us, Annie, thank you,
25 because we're about to then turn to section 4 which is the
26 lead into your eventual redress process that you undertook
27 with the relevant Church authorities. But, of course, at
28 that time you were there working at a Catholic school ran
29 by the Marist Fathers?

30 A. Yes.

31 Q. So, it did help to give some context as to your
32 relationship?

33 A. Yes, I just suddenly realise how odd it must seem.

34 Q. I wonder if you would like to read through from paragraphs
35 4.1-4.6?

1 A. Sure. I'm going to leave out a name, just because it's
2 there randomly.

3 Q. That's fine.

4 A. Otherwise, it will sound like I'm pinpointing someone.

5 Redress. In 1990, I left Auckland and moved to
6 Whangarei where I began teaching. So, the first person I
7 disclosed to was the current Head of Religious Studies
8 there. When I say current, he was current at the time. I
9 told him in the early 1990s. He had come to my art room
10 and we were talking, we'd become colleagues, and he started
11 to talk to me about his concerns about two young boys who
12 he defined as Polynesian who had been abused by a priest,
13 he told me he had talked to the parents and they would not
14 make a complaint.

15 Q. Maybe just take a breath.

16 A. For a long time I thought it was only my family who had
17 been abused by Michael, so I told him about my abuse and
18 out came the name Michael Shirres and I remember being
19 surprised that there were boys that Michael had abused as
20 well.

21 Q. Can you clarify that, Annie? You're talking that your
22 colleague was telling you about an incident?

23 A. Yes, that he had been involved in and his frustration that
24 he couldn't take it further because in his mind he needed
25 the parental consent.

26 Q. And this was your same perpetrator?

27 A. And it was the same man, so I said to him "you're talking
28 about Michael" in the same breath as he's saying "Michael".

29 Q. How old were you at this point, 1990?

30 A. 28 or 27.

31 Q. And was this the first person outside of your family or an
32 intimate partner that you had ever disclosed your abuse to?

33 A. I have no memory of disclosing to other people.

34 Q. Thank you, continue on.

1 A. So, when I disclosed, I asked this man to go to the Bishop.
2 I think I've explained he was a priest. I'm unsure if he
3 did. What he did do was go to the Head of the Dominicans,
4 it may have been the Bishop, that was Bishop Denis Ryan,
5 whoever it was told Kevin to go to the Dominicans.

6 One time I indicated Mike Shirres' name to Fr Darby, his
7 response was to tell me some men should never be allowed to
8 be priests. I felt he was genuinely supportive and I
9 didn't ask him to do anything, assuming it had already been
10 done. So, what I'm trying to say there is, to me, if I've
11 told a priest this thing that I think is of world news
12 seriousness, that surely I wouldn't need to tell it again.
13 I thought, thought that the Bishop was going to drive to
14 the school and fall on his knees outside my classroom. To
15 me, there was this thing in my head, of course they'll be
16 so upset.

17 Fr Darby retired, time went by. By early 1993, I was
18 still teaching at Pompallier but I was finding it really
19 hard to continue working in a Catholic environment. I'd
20 reduced my hours to 4 days a week and that was because of
21 the stress. And then one day I came into the staffroom and
22 there was an advertisement on the school notice board
23 saying that Michael Shirres was coming to the school to
24 speak about Māori spirituality.

25 So, then I disclosed again to the new Principal. He
26 setup a meeting with Gloria Ramsay, sorry his name was Jim
27 Gersham and I think I understood it that Gloria ran an
28 abuse survivor network at the Auckland Diocese and the idea
29 was she would now make a formal complaint.

30 Q. If we can just pause there, you had the help of your
31 Principal, Fr Jim. You were here yesterday for Frances
32 Tagaloa's evidence and some of the other and we heard
33 yesterday in the Church's opening statement that the
34 Catholic Church is made up of numerous autonomous entities.
35 Did you understand that at the time?

1 A. No, not really. I had a friend on the staff who was a
2 priest who would sometimes explain things about, for
3 example, why had - I didn't understand why the other person
4 had gone to the Dominicans or the Bishop. I didn't know
5 who was getting, look I just didn't know, I didn't
6 understand what was going on. I was telling them an
7 emotional thing that was being processed in a different way
8 to people I didn't know.

9 Q. How did you navigate that? Was that through the support of
10 the Principal?

11 A. That should be a simple 'yes' but it wasn't actually
12 navigated. We're now talking about a period of time from
13 1991 to 1995 and by then my brain was not - my brain had
14 melted, my brain had melted, I was trying to go to work.

15 Q. So, I guess, and maybe you've just said it, but I would be
16 looking for any comment you might be able to make about the
17 difficulty survivors face when trying to navigate through
18 the different entities?

19 A. Oh yes, yeah. Well, you are - it's almost, I would say
20 some well-intentioned people, like my colleague, were
21 genuinely trying to say, "Look, this is going to the
22 Dominicans so it may not happen over here or this is one
23 group and this is another". The difficulty is, there were
24 well intentioned people helping as friends and then there
25 was this kind of like a systemic problem. And that is when
26 you ask a Catholic priest where the Church is because you
27 want to complain, they tell you that you're the Church
28 around they say it in such a way that spiritually that's
29 true. But if you want somebody to pay petrol or parking
30 tickets, I don't think you split it up amongst the
31 congregation. So, it's a sort of word, it's like there's a
32 hierarchy of theory. You've got high theory that's, you
33 know, academic and then you've got what we tell the masses,
34 and the masses I think genuinely believe that they are the
35 body of Christ. I think they manipulate that.

1 Q. So, where we left your statement was you are being to go
2 into the meeting with Gloria Ramsay. Can you share with us
3 any memories of that?

4 A. Yeah, that was actually one of those good experiences and
5 that, I think, was what was so confusing, is there would be
6 positive things happening and then the other things that I
7 didn't understand. It's almost like you're a child trying
8 to deal with something quite toxic but Gloria came to my
9 home and took a statement from me and at that point I was
10 like, yeah, this is good.

11 Q. You felt listened to?

12 A. Yeah, yes, I did.

13 Q. And that statement we have exhibited it in the bundle,
14 witness number 0013003, page 02.

15 A. Yep.

16 Q. I wonder if the Trial Director could bring that up. We're
17 looking specifically at point 5 when we get to there, Trial
18 Director.

19 Annie, have you got that page before you?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. What I'm directing you to is some of the requests that you
22 made through Gloria Ramsay who took your complaint. Would
23 you like to talk to us about those or any one in
24 particular?

25 A. Yes. The first ones are what you would imagine from a
26 survivor talking about themselves and their family. But
27 number 5 is the one which led to, I think, retraumatising.
28 If you can be retraumatised from that much trauma. If you
29 could say, this was 100% trauma and then add this. So, my
30 question that day that Gloria recorded was, "How can
31 Michael be 'Safe' when he still has the Mana of the Māori
32 community. The children of the Māori people will be
33 vulnerable. She asks", referring to me, "if the
34 Church/Dominican order", both of them "think that it is
35 O.K. to abuse Māori/coloured children. Are they considered

1 safe to be hurt? She doesn't believe that he should be
2 allowed to hold his Mana". That for me is a big one.

3 Q. I wonder if we could dwell on this point. You talked
4 earlier about your knowledge as a child of Michael's
5 growing relationship with Māoridom. At this time, early
6 1993-1994, what was your knowledge of Michael's mana in the
7 Māori community?

8 A. Well, just the fact that he was meant to be coming to our
9 school to discuss Māori spirituality is a straightforward
10 indication. By that time he also had a PhD and had been a
11 lecturer at Auckland University and I think they called it
12 Māori Anthropology, I'm not sure but he and Henare Tate had
13 put together a course that was quite respected, that a lot
14 of Māori people were involved in and it's this ...

15 Q. That comes a bit later in 1997.

16 A. So, he - another thing to add to that is even when I was at
17 university, at Art School, I recall a day when I actually
18 saw the same sign of "Michael Shirres is coming to talk
19 about Māori spirituality", it's like this was a big day,
20 you know. So, he had a lot of status.

21 Q. Before we move on from that, is there anything else you
22 want to say there?

23 A. About Michael?

24 Q. About that particular issue at that point in time.

25 A. Just that I felt, there was that sort of feeling of he was
26 sort of embedded. If I saw a piece of carving, I would
27 think, oh maybe he's touched it.

28 Q. Thanks, Annie. Reflecting now with some hindsight on
29 Gloria's involvement, did you have any views around the
30 adequacy or otherwise of her coming to represent the
31 Dominicans to you?

32 A. I can just say that if someone else had been going to talk
33 to someone, I probably would have recommended her. So,
34 yeah, that wasn't a trauma.

35 Q. And did you have any follow-up with her after that meeting?

1 A. No. I received a report. I had her phone number though,
2 she'd given me her home phone number.

3 Q. You did later talk to her as well?

4 A. Many, many years later, yes.

5 Q. So, at this time, you were also going through probably what
6 could be termed a separate process with the Dominicans?

7 A. Well, apparently, this is why I got so confused, the
8 Bishop's office lent the Dominicans Gloria. How do you
9 unwrap that?

10 Q. Yeah, we'll hear from Gloria later today, so perhaps she
11 can shed some light or otherwise on that.

12 A. Yep.

13 Q. I guess if we turn back to your statement at 4.7, you could
14 read from there and add anything -

15 A. Okay, I've got it. Under "Jim was then put in touch"?

16 Q. That's right.

17 A. So, "Jim", that's the then current Principal, "was
18 then" - I've said here "put in touch" but what I understand
19 is that Jim and Fr Murnane, that's Fr Murnane is from the
20 Dominicans were in contact. "Jim inferred to me that he
21 knew Michael was an abuser". Jim also spoke what Pākehā
22 consider fluent Māori, so had moved in that kind of circle.

23 So then my sister and I went and talked to Peter Murnane
24 "and asked why nothing had been done" in my first complaint
25 and he told us he thought the complaint was about a woman
26 and not a child, as if that was okay. Later, the person I
27 first disclosed to wrote a letter about our discussion and
28 all he really had to say in it "was that I hated Michael".
29 So, can I just explain that between 1991 and 1993, the
30 issues in Boston, which is the stuff that was highlighted
31 in the *Spotlight*, were just coming out and so, I think
32 people who originally were chatting, were now becoming
33 defensive.

1 "On 29 June 1994, I got a letter from the manager of the
2 Protocol Advisory Committee ...", which I think is the
3 Bishops' one.

4 Q. That's right.

5 A. " ...Terry Leslie, informing me that Michael had been
6 enrolled in the SAFE programme and that he was withdrawn
7 from all Ministry and priestly functions from May 1994 and
8 he was no longer allowed to teach at the Catholic Institute
9 of Theology".

10 Q. If we can just pause on that point. Was that the first
11 time you heard about any disciplinary action for Michael or
12 were you aware of something earlier?

13 A. I really don't recall. I would imagine that would have
14 been the first time. Jim may have said something to me.
15 Can I just say that the real issue for saying that, is that
16 you can see in that, that what I said about the Māori part
17 just was totally ignored. So, it was almost as if I hadn't
18 said it.

19 Do you want me to go on?

20 Q. Yes.

21 A. "I contacted a lawyer" and I had come to believe that the
22 Church would take things more seriously or would only take
23 things more seriously when "it became about money". I saw
24 a Whangārei lawyer. Can I name him?

25 Q. Yes.

26 A. Chris Muston, who acted for me on the understanding that he
27 would have to get his payment from the Church because I
28 couldn't pay him, and he took that on.

29 "Paddy O'Driscoll was the Dominicans' Catholic lawyer"
30 that I remember.

31 "My sister", this sister "and I, had a meeting with the
32 head of the Dominicans from Australia". So, just to give
33 you a little explanation, we've got Michael Shirres was a
34 Dominican, Peter Murnane was the Head of his Order in
35 New Zealand in Auckland but the person they got me to have

1 the meeting with was the head of the order in Australia and
2 that's Mark O'Brien who I think was a theologian as well.

3 "After that meeting" Paddy rang me and "offered me
4 \$20,000". I heard or knew by that stage that "Michael had
5 confessed". We had a phone call that took about two hours,
6 with me explaining why that wasn't an acceptable response.

7 Q. Was your lawyer present for that phone call?

8 A. No, we were on our own. I mean, I was on my own in a room
9 talking to Paddy. So, he started with an offer of \$20,000.
10 We had a conversation where he began to talk about some of
11 his own experiences and it went to \$50,000.

12 Q. At any point, were you encouraged to speak to your lawyer
13 about that offer?

14 A. No, I wasn't actually. I didn't even think about it.

15 Q. Were they aware you were represented at that time?

16 A. I don't remember anything like that. I just remember we
17 had this meeting with the lawyers, which was really
18 horrible. Mark O'Brien actually made me feel, you know,
19 like I might as well go to hell now.

20 Q. Was there something you wanted to share about your feelings
21 there, in terms of – you reflected earlier about the body
22 of the Church and taking from the body of the Church in
23 that meeting?

24 A. Oh yes. One of the comments made to me was that if I asked
25 for compensation, call it what you like but, you know, we
26 were discussing you haven't really got to the guts of what
27 I'm trying to ask you to understand. I was told that Fr
28 Murnane had to grow his own vegetables and this was taking
29 money from the poor basically.

30 Q. Are you saying that was said to you?

31 A. That's what was conveyed to me. To be honest, I didn't
32 believe him.

33 When I made that agreement, I then on the same phone
34 call said that I suggested they make the same agreement
35 with my sisters and not go through the same debacle, and

1 they agreed to that. And I've said here, "I was naive to
2 think that they accepted" my requests about the Māori part
3 be addressed. So, I had that written on paper. We said
4 it, Gloria had heard it. I presumed in this exchange that
5 that would be addressed.

6 Q. If you could continue reading from there, over the page.

7 A. Okay. There was this issue. When Michael confessed, he
8 didn't confess to me, he confessed in a letter to my
9 father. In the letter, he talked about sexual -
10 sorry - sexually abusing the three daughters and the
11 relationship with our mother. As a result of that, I felt
12 Michael had been quite cunning because he knew I would
13 never expose that while my mother was alive. So, yeah,
14 making the complaint "caused a lot of problems". I'm just
15 trying to explain it a little bit more simply.

16 My mother was quite suicidal. So, the idea that maybe
17 we should have just gone public was affected by wanting to
18 protect her. I don't know if that's a sufficient
19 explanation.

20 Q. Certainly.

21 A. And all this was about Michael's behaviour, not Star of the
22 Sea.

23 Q. Did your father have a difference of opinion as well about
24 how it should be handled?

25 A. Yes, he wanted to go to - well, he wanted the daughters and
26 him to go as a group. There's three of us. I worked in a
27 Catholic school, I felt it made more sense and it was right
28 for the three daughters to be a group. And, as I said
29 earlier, I had - I think I met my father twice for the rest
30 of our lives. It became -

31 Q. Did you have a difference of opinion with him about using
32 the media?

33 A. Yes, I did. I was horrified at the idea that our story
34 would be public. I'm still horrified. I'm horrified right
35 now but there doesn't seem to be any other way to address

1 the need for real change. As you know, I could show you
2 many, many pieces of paper, none of which have resulted in
3 authentic understanding.

4 Anyway, he died. That sounds easy, doesn't it. He
5 died, I didn't go to the funeral. My son didn't go to the
6 funeral. My son met his grandfather twice.

7 And then I found the papers that he had left. Yes, he
8 posted them to me before he died.

9 Q. This is your father?

10 A. Yes. So, at some point I sat and saw, perhaps for the
11 first time, his point of view. And I've given many of
12 those papers but not all to the Commission and what I came
13 to understand is that I, with my sisters, doing what we
14 did, had come to one settlement and my father had come to a
15 separate one. In the separate one, the Church lawyers in
16 his account had gagged him in such a way that he agreed to
17 try to stop us talking about the situation.

18 Q. Can you go into some more detail about that?

19 A. Well, that created this - I now understand why we just
20 couldn't fix things. My sister overseas has a letter that
21 I'll pass on. She talks about how she took matters into
22 her own hand and talked to our father and what came through
23 to her was that even though he was so angry about Michael
24 Shirres and the behaviour of the Dominicans, he (a) felt
25 that the Bishop of Auckland was the person who should have
26 disciplined the Dominicans for him and he - can you just
27 help me a minute? Where am I?

28 Q. The Confidentiality Agreement that you discovered after
29 your father's passing.

30 A. Yeah. So, when I saw the papers, there were all sorts of
31 things, letters from a Queen's Counsel, statements from
32 people witnessing things, people going, you know, this is
33 terrible. One of the letters was from a Fr Toomey, it was
34 on quite flash paper. It starts off being sympathetic to
35 my father and in the last paragraph virtually says

1 something like, "You are in danger of slanderism" or
2 whatever the word is. Here we are, we're being sympathetic
3 and we're telling you off. This is actually a really key
4 thing.

5 My father was actually a good Catholic. If a priest
6 told him off, he felt terrible. When the Catholic Church
7 told - in his mind - when the Catholic lawyers, for want of
8 a better word, gagged him, he saw that as the Church
9 gagging him and he wouldn't fight it. I don't know if you
10 can understand how complex that is. Even though he saw it
11 as morally wrong, he was a Catholic to the bone. He had
12 been in a seminary briefly. He could not let go of his
13 love of the Church and his obedience. To be frank, I think
14 what he let go of - I don't think he meant to - but he let
15 go of me at age four. It was just too difficult to fight
16 someone like Michael Shirres who appeared to have such
17 status and there was Dad, you know, a depressed young man
18 who had a temper and couldn't really articulate. He could
19 be very articulate with academics but it was different with
20 priests.

21 Q. So, if we could just, again dwelling on this issue of
22 confidentiality agreements, you are saying you weren't
23 aware until your father had passed that he had signed a
24 Confidentiality Agreement with the Dominicans?

25 A. Their lawyers.

26 Q. Their lawyers. Had you also signed a confidentiality or
27 non-disclosure agreement?

28 A. Yes but mine was different and had quite a different tone.

29 Q. What was the tone of yours?

30 A. Sort of like "we don't really want" - I don't remember it
31 being particularly long. It was almost like, well - I
32 actually got some advice on it later and the main thing was
33 I was not to say how much money they paid me. I think
34 that's the correct interpretation. And I *believed* I was
35 gagged but when I read my father's, I can see the

1 difference. So, I thought I was gagged. I thought I
2 wasn't allowed to tell people but my father was more - it
3 was more than implied with him.

4 Q. How long did you live under the understanding that you
5 weren't allowed to speak of the abuse?

6 A. Until I came back to New Zealand and - there's exactly two
7 things here and it is partly the PTSD. One of the things
8 in Dad's letters was one - one was from the Archbishop Tom
9 Williams and one was from the MP Phillida Bunkle. Sorry, I
10 can't make this clear but I think you'll understand. The
11 guts of it was that Tom Williams, who was an Archbishop,
12 said that they were not be holding people to any gags, and
13 it was a very clear statement, "Tom Williams says we will
14 not stop you". Even though I'd read that piece of paper,
15 it didn't really go in because I can remember trying to
16 contact NOPS [National Office of Professional Standards] to
17 say, "Can I have something in writing saying I am allowed
18 to talk about this?" and I got no reply. So, it was like,
19 yes, I've seen this but is it true? Added to that, in my
20 ridiculous need to have community, I had started to study
21 at the Good Shepherd College, so I was studying theology
22 and I can remember being told by colleague/friend/priest
23 that he didn't believe that the gags held anymore.

24 I took that letter to the Bishop of Auckland thinking
25 that - I'm sorry, I've made a little jump here. Once I
26 woke up, I and my sister took that letter to the Bishop of
27 Auckland -

28 Q. You are talking about your father's letter?

29 A. The one that he sent me from Tom Williams and the one from
30 Phillida Bunkle, to say to the Bishop, "Look, there are no
31 gags", thinking the obvious thing would be to publish that
32 so that anyone who had experienced what we'd experienced
33 would know that, in fact, the Catholic Church wasn't going
34 to silence us anymore. This is a timeframe from 1991, you

1 know, to the 21st century. And then that letter just
2 disappeared.

3 Q. You were hoping for some sort of supported publication of
4 that?

5 A. Yes, I would imagine a four-page spread in national papers
6 because surely you would want to let people know (a) that
7 they're not gagged, because you care, remember you care?
8 And because you've said repeatedly to the public that you
9 want to help. So, I literally, with my sister - so I got
10 all these letters. Sorry, I need to just explain. That
11 happened, time went by. I got the letters out but there's
12 another little incident. Can I just flick to the little
13 incident?

14 Q. Go right ahead.

15 A. So, I've come back to New Zealand, years have gone by and I
16 start to work, which is really good. I was at
17 Victoria Park and there was a store with Māori artefacts,
18 Māori art, and I picked up a card and it had a quote from
19 Michael Shirres on the card, like to endorse the Māori
20 quality, so I thought that's a bit strange. Around the
21 same time on the Internet I had discovered there was a web
22 page about Michael and there was also a publication of his
23 book.

24 Q. So, maybe now is a good time to refer to that book.
25 There's a passage here that the witness is going to refer
26 to. Madam Registrar has it on the projector. We haven't
27 exhibited it but it is part of the public record. When we
28 can bring that up. So, Annie, if you could show us the
29 book and tell us the book's title?

30 A. This is *Te Tangata*, the human person in English, it has
31 Michael Shirres at the bottom and OP, the Order of
32 Preachers. It's published in 1997, if you note everything
33 that happened is before 1997, well before.

34 Q. So, turning to what's actually highlighted helpfully by
35 Madam Registrar, as in the preface?

1 A. Is it okay if I read it?

2 Q. Yes.

3 A. This was written by Henare Tate, "I complement Pā Shirres
4 on his great effort in producing this book at this
5 difficult stage in his life's journey and thank him for his
6 taonga and ōhākī".

7 Q. It has the date 26 February 1997, what did that mean to
8 you?

9 A. It raised the question, and the question is either Henare
10 Tate did not know that he was working with a child sex
11 abuser or he did know and thought this was okay.

12 If he did know, one would wonder why he would do this?
13 If he didn't know, why didn't he know given what we'd done?
14 To me, this was the first evidence that they had not really
15 listened and they had continued to wheel him out *for Māori*.
16 So, please don't tell me we are keeping children safe but
17 we're not going to communicate with the Māori community.

18 So, this is actually where that very garbled story - and
19 I know it's garbled because it was garbled to Liv - but
20 this is where I realised that seriously, the hypocrisy of
21 this is one thing, the cruelty is another. If you did want
22 to read this, and you can buy it, it's about \$50 on
23 Fishpond, I think, or you can get it from a library, but
24 this book is actually about Māori tapu, the intrinsic
25 person, the soul, what makes a human being, how to use
26 karakia. This to me is the most offensive document in our
27 country. I cannot - you have just heard me speak after
28 lunch and that's me in trauma. I'm really lost, and I know
29 I was lost thinking oh no I'm stuffing it up. This is me
30 out of trauma. You see this, this book was written by a
31 known sex abuser. It was promoted by the Catholic Church.
32 I don't give a stuff which body you want to call it or
33 which organisation. Don't tell me that the Bishop of
34 Auckland did not know this was published. Don't tell me
35 that other Catholic academics didn't know this book was

1 published. And explain to me why I found dozens of
2 references to Michael Shirres telling Māori people what
3 their spirituality is. So, something shifted in me. I
4 watched Māori girls treated in the most inhumane of ways.
5 I then grow up in a country where I was told there was no
6 racism and I had a vivid imagination. I worked in a school
7 where there were a number of Pasifika Island/Māori
8 children, there was no doubt in my mind that I encountered
9 children who were not unfamiliar with that kind of
10 hypocrisy. I have lived to see what's happened in
11 Northland and if anyone here doesn't know about Northland
12 just go look up P. Sorry I'm angry. I mean, the idea that
13 any lawyer or academic wants to defend this fills me with
14 shame as a New Zealand citizen. The idea that the Bishop
15 of Auckland went to the media and said that the Dominicans
16 are doing a good job fills me with disgust. I have stories
17 in my head that I have been told by other survivors of this
18 man. I have been told stories that you can be told too if
19 you choose to go and spend time in Northland. I have been
20 told that Māori Catholics will be looking after the
21 Catholic Church's interests. Māori Catholics in
22 Northland - and perhaps someone can help me if I'm
23 wrong - but, as far as I can see, I mean we do have people
24 in charge of Māori Catholicism in the areas and so
25 on - nothing, nothing has been done. I went back into the
26 Catholic Church, I can say to you, as a parishioner,
27 nothing has been done and now we have stories in the media
28 about what is happening to Māori people and the way people
29 just make comments about Northland and I would just like to
30 remind you that Northland was colonised. The man who
31 sexually abused me colonised Māori spiritual theology and
32 no-one has cleaned it up. He is quoted in religious
33 education books. I stole this book, I stole it from Good
34 Shepherd College where there were two copies available.
35 Q. Do you want to have a water before we move on?

1 A. Is that clear?

2 Q. Yes, crystal.

3 A. Sorry.

4 Q. No need to apologise, Annie.

5 A. I found my inner Irishman.

6 **CHAIR:** Are you holding on all right there?

7 A. (Nods).

8 **CHAIR:** Are you okay to carry on?

9 A. Yes, you bet ya.

10 **CHAIR:** Good, carry on.

11 Q. Just before we leave that topic and I want to expand on the
12 idea of Māori Catholicism in Auckland which we have spoken
13 about in length and you have signposted there where we
14 might be able to go.

15 In your statement we exhibited your media article when
16 you went public with your story and that also covered some
17 of these issues as well, but we also have the Reckoning
18 podcast as well which is a great resource about these
19 issues. Can you tell us a little bit about that feedback
20 that you received from your public speaking about this?

21 A. Do you want that in the context of Māori or in the context
22 of -

23 Q. I guess if you could do both, it would be fantastic.

24 A. Okay. I'm sorry I have to often say "somebody told me" but
25 people are actually quite frightened about speaking on this
26 topic. So, "somebody told me" is basically me protecting
27 good people.

28 So, the article came out by Mick Hall, he really
29 researched it well, he covered the people who are experts,
30 there was theory, he spoke to Gloria Ramsay and exposed us
31 as I had agreed. I wasn't prepared for what came next,
32 which was many phone calls, emails, radio. The message I
33 got from someone who worked with a lot of school teachers
34 who were in touch with Māori ideas, was that people would
35 not be saying anything against Pā Shirres. The Bishop made

1 a statement which, on the face of it, sounds like a really
2 good example of the new, what do you call it, safeguarding?
3 So, it's a piece of paper that I found at Church and it
4 basically said the Dominicans were horrified or sad about
5 what had happened and that if you wanted help over Shirres
6 you could go to NOPS. So, I know that he came and actually
7 went to the Church at Moerewa which is an area that
8 struggles, and has a Catholic centre. The media was
9 reporting the Bishop thought everything was pretty good and
10 thank you and don't worry because NOPS is going to come and
11 help you. The message from the local people was, you know,
12 this is Pā Shirres, what are you talking about. Bear in
13 mind that Michael Shirres was very big on Bastion Point and
14 Treaty issues. I don't know if it makes sense, he was a
15 hero.

16 Basically, I went from being afraid and sure that there
17 were a lot more stories just because of what people told
18 me, to having people saying, "I was abused, please don't
19 use my name" and that is one of the biggest problems, I
20 think, for the Commission, is we talk about reaching
21 people. I would say to you that probably very few people
22 in Northland Hospital know that the Commission is on. I
23 would say very few people in schools know the Commission is
24 on. I live in Northland. Northland has not been reached.
25 I have a computer, I'm literate. We're talking about a
26 region where people kind of have to go on a ferry boat to
27 get down to a hospital which is miles from where they live.
28 We're talking about an area with systemic poverty. The
29 Bishop of Auckland goes up one day and tells the people
30 that they can contact NOPS. Can you see a problem?

31 So, I hear from people that the Church is trying hard.
32 I hear from people who say everything is better now, we
33 have *The Path to Healing*, and it is an ineffective ugly
34 document.

1 Q. Before we move to *A Path to Healing*, just lingering on your
2 actual redress process, which I accept we did jump ahead.

3 A. Sorry.

4 Q. That's not your fault, it was very compelling evidence so I
5 didn't want to interrupt you.

6 At the time you made your disclosure, Shirres was still
7 alive and you've noted in your statement that the Police
8 were never notified about Michael and he was never
9 prosecuted. That's because you didn't make a complaint, in
10 terms of your abuse, that's why they weren't notified. Can
11 you talk us through that?

12 A. I didn't notify, partly because as a four-year-old girl I
13 watched the Police take my father away. I had been given
14 to believe that going to the Police would be a traumatic
15 experience and I rather foolishly accepted that. Also, in
16 those days, when I talk to people now it's as if we
17 misinterpreted the law, but there was a thing about
18 10 years after an event and people like me didn't know the
19 difference between whether something was criminal or civil.
20 So, you would hear things and think, oh no, I mustn't do
21 that. Also, there was no mother. You know, I mean really
22 my parents were lost to me from 1966 but I still liked to
23 kind of talk to the body, you know.

24 Q. Are you saying it would have been difficult for your mother
25 if you'd gone to the Police?

26 A. My mother said - and I have no doubt - that she would kill
27 herself. I have no doubt.

28 Q. In that comment, you know, you are encapsulating the range
29 of perspectives on Michael Shirres, still within your
30 family?

31 A. Yeah, we're talking five people who are never addressed by
32 one of these many bodies.

33 Q. That was going to be my next question. Did you receive any
34 apology in person from any Church authority responsible for
35 Shirres?

1 A. My father did.

2 Q. In person?

3 A. A yellow letter, a letter on yellow paper. I don't know,
4 my father didn't talk to me. I love this notion of the
5 family. We could not have been more separated, and that's
6 one of the other things. You know, the whole thing about
7 the Catholic assumption, they assume they know. They even
8 assume they're listening. If they wanted to listen, they
9 could talk to us. My email was in the paper.

10 Q. And what would you expect the Church to have done when
11 they're dealing with your father and you and your sisters
12 separately and you didn't know? What would you have hoped,
13 looking back now?

14 A. You see, I think the thing is there were two Bishops of
15 Auckland, Bishop Browne and then Bishop Dunn. I think they
16 feigned confusion. Excuse me. (Short pause). I just had
17 this memory of my father telling my other sister about
18 being humiliated by the Bishop, various inferences that he
19 was a troublemaker. If you go through all the letters and
20 all the documentation, it's all quite clear. I was saying
21 I don't want my father involved. My sister was saying I
22 don't want my mother dead. My other sister was saying,
23 where is the justice for the abuse? None of us spoke to
24 each other. The three of us, I'm not sure when we were
25 actually together again. It might have only been about
26 five years ago, I'm not sure. The pain of this is not old.
27 This is not historical pain.

28 Sorry, can I talk about Fr Toomey?

29 Q. Certainly.

30 A. As I said, I went back to Good Shepherd College and studied
31 Christology, I love all that. I studied Pastoral Theology
32 and that's what happened. I got a little bit disconnected
33 I think from things, but anyway, I was studying these
34 things, then it got really stressful, another breakdown and
35 I went home to Northland and stayed there. I was getting

1 so ill that I wanted to contact the Dominicans and ask for
2 help with counselling. I did that, met the head of the
3 Dominicans and had had a discussion with him. There was a
4 witness. In that discussion, I said I've seen things like
5 this [refers to book by Shirres, Te Tangata], I don't think
6 you ever listened to what I said about Māori, I am unwell,
7 I need you to help with my counselling and I need you to
8 pay attention. You let a priest do -

9 Q. This was you, Annie, asking for some pastoral support post
10 settlement?

11 A. Yes and for them to make good the situation that I felt
12 they had allowed to happen. Fr Toomey put his hand up,
13 told me he would only talk about what he had in writing,
14 didn't pay for my counselling and left.

15 When I went home, I thought, I don't know what I thought
16 but a few months later there was an article published,
17 written by Fr Toomey, comparing Michael Shirres to Thomas
18 Aquinas. So, after some effort that was removed from web
19 pages etc., although obviously if you have a hard copy of
20 the Catholic news you can find it and obviously it's been
21 put around.

22 I want to explain to you that a very broken version of
23 me went to the head of the Dominicans, raised this. I was
24 given good words, apart from "no, we don't want to hear
25 about anyone except those that are recorded" and that's how
26 much he meant it.

27 Q. So, if we could just pause there, Annie, because we're
28 really coming to the end of your whole statement and your
29 story. I appreciate you've been in the witness box for a
30 long time. We have some sort of closing questions that
31 you've been planning to answer. How are you going in
32 there?

33 A. Fine, okay.

34 Q. What we'd like to look to really is the overall redress
35 process, and I know you've had a good look at the modern

1 *Path to Healing* document. There is one part in that
2 document that talks about the destruction of records after
3 50 years. Can you just tell me, as a survivor, how you
4 interpret that paragraph and what your concerns are about
5 it?

6 A. It tells me that they clearly didn't think about the people
7 you've seen in this room. I can understand saying at least
8 50 years about something but basically, what they say is
9 that - I haven't got it here, but they talk about the fact
10 that after 50 years things will be destroyed. I am 58, so
11 that means if I hadn't come to terms with my abuse until
12 now, the evidence would be lost. Can I also say - because
13 it's really important - one of the other things I found out
14 when I just declared my story with a lot of pressure, is
15 the Catholic Church, Dominicans and the local parish priest
16 where we lived knew that Michael Shirres had a history of
17 child sexual abuse in 1966. They knew that when they did
18 the *Path to Healing*.

19 Q. And I think that was really your main point that you
20 actually wanted to end on?

21 A. No, there's another little bit.

22 Q. I wonder if you could share that.

23 A. I will try and be brief.

24 Q. And what that really goes to, what you're about to share,
25 is what you think the Church authorities dealing with
26 survivors need to be informed by, is that right?

27 A. Yes. There's a few little points. One is, you know, I
28 wrote to the Rōpū [Te Rōpū Tautoko] and offered to talk to
29 them. So, if they wanted to be informed and understand a
30 survivor, they have had an opportunity. They didn't take
31 it.

32 I approached - no, actually the Bishop of Auckland
33 offered that I help with the 2020 book. Virginia Noonan, I
34 think she did answer the phone in the end but basically, I
35 would just encourage anyone to ring NOPS and see how long

1 it takes to get an answer. And when you do get an answer,
2 how much it actually shows any kind of empathy or
3 understanding.

4 So, in that, I discovered and thought this was actually
5 really priceless. It's what they do with crisis
6 management. There are three things you do in a crisis.
7 We've done them with Covid. You cordon, so you stop the
8 spread of the problem. You contain and deal with it, you
9 put boundaries on it. Then you care. The Catholic Church
10 does not know how to cordon because it doesn't even know
11 what it is, it can't find itself. If you can't find
12 yourself but you can find a lawyer, that tells me something
13 isn't quite right in your practice. We have had 2000 years
14 to work out how to behave like Christians. There is no
15 more time, in my opinion we should not be using government
16 funds to support an institution that cannot pick up the
17 phone. That is a failure in basic practice.

18 When they do pick up a phone, they don't understand what
19 their own culture is doing, what's happened or who it's
20 happened to. They have no understanding about trauma and
21 sexual abuse which makes me wonder how they can possibly
22 understand things like the crucifixion.

23 And the only way that I think we can ever see progress,
24 so to now call a halt and say to the Catholic Church,
25 "Stop, you were cordoned, you need to be contained. Yes,
26 you have a right to care". To do that, I think there
27 should be a levy on people who use Catholic facilities and
28 the Catholic Church should be paying a levy. I don't think
29 that New Zealanders would put their taxes into any other
30 system that was this confused.

31 **MS HARONGA:** Thank you, Annie, for your evidence today. I
32 think we've certainly covered a full range and that really
33 just speaks to your varied experiences with the Church. I
34 will pass back to Madam Chair for any questions.

1 **CHAIR:** Annie, we have conferred and we are not going to
2 ask any further questions. I just want to make it quite
3 clear that's not because we're not interested. We are
4 completely absorbed in what you've told us. We have read
5 your statement. We have read the accompanying documents
6 which speak volumes, quite frankly, and so we are not going
7 to put you through the ordeal of raising further minutiae,
8 I think we have plenty here for us. I will ask Dr Erueti
9 to address you.

10 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Tēnā koe, kua tāe mai mātou ki te wā
11 mutunga (inaudible words).....anei mātou te Kōmihana tēnei te
12 mihi nui ki ā koe. Kei te mihi hoki ki tō whānau, ki ā koe.
13 (Thank you, we have come to the end of your evidence.....the
14 Commission would like to thank you and your family today).
15 On behalf of the Inquiry, I want to thank you for coming
16 and sharing your experience and recognising how difficult
17 it is to speak in the public domain. But, as you say,
18 there can be a lot of passing around of paper and shuffling
19 of paper is one thing but to come here and hold forth and
20 talk and give compelling evidence about your experience is
21 another thing. So, on behalf of all of us, we want to
22 thank you for your korero. Kia ora.

23 **MS HARONGA:** If we could take five minutes?

24 **CHAIR:** We will take the afternoon adjournment, it's right
25 on time, before we start a new witness. Thank you very
26 much.

27

28 **Hearing adjourned from 3.25 p.m. until 3.40 p.m.**

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GLORIA RAMSAY - AFFIRMED
EXAMINED BY MS HARONGA

MS HARONGA: Tēnā kōrua, tēna koutou ngā Kai Kōmihana anō. Tēnei te mihi ki ā koe, Glo. Can I ask Madam Chair to complete Gloria Ramsay's affirmation.

CHAIR: Yes, I will. Good afternoon Gloria, happy to be called Gloria or are you more of a Glo person?

A. I am definitely a Glo.

CHAIR: Then Glo it is. (Witness affirmed). Thank you very much.

MS HARONGA:

Q. Thank you. So, if I could just acknowledge Ted and Colleen in support. For the benefit of the Commissioners, Glo is certainly welcoming any questions you may have throughout and at the end of her evidence.

At the outset, Glo, I would just like to acknowledge the tragic loss that your family has recently suffered. I just note that because you are giving your evidence still at a time of grief and we do acknowledge that and your bravery being here today.

A. Thank you for doing that.

Q. As you know, we can take a break at any time for as long as you need.

A. Thank you.

Q. As you are also aware, this statement can be taken as read by the Commissioners presiding. It's been your decision today that you are going to read into the record some parts of your statement and answer questions as we go.

So, if I can invite you to begin from your statement which should be before you?

A. Mm-Mmm.

1 Q. That would be dated the 15th of September on the first page
2 and if you could begin reading in the introduction section,
3 we are looking at paragraphs 1.1, 1.3 and 1.4.

4 A. "My full name is Gloria Mary Ramsay" but I am known as Glo
5 and I prefer that name. "I was born in 1950 in Auckland
6 and I am 69 years old", just, soon to be 70.

7 "I was sexually and emotionally" and spiritually "abused
8 while attending St Mary's Convent in Northcote in Auckland.
9 The abuse occurred between 1957 and 1959 when I was aged
10 between 7 and 9 years old.

11 "When I was born, I was taken away from my biological
12 mother shortly after my birth. My biological mother left
13 me in the hospital", St Helen's Hospital it was actually,
14 "when I was a few days old and I was put into the care of
15 the State for adoption. I do not know where I was living
16 for the time that I was in care of the State. All my
17 adoption paperwork refers to me as being an 'illegitimate
18 child'", indigent I think is the word used as well. "The
19 stigma of this followed my adopted parents around".

20 Q. Were there any stipulations made about your religion on
21 your adoption order, committing you to the State care to be
22 adopted?

23 A. Yes, there was.

24 Q. What was that stipulation?

25 A. That I be raised a Catholic. I had to be raised a
26 Catholic.

27 Q. Do you know why it was recorded on the order that you
28 should be raised and educated as a Roman Catholic?

29 A. No idea why really. I am just looking to see where this -

30 Q. We are looking at paragraph 1.6.

31 A. Thank you. "I am not sure why I had to be raised a
32 Catholic as my biological mother was not Catholic and my
33 biological father was not named on the birth certificate.
34 The requirement that I be raised and educated a Catholic
35 has determined my entire life. By that I mean, my adopted

1 parents were required to commit to raising me as a Catholic
2 to be able to adopt me". So, yeah, that had quite a strong
3 influence on everything really.

4 Q. Looking now at paragraphs 1.14-1.18 on page 3, I think you
5 wanted to read those?

6 A. Yes. "Although Mum was a Catholic, I don't recall Mum
7 being that staunch or devout when I was little".

8 Q. There you are talking about your adopted mother?

9 A. Yes, yes. "I started St Mary's when I was five years old.
10 I remember being told that I had to go to this 'special
11 school' because I was Catholic". It didn't make a lot of
12 sense to me because I wanted to be at the same school as my
13 friends that I was growing up with.

14 Q. One of those is your support person there today?

15 A. Yes, he is, yeah. "Closer to the time of my first
16 communion, when I was around seven, Mum started to take me
17 to Mass regularly. I think there was some pressure on
18 her". Actually, when I think back to it, I can remember in
19 the classroom we would get asked on Monday mornings who was
20 at Mass on Sunday. And when I never put my hand up, I
21 think that's when the pressure started to come on my Mum to
22 take me to Mass on Sundays.

23 "We would bus", yeah, "we would bus from home", that was
24 in Verrans Corner in Birkenhead "to St Mary's parish in
25 Onewa Road".

26 Q. Just remember the speed, Glo, because we have our sign
27 interpreter catching up as well, but if you keep going as
28 you are, just a little bit slower.

29 A. Yeah.

30 Q. Continue from where you were, paragraph 1.16.

31 A. Yep. "Later, after I had found out about my adoption, she
32 would tell me that if she hadn't adopted me, she wouldn't
33 have to go. She wouldn't 'have to sit through this' if it
34 wasn't for me. I expect that this was quite often when she
35 might have had other things on her mind or possibly a

1 hangover, not wanting to be there but having to go because
2 that was the commitment she had made in order to adopt me".
3 She made that commitment to my great aunt Dame Hilda Ross
4 who had arranged my adoption.

5 "Other days she attended with me no problem and that was
6 just one of the messages I got when I was a little girl."

7 Q. So then we're moving on to talk about how you found out
8 that you had been adopted. You could probably just
9 continue reading there from 1.17.

10 A. "When I started school, I was in awe of the man in the long
11 black dress with the white back to front collar. This was
12 Fr 'Frank' Terry who later became my abuser. Fr Terry was
13 based at St Mary's parish in Northcote in the 1950s. One
14 day at school, we were talking about Joseph being a foster
15 parent to Jesus". It was just before Christmas. "The
16 teacher asked if anybody in the class was adopted. One of
17 my classmates said that I was and that I didn't live with
18 my real parents. Until this point, I had no idea that I
19 was adopted. My classmate had overheard the adults in her
20 family talking about the fact that I was adopted.

21 My mother was really more than upset, she was absolutely
22 devastated "when I came home and innocently asked her 'Why
23 aren't you my real mother? Where is my real mother?' and
24 she actually went to stay with her friend that night".

25 Q. Did that leave an impression on you, that she left the
26 house that day?

27 A. The big part about that, was I had already started being
28 abused at that time and what it said to me was I'd already
29 been given this message that I was actually a really bad
30 child and so, this just really reinforced it. It just
31 really reinforced that because my birthmother obviously
32 didn't want me and now Mum had gone away that night as
33 well, she didn't want me, and it just, it changed
34 everything really, our relationship, my relationship with
35 Mum changed after that.

1 It was difficult and it happened after the abuse had
2 occurred, as I said earlier, and confirmed to me my
3 feelings of being bad.

4 "Once everybody knew I was adopted, I was faced with the
5 stigma of being an illegitimate child in the 1950s. All of
6 this, compiled with the abuse I suffered, made my life as a
7 little girl very difficult. I was very confused and very
8 wounded" at that time.

9 Q. So, we're now going to read through the section all the way
10 up to paragraph 2.13, actually further. Maybe if you start
11 reading and I can pause you with some questions at the end
12 of that section.

13 A. Thank you. "I remember some of my classmates, both girls
14 and boys, at St Mary's being called regularly to the
15 presbytery to see Fr Terry. This began happening when I
16 was around seven years old and approaching the age of
17 communion.

18 "A classmate's name would be delivered to the teaching
19 Sister on a note and then that person would go to the
20 presbytery. The same children were summonsed regularly,
21 sometimes one after the other". And there were girls and
22 there were boys.

23 "I recall one classmate who was also a boarder at the
24 school receiving a note saying to me that she was going to
25 have to go and see father to tell him about the rudies that
26 she was having with *her* father. At such a young age, I had
27 no idea what she was talking about".

28 Q. Did that comment later make sense to you?

29 A. Yeah, about 35 years later. "One day my name was on the
30 note. I remember feeling very special as this was the
31 first time I had been called to the presbytery to see Fr
32 Terry.

33 "In the presbytery, Fr Terry put me on his knee. I
34 later woke up lying on a cold, hard floor in a strange
35 room. My head was spinning, and I was retching and

1 struggling to breathe. I could hear a man's voice in the
2 distance and Fr Terry's housekeeper was wiping my face with
3 a damp cloth and just saying to me 'there, there'".

4 Q. How old were you at the time, at this time?

5 A. It was approaching first communion time, I was probably
6 seven-and-a-half, eight, I don't know for sure how old I
7 was. "After that, a nun came in with a spare set of
8 clothes for me to change into. It is the only time I was
9 called to the presbytery. I'm sure that Fr Terry sexually
10 abused me while he masturbated. Even though I have had
11 counselling and hypnosis, I have not ever been able to
12 recover a full memory of that abuse. But after that,
13 Confession became the gateway to the next lot of abuse. Fr
14 Terry would force me to confess to having engaged in
15 'impure actions' with other children.

16 "Confession would last a long time because he kept
17 asking me to describe what other children were doing to me
18 and to confess my 'impure sins' but I didn't know what he
19 was talking about. Then he told me of things he knew I had
20 done, even though for me they had never happened.

21 "I eventually learned to lie and just repeat the things
22 that never happened to please him so that Confession could
23 end".

24 I can't explain this. It was mental torture and I've
25 got a letter here from another victim who I think she
26 expresses it much better than me. I can't find the words
27 to explain or to express the insanity of what that man did.
28 I just, it's just beyond me.

29 Q. If you would like to read, and we do have that survivor's
30 consent to share her letter.

31 A. Yep. Is that okay? Now?

32 Q. If you would like to, if you think that's a good time, Glo.
33 You can refer to the part about Fr Terry and we can come
34 back to the letter later as well if you want.

1 A. This is a copy of a letter that another survivor has
2 actually sent to the Commission and I'll just start where
3 it's important in the letter, and I do have her consent to
4 read this.

5 "I think my greatest concern is that my abuser, Fr
6 Terry, pressed to the Auckland Catholic diocese will go
7 unnoticed during the Inquiry. It is my belief that this
8 man would be one of our country's most prolific child sex
9 predators, given that he had years of access to children,
10 both in parish schools at the Knock Na Gree camp, Oratia,
11 and at the Catholic School Netball Association. He may
12 have had other opportunities I don't know of. He was what
13 I would describe as a psychological killer of children's
14 innocence" - this is the key part - "because his abuse
15 always shifted to his victim and their families as the
16 guilty offenders". But to me, it wasn't to the families,
17 it was to other children. That's the part.

18 Q. That's your description and he was able to do that with you
19 through the confessional?

20 A. Through the confessional, yeah. And I don't believe it was
21 just me. I heard from so many other people who had those
22 bad experiences in that confessional, yep.

23 Q. Thank you for that, Glo, we may refer to that letter again
24 later because I know there are other parts of it that are
25 important.

26 A. Thank you.

27 Q. You were up to paragraph 2.10.

28 A. "While he was encouraging me to describe these so-called
29 'impure actions', I could hear him breathing heavily and
30 the confessional room would shake".

31 The confessional room also had this really deep horrible
32 musty smell in it and it just made one feel, like as a
33 child, the smells and the sounds and the breathing and the
34 whole thing, the trauma was really intense.

1 "Fr Terry would routinely tell us the story of Saint
2 Maria Goretti, the 12-year-old girl who forgave her rapist,
3 even though we had no idea" [as] little children, seven and
4 eight, "of what rape was. He also reinforced in us the
5 view that victims were always to blame. They should be
6 prepared to die a martyr, rather than allow someone to be
7 impure with them.

8 "Every time I had to attend confession, I would feel
9 sick. Sometimes I would faint, vomit and cry. Eventually,
10 my mother took me to see two different doctors who couldn't
11 find anything wrong".

12 Q. Did you want to pause there and talk at all about those
13 medical interventions?

14 A. At this point, I found out I was adopted and I was in the
15 middle of this trauma at the same time and I didn't want to
16 say the wrong thing to my mother because I had upset her so
17 much when I talked about my adoption. So, I didn't, all I
18 was trying to do was please everybody and with the doctors,
19 the first doctor was just our GP and he made a referral to
20 this other doctor who I don't know who he was, I was too
21 young to remember that but one of the things that really
22 affected me with that second doctor, was his gentleness and
23 his empathy as he was - just something about when he looked
24 at me, I suddenly felt like he understood but he didn't but
25 I felt like, I felt better. I felt something, I don't know
26 but yeah, but they didn't find anything wrong, my bloods,
27 everything was fine but of course it was just trauma,
28 that's what was really wrong with me. In those days, they
29 didn't know about trauma.

30 It seemed to me that most of the children, including
31 myself, when we went to confessions, would want to get to
32 the other side, there were two priests, there was two
33 sides, so we had one side and we had the other side, Fr
34 Terry here and Fr Foley over here, sometimes it could be

1 the other way round, you never really knew which side which
2 one would be on, so it was a bit of Russian roulette.

3 "Fr Foley was a lovely gentle man. Fr Terry was a very
4 mean man. He was actually very mean to Fr Foley as well
5 and would force him to go for long periods without food. I
6 can remember women in the parish would worry openly about
7 Fr Foley and the treatment he endured".

8 Q. There were also Sisters at the school?

9 A. Yes, there were.

10 Q. You do have one incident that you have outlined there where
11 your mother saw an injury from some physical abuse and your
12 understanding is she complained?

13 A. Yes, yes, she did.

14 Q. Did you have anything to share about that?

15 A. I don't know what happened about that. I think I changed
16 classes. I think I went to a different class after that,
17 yeah, so that got some action.

18 Q. And then the other incident around your piano teacher, I
19 think you did want to talk about that?

20 A. Yeah. "My piano teacher at St Mary's was another Sister.
21 She was often emotionally, verbally and physically abusive
22 towards the students. She taught in the classroom as well.
23 Sometimes she would scream, throw books, hit students with
24 rulers, dusters, anything that could fly really. I
25 remember one incident where a girl was being hit repeatedly
26 while she was under the desk". She went under the desk
27 because the nun had sent her under the desk to pick
28 something up that she had thrown down, and then as the girl
29 went under the desk she jammed the seat down so that she
30 couldn't get up. And while she was trapped under the desk,
31 she kept screaming at her to get up, hitting her with this
32 great long ruler but holding the seat down so she couldn't
33 get up. And for me, that was really traumatic. I'd never
34 witnessed violence to that degree and so for me, that was

1 extremely stressful but then I had to go to a music lesson
2 with her.

3 Q. The same teacher?

4 A. The same teacher, so that made going to music really a
5 scary thing too, so that joined into the fear of going to
6 the confessional but then there was this fear of going to
7 music as well, so they sort of coincided.

8 Q. Your mother ended up overhearing?

9 A. She did.

10 Q. A session of verbal abuse from this teacher, what was the
11 outcome of that?

12 A. Yes, I was in the middle of a piano lesson and she was
13 screaming at me and Mum just happened to come early that
14 day to pick me up, which she never normally did, I caught
15 the school bus. They were taking me and another friend, I
16 think we were going to the beach or something but it was a
17 surprise for me. She arrived at the music lesson and heard
18 everything, so she made a complaint to Mother Placid, who
19 was the Mother Superior at the school at the time, and I
20 didn't have any more music lessons with that Sister.

21 Q. Do you know what happened to that Sister?

22 A. She was moved shortly afterwards, about the same time as Fr
23 Terry was moved.

24 Q. How did it affect your life, the abuse at the piano lessons
25 specifically?

26 A. Before I had her as a teacher, I was doing really well with
27 my music. I had passed all my exams that I was sitting. I
28 loved the piano, I had been playing it since I was like
29 3 years old. And afterwards, I had a new teacher who was a
30 lovely lady but every time I went, I just, I could not play
31 the piano, so I lost my ability to continue my music which
32 has been - having just found out my birth father was
33 actually a pianist has been quite a big thing to realise I
34 lost that.

35 Q. That's something you've recently found out?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. I think that was that section. We're now sort of moving to
3 the section entitled, "The abuse of others".

4 A. Mm-Mmm.

5 Q. From that letter from the survivor, it's already been
6 mentioned, the access that Fr Terry had to other situations
7 where there were children and you detail that at 2.23, so
8 maybe if you want to start reading from 2.24?

9 A. "At school, a classmate disclosed to me that something had
10 happened with Fr Terry and she [had] told her father about
11 it. She told me this while we were on a school bus. I
12 didn't take it in at the time. I didn't make the
13 connection then that it was likely the same offending that
14 had happened to me. I was terrified of him but back then I
15 thought I was the only one and that what happened to me
16 happened to me because I was bad. I was illegitimate and I
17 was adopted".

18 Q. Do you want to expand on that, in terms of how you were
19 making sense of the abuse at the time?

20 A. I just had that real sense of worthlessness really, I
21 suppose, like deep down. I mean, I certainly put on a big
22 mask as well. We all wear masks, I wore a very good mask
23 but inside myself I wasn't a very happy kid really at that
24 point.

25 Q. Continue on.

26 A. Because her father had made a complaint about Fr Terry, "he
27 was then moved out of the parish and I didn't encounter him
28 ever again. Fr Jim Shanahan came next to the parish and he
29 was just lovely. He said to me later as an adult that he
30 knew something had happened to the kids when he first
31 joined the parish because the children were always around
32 him behaving differently and actively looking for physical
33 attention, which I now know to be a common behaviour in
34 abused children".

- 1 Q. So, the next paragraph skips on to when you were then
2 married, pregnant with the first of your soon-to-be six
3 children. Can you just pause there and let us know, what
4 was your relationship with Catholicism between school and
5 that later stage of your life when you were married?
- 6 A. From the time I started school at St Dominic's really I
7 tried to avoid going anywhere near a Church. And so, when
8 it came to getting married, Mum - well, I had to get
9 married in the Church, she'd promised I would be a
10 Catholic, so I had to be married in the Church, so we went
11 back to the Church for marriage. My husband went and saw
12 the priest and had instructions, as they used to do in
13 those days, and he told me they mainly talked about
14 football but, yeah, we got married in the Church but that
15 was it and when our children, when our first three children
16 were born, I insisted, well, we had to have them Christened
17 but they were all Christened in the Anglican Church which
18 we never attended but we took them along there for
19 Christening, so I had nothing to do with the Catholic
20 Church really.
- 21 Q. At 2.27 you talk about what brought you back into really
22 the Catholic community.
- 23 A. "When my second daughter was six months old, she got
24 meningitis and was on life support. At this point I
25 bargained with God". My husband begged me to pray and I
26 thought God won't listen to me if I pray but he begged me,
27 he said, "I can't pray, I don't believe". So I did and I
28 did a deal and I said "I'll come back to Church if my baby
29 survives". She made a full recovery and I returned to the
30 Church, not straight away but over a period of time.
- 31 Q. And then the next paragraph talks about what was to become
32 the beginning of your disclosure of having been a victim of
33 sexual abuse as a child. Can you just tell us about after
34 your daughter's recovery, what was your involvement like
35 with the Church as a parishioner?

1 A. When I finally did get back into visiting the Church, I
2 found it had changed a great deal from the Church that I
3 had known as a child. It wasn't Latin mass anymore, for
4 one thing, so it was English and there was a whole
5 different, a whole different experience of going into that
6 environment, and I gradually started to get involved.

7 Q. What sort of activities were you involved in?

8 A. Mainly the things with children because by that stage I had
9 then three/four children and it was to do with things like
10 children's liturgy and I love the way, the creative aspect
11 of having children's liturgy, such a different experience
12 to what my own childhood experience had been, I wanted my
13 children to have the best, you know and I wanted them to
14 have a better mother as well. At that stage I was in play
15 centre, I was doing training, so I'd done parent education,
16 yeah, that comes up further down the track, doesn't it?

17 Q. It does, yeah.

18 A. Yeah. So, I became, yeah, deeply involved, volunteering in
19 children's liturgy and anything that was on really.

20 Q. A comment you just made then about wanting your children to
21 have a better parent, a better mother, was it that you
22 said?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Do you want to explain what you mean by that? Did you have
25 any - do you want to talk about that later?

26 A. I think it might be better to come up later with the
27 information we've got but, yeah, I had pretty low
28 self-esteem about myself as a parent absolutely, yeah.

29 Q. Now reading from 2.28?

30 A. Thank you. "One day in the 1990s", gosh we are a long way
31 ahead, "I was talking to a friend who also attended St
32 Mary's after another of our classmates had passed away. We
33 were talking about school when my friend suddenly said to
34 me 'bloody Terry'". Probably not quite like that either
35 but it was just her expression at the time when she said it

1 and then I said it and then we looked at each other. And
2 then she said something else, she said "I had to go to the
3 Presbytery" and as soon as she said that it was suddenly
4 like, it was like a lightning bolt moment and I looked at
5 her and I realised that she'd been abused, I'd been abused,
6 and we both said it at the same time "you too", it just was
7 a moment in time that you can't really go back on really.

8 Q. Was it important to you that you weren't the only one?

9 A. Absolutely. It just, it was incredible. It was - I'd
10 always believed it was only me and that it was because I
11 was so bad, it was because I'd been adopted, it was because
12 I was illegitimate, that there was something really wrong
13 with me, all of those things and I think for me that moment
14 of realising and then when she said to me "and there's
15 others", it was just like so empowering, it was just like,
16 wow, I believed a lie all my life.

17 Q. And just for context, this friend that you're speaking of
18 is the one who sent you the letter you quoted from earlier?

19 A. Yes, yes, it is, it is, yes.

20 Q. So, you were also - so, that was in the 1990s and you went
21 on to become a founding group member of a survivor support
22 network in 1991, along with that same school mate; is that
23 right?

24 A. Yes, yes.

25 Q. Can you tell us about how that group formed?

26 A. Well, by this time I was actually working for the Church.

27 Q. As a pastoral assistant?

28 A. As a pastoral assistant. I had gone on and been studying
29 theology and my involvement in the Church had become quite
30 strong. Yeah, so, probably the first people or the first
31 person I then told after that moment with my friend was my
32 husband and then the next person I would have told would
33 have been probably somebody at work and I am not sure which
34 order that would have happened.

35 Q. Did you also tell your mother around that time?

1 A. I did, I told Mum but not quite at that time. It would
2 have been after, after I'd already acknowledged it at work.

3 Q. I just ask because we've heard some evidence yesterday
4 about the difficulties in telling one's parents. Did you
5 have any thoughts to share around difficulties with telling
6 your mother?

7 A. I did because Mum had been so dedicated in making sure that
8 I got raised as a Catholic because that was what was
9 required for her to do, and then having done that and then
10 to find out that I'd been abused, I didn't know how well
11 that she'd be able to accept that. And I was right, like
12 when I told her, Mum was absolutely, like she was
13 devastated. The only saving grace was that Dad had already
14 passed away. For Mum, it was quite a shock, it was a
15 really big shock for her because at that point, although
16 when I was younger she didn't like going to Church very
17 much, she'd rather stay and have a beer, after Dad - as
18 years had gone on, she'd become more committed to the
19 Church as well and she was getting a lot of - she had a lot
20 of friends in the Church and so it was just a big deal
21 really to tell her that, yeah.

22 Q. If we could just go back up from the statement, I think you
23 were going to share some of your perspectives on working
24 with the Network.

25 A. Yes.

26 Q. Not to be confused with the modern day iteration of Liz and
27 Murray's Network but the Network or group of Survivor
28 Support Network that you established with that same school
29 mate.

30 A. Yes.

31 Q. Could you tell us about those early sessions and what kind
32 of perspectives were there?

33 A. So, what happened was that we - when I went back to work
34 and I talked about what had happened, and that I wasn't the
35 only one and there were others of us, I told my boss who

1 was actually the parish priest at St Patrick's Cathedral at
2 that stage and a mentor there. They both, I mean the
3 Bishop, St Patrick's Cathedral is the Bishop's Church, so
4 that was the next step, was to tell the Bishop. So, for me
5 and my friend - so, for my friend and I, it was really
6 important to actually make a change. Like, that's what
7 happened for both of us; we can't let this keep going, we
8 have to do something to bring about change.

9 Q. And that was the instigation of forming the group?

10 A. The group. So, initially, it was for me to tell the Bishop
11 on behalf of us.

12 Q. When you went to speak to the Bishop the first time, was
13 that about the survivors group that you had established?

14 A. Yes, that's right, yeah. So, we gathered together somehow,
15 I can't remember exactly how it all came together but
16 suddenly we had a facilitator available and a counsellor to
17 facilitate a group and because there were more than, yeah,
18 there was three of us from Terry, the group was formed and
19 we had other victims join the group who had been abused by
20 other people.

21 Q. And just thinking of even specifically that first session,
22 when you say there was a counsellor and a facilitator made
23 available, do you mean having been supported by the Church
24 to be there or they made themselves available in a
25 voluntary capacity?

26 A. In a voluntary capacity, yeah.

27 Q. And what was discussed at that first meeting, do you
28 remember, or the themes, the ideas?

29 A. Wanting to make a difference, wanting to do something
30 constructive to bring about change, to ask for
31 accountability. There was a lot of information coming out
32 from other countries at that time. There were
33 documentaries being shown, like on 60 Minutes about the
34 abuse revelations in America, abuse revelations in
35 Australia, and it was really becoming quite vocal, so this

1 was 1990, 1991, 1992 and it was like a can of worms was
2 opening up, and lots of resources were being made available
3 as well as people started to want to bring about change and
4 accountability.

5 Q. Was any resource provided to your group by any Church
6 authority to that group specifically?

7 A. We got a small amount of funding. We got a PO Box number
8 so people could write to us if they wanted to contact our
9 group. We had resources provided but I think they were
10 mainly provided by members of the group as they gradually
11 started to collect things. There were materials coming in
12 from the USA, books, workshop material. So, that's where
13 our group's focus really started to grow, was actually
14 wanting to do some education and some challenging of the
15 Church about what wasn't happening and that it had to stop.

16 Q. And so, you touched on it before, that your first job for
17 that group was to go and tell the Bishop that you existed.
18 Can you talk us through that and your role overall with
19 that support group?

20 A. I guess, my role with the support group was really to be a
21 liaison between our group and the Bishop at that point.

22 Q. And you were in a good position to do that because you were
23 a pastoral assistant at the time?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. So, can you tell us some of the things that you would have
26 done for the support group in that liaison role?

27 A. We made recommendations to the Bishop, so there's quite a
28 few documents I think that we have attached.

29 Q. We have those.

30 A. I wrote letters, I sent faxes on the Cathedral fax machine
31 which one Bishop was very upset about, getting faxes about
32 survivors groups off the Cathedral fax.

33 Q. I guess an example of this would be exhibit number 0021003,
34 page 01. There's only one page of that but that's a letter

1 from you to the Archbishop of Wellington formally
2 introducing the group?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And I think the next exhibit was a response that you had
5 there, so that would be exhibit 0021004-001. This is a
6 letter 2 October 1992, this is a response from the
7 Archbishop of Wellington. Just if I could speak to my
8 Trial Director here. (Short pause). We're just
9 highlighting the final paragraph there. Is this an example
10 of some of the response that you got from your letters?

11 A. Yes, that was one of the good ones.

12 Q. Did you see any action taken on your recommendations, aside
13 from response to your letters?

14 A. Well, minimal, minimal.

15 Q. We have an example of one of the bad letters, that's one
16 for the Commissioners to review perhaps because -

17 **CHAIR:** Is this the letter from the Hamilton Diocese?

18 **MS HARONGA:** Yes, it's too hard to highlight just one part
19 of that but it's in the bundle and it's taken as read.

20 **CHAIR:** Yes. That is [WITN0021005] from Edward Gaines, the
21 Bishop of Hamilton?

22 A. That's right.

23 **MS HARONGA:**

24 Q. Can you talk us through some of the education outreach that
25 the group was doing in the community at the time?

26 A. Initially, one of the things that the group first got
27 involved in was a workshop that was being promoted by a
28 men's group about family violence prevention and we said
29 that it's all very well to be promoting family violence
30 prevention as a Church but what about the violence that's
31 going on within the Church? So, that was one of the first
32 things I think that we actually tackled, that we actually
33 said, "Actually, you know, you've got to clean your own
34 house first, our own house first". We owned it as our own
35 house as well. And so, the first project would have been

1 that workshop for which we all got quite involved in
2 supporting the launching of that.

3 And what happened as a result of that, was it resulted
4 in the workshop becoming a place of disclosure of sexual
5 abuse harm, not just within the Catholic Church but with
6 many Churches that attended that gathering. That was at St
7 Paul's in - I think that was in 1993, if I'm right. As a
8 result of that - it was attended by Police, we had CYPS
9 [Children and Young People's Services] people there, there
10 were members of the SAFE community there, it was a very big
11 workshop. And the result of that, a group formed and
12 gathered together and became the Inter-Church Network For
13 the Prevention of Abuse and it was Baptist, Catholic - it
14 was you know a non-denominational group that formed. And
15 that group then started doing the delivering of a whole lot
16 more workshops in the community.

17 Q. And so, I think you touched on it but just to clarify,
18 throughout this you're receiving disclosures from survivors
19 who are reaching out to you?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And would you meet with some of those survivors to help
22 them by bearing witness to their experience?

23 A. I went through a stage of feeling like I had "if you've
24 been abused come and see me", that's what it felt like for
25 quite a long period of time. And, yes, a lot of people
26 came forward. I used to just get people just come
27 to - this was when I was still at the cathedral working, a
28 number of victims that would come forward and talk and just
29 disclose their abuse and want to talk about it and then
30 they would go back home, yeah.

31 Q. Did many of them go on to take formal disclosures to the
32 Church after speaking to you?

33 A. I have no idea if they did that afterwards. Some may have
34 but if they did, I was not aware of it.

1 Q. Would you have a sense of whether there were any barriers
2 to those people who were coming to speak to you, in terms
3 of taking their complaints further?

4 A. Well, at that point there was no process, there was no
5 process for anybody to follow, so it was just a matter
6 of - there was nowhere to send people, unless it was a
7 criminal complaint and they went to the Police. But, you
8 know, in the 1990s the Police didn't have a good record for
9 listening to survivors of any abuse, let alone clergy
10 abuse.

11 **CHAIR:** Glo, would you mind bringing your microphone a bit
12 closer to your mouth? We are having a little bit of
13 trouble just hearing you.

14 A. Thank you.

15 **MS HARONGA:**

16 Q. Maybe a little bit closer.

17 A. Is that better?

18 Q. That's better, yes. So, what we've come up to is the stage
19 while you were a pastoral assistant and the survivor group
20 is already in existence, did you then disclose that you had
21 been the victim of sexual abuse as a child to Bishop Denis
22 Browne?

23 A. Yes, I did.

24 Q. Did anybody support you to make that disclosure to the
25 Bishop?

26 A. Probably my boss.

27 Q. That was your boss and mentor that you were mentioning
28 earlier?

29 A. Well, yes, yeah.

30 Q. Anyone else, maybe from the survivor group or -

31 A. Well, yes because the group was formed by then as well, so
32 yes because when I disclosed my story, I was also saying
33 I'm not the only one, there are other survivors as well.

34 Q. I'm not sure if we're talking about the same mentor, there
35 was your boss who was like a mentor to you. You also

1 mention in your statement having a close relationship with
2 a mentor during your time as a pastoral assistant.

3 A. Yeah, they'd be two separate people.

4 Q. Two separate people?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Speaking about that one in your statement referred to
7 at - referring to - I've got to find where I am.

8 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** 2.43.

9 **MS HARONGA:** 2.43.

10 Q. We're talking about the comment in your statement about
11 thinking about going public and naming your abuser back
12 then and you had a discussion with your mentor about that.
13 Do you recall what I'm talking about?

14 A. Yes, I do.

15 Q. How did that conversation come about, the idea of possibly
16 going public?

17 A. Once again, it was leading up to the time of the workshop.
18 So, that very first workshop and I agreed to a media
19 release to talk about the fact that that workshop was
20 coming up and I was coming out to say that I was a survivor
21 of abuse. At the time, I thought I should name him, it
22 made sense to me that he should be named. He was dead, so
23 I felt like I should be saying who he was because I knew in
24 my heart there were other survivors. And when I spoke to
25 that mentor about doing that, she said, "Oh no, you can't
26 do that, he's got a family. You know, they'll be
27 devastated". I mean, I did as I was told. I wouldn't
28 upset anybody and I didn't. I just didn't like to upset
29 people, so I listened. So, I told my story without naming
30 the abuser, yeah.

31 Q. What happened from your disclosure to Bishop Denis Browne?

32 A. He was, I felt at the time, I felt that he had heard me
33 and, in his words, I think I can probably quote his words,
34 "I am really sorry that this happened to you. It was a
35 terrible thing to happen. You've got such strong faith.

1 You know, you will be able to help other people who have
2 been through similar things".

3 Q. And did that later give rise to your role on the Protocol
4 Committee?

5 A. I believe so. It sort of was, sort of, the lead-up to "you
6 will be able to help other people" because at that stage I
7 was already representing other people when I was speaking
8 to him about what had happened to me and saying that there
9 were others as well.

10 Q. What did that mean to you, to receive, you know, that
11 compliment about your faith from the Bishop when you made
12 your disclosure?

13 A. Well, you know, it was sort of, you've got to remember I
14 was very, I was very much a pleaser, so to be given that to
15 me was a compliment. Like, I was willing to forgive, so I
16 could help other people learn to forgive the Church as
17 well. I was pretty dysfunctional, I was a rescuer, as we
18 are, so being a rescuer and being given a mission to rescue
19 was pretty high up on a level of thinking I was the chosen
20 one.

21 Q. Did anything happen with your actual disclosure or
22 complaint of abuse?

23 A. No, that was it really, that was it at that point and
24 that's as far as my complaint went really.

25 Q. There didn't appear to you to be any investigation into
26 your allegations?

27 A. No, completely accepted, completely accepted that I told
28 the truth. So, yeah, I was believed, I was being given a
29 mission.

30 Q. Were you asked if you had any outcomes you might have
31 wanted from that meeting?

32 A. No.

33 Q. Your statement outlines that you went to some counselling
34 sessions and you, yourself, have gone on to work as a

1 counsellor. What was the quality of the counselling
2 sessions arranged for you?

3 A. It wasn't trauma counselling. It was very minimalistic
4 counselling. A lovely person but just was not on my page,
5 had no skills to work with me.

6 Q. So, you either discontinued or you ran out of sessions?

7 A. I discontinued after about the fourth session.

8 Q. Did anyone check with you to see if you needed any more
9 support?

10 A. The only - the support I got was through our survivors
11 support group.

12 Q. I guess, when I make that comment I mean from any Church
13 authority?

14 A. No.

15 Q. And from any Church authority were you given any direction
16 or assistance, in terms of ACC psychiatry assistance?

17 A. I didn't know it existed at that point.

18 Q. It's quite common for survivors to look for information
19 from the Church authority when making a disclosure,
20 information about their abuser. Did you have any hope or
21 expectation you might have access to Fr Terry's Ministry
22 history or records?

23 A. No idea that I would have had any - I had no idea that I
24 could ask for anything like that, no.

25 Q. Did you hope for any assistance from the Church to locate
26 any other survivors from your abuser?

27 A. That was what our group started to try and bring about.
28 That was one of the things that we were all really strong
29 about is, you know, being able to let other survivors know.

30 Q. And did that happen, in terms of support from the Auckland
31 Diocese or did you get any explanation about why that need
32 might not be able to be met?

33 A. We sort of ran into a brick wall with that. Like,
34 with - no, not really.

- 1 Q. You use more of an analogy around the brick wall, if you
2 wanted to share?
- 3 A. Oh, the brick wall, yeah, well that was further down the
4 track.
- 5 Q. Okay.
- 6 A. Yeah, no, I'm happy to share it. Like, further down the
7 track I had this image of this brick wall and clawing at it
8 with fingernails myself and another survivor. It's like we
9 were trying to get some stuff done and clawing at it with
10 our fingernails but behind the other side of the brick wall
11 the canon lawyers were there with their truck loads of
12 cement putting up a thicker wall, yeah.
- 13 Q. So, later down the track, I guess actually before we move
14 on from that, you did receive that apology from the Bishop?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. Was it an apology framed in terms of taking responsibility
17 for the abuse or was it a sympathy that this had happened
18 to you?
- 19 A. It was more of a sympathy that this had happened.
- 20 Q. Do you feel like you ever received a proper apology?
- 21 A. At the time, I thought I had.
- 22 Q. And in hindsight?
- 23 A. As I look back in hindsight, I was shocked when I watched
24 the movie *Spotlight* and at one point in the movie the
25 Bishop meets with the mother of one of the victims and he
26 says to her "But you have so much faith" and it just seemed
27 like whoa, I've heard this before. It was almost like
28 word-for-word for what I heard back in 1990.
- 29 Q. And moving to your invitation to take the role on the
30 Protocol Committee, who asked you to take that role?
- 31 A. Bishop Denis Browne.
- 32 Q. Can you describe what that opportunity felt like at the
33 time, probably roughly comparable to what you spoke about
34 just before?

1 A. Yeah, well, it was but it had actually come from one of the
2 recommendations that our group had made to the Bishop, to
3 the Bishops Conference, when we put forward submissions for
4 what could be done to setup a proper investigation process
5 for victims and survivors of clergy sexual abuse.

6 Q. Are you saying one of those recommendations was to include
7 a survivor voice?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. So, at the time, that felt like your recommendations were
10 being observed and adopted?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. What kind of work did you do as a survivor advocate in the
13 Protocol Committee?

14 A. Not very much.

15 Q. Did you attend any regular meetings of the Protocol
16 Committee?

17 A. I think I had - I think we had one meeting and I think I
18 met maybe two or three times perhaps with the Convenor of
19 the group, Monsignor Terry Leslie at the time that was
20 about different things.

21 Q. If they were having meetings of the Protocol Committee, you
22 weren't aware of those?

23 A. I wasn't aware of them, only the first one, the first
24 gathering meeting.

25 Q. In terms of the work you did with survivors on behalf of
26 the Protocol Committee, can you talk to us a bit about
27 that, what that looked like?

28 A. The survivors that came to the Protocol Committee? I never
29 really saw that many. Annie that we saw earlier and
30 another of the Dominicans' victims, I met with at another
31 location.

32 The other victims, one was a survivor who agreed to test
33 the process and I went to that interview with her, to
34 support her. The person who interviewed her was Lyndsay

1 Freer, who's the media advisor, so she was doing the
2 interviewing. I was just there as a support person.

3 Q. Was that every survivor you interacted with on behalf of
4 the Protocol Committee?

5 A. That was it, those were the only survivors that I really
6 had anything much to do with on the Protocol Committee.

7 Q. So, that's three, and one of them was a pre-arranged
8 testing meeting?

9 A. Mm.

10 Q. You detail in your statement how one of those meetings was
11 what caused you eventually to leave your work with the
12 Church and we'll get to that in a moment but I just wanted
13 to ask you if you ever attended an investigative meeting
14 with a respondent or abuser?

15 A. Yes, I did, Mm.

16 Q. What was your role at that meeting?

17 A. A support person or - I'm not really sure what it was but I
18 was invited by Monsignor Terry Leslie to attend a meeting
19 with an offending priest.

20 Q. Do you have any observations to share about that meeting,
21 possibly in comparison to what you saw in terms of the
22 treatment of survivors?

23 A. Yes. It was an elderly priest who had offended against a
24 young I think 15-year-old and he broke down and he
25 acknowledged his offending and it was a very - I was moved
26 by the compassion of the meeting. It was extremely
27 compassionate and very moving, very powerful and moving.

28 Q. Could you share any observations about any differences in
29 the investigative meetings you saw with survivors?

30 A. There was no comparison between the survivor being
31 interviewed by Lyndsay Freer and the priest offender being
32 interviewed by Terry Leslie. There was just - one was full
33 of compassion and one was full of, I don't know what the
34 energy would be that you would call it, but it wasn't
35 compassion.

1 Q. You note, at this point we are at your statement at 4.4
2 where you note there was a leadership change where Bishop
3 Dunn came in. You shared that metaphorical language of the
4 brick wall and clawing at it, was that around the time you
5 felt that your work with the survivors group was being
6 stymied? We are at 4.4 in your statement.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. If you need to refer.

9 A. Yeah, that's right, yeah, it was being stymied.

10 Q. Moving - I guess we could just start reading from here,
11 although I note that there are two corrections to be made
12 to paragraph 4.5 but we could pick back up with the reading
13 if you like, Glo.

14 A. Yep, start with?

15 ●. 4.4.

16 A. "Later, Bishop Dunn came in 1996 and he was less
17 progressive than Bishop Browne had been. I felt the
18 headway the Protocol Committee had been making was now
19 being stymied. This was one of several things that
20 happened around the same time and contributed to my
21 decision to leaving the role with the Church and leaving my
22 faith".

23 Q. At paragraph 4.5, you just want to make a clarification
24 there, as I understand it, that you do not recall if the
25 document you asked that survivor was to sign was a
26 non-disclosure agreement or not; is that the clarification?

27 A. Yeah, yeah.

28 Q. Okay. If you can read on from there, if you could pick it
29 up from, "Previously"?

30 A. "Previously, I had attended meetings with survivors to
31 provide support for them in their engagement with the
32 formal Church representative who is there to provide the
33 apology. However, this time I was sent alone because there
34 was no-one available from the Church".

35 Q. This was you representing which Order?

1 A. The Dominican.

2 Q. Otherwise known as?

3 A. Order of Preachers.

4 Q. If it you could read on and tell us about your feelings
5 about that meeting?

6 A. "This experience shocked me to the core, that I would be
7 asked to do that. It made me feel like I was complicit and
8 an enabler. I really struggled with the knowledge that I
9 had fronted a Church apology for abuse to a survivor when
10 in fact I had been a victim myself".

11 Q. Was this the meeting that we heard about earlier with
12 Annie?

13 A. Annie, yes, it was.

14 Q. Did you listen to her evidence about that?

15 A. Yes, I did, yes.

16 Q. We are drawing to a close here. Can you talk to us a
17 little bit about how - what was the toll on you when you
18 decided to walk away from your employment as a pastoral
19 assistant, your faith and this community? Can you talk us
20 through what was going through your mind at the time?

21 A. It was huge. The Church had become - because I had had all
22 this other stuff in the background, I never had that sense
23 of identity. Identity I guess for me was something, yeah,
24 it was my identity really. And in the Church I had started
25 to get some kind of identity and to walk away from it was
26 probably, it had become my family. We refer to it as our
27 "faith family", you know, our faith community was our faith
28 family, and so I was walking away from the family that had
29 been such a huge part of my life for so long.

30 I had sort of believed that - I'd gone into it believing
31 that the Church had changed and that it was a better place
32 and that it was a safe place now. I mean, there's so much
33 more, there's so much more in here that we haven't sort of
34 really touched which is -

35 Q. We still have some more.

1 A. Yeah, yeah, it was actually enormously hard to walk away
2 because I'd lost so much. I'd had a lot of grief. I'd
3 lost my Mum, I'd lost my Dad, I'd lost my birth Mum who I'd
4 just found, and suddenly I lost my faith community as well
5 and it was really, really big but I needed to do it, I had
6 to do it because I'd realised that sitting in a Church
7 looking up at the altar and looking around and seeing all
8 of these faces that I knew were abusers, especially around
9 the holiest parts of the Mass, different things that had
10 happened, different stories I'd heard, I'd heard so many
11 stories from ordinary survivors, yeah.

12 Q. So, with all that you know now and the fact that you got to
13 a point where you had to leave, what do you think the
14 purpose was of asking you to be on the Protocol Committee?

15 A. Tokenism, yeah.

16 Q. I think that really sums it up on that question. I am sure
17 you could expand on it.

18 You also wanted to flag from the impacts of abuse at
19 3.5, that's on page 10, you mention suffering strong and
20 inexplicable emotional drivers at the time your eldest
21 child approached the age where you were abused. Can you
22 talk about how the abuse impacted your view of yourself as
23 a parent?

24 A. Yeah. Shall I read part of that?

25 Q. Certainly, if you -

26 A. Yeah. "The abuse I suffered at St Mary's also impacted my
27 ability to parent my children and it still affects our
28 relationships to this day.

29 "When my first born turned seven, the same age that I
30 was when the abuse occurred, I began to feel uncontrollable
31 rage. I was scared of myself and how I would react to
32 certain situations. I had three small children at the
33 time".

34 And I think - I went to my doctor and he prescribed
35 me - at the time I think my third child was still a baby

1 and I was still feeding her and he felt I had "Puerpal
2 Disease" or some such thing and gave me some antibiotics
3 but he also gave me some Valium to start taking. So, I
4 mean, I reached out for help but just losing control like
5 that when you've got children is a really scary thing and I
6 am aware now that there are significant findings now or
7 things, yeah well, I learned actually I suppose when I was
8 training in my counselling about the "trigger child" and
9 about how the trigger child can trigger the trauma of
10 abuse, and that trauma then comes back to visit in rage and
11 anger. And I related to it yesterday I think when Frances
12 was sharing the same thing about being an angry person. It
13 just sort of goes with the ground but the impacts on the
14 children is that they then become traumatised by the
15 mother's trauma, by the parent's trauma. So, your trauma
16 becomes their trauma and not just the child you're raging
17 at but the other children are witnessing it, so it just
18 escalates.

19 Q. That description of intergenerational harm -

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. - from abuse, is that something that you think this
22 Commission should be looking into?

23 A. Absolutely. We just have to look at our society, at what's
24 happening in the abuse that's going on in our communities,
25 and so much of it stems from abuse. When I was working at
26 Jigsaw North up in Whangarei, we had a group of counsellors
27 there who were working with mothers doing an Anger Change
28 For Mothers group and I think that those sorts of
29 programmes are incredibly powerful for people who have had
30 trauma to be able to attend and get involved with. And I
31 wish we had things like that when I was a young mum but
32 they are available now and I think more promotion of things
33 like that in the community are really valuable.

34 Q. Now changing topic entirely, can I invite you to read
35 paragraph 2.46 on page 9?

1 **MS HARONGA:** This is one of the last questions,
2 Commissioners.

3 Q. I will invite you to read that and then we will just have a
4 couple of questions about that.

5 A. "While working for the Church I was privy to various
6 presbytery conversations about behaviours happening within
7 the Church. I can recall one conversation between two
8 priests, one who had just come back from the Pacific
9 Islands. The gist of the conversation was that it was
10 accepted that of course abuse occurred, just as long as
11 they didn't ever let themselves get caught".

12 Q. Can you expand on that? Were the two priests talking about
13 they themselves being abusers or observations of abuse over
14 there?

15 A. Observations of abuse and it was at the time that it was on
16 the TV, it was at that time where it was being talked about
17 widely in those mid - those early '90s.

18 Q. Did you get the impression the abuse they were speaking
19 about was current or historic?

20 A. Current, definitely current.

21 Q. Would you have any sense of what year that would be? It
22 would have to be before you left that job?

23 A. Yeah, so it would have been between 1991 and 1993.

24 Q. In your work with the survivors group, did you have
25 anything else to share on the issue of the Pacific Islands
26 being used for what might be able to be termed the
27 "geographical cure"?

28 A. Yeah, one member, one survivor that I had spoken with had
29 shared that her abuser was sent to the Pacific Islands.
30 That he used to come back every year for a visit and stay
31 at their house and that's when she was being abused.

32 Q. Any other issue, anything else to add to that before we
33 just go to our closing questions?

34 A. No.

35 Q. We've covered everything that we wanted to.

1 So, with all of your experience that you've gone through
2 with us this afternoon and in your statement, you were in a
3 unique position with a lot of knowledge about what possible
4 redress processes might look like. Was your feedback
5 sought to inform the ongoing development of redress
6 processes within the Auckland Diocese?

7 A. Never.

8 Q. Or *A Path to Healing* when it was brought in?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Are you aware of any established means of obtaining
11 feedback from survivors and their families who have
12 experienced the redress process?

13 A. Not that I am aware of.

14 Q. How independent do you think the redress processes were,
15 the ones which you were involved in either as a survivor
16 supporter or with the Protocol Committee?

17 A. They were completely, like, um, there was no - like, I
18 just - it was just the Church, there's nothing else,
19 there's nothing else happening. Like, there was no - it
20 wasn't satisfactory at all, none of it.

21 Q. This will be my final question and we don't need to go into
22 the detail of it but in your statement you outline your
23 perspective that victim survivors are silenced by the
24 inability of friends or supporters or family members being
25 able to make complaints on their behalf. Can you talk to
26 us about that issue and what you think the Church might be
27 able to do to reduce the barrier of disclosure of people
28 who can't actually come forward?

29 A. I have got some notes here that I just did about this.
30 Like, it's probably not quite answering your question. I
31 think there are so many barriers to disclosure and they're
32 not just because of the Church. I think there are so many
33 pressures from so many people. When there's a disclosure,
34 there's more victims than just the victim. It's the whole
35 faith community that becomes affected by abuse. So, if

1 you've got a community of people and there's a victim comes
2 forward and makes a complaint, they've got their personal
3 shame, they've got their personal beliefs, they've got
4 their family to consider, then they've got the wider
5 community to consider and there are so many barriers for
6 people to ever be able to come out and speak about it. The
7 shame is probably the biggest part of that. If somebody
8 makes a disclosure in a parish, for instance, a faith
9 family parish, the different dynamics that are going to
10 come out are things like disbelief, the denial, the grief,
11 "This can't be happening in my parish. Our priest would
12 never do that", yeah. Then you've got them taking sides,
13 so you have the ones that will come out that they're going
14 to protect Father, and then you've got the ones that want
15 to come out and accuse and blame the victim, and you've got
16 the ones that are going to come out and be angry with the
17 perpetrator, and the ones that will come out in the middle.

18 Then you've got the media. When that movie *Spotlight*
19 came out and it won the Academy Award, I can remember
20 watching the media on the news as they said "and the winner
21 was *Spotlight*" and they sat there, the two people, and
22 went, "Oh" and looked at each other, one rolled their eyes,
23 "Oh" and it was silence. Most movies when they win an
24 Oscar they show pictures or give examples of the film, but
25 it was just this whole, shutting the whole thing out, "we
26 don't want to know about this". So, that sort of attitude
27 is one of the things that really stops victims from
28 speaking out about anything, about abuse from anybody. And
29 I think as a community, as a society, with our stats
30 rising. In the 1990s our abuse stats for little girls
31 being abused was 1 in 5 and 1 in 7 for little boys. It's
32 now 1 in 3 for little girls, so what have we done in the
33 last 20 years, 30 years, that our stats have got so much
34 higher? Our attitudes need to really change and our
35 Churches should be the leaders and instead they are

1 dragging their heels at the bottom of the road. They're
2 saying, and when I think about what Frances said yesterday,
3 I totally support her when she says "the change of canon
4 laws are archaic and irresponsible definition of child
5 sexual abuse has to be changed to being recognised as a
6 criminal offence as per New Zealand law and the
7 International Human Rights Commission. The celibacy myth
8 needs to be exposed for what it is, a myth. A myth that
9 creates dysfunctional attitudes about sexuality, resulting
10 in deviant sexual behaviour" and it has been doing this now
11 for at least 1000 years". Okay? "The first records of the
12 date - it dates back to 1040 and 1054 where it was first
13 raised by the Benedictines and later by Damian". This goes
14 back to Tom Doyle, I just need to refer to Tom Doyle. This
15 was information that he put out and I didn't quite finish
16 getting that written up but we've been doing this for over
17 1000 years, that's when they were asking them to stop
18 raping little boys and to stop raping women in the
19 confessionals, yeah, 1054. Yep, I just need to say that
20 because that's where I'm sitting with it at the moment,
21 yeah.

22 Q. We are really at the end of my questions for you. Did you
23 want to refer to the survivor's letter again? I think
24 you've probably said it yourself but if there was anything
25 else that you really felt needed to be said from that
26 letter?

27 A. Yep, okay. "There is a barrier to victims and survivors
28 having their experiences acknowledged and verified. One
29 could easily think that he or she was the only one to
30 experience such abnormal behaviour by a trusted and
31 respected man. Knowing there are others, many in fact, I
32 would think is an important part of one's healing journey.
33 It is a way to break out of the silence and the mental
34 torment. I was abused by this man for a lengthy period,
35 somewhere between the years 1957 and 1962 in Northcote at

1 St Mary's Catholic Primary School. It wasn't until 1983
2 that I received some help in being able to recognise the
3 extent of personal damage and harm I had experienced as a
4 young child. I had up until then never been able to put
5 into words what had happened to me. I then sought
6 counselling for my abuse over a number of years and through
7 expert help became a survivor of child sex abuse. My plea
8 to the Commission is to allow stories to be told, the
9 abusers to be named, the places and times to be noted, so
10 that victims can become survivors and join the movement to
11 stop this insidious crime that occurs among our most
12 vulnerable citizens".

13 Q. Thank you, Glo, for those closing remarks. We do
14 appreciate there's probably a great wealth of knowledge
15 that we could discuss further and I'll talk to you about
16 that as to how the Commission might hear from you further
17 in other situations but thank you very much for your
18 evidence this afternoon/this evening. I will hand now to
19 Madam Chair.

20 **CHAIR:** Thank you. I will just check to see if there are
21 any questions?

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2 **GLORIA (GLO) RAMSAY**
3 **QUESTIONED BY THE COMMISSIONERS**
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6 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** Tena koe.

7 A. Tena koe.

8 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** I just have one question around at
9 4.6. You talk about the value of an apology and in person
10 from someone who should feel responsible and should be held
11 accountable. Who would you, in your opinion, think that
12 should come from?

13 A. For me, I felt it came from Bishop Denis when I actually,
14 for myself, because he was the Bishop. But for the person
15 that I was hearing, like sitting in front of at that time
16 at 4.6, I think that was with another survivor.

17 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** Yes, it was.

18 A. Yeah, that was relating to another survivor. And to have
19 another survivor sitting with her, it would have been
20 different if she'd been expecting me just to be another
21 survivor, a survivor like supporting her, but then I'm not
22 apologising, I'm just listening. I'm there to hear her
23 story and support her but I was not her abuser. Like, I
24 didn't represent her abuser.

25 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** Nga mihi.

26 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Good afternoon, Glo. Just one
27 point of clarity, please, the survivor network that you
28 helped setup, all of the survivors there, they were good
29 support for one another in sharing their experiences?

30 A. Yes.

31 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** And then you were able to make
32 contact with the Cardinal and the other Bishops to pass on
33 your recommendations, so they knew you existed?

34 A. Yes.

1 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** And they knew the harm that your
2 group were cumulatively gathering, in terms of the impacts.
3 Was there an expectation because your report had gone up,
4 that they were going to be able to address the individual
5 women's experiences, the abuse they individually suffered?

6 A. Nothing like that was ever part of our group. There was
7 nothing. We got, no, our group was - we were working for
8 them. Like, we were just, yeah, there was - we got a bit
9 of funding for a few things and we did get funded to go to
10 Australia to represent our group over at the first
11 Australasian conference in 1996 that was, I think, about
12 professional abuse which was about psychologists and clergy
13 and we did a little workshop over there.

14 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** So, there was no recognition from
15 them that actually, this is serious? That there's this
16 wealth of evidence, of material that your group had put
17 together, that they should respond to it in providing
18 proper redress to you? Because it was before the *Pathway*
19 *to Healing*, wasn't it?

20 A. No, there was no redress, goodness no.

21 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** So, there was a sense that they
22 were playing on your vulnerability perhaps?

23 A. Absolutely, yeah. I see that now. It was tokenism. What
24 we were doing was really just keeping the wolfs from their
25 door.

26 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you for that.

27 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Just one thank you, Ms Ramsay. Just
28 following from Ms Alofivae's question, this pressure on
29 survivors to forgive the sinners, something we didn't see a
30 lot in the State redress hearings, but it is a theme we are
31 hearing about a lot over the last couple of days. Given
32 this and the need to demonstrate your faith, I imagine it
33 must have been difficult to have said no to Bishop Browne
34 when he asked you to volunteer to participate in the
35 Protocol Committee?

1 A. I would never have said no. No, especially not then, no.
2 I was delighted to be able to serve the Church. I was very
3 indoctrinated.

4 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Kia ora, thank you. I just wanted to
5 ask that question, thank you.

6 A. Yeah, thank you.

7 **CHAIR:** Glo, I have no questions. Just to let you know
8 that we have very carefully read all your brief of evidence
9 and the documents, so that even though you didn't speak
10 them out loud, we have read them and taken account.

11 You said a powerful thing at one stage relating to the
12 film *Spotlight*, when you said that no-one wants to know.
13 So, I just want you and other survivors to know that we
14 want to know. That's why we're sitting here and we're very
15 grateful to you and the others for coming and helping us
16 know and, as I say, through the documents, through your
17 testimony and through your experiences, you are helping us
18 to know. And I also hope that through you coming forward,
19 other survivors who have been silenced or felt silent feel
20 they can come forward to survivor networks and particularly
21 to the Royal Commission so we can gather together all your
22 experiences and we hope we can make some changes as a
23 result.

24 A. Thank you.

25 **CHAIR:** Thank you very much for your evidence today and
26 thank you for your quiet and silent but very supportive
27 companions there, thank you for helping to support Glo
28 through this.

29 That brings us to the end of today's proceedings.
30

31 (Closing mihi and waiata)
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Hearing adjourned at 5.42 p.m.