

Committee Secretary

Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee

Parliament House Canberra.

My submission for redress.

1942 my four sisters and I entered St Aidens Orphanage Bendigo when our parents separated due to my father's drinking. I was 6 years old, my younger sister 3 and the eldest was eleven, our mother took us out 5 years later after receiving a forced letter from me telling her I had torn my underclothes because they were soiled. Also, for this misdemeanor I was prevented from attending a religious film outside the orphanage, an event that happened once a year. Sunday mornings we had to drink hot Epsom salts which caused our bowels to open, I stood by the nun in charge waiting for permission to ask to leave the room, she was aware of me but ignored me which resulted in me soiling my pants and running from the crowded dining room to the toilet. Another time, whilst preparing for bed undressed to my underwear I was fetching a dropped hanky from under my bed and was taken to the unlighted garret and locked in alone for the night (I was 8 years old) My younger sister, 65 years later, bears the scars of untreated infected chilblains. She, along with my eldest sister suffer with Bipolar, with periods spent in mental institutions. Personally my lack of confidence affected my life in many ways, I drank to excess, my first marriage failed, I am still unable to show my emotions due to lack of anything resembling affection whilst instituted. This is a brief example of what our "childhood" was like in a catholic orphanage.

I feel that redress for myself and other Care Leavers is important to maybe compensate for our lack of a childhood and damage to our future life.