

Justice for Magdalenes Research (JFMR)

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May 9<sup>th</sup> 2017

An Taoiseach Enda Kenny  
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cc. by post and email to An Táiniste Frances Fitzgerald [frances.fitzgerald@oireachtas.ie](mailto:frances.fitzgerald@oireachtas.ie)

**Re: Dublin Honours Magdalenes**

Dear Taoiseach,

Justice for Magdalenes Research (JFMR) has recently had a constructive meeting with officials and public representatives from Dublin City Council (who own the former Magdalene institution on Sean McDermott Street) and the CEO of Respond! who own the campus at High Park which was the site of another Magdalene institution. We are so prompted to write you to remind you that in your apology to the Magdalene women you stated that:

“I am conscious that many of the women I met last week want to see a permanent memorial established to remind us all of this dark part of our history. I agree this should be done and intend to engage directly with the representative groups and as many of the women as possible to agree on the creation of an appropriate memorial to be financed by the Government separately from the funds that are being set aside for the direct assistance for the women.”

As you know the Magdalene redress scheme proposed by Mr Justice Quirke and fully accepted for implementation by the Department of Justice on 26th June 2013, recommended that Magdalene women be consulted with a view to commemorating the experience and legacy of the Magdalene institutions. Both the DCC and Respond! are keen to work with JFMR to facilitate a gathering of interested Magdalene women for this consultative process. Dublin City Council has recently voted to put a stay on further plans for the sale and development of the campus at Sean McDermott Street until the process of consultation with Magdalene survivors has been conducted. JFMR is also in communication with an agent representing the owners of the former Magdalene at Donnybrook and expect that they too will join with us to ensure this consultative process takes place.

We envisage inviting former Magdalene women to Dublin to visit the sites and to have a facilitated meeting whereby their deliberations are recorded and subsequently honoured. Women who cannot attend will be invited to make written submissions to the consultation process. Mr Justice Quirke also recommended that a Dedicated Unit be established, following consultation with a committee of Magdalene women, to be a point of contact for former Magdalene women and to facilitate women who may wish to meet each other. As this unit has not yet been established we request that you and An Tánaiste appoint officials within the Department of Justice to work with us on issuing an invitation to all of the women who have been in contact with the Department in relation to the redress scheme and to arrange for the accommodation and other logistical details in hosting this event which we propose will take place this summer.

While we don't believe everything we hear via the media, we are fearful that you may leave office shortly without putting this plan to consult with the Magdalene women in place. Regardless of the status of your office when the consultation takes place we hope that you will consider an invitation to the public celebrations that are envisaged as part of this process.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience,  
Yours sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
*Katherine O'Donnell Maeve O'Rourke*

Katherine O'Donnell, Maeve O'Rourke and Claire McGettrick  
On behalf of JFM Research