



JUSTICE FOR MAGDALENES RESEARCH

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17th August 2021

Minister Roderic O’Gorman, T.D.
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
Block 1, Miesian Plaza
50 – 58 Lower Baggot Street
Dublin, D02 XW14

Sent via email to: Minister@dcya.gov.ie

Dear Minister O’Gorman,

We are writing to you in your capacity as minister with responsibility for the Magdalen Implementation Team and, as such, the Data Controller for the 800+ women participants in the *Ex Gratia* Restorative Justice Scheme.

As the five members of the Justice for Magdalenes Research (JFMR) group, we have co-written a book, *[Ireland and the Magdalene Laundries: A Campaign for Justice](#)*, to be published internationally by Bloomsbury/I.B. Tauris on September 9th, 2021. We are asking that the Scheme fund and that the Implementation Team facilitate every woman who wants a copy of this book to receive one by post (i.e., a paper-back printed copy in the mail).

This is something only the Data Controller for the women can make happen. We feel strongly, that every woman who wants a copy should receive it gratis and suggest that the surplus operating budget for the Scheme can legitimately be put to this use (as co-authors, we did not receive any money for writing the book and *all* royalties are being donated in the name of the women held in the Laundries to EPIC [Empowering People in Care]). We are happy to put your department in touch with Bloomsbury Press to negotiate a discounted bulk purchase price.

Ireland and the Magdalene Laundries has its origins in the Dublin Honours Magdalenes (DHM) gathering in June 2018, an event co-sponsored by the Department of Justice in fulfilment of the

Quirke Report's recommendations. Survivors participating in the formal 'Listening Exercise' at DHM insisted, repeatedly, that the story of the Magdalene Laundries and their struggle to obtain justice be told in the history books so that the younger generation never forget the treatment meted out to vulnerable women and children in Ireland's recent past.¹ Our book responds to the women's request: it tells the story of the JFM campaign from 2009 to 2013 and it details JFMR's critique of the State's implementation of redress measures to the present day. As such, the book represents our group's commitment to truth-telling as part of a transitional justice response to Ireland's history of institutional abuse and its ongoing harms.

We would greatly appreciate your assistance in making this request possible. And, we understand that your Department may wish to inform the media of your intent to distribute the book to the women to underscore the government's commitment to transitional justice.

Sincerely,

Claire McGettrick, Katherine O'Donnell, Maeve O'Rourke, James M. Smith & Mari Steed
Justice for Magdalenes Research

cc. An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, TD

¹ See O'Donnell, K., and McGettrick, C. et al. (2020), *Dublin Honours Magdalenes Listening Exercise Report Vol 1: Report on Key Findings*. Dublin: Justice for Magdalenes Research and Department of Justice.