

IRISH REPORT ON IRISH NUNS DEBUNKS MYTHS

Another interim report by Ireland's Commission of Investigation of the Mother and Baby Homes has been released, and it debunks some myths perpetrated by the critics of the Sisters of Bon Secours in Tuam, a town in County Galway. It also vindicates the position of the Catholic League.

Katherine Zappone, Ireland's Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, said there is "little basis for the theory that rather than having died, the children were 'sold' to America." In fact, the report explicitly notes that "there is no evidence whatsoever that could support that theory."

The report also shoots a hole in the theory that the remains of nearly 800 children were found in a septic tank on the grounds of the Mother and Baby Home. It concluded that "human remains found by the commission are not in a sewage tank."

The Irish, English, and American media have dealt with these two issues dishonestly; most failed to even mention the latest findings. In other words, the media are keeping the lies about the nuns alive by failing to report the truth.

In this country, for the past several years, no media outlet swallowed the moonshine about both hoaxes more than Irish Central. Only now is it acknowledging that the babies were not sold, but it has still owned up to its role in promoting the lie that the remains of 796 children were found in a septic tank.

Martin Sixsmith wrote the book about Philomena Lee and Steve Coogan did the screenplay adaptation. Judi Dench played her character in the movie, "Philomena." The number of bald face lies told about the nuns is staggering. Take, for example, an interview that Coogan granted to MSNBC in 2014 about the

movie.

Richard Liu, the host, said at one point, "And you're talking about a group of girls and women, out-of-wedlock, having children in these institutions [homes run by nuns for troubled young women], and their children were taken away from them."

This is a lie: the nuns did not walk the streets of Ireland seeking to rob kids from their mothers. In the case of Philomena, her father took her to the nuns to care for the baby she could not provide for.

Coogan replied to Liu that the home was "the only place that you could go to." He is correct about this: no one was kidnapped—the women came to the nuns *voluntarily*. Moreover, the alternative was the street. Lucky for Philomena, her father placed her with the nuns—the same nuns who found her a job after her baby was born.

Coogan said these women were "effectively incarcerated against their will." This is a lie: no one was "incarcerated"; Philomena did not live in a jail cell. The word "effectively" is interesting: either they were imprisoned or they were not. Coogan also says "their children were forcibly adopted." This is another lie: Philomena voluntarily signed a contract when she was 22. No one "forced" her to give up her baby.

It is important to note that Philomena never set foot in the U.S. until 2013; this was long after her son died of AIDS. Contrary to what the film contends, she never looked for her son in the U.S.

It must also be noted that the babies were never "sold" to anyone, never mind the "highest bidder." Did some American couples offer a donation to the nuns for their services? Yes. That was purely an expression of appreciation.

Regarding the "mass grave" sewage-tank hoax, anyone who was not an ideologue should have been able to figure that one out

a long time ago.

In 2014, a reporter for the *New York Times* wrote that “a dogged local historian,” Catherine Corless, “published evidence” that 796 children died in the Tuam Mother and Baby Home, and that the remains of “some” were found in the septic tank. In fact, Corless is not an historian—she is a typist.

Corless not only failed to mention a “mass grave,” she offered evidence that undermined her thesis. She wrote that, “A few local boys came upon a sort of crypt in the ground, and on peering in they saw several small skulls.” She mentioned there was a “little graveyard.” That is not the makings of a mass grave.

The primary source for Corless’ “mass grave” thesis is Barry Sweeney. When he was 10, he and a friend stumbled on a hole with skeletons in it. In 2014, he was asked by the *Irish Times* to comment on Corless’ claim that there were “800 skeletons down that hole.” He said, “Nothing like that.” How many? “About 20,” he said. He later told the *New York Times* there were “maybe 15 to 20 small skeletons.” In other words, Corless’ primary source contradicts her account!

The Church haters, naturally, are not going away, though even they must concede that no babies were sold and no septic tank strewn with bodily remains has been found. No matter, this is a sweet victory for the Catholic League—we were right all along.