

# “PHILOMENA” LIES AND ANTICS

Bill Donohue comments on the latest round of noise surrounding the film, “Philomena”:

On Saturday, the *Independent.ie* (Irish Independent) ran a story by Liz O'Donnell on “Philomena” saying that Philomena Lee’s “child was stolen by the nuns.” This is incorrect: the 18-year-old Lee, pregnant out-of-wedlock, was taken to the nuns by her widowed father, hoping they would care for the baby. They did. At age 22, Lee voluntarily signed a contract awarding the nuns her son. The nuns then got her a job. That is the undisputed truth.

Today, *Newsday*, the Long Island daily, has a story by Anthony M. DeStefano saying “Philomena Lee had an audience with Pope Francis at the Vatican, where he reportedly is planning to screen the film.” This is incorrect: she was denied her request for a private meeting with the pope, and wound up shaking his hand behind a wall as part of the general audience. Moreover, Father Frederico Lombardi of the Holy See Press Office explicitly said, “The Holy Father does not see films and will not be seeing this one.”

At the British Academy of Film and Television Arts awards on Sunday, “Philomena” won the Adapted Screenplay prize. Dame Judi Dench, who plays Philomena Lee, did not win Best Actress, but had they had an award for Biggest Fool, she would have won going away: at the awards ceremony, she flashed her butt in front of Oprah Winfrey; tattooed on it was the name Weinstein, in reference to the film’s distributor, Harvey Weinstein. Dench is 79.

Look for Dench to mimic Miley Cyrus at the Oscars. Pass the vomit bag.