

# IRELAND'S REPORT ON HOMES FIZZLES

**Bill Donohue**

Catherine Corless, the local typist from Galway behind the "mass grave" hoax, must be furious. She has every right to be. Just last Friday she spent two hours listening to Ireland's Minister for Children, Katherine Zappone, wax emotional about the Mother and Baby Homes. Corless was all jacked up awaiting the release of the second interim report on this subject. But now she has nothing to chew on.

The report is a dud. Zappone's commission examined the Homes over the period 1922-1998, issuing its first interim report in July 2015. The second interim report, released yesterday, has been sitting on Zappone's desk since last September.

It sat because the government was scared to death of its own liabilities. The Attorney General and others were weighing all of the nitty-gritty legal and financial problems connected to this matter. They prudently concluded that the government would be deeply implicated in any alleged wrongdoing. To top things off, there was no finding of abuse.

The report says that "the Commission is not asserting that abuse occurred in the institutions which it is investigating." In a Q&A published in the official release of the report, it was asked: "Why has the Government decided not to offer redress to unaccompanied children at this time?"

Here is its answer: "The Government examined the matter very carefully. It is conscious that the Commission has made no finding to date about abuse or neglect in these homes." Not much left on the table after that, save, of course, for accusations about a "mass grave." It is nowhere mentioned in the report.

By redress, of course, the alleged victims were looking for cash. But they won't get a dime from their consoling officials. Not even Prime Minister Enda Kenny has any spare change for them.

It should be pointed out that these children were not "unaccompanied." In fact, they were dumped on the doorsteps of the "evil" nuns by their mother or their father: They did not just walk down the street at the age of three looking for Sister Margaret Mary to offer them room and board.

The report owns up to the role of the Irish government, saying, "the fact of financing [the Homes] did give the State the ultimate regulatory power—that is, the power to close the institutions." It was not lost on the officials how consequential this was.

The Irish Times quotes an official who knows what is at stake. "One Minister said that if the Government were to accept the redress recommendation from the commission, then the 'sky' would be the limit for potential future liabilities for the State. This would be a whole new level." The reporter, Fiach Kelly, says the Minister added that "there were no findings of negligence or wrongdoing and the mother and baby homes were not Government regulated."

So what is lawmaker Catherine Connolly going to say about this? Last month she blasted Zappone for sitting on the report. Indeed, she smelled a rat. "What is in it that is so frightening? What is in it that prevents it from being published?"

What is really frightening is people like her who anxiously await condemnatory news about nuns, and are then livid when the probe ends with a whimper. Others, according to the Irish Independent, called the absence of a redress scheme "devastating" and "shameful." Paul Redmond, poster boy for victims, is demanding a meeting with Kenny. If they meet,

perhaps he can tell the prime minister where the shoeboxes are: he is on record saying the nuns buried kids in shoeboxes.

How much loot these activists were looking for is uncertain, but it is a sure bet that if the government wasn't on the hook—and only the nuns stood to being fleeced—there would be a really fat redress package.

The hunt for shoeboxes and a “mass grave” will continue. But sooner or later this game of “hide and seek” will end, and most will realize that this entire war on the nuns has more to do with discrediting the moral voice of the Catholic Church than it has to do with justice.

What is driving the effort to smear the nuns is a full-throated push for abortion rights. By sullyng the Church's past, they weaken its influence today. Give them an “A” for strategy, but an “F” for ethics.

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## **IRISH NUNS CONDEMNED; EVIDENCE LACKING**

Reports that a “mass grave” was found containing the bodies of 800 children outside a home run by Irish nuns recently dominated the news in Ireland and England, and became a big story in the United States as well. As it turns out, the nuns were unfairly condemned by an array of politicians, pundits, and activists.

It was a lie in 2014 and it is a lie in 2017. There is no evidence of a mass grave outside a home for unmarried women operated by nuns in Tuam [pronounced CHEW-um], near Galway, in the 20th century. The hoax recently surfaced, and an obliging

media ran with the story as if it were true.

Ireland's Mother and Baby Commission recently completed its inquiry into this issue and released a statement on March 3rd about its findings. The probe was a response to allegations made by a local historian, Catherine Corless, who claimed that 800 babies were buried in a tank outside the former Mother and Baby Home that was operated by the Bon Secours nuns.

The statement issued by the Mother and Baby Commission was disturbing but it never mentioned anything about a mass grave. Having completed a test excavation of the Tuam site, it found "significant quantities of human remains" in most of the underground sewage chambers. "These remains involved a number of individuals with age-at-death ranges from approximately 35 foetal weeks to 2-3 years."

If there were a "mass grave," Katherine Zappone, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, would have said so. Yet her statement said nothing about any "mass grave." Moreover, when the government's Interim Report was issued in 2016, it also made no mention of a "mass grave."

The "fake news" about a "mass grave" is oddly enough credited to the same person who says there never was one. His name is Barry Sweeney. In 1975, when Sweeney was 10, he was playing with a friend, Frannie Hopkins, 12, on the grounds where the Home was when they stumbled on a hole with skeletons in it.

Sweeney told the *Irish Times* that "there was no way there were 800 skeletons down that hole. Nothing like that number." How many were there? "About 20," he said. He subsequently told the *New York Times* that "People are making out we saw a mass grave. But we can only say what we seen [sic]: maybe 15-20 small skeletons."

This issue of *Catalyst* contains some of the most important statements that Bill Donohue released to the press in March. He was interviewed by several media outlets in Ireland about

this matter, challenging the conventional wisdom.

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## CATHOLIC STALWARTS DIE

The Catholic community lost two great persons in February, Michael Novak and Norma McCorvey. He died on February 17, and she passed away the next day.

“Michael Novak was more than a brilliant and dedicated Catholic, his range of scholarship was astonishing,” said Bill Donohue in his statement to the media. “Theologian, sociologist, economist, political scientist—he was all of these and more.”

Mike was perhaps best known for his work in understanding the relationship between a market economy and freedom. His book, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, was widely credited with changing the minds of many Catholic scholars about the way the economic order affects the political order.

Novak was a member of the board of advisors of the Catholic League. His presence is greatly missed.

Norma McCorvey is known to the public as the person behind the Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion in 1973. In Catholic circles, she is remembered as someone who sought forgiveness, converted to Catholicism, and became a champion of the pro-life cause.

McCorvey was used by the pro-abortion industry. She lied about her pregnancy—she was never raped—and she never had the abortion she sought, even though she won in court.

Fox News commentator Alan Colmes died February 23. While not Catholic, Donohue and he were good friends, despite their

political differences. Bill said, "His kindness was always evident, as was his great sense of humor."

May all three rest in peace.

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## THOSE "EVIL" IRISH NUNS

William A. Donohue

When it comes to women, men have learned to be careful not to sound sexist or condescending. If they are perceived as such, they will be stigmatized. There is one exception: they can speak about traditional nuns in a vile way with impunity. This is not limited to men. Most importantly, it includes feminists.

It is a sad truism that not a single champion of women's rights ever defends traditional nuns against vile comments and portrayals. Indeed, it is considered appropriate that those sisters who are not at war with the Church's teachings on women and sexuality pay a price for their traditionalism.

For example, feminists never protest when these nuns, many of whom are in habit, are cruelly caricatured by Hollywood, artists, academics, and the media. Yet these nuns are precisely the ones who have given of themselves selflessly to the Church.

As this edition of *Catalyst* makes plain, no group of nuns has been more viciously vilified than the Irish nuns of the twentieth century. Even some noted politicians have chimed in, the worst of whom is the pro-abortion Prime Minister of Ireland, Enda Kenny. He is an utter disgrace.

I am an Irish citizen, as well as an American, and was largely

raised by my grandparents from Ireland. So this subject hits home. I am not naive: Some Irish nuns were wicked, but to say most were is not only without foundation, it is a gigantic smear. Cardinal John O'Connor once said some priests were evil, but anyone who knew him knew he loved his priests; the bad ones were the exception.

By the way, some professors I have met are lying propagandists who hate America, but it would be wholly unfair to say most are. The difference is that professors can defend themselves, but these days it is very difficult for Irish nuns of the last century—many of whom are sick or deceased—to get a fair hearing. So if we don't stand up for them, who will?

As I indicated, American society is not opposed to stigma, per se. But we are aghast to learn that Irish nuns, and much of Catholic Ireland, stigmatized unwed mothers and their children.

Have we forgotten what stigma is all about? Its primary function is to sanction unwanted moral attitudes and behaviors, usually in service to something good that we seek to safeguard.

In more conservative times, we spoke about the problem of illegitimacy, but today we speak about unwed mothers and their offspring. That is because we don't want to stigmatize them. The motive is pure enough—we don't seek to punish these women and children, especially knowing that the wayward fathers get off scot free. But let's not get self-righteous. For instance, it is a mistake to think that those who stigmatized these women and children in the past did so because they were evil.

If we want more of some behavior, we reward it. If we want less, we sanction it. The reason unwed mothers and their children were stigmatized is the same reason why cohabitation, adultery, polygamy, and homosexuality were stigmatized: they were seen as challenges to traditional marriage and the two

parent family.

If stigmatizing alternatives to monogamy and the two parent family had no effect, then a rational case for condemning the stigmatizers could be made. But it worked. Take the 1950s. Everyone agrees it was a much more conservative time. To the critics of this period, it was a time of sexual repression. What they are reluctant to acknowledge is that it was also a time of great family strength.

Sociologist David Popenoe noted that “greater family stability was achieved in the fifties than at probably any other time in history, with high marriage rates, low unwed birthrates, and low death rates not yet offset by sky-high divorce rates.” Importantly, he attributes the very public and influential role that religion played as contributing to this condition. That included stigmatizing alternatives to traditional marriage.

No one doubts that stigmatizing out-of-wedlock births has decreased, but it is also true that this has occasioned a large increase in such births.

So have we gone forward or backwards? It would be nice to live in a world where stigma was a thing of the past and where dysfunctional behaviors and life-styles were also non-existent. But that is a pipe dream, so we must choose.

The choice has been made: we have become more accepting of deviant sexual behaviors, and in return we have witnessed a spike in family dissolution. Should we pop the champagne?

In other words, let's not hear any more nonsense about “evil” traditional nuns who enforced sanctions against unwanted behaviors. They did so because they wanted to jealously safeguard the gold standard for all children, a stable home run by their mothers and fathers.

Remember one more thing: the mothers who dropped their out-of-



wedlock children off at the convents had only one other choice at the time—the street. Thank God they chose the nuns.

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# INSPIRING LIFE OF AN ABORTION SURVIVOR

*Rick Hinshaw*

Melissa Ohden, *You Carried Me: A Daughter's Memoir* (Walden, NY: Plough Publishing House, 2017)

Melissa Ohden's story begins with an attempt to kill her in her mother's womb. That is what brought her to Washington in September 2015 to testify before the Judiciary Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives. She spoke along with Gianna Jessen, also an abortion survivor—whose story had, years earlier, been a source of strength to the teenage Melissa as she struggled to deal with the knowledge that she had been the target of an abortion.

Together, they used that Congressional forum to tell America, first-hand, about abortion's victims. "We are your friend, your coworker, your neighbor," Melissa said, "and you would likely never guess just by looking at us that we survived what we did."

When we think about people like Melissa and Gianna, we tend to bookend their stories. They survived an abortion. Now they are living happy, productive lives. The end. It's a powerful pro-life story, in and of itself.

Yet to know of how Melissa's life started—as the intended victim of an abortion—and where she is today—a wife, mother,

author, and powerful advocate for women, men and children victimized by abortion—is to know only the barest outline of her inspiring story of tenacity, courage and survival.

In *You Carried Me*, she invites us into her lifelong journey of questioning and self-discovery—from her extreme vulnerability upon learning, as an adolescent, that her live birth resulted from a failed abortion; through the depths of teenage depression and self-destructive behavior that followed; to a sustained and determined search to find her origins, to determine God's purpose for her life, and ultimately to reconnect with the mother who tried to abort her—and who, she would learn, was as much a victim of that decision as she was.

Along the way, we see how the never-ending love of Melissa's adoptive family, and later her husband and her own children, have sustained her; and how, conversely, friends, college peers and teachers, even some clergy, their hearts apparently poisoned by the abortion culture, reacted with discomfort or outright hostility toward Melissa when she told them her story.

To read Melissa's story will be, for those who are actively pro-life, a powerful affirmation of all they have believed and given witness to: the living humanity of the pre-born child; the meaning and purpose that God gives to every human life; the destructive nature of abortion, not only to the child in the womb, but to everyone who is touched by its evil; and the love, care, healing and hope—for mothers and children before and after birth, and also for all those whose lives have been devastated by the tragedy of abortion—that are and must be central to every pro-life ministry.

For abortion supporters, on the other hand, Melissa's story will be—or should be—terribly, terribly disturbing. For her life is testament to the reality of abortion. No one can look at her, or hear her story, and deny that abortion kills; that every abortion—or every *successful* abortion—destroys a living,

growing human being. Melissa is here only because in her case, the abortion *failed*. She was living in the womb and she *continued* to live after the abortion. She—as well as Gianna and other abortion survivors—is a living, breathing refutation of the abortion culture’s wholly discredited claim that there is no meaningful life before birth.

Moreover, her life disproves the pernicious lie upon which our abortion culture is based: that a child conceived under difficult circumstances is necessarily “unwanted,” and would be better off dead. Melissa, we see, was very much wanted and loved: by the family that adopted her shortly after her birth; by her husband and children later in life; and also, as she would learn, by her birth mother, who never wanted, and deeply regretted, the abortion that was forced upon her.

Melissa’s story, however, is not just about the extraordinary love she has received; it is also about the love she has given.

In Frank Capra’s classic movie, “It’s a Wonderful Life,” the angel Clarence observes that “Each man’s life touches so many other lives. When he isn’t around he leaves an awful hole, doesn’t he?” We see in Melissa’s story how her own life, of course, was so dependent on the love of others. But we also see how she deeply touched so many lives—and what holes there would be in those lives if, as first intended, she had not lived.

The outpouring of love for Melissa began with the nurse who first heard her weak cry after she had been aborted, and the nurses who got her to ICU—despite, as she would learn years later, the demand of her own maternal grandmother that she just be left to die. Then there were all the nurses and staff who continued to care for her over the ensuing weeks as she fought for her life.

What would have happened to her if they weren’t there? Or if

they had taken the attitude adopted by Barack Obama? As Melissa points out, as an Illinois State Senator the future president voted against legislation to protect children born alive after an abortion. One wonders what he would say to Melissa Ohden if he met her today. Would he have the courage of his convictions, and tell her that if it were up to him she wouldn't be here?

Then there were, of course, Melissa's adoptive parents, Ron and Linda Cross. They risked so much to take her into their family, not knowing what traumatic long-term consequences might have resulted from the saline poison that had wracked her little body for four agonizing days before the abortion was completed. (Miraculously, there were no such lasting complications in Melissa's case, beyond the serious medical problems associated with premature birth that the Crosses had to navigate with Melissa.) But—inspired, she writes, by the strength and tenacity of a friend who had been rendered quadriplegic by an accident, they hoped to find the same qualities in Melissa; and did, even as their love helped to draw those qualities out.

It is easy to understand what the Crosses meant to Melissa—giving her a loving home, working and sacrificing over the years to raise her and give her opportunities, being there for her as she dealt with the awful truth—that they had to tell her—about the attempt to abort her, and then being fully supportive of her efforts to trace her origins and find her birth families.

Equally compelling, however, is what Melissa has meant to them—how this “unwanted” baby, intended to be discarded, became such an integral, loving part of their lives and their family. What a hole there would have been in *their* lives had Melissa been killed before they could have found and adopted her.

There are so many others whose lives Melissa has touched, and

who have touched hers: from friends, siblings and extended family members; to all the people she ministered to during her career in social work, in the fields of mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence and child welfare; and all those to whom she now helps bring hope and healing through her various pro-life ministries. And of course, where would the lives of her own husband and children be without her—or hers without them?

Most compelling is the incredible story of Melissa's connection to members of her birth families. From the searing pain of learning that her birth father had died without ever responding to the letter she had written him, came the wonderful, loving relationship that her paternal birth grandfather formed with Melissa.

Then, contacted by her birth-mother's cousin, she read the words she had longed for: "The abortion was against your mother's wishes."

"I felt a private joy for myself," she writes: "I had been wanted, and loved, after all." This was confirmed when finally they met, and her birth mother shared with Melissa the joy she felt when she first learned, years later, that her baby had lived.

At the same time, having, through her pro-life work, "met so many women who had endured what had happened to her," Melissa wept for her mother. "My heart ached for this young girl, afraid and alone, forced against her will—by the people who should have protected her—to end the life of her child." Forgiveness, already in her heart, now flowed forth.

And so Melissa and her birth mother filled each other's lives as no one else could. Melissa gave her mother the forgiveness and love that made her whole again; she in turn enabled that forgiveness in Melissa, and filled the great void in her child's life with the knowledge that her birth mother does,

and always has, loved and wanted her.

Moreover, Melissa learned that telling her story publicly, far from being painful for her birth mother, was vital for her healing. "I need you to keep speaking," her mother wrote. "You are the first person to ever fight for me." Melissa, the intended victim, was now the healer.

As is so often the case with those victimized in one way or another by the abortion industry, Melissa's story also involves a journey of faith—one that would ultimately lead her into the loving embrace of the Catholic Church.

A Christian who attended various churches over the years, she traces the beginnings of her journey to the Catholic faith back to an encounter with a pro-life group outside a Planned Parenthood clinic in 2005.

Blissfully unaware at the time that Planned Parenthood did abortions, she had gone there to obtain birth control pills. Approached by a pro-life man who informed her that they did abortions, she told him that she knew all about abortion, she was an abortion survivor.

"You should be here, not there!" he replied—words that challenged her, and ultimately helped draw her into publicly sharing her story. He also gave her a rosary, and "ever since," she writes, "I had been led, slowly but inexorably, to the Catholic Church."

Years later, "encouraged by the faith and witness of so many Catholics I had met through my years of speaking out," she started attending Mass. "I knew right away it was where I belonged; it felt like coming home." She began taking formal instruction, and was received into the Church at Easter time in 2014.

Thinking again of Frank Capra's words, it is easy to see the holes that would exist in so many lives today had Melissa

Ohden not lived. But what about those millions of babies who did not live? How many “awful holes,” in how many lives, exist today because the Melissa Ohdens who would have filled them were killed by abortion?

To the unspeakable atrocity of more than 40 million innocent children killed, add those countless millions of empty, wounded lives. That gives some idea of the true depth of America’s abortion carnage. And that is what Melissa Ohden’s life story should inspire us to confront.

*Rick Hinshaw is the director of communications for the Catholic League.*

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## **“MASS GRAVE” HOAX WIDELY REPORTED**

No media outlet has done a more consistently accurate job reporting the “mass grave” story than the New York Times. Not only did it not fall for this bogus story when it first surfaced in 2014, it actually poked holes in it. Its coverage in 2017 has also been flawless. Kudos to the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* for recently picking up the Times story.

Unlike other Irish sources, the Irish Echo got this story correct.

The BBC fell for the “mass grave” bunk in 2014. Now in 2017, it had covered this story accurately, absent any sensationalistic talk about a “mass grave,” until just recently, when it used the term in reporting on comments from Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny.

The *International Business Times* initially ran with the “mass grave” story, but then it offered a very fair account of Bill Donohue’s criticisms of it. It should be commended for its balanced reporting.

Reuters had a mixed record: some stories mentioned the “mass grave” and others did not.

The following media outlets ran at least one story on the “mass grave.” No source was worse than AP: two years ago it ran an apology for faulty reporting on this subject, and this year it was just as inaccurate. Worse, its stories have been picked up nationwide by other media outlets, thus spreading the fake news about a “mass grave.”

## **Wire Services**

AP

UPI

## **U.S. Print Media**

*Time* (AP)

*Washington Post*

*Daily News* (AP)

*New York Post* (AP)

*Newsday* (AP)

*USA Today*

*Chicago Tribune* (AP)

*Boston Globe*

*Los Angeles Times* (AP)

*Wall Street Journal*

*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

*St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (AP)

*Atlanta Journal Constitution* (AP)

*Orange County Register* (AP)

*Sacramento Bee* (AP)

*Tampa Bay Times* (AP)

*Star Tribune* (AP)



*San Diego Union Tribune*  
*Orlando Sentinel*  
*Providence Journal*  
*Hartford Courant*  
*Salt Lake Tribune*  
*Spokesman Review (AP)*  
*Saginaw News*  
*Christian Science Monitor*

## **U.S. Radio and TV**

ABCNewsRadio  
CNN  
NPR  
Voice of America

## **Online Media**

CBSNews.com  
FoxNews.com  
NBCNews.com  
Yahoo News  
Irish Central  
Inquisitr  
Daily Beast  
SF Gate (AP)  
Christian Times

## **U.K. Media**

Guardian  
Telegraph.co.uk  
*Daily Mail*  
*Belfast Telegraph*  
*Irish News*  
*Daily Star Online*  
*Daily Mirror*  
*Express*  
Independent

MailOnline  
*Scottish Daily Mail*  
Belfast Telegraph Online  
Express Online  
Press Association Mediapoint  
Sky News

## **Irish Media**

*Irish Independent*  
*Irish Mirror*  
*Irish Times*  
*Irish Sun*  
Newstalk 106-108 fm  
Dublin Live  
*Irish Examiner*  
thejournal.ie  
RTÉ.ie  
Galway Bay fm

What is most astonishing about this unprofessional journalism is that it is at odds with the official statements by the government's Mother and Baby Commission and the formal remarks made by government officials. While those accounts mention that "significant quantities of human remains" were found, none mention anything about a "mass grave."

What was uncovered is disturbing enough, but what is being reported is pure hype. The photo that is being shopped about the "mass grave" on the property of the Bon Secours Sisters is a picture of a graveyard. Period. It is not proof of a "mass grave."

The incuriosity of the media suggests a willingness to validate an ideological predilection, one that is not exactly Catholic-friendly. It surely is not a quest for the truth.

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# WHERE ARE THE “MASS GRAVE” PICTURES?

Irish Central is the most irresponsible of the mass grave theorists in the U.S.

On March 4, it ran the following headline: “Tuam Mass Infant Grave is Confirmed, Now What Are We Going to Do About it?” In fact, no confirmation was given. The article cited the “significant” number account, but offered no proof that the government confirmed the existence of a mass grave.

On March 8, in an article on women’s rights, Irish Central said, “Just last week 800 babies were found buried, abandoned in an unmarked grave in Tuam.”

This is an out-and-out lie. The bodies of 800 babies were not found. Irish Central literally made this up. It is pure fiction.

Irish Central has a moral obligation to provide pictures of the 800 bodies found in an unmarked grave in Tuam. Where are the pictures? Time to put up or shut up.

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# WHY THE “MASS GRAVE” STORY IS A HOAX

Almost all of the media in the U.S., England, and Ireland are promoting a fake news account of a “mass grave” containing the

remains of nearly 800 children. Here is why we aren't buying it.

- The official statement by the Mother and Baby Commission, issued March 3rd, makes no mention of a "mass grave." Why not? If there were evidence of a mass grave surely that would be the lead story. Instead, it says "significant quantities of human remains" were found in sewage chambers. That is disturbing but it does not support the wild claims of a "mass grave."
- Katherine Zappone TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, issued her formal remarks on March 3rd as well. She said nothing about any "mass grave." Why not?
- On July 12, 2016, the government's Interim Report was issued. It said nothing about any "mass grave." Why not?
- Catherine Corless is the source of the "mass grave" allegation. In 2012, she wrote about her findings in an article titled, "The Home"; it was published in the Journal of the Old Tuam Society. She made no mention of any "mass grave." Why not?
- Corless not only failed to mention a "mass grave," she offered evidence that contradicts her later claim. To wit: "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.
- Corless said in 2014, "I am certain there were 796 children in a mass grave." She offered no evidence, nor did she explain why—just two years earlier—she said there were "several small skulls" in a "little graveyard."
- 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!

- When this story broke in 2014, Ireland’s Minister for Education, Ruairi Quinn, said the Corless account was “simply not true.”
- The local police said at that time that “there is no confirmation from any source that there are between 750 and 800 bodies present.”

So why did Corless change her story from “several small skulls” found in a “little graveyard” to 800 bodies found in a “mass grave”? That is what journalists should be probing. They can begin by questioning her relationship with Martin Sixsmith, whom she first met in January 2014. He is the author of a book about Philomena Lee, the woman made famous in the movie, “Philomena.” The lies about her story have been recounted by Bill Donohue in his article, “Philomena Is a Malicious Fraud.”

It was only after Corless met Sixsmith that her rage against the Catholic Church was evident. Her 2012 journal piece was void of any hatred, but after her encounter with Sixsmith, she turned on the Church. Their hostility to Catholicism has been on display ever since.

The most pernicious aspect of this story is the willingness of the media to be seduced by the most fantastic tales about the Catholic Church, and the profound laziness of reporters to fact check news stories. They are responsible for making this a classic example of fake news.

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# SO HOW MANY DIED IN IRISH HOMES?

Paul Redmond is chairman of the Coalition of Mother and Baby Home Survivors. He was born in one of the homes in 1964, and was adopted 17 days later. He has become the leading activist involved in the search for answers to what actually happened in these homes.

As with many others associated with this cause, Redmond's "evidence" is slippery.

- On January 30, 2015, the *Irish Mirror* reported that Redmond claimed he had evidence of 7,000 babies and children who died in homes across Ireland in the last century.
- On March 3, 2017, just as the latest Tuam "mass grave" story was being reported, Redmond told Ireland's BreakingNews that "at least 6,000 babies and children" had died in the homes. No one asked him to explain the missing 1,000.
- On March 6, 2017, three days after he cited the 6,000 figure to BreakingNews, he told the same media outlet that 7,000 died in the care of the nuns. No one asked him to explain the additional 1,000.
- On March 7, the *Irish Sun* reported that Redmond said there were 6,000 *women* and children who died in the homes. No one asked him to explain the missing 1,000, nor did they ask why he now included women in his estimate.

Redmond outdid himself on March 3 when he told UPI that "well over 4,000 babies and children" were buried in three of the homes. But where? Redmond said they were buried "in shoeboxes and rags." No one asked him to prove a thing.

And some wonder why we are so skeptical.

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# TUAM CRITICS ON ABORTION AND GAY MARRIAGE

The number of human remains found outside the Mother and Baby Home in Tuam does not come close to 800, but that there are any is disturbing. It seems logical to think that those who are truly concerned about these deceased children—some of whom were unborn—would be pro-life. But among the elites, they are not. They are also pro-gay marriage.

What unites the two issues is an expansive view of sexual rights. This vision of freedom is very much interested in the rights of adults, having next to nothing to say about the welfare of children.

There is a third issue relevant to this discussion: attitudes toward the Catholic Church. It is not surprising that those who are screaming the loudest about the “mass graves” also like to bash the Church.

In the U.S., no one is more exercised about the Tuam story than Niall O'Dowd of Irish Central. “I am personally in favor of same-sex marriage,” he says. As for abortion, he says it is a “complex and incredibly emotional issue,” and warns of the horrors of banning it.

Now if someone said that racial discrimination was a “complex and incredibly emotional issue,” and warned of the horrors of banning it, is there anyone who couldn't figure out what side he was on?

Irish politicians are a genuine disgrace. The Prime Minister, Enda Kenny, is livid over the Tuam story. Does that motivate him to protect life in the womb? Not at all: He champions more

exceptions to Ireland's limited abortion ban. When he received an honorary degree at Boston College in 2013, he earned a salute from Planned Parenthood. That speaks volumes. He is also a big proponent of gay marriage, and a reliable critic of the Catholic Church on matters sexual.

Michael D. Higgins is President of Ireland. He gets melodramatic when speaking about Irish nuns. He talks about "dark shadows" that hang over Ireland, "shadows that require us all to summon up yet again a light that might dispel the darkness to which so many women and their children were condemned..." Predictably, he has signed pro-abortion and pro-gay marriage legislation.

Senator Katherine Zappone is one of two leading critics of the Tuam story in the Parliament. She is a pro-abortion American transplant who "married" her girlfriend, an Irish ex-nun, in 2003.

The other member of Parliament leading the charge is Brid Smith. She is strongly pro-abortion and pro-gay marriage, and is one of the nation's most relentless anti-Catholics. She is also a communist.

That's quite an assembly. The remains of children found in a septic tank from decades ago is an abomination, but children who are killed before birth in 2017 is not nearly as bad. There is no difference between Francis marrying Frances, and Frank marrying Freddie. To top things off, the Church is repressive, especially those "evil" Irish nuns.

No one with any sense would want to get inside these people's heads any further.