

Drawing Aside the Purple Curtain

The Papal System Today: an Analysis of the News

A Mass Grave of Babies and the Lie of “Limbo”

by Shaun Willcock

Milltown Cemetery is found in predominantly Roman Catholic west Belfast, Northern Ireland. A fence separates the cemetery from the Bog Meadows nature reserve. And according to the cemetery register, an anonymous spot of marshy land in that nature reserve, abutting the cemetery, is a *mass grave*.¹

The Roman Catholic “Church” owned this land for decades. Then, under the terms of a 999-year lease drawn up in 2000, the “Church” sold off 37 hectares to the Ulster Wildlife Trust, the owners of the Bog Meadows reserve. And this means, according to people familiar with the history of Milltown, that the nature reserve could now contain *several thousand* graves!²

The trustees of the Milltown Cemetery stated that an “administrative error” caused the boundary to be drawn incorrectly, and that the land containing the graves should never have been leased. But almost nine years later, relatives of those buried there were still waiting for this “administrative error” to be corrected. Who was buried there? The *babies* of Roman Catholics who died in infancy before they could receive the Roman Catholic rite of “baptism” (the word “baptism” is put in inverted commas because Romish “baptism” is not true, biblical baptism), between the 1940s and 1970s. And why were they buried there, in this unmarked and uncared-for site? They were buried there because Rome’s teaching forbade “unbaptized” infants from being buried in the supposedly “consecrated” or “holy” ground of the cemetery (Rome “consecrates” the ground in a cemetery which is used for the burial of Roman Catholics).

The “Church” of Rome claims, contrary to God’s Word, that baptism is essential for salvation, and for this reason parents bring their children to a priest to be “baptized” as soon after birth as possible, fearing that if they don’t do this and their child dies, it will not be able to enter heaven. According to what was unofficial Roman Catholic teaching for centuries, the souls of babies who died without receiving the Papist sacrament of baptism went to a place called limbo. Limbo was said to be a place on the border or fringe of heaven and hell, a place that was neither heaven nor hell for those who did not deserve either. Although this teaching was never *officially* defined by Rome, being a mere “theological hypothesis” according to the present pope of Rome, Benedict XVI,³ it was nevertheless encouraged by the hierarchy as a very useful tool for spurring parents to have their newborns “baptized” as Papists, as soon as possible. This was admitted by Benedict XVI himself. Then in 2006, after centuries in which it was taught to, and believed by, Roman Catholics the world over, a Vatican commission appointed by the pope of Rome concluded that the souls of “unbaptized” babies were entrusted to a “merciful God” whose ways of ensuring salvation could not be known, and that all children who die do so in the expectation of “the universal salvation of God”, whether “baptized” or not.⁴ Thus, although Rome still insists on “baptism” for infants, saying it is essential to salvation, it now adds that infants dying in infancy just *may* be saved without it.⁵

It’s all very confusing and muddled to the average Roman Catholic, not given to the theological ducking and diving, the twisting and turning, at which the hierarchy of Rome is so adept. But when all is said and done, the cold fact remains that for *centuries*, the bodies of “unbaptized” infants were considered unfit to be buried in “holy” ground – and were dumped in graves like the unmarked mass grave at Milltown.

“It’s horrific when you sit down and think about what has been done,” said Eileen Strong, a founder member of a group called the Relatives of the Milltown Babies, which demanded that “Church” leaders apologise for leasing the land to the wildlife trust, identify the grave sites, and return the land to the

cemetery with new grave markings. “We were always taught never to say no to a priest but it’s about time someone stood up to the Church.”⁶ Indeed it is horrific, and indeed many Irish Papists are at last beginning to stand up to their false “Church” more and more, in the light of the priestly child abuse scandals that have rocked Irish Roman Catholicism to its foundations. The times are changing, and the Lord God is tearing away the hypocritical mask of piety worn by the priesthood of Rome for so long.

Another member of the Relatives of the Milltown Babies, Colette Walsh, was a teenage mother in the 1960s. She gave birth to a stillborn son with severe brain damage, and she said he was treated “like a piece of dirt” by hospital staff. As was common at the time, the male members of her family took responsibility for the child’s burial, and she was not told exactly where her son was buried, nor did she ask. “That was the culture at the time,” she said. “You were expected to get on with your life and put it behind you.” After consulting the record books at Milltown, she found an entry for a nameless baby, identifiable only by her married name in the adjacent column. That was how she discovered that the plot of land in which her son had been buried had been leased to the Ulster Wildlife Trust. “What angered me is that no one was ever consulted about this,” she said. “No one thought of the grief and hurt that this would cause the families.” She said, “There must be hundreds of mothers, fathers, aunts or uncles out there who know about one of these children. We want people to come forward and talk to us. They have nothing to be ashamed of.”⁷

A founder member of the group, Donna Hanvey, whose newborn baby brother was buried at the site in 1966, said: “It’s unkempt and full of rubbish, yet there are burials in there – as many as 11000. It’s as simple as that.”⁸

Once it became clear that the Relatives of the Milltown Babies really did have a case, Rome lost no time in dispatching a priest to make the most of the situation and thereby attempt to play down the tragedy. Priest John McManus met with the families concerned and also conducted a vigil service at the cemetery boundary at “Christmas” time in 2008. What a useless, empty gesture! But sadly it was doubtless appreciated by the Roman Catholic families, misled as they are to believe that such a “service” would somehow be beneficial. Working with the families, he demanded that their children’s resting place be mapped, marked and preserved. The priest said, “We’re coming out of what we can only regard as a mistaken theology of a hundred years ago. People have been carrying the grief and burden of losing a child for decades and it’s important we get this right.”⁹ What astounding audacity! Doubtless by the “mistaken theology of a hundred years ago” he means the Roman Catholic teaching about “unbaptized” babies and limbo. Well, the truth is that it was a theology maintained until just a few short years ago, not a century ago! And furthermore, Rome prides itself on being “always the same” – yet here this priest admits it was a “mistaken theology”! Well then, if Rome was mistaken about this, what about all its other unbiblical, heathenish doctrines and dogmas? What about Mary worship? Prayers to the dead? Prayers for the dead? Saint worship? The worship of the wafer in the mass? What about Purgatory? The seven so-called sacraments? Salvation by works? What about all the other heathenish doctrines? Will Rome ever admit to *these* being “mistaken theology”? Don’t hold your breath, because it’s not going to happen. It’s one thing for Rome to drop the teaching on limbo; but it will *never* drop its other, *officially defined* “doctrines of devils”.

And note how breezily Rome simply dismisses its shocking errors, and the pain and trauma caused by them. As we wrote in a previous article on “limbo”: “Rome’s motto has always been, ‘Always the same.’ It claims that it never changes. It claims that it teaches the truth which the apostles taught. And yet here we are, in the 21st century, and Rome is *backtracking* on what it permitted its blinded devotees to believe for many, many centuries! Literally millions of Roman Catholics have lived and died in the belief that unbaptised children *cannot* go to heaven, but must spend eternity in a place called limbo, a place that is not hell and not purgatory but also not quite heaven. And now – Rome has ‘backtracked’! It now simply says, ‘Oops – there’s really no such place after all. We’ve allowed our priests to teach this concept, for centuries, to the poor grieving parents of babies who die in infancy without being baptised; but, well, ahem, the place really doesn’t exist.’ And this monstrosity is believed by millions to be a Christian church?”¹⁰ For *centuries* Roman Catholic parents who suffered the loss of a child before it could be “baptized” were fed this lie, and were expected to just get over it and accept their “Church’s”

heresy. Millions lived their entire lives believing that their children were in limbo, and all because they failed to apply a few drops of water to their heads in time.

The Ulster Wildlife Trust stated that it would transfer any established graves back to the “Church” of Rome once an accurate map of the burial sites had been made by archaeologists using ground-penetrating radar equipment.¹¹ Although the results were not made public, relatives said the results had confirmed their suspicions that graves were indeed contained there.¹² A spokeswoman for the Ulster Wildlife Trust said, “This could really open a can of worms. We purchased this land in good faith and have been co-operative with the families and the trustees of the cemetery. But ultimately this was a mistake by the Church and we feel it is their responsibility to resolve the matter.”¹³ Very true. If indeed the wildlife trust had no inkling of these things when it purchased the land, the fault lies entirely with the “Church” of Rome. Its callousness and utter disrespect for people is revealed starkly by this incident.

In April the “Church” of Rome apologised for selling the land, after admitting that the plot of land contained graves, many of them belonging to infants and newborn babies. The Roman Catholic bishop of Down and Connor, Noel Treanor, apologised for the distress caused to relatives whose loved ones were buried there.¹⁴ In a newspaper advertisement, he said: “It has become apparent that part of the ground included in the lease [to the Wildlife Trust] contained the unmarked graves of babies and older people buried many years ago. On this Good Friday I, on behalf of the trustees of the cemetery past and present, apologise to all those who have loved ones buried in this section of the cemetery and I regret the hurt and distress that this has caused. I want to reassure them that all necessary steps are being taken, with the cooperation of the Ulster Wildlife Trust, to take back possession of this sacred ground. When the ground in which the loved ones are buried has been returned to us, we will restore this part of the cemetery and erect an appropriate monument to the memory of all those who are buried there, both young and old, so that it will be a fitting place for their relatives to visit, pray for and remember their loved ones.”¹⁵ Of course, praying for dead relatives is completely unbiblical and heathenish, as is “blessing” ground; but then, Rome is a heathen religion. As for the “apology”, Rome’s apologies are never worth anything anyway. Those babies were tossed into unmarked graves, and the “Church” of Rome, which must have known where they were, later readily let the land become part of a wildlife reserve, doubtless in the hope that all evidence of this aspect of its doctrine and practice would thereby be covered up; and now, having been found out, it “apologises”.

Then in May, this Romish bishop “blessed” the land for the first time.¹⁶ He said, “We now entrust these children to the abundant mercy of God so that they may find a home in His kingdom.”¹⁷ Here we see Rome’s false theology yet again: the remains of these children have lain in that plot for decades; yet this man prayed that God would be merciful to their souls so that they “may find a home” in His kingdom. According to the Bible, the Word of God, when a person dies his soul goes immediately to either heaven or hell, and nothing that anyone can do or pray on earth will alter that. Yet this Romish bishop prays as if the souls of those children were floating about somewhere for all this time, unable to find a resting place in heaven until he prayed this prayer! Thus he deceived those listening to him into believing that the eternal destiny of those children was in his hands! In this wicked way the power of Rome’s bishops and priests is solidified over the deluded people who believe them. That this was indeed the effect upon the grieving Roman Catholic relatives present at the “blessing” was evidenced by the many who wept as he prayed, and by the words of Relatives of the Milltown Babies founder Donna Hanvey, who said that the “blessing” was a day many like her had been waiting for. She said, “The bishop has done an awful lot for us. First came the apology and now he’s blessed the graves and recognised these babies which has made such a big difference to us.” It was also shown by the words of Colette Walsh, whose son was buried there, and who said, “This has been a wonderful day for me. It’s a day I never thought I would see. It’s been a long time coming. The apology the bishop gave was unbelievable but the fact he blessed the graves just shows that these babies will never be forgotten now.”¹⁸

The tragedy here is that these poor people have been deceived and misled by a religious institution falsely claiming to be a Christian church: the Roman Catholic institution. It callously dumped babies’

bodies in an unmarked grave because as far as it was concerned, they did not deserve proper burial in the “holy ground” of the official cemetery as they had died without being “baptized.” How cruel to teach that, because a child’s *soul* could supposedly not go to heaven, its *body* could not be buried in a “proper” cemetery! *Even if* they sincerely believed the “soul in limbo” teaching, what had that to do with the body? Why should the *earthly* remains of a person be punished because its *soul* was not in heaven?

But this is how Rome has been. For example, it exhumed the bones of John Wycliffe and burned them, because it believed Wycliffe had been a heretic whose soul was in hell. It did the same to others as well. And the same mentality lay behind the treatment of the bodies of “unbaptized” infants.

These poor, deceived Roman Catholics suffered untold pain because their religion taught them that their babies were in limbo. They then suffered further pain because their religion taught them that a “proper” burial meant being buried in ground that had been supposedly “consecrated” by a priest. This is nothing but heathenism. There is no such thing as a “consecrated” burial ground, and it makes no difference whatsoever to a person’s eternal state whether he is buried in so-called “holy” ground or not. None of this is found in the Bible. It is all heathenism, adopted into Roman Catholicism centuries ago. It is all a lie. Roman Catholics have been fed a double lie: they have been lied to regarding the bodies of their dead relatives, and they have been lied to regarding their departed souls.

And yet, despite all the pain caused to them *by the “Church” of Rome*, these poor people are *still* bound to this religious system by their religious leaders! The very “Church” which brought such misery into their lives in the first place is now the “Church” they turn to for succour and comfort, when it does an about-turn under pressure and “apologises” and prays! This is the greatest tragedy of all. Such is the devilish power of superstition and fear. It is the fear to make a clean break with a religious system that claims to have the power to open or shut the very gates of heaven.

To any Roman Catholic who may be reading this: dear friend, turn away from all this superstitious nonsense! Think about what Eileen Strong said as quoted above: say no to your priest and stand up to this false “Church” which is full of lies and deception! But go further: say no to *all* the devilish doctrines your priests and bishops, and your pope, have taught you, reject this antichristian religion which, instead of teaching the truth of God as found in His Word, the Bible, teaches for doctrines the commandments of men! (Matt. 15:9). Forsake it, and come to the Lord Jesus Christ! He can break the chains of this religion which holds you in such bondage! Come to Him by faith, for He is the Friend of all who do so, and will never cast them away! (Jn. 6:37). He is full of mercy and compassion, and unlike the pope of Rome Christ’s yoke is easy, and His burden is light (Matt. 11:30). Don’t trust in your Popish “baptism”, for water can never wash away sins or regenerate the soul. Rome was wrong about limbo, and it is wrong about what it terms “baptism” as well. It is wrong about all its “sacraments” and their supposed power, it is wrong about the way of salvation. None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good! You have been lied to your whole life long, but Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life! (Jn. 14:6). Come to Him, and find rest for your soul! (Matt. 11:28).

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ENDNOTES:

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