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MY HORROR AT CASEY'S STATELY FUNERAL IN CATHEDRAL

Bishop's niece reveals how she was driven to accuse her uncle of abuse

THE 'horror' of learning that Bishop Eamonn Casey was buried in Galway Cathedral ultimately 'saved the life' of survivor Patricia Donovan, driving her to expose

By **Ian Begley** and **Anne Sheridan**

the serial abuser.

Bishop Casey was branded 'a sexual predator' in an RTE One documentary broadcast last night on foot of a joint investigation with the Irish Mail on Sunday.

Ms Donovan, a niece of Casey, spoke for the first time on camera of the vile sexual abuse she experienced at his hands, including claims he first raped her aged five and that the abuse continued for years afterwards.

The Catholic Church's guidelines state that a member of the clergy who is deemed to have a case to Turn to Page 4



Tragedy: Clodagh Phelan fell from seventh floor

Girl, 11, dies after falling from hotel balcony on family holiday in Majorca

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Maybe in a weird way, it saved me

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answer of child sexual abuse is not entitled to the same funeral liturgy as a priest in good standing.

Despite this, Galway Diocese decided to bury Eamonn Casey in the crypt of his former cathedral in a lavish ceremony attended by more than 1,600 people, including President Michael D Higgins, on March 16, 2017.

While a lengthy homily that recognised his 'kindness and encouragement' was well received by most, the endless tributes were almost too much to bear for Ms Donovan.

And when he was given the honour of being buried inside the crypt at Galway Cathedral, it spurred her on to uncover his crimes.

She said: 'The week I found out that he had died, I was planning to end my life.'

'The horror of finding out on that Saturday that he had been put into the crypt in Galway Cathedral, when Galway knew that I had reported him, and somebody before me had reported him for abuse...

'And maybe, in a weird way, it saved my life, because, well, I vowed at that point, I would try and get heard.'

Ms Donovan first reported Bishop Casey for alleged abuse in 2005, which allegedly took place from the late 1960s, starting when she was just five years old and continuing for more than a decade.

She spoke out for the first time in 2019 to the Irish Mail on Sunday, which extensively reported details of her allegations, along with

'I vowed I would try and get heard'

separate abuse claims made by other women.

She said the influence Casey had in Irish society made her feel like 'this little person up against a huge organisation'.

She said: 'The only way he was able to do what he did to me, to the level that he did it, was because of the power he had from the Church.'

The Vatican has stated that decisions about Bishop Casey's funeral rites were made at 'the local level' and that 'the Papal Nuncio was not present for the funeral'.

One of Ireland's best-known clerics, Fr Brian D'Arcy has said Casey should never have been buried in the crypt.

He told RTE's *Liveline* yesterday: 'I get really angry over all of this. In one sense I'm not a bit worried where Eamonn Casey is buried or not buried. I think

that's a minor issue, but what I'm really thinking about is how those poor

Anger: Fr Brian D'Arcy expressed his views on RTE



Silenced: Ellen Murphy in the late 1990s or early 2000s

THE first known person to accuse Bishop Eamonn Casey of alleged child sexual abuse vowed that day one she would tell her story – even though she was silenced by the Redress Board from ever speaking out.

Now pictured for the very first time, Ellen Murphy said: 'Money is not in my mind. It is just to bring it out, let the public see with their own two eyes how people were badly treated.'

Mrs Murphy, who has since died, was one of the five women to accuse Bishop Casey of child sexual abuse and she reported her claim against him in 2001.

But she was gagged from ever speaking about her alleged abuse after accepting an award from the Residential Institutions Redress Board under its terms.

Mrs Murphy, who claims she was abused by Casey when she was 15 and in a reformatory school in Limerick, initially took a case to the High Court against him for damages, but had to drop that case when it was dealt with by the Redress Board.

The High Court documents outlined two alleged instances of abuse in Limerick in 1956.

They stated: 'On the first occasion she had been directed by a Sister [X] to bring tea and cakes into the parlour where the said priest Eamonn Casey was sitting. The said Sister left the parlour, at which point the plaintiff was directed to remove her underclothing and the said priest Eamonn Casey proceeded to touch the plaintiff's genital area with his toe.'

'On a further occasion, when the plaintiff was returning from Limerick Cathedral with other girls from school, the said priest Eamonn Casey grabbed the plaintiff from behind and lifted her on to his shoulders at which

WOMAN WHO FIRST ACCUSED CASEY OF ABUSE WANTED TO TELL HER STORY



by Anne Sheridan

time he fondled [her] genitalia causing her severe pain.

'The plaintiff was and remains deeply traumatised as a result of the sexual assaults and abuse. She has suffered throughout her life as a result of the foregoing.'

Mrs Murphy died in 2014, but speaking for the first time, her son Niall Murphy, who lives in England, told RTE of his mother's quest for justice and compensation. He said: 'She did speak about it for many years, that she would have liked to have justice, if only she could.'

'When it came up and she knew that she had the opportunity to take the Church to court, she was not reluctant in any way.'

'It amazed me that she lived to be 74'

I think there was a lot of unprocessed emotional trauma in my mum that manifested itself physically in the form of illness a lot of the time. It amazed me that she actually lived to be 74.'

Her story was revealed last night in RTE's *Bishop Casey's Buried Secrets*, in association with the Irish Mail on Sunday, which examined at least five cases of alleged child sexual abuse against Casey and how the Church handled the allegations.

She revealed her harrowing life story and years of alleged sexual and physical abuse to the Justice for Magdalenes Research project, in 2013. She was entitled to anonymity in that interview, or to use a pseudonym, but went under her own name.

The Irish Mail on Sunday first revealed allegations against Bishop Casey in 2019 – including the first extensive interview with his niece Patricia Donovan.

The Mail did not name Ellen Murphy at that time, but included details of her story.

Addressing other survivors of abuse, she urged: 'You have to bring it out and don't be one bit ashamed. There is nothing to be ashamed of. The truth is good.'

Nor was she allowed to discuss details of the alleged abuse.

She could only go so far as saying: 'We knew the priests and respected them, but I am sorry to say, they didn't respect us.'

She did not mention Casey, or any sexual abuse against her in that interview, nor could she under the stringent terms of the redress settlement which gagged survivors from speaking out against their perpetrators.

Ellen Murphy was 15 at the time of the alleged abuse and it would take almost 50 years before she tried to hold Casey and the Catholic Church to account. Her name was later discovered by the Mail after files were obtained by

Fr D'Arcy added that if Bishop Casey was publicly defrocked, his funeral Mass would have been significantly different. He added: 'There are procedures in place for the funerals of priests who have been convicted of sexual abuse of children.'

'They can't have the service on webcam, it must be low-key and there can be no long homilies



Memory: Ellen Murphy and her husband Thomas on their wedding day in 1967

Patricia Donovan, who also accused him of abuse, through a solicitor then working on a potential legal case for Ms Donovan.

The documents, which were obtained from the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton in England, stated, on a file marked E.C. [Eamonn Casey]: 'E.C. has informed Fr [X] that there was another historical case dealt with by his solicitors in Dublin. Name of alleged victim was Ellen Murphy. She made a claim through the Residential Institutions Redress Board and was awarded compensation.'

Ms Donovan obtained these files in 2017 – 16 years after Mrs Murphy had come forward to the authorities to report Bishop Casey and lodge a civil case.

By this time, Ms Donovan finally knew she was not the first, or only, person to accuse him of abuse. There were now at least three women who had reported him to the Limerick Diocese – Mrs Murphy's complaint in 2001, Ms Donovan's was filed in 2005 and another woman, who cannot be identified, came forward in 2014 and lodged High Court proceedings in 2016.

The latter's legal case was settled via the High Court after his death in 2017 for over €100,000. The Gardaí were informed by

about them. This is what Casey's funeral Mass would have been like if he was defrocked.' Some 11 bishops and 61 priests took part in the concelebrated funeral Mass at in Galway's Cathedral of Our Lady Assumed into Heaven and St Nicholas.

In the homily, Bishop of Achonry Brendan Kelly said the occasion was 'neither the time nor the place'

Limerick Diocese of Ellen Murphy's allegations of child sexual abuse against Casey, but her solicitor declined their request to make a formal statement, saying she preferred to pursue matters through the civil courts. She did, however, agree to contribute to Justice Ryan's Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse.

Ellen Murphy [née Ward] was born in 1940 and was placed in St Francis Xavier's Industrial School in Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon, in April 1944, where she remained for two years.

She had been placed in State care due to a non-attendance at

'I was an innocent little girl'

school, while her parents were charged under the School Attendance Act, 1926. She was then moved to the Benada Abbey Industrial in Co. Sligo, until 1955.

That August, Ellen says she was picked up by five nuns and placed in the back of a van, to be transported to Limerick by the Good Shepherd Sisters: 'That was a life for me I should never have had. I never did wrong to anybody. I was an innocent little girl.'

Aged 15, she was brought to the

sprawling Good Shepherd grounds at the junction of Clare Street and the Pennywell Road in Limerick city. It was situated a stone's throw from St John's Cathedral, where Casey was installed as curate that same year. It was around this time, in 1955/56, she would allegedly encounter him for the first time.

She remained in Limerick from August 1955 to May 1956, when she was then moved to Cork, and lastly to Dublin. When she eventually left the Sisters of Charity in Donnybrook in August 1964, after 18 years in institutions, she could neither read nor write.

In Dublin, before she left for London, she worked as a factory hand, a servant and a seamstress. In London, she worked as a cleaner for British Telecom and the Met Police, but was no longer able to work from 1992.

She married in 1967, and her son Niall was born in 1971. But her past haunted her all her life.

'I used to look behind me to see if there were nuns following me. My husband used to say to me, "That's the past, forget about the past". I still have nightmares,' she said, when she was in her 70s. 'One night I woke up and I was screaming, and I used to cry in my sleep thinking they were coming for me. They still torment you.'

When: 1956
Alleged victim: Ellen Murphy, then aged 15

Reported: In 2001
His position: Eamonn Casey was then chaplain, from 1956-1958, to St Joseph's reformatory school in Limerick.

What happened: Ellen Murphy took a High Court case against Casey and the Diocese of Limerick. However, when her case was dealt with by the Residential Institutions Redress Board, she was forced to drop that civil action. She was awarded over €40,000 plus a similar amount of costs.

What did the Church do: The Diocese of Limerick informed the gardai, the Vatican and the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton in England on June 7, 2001, but Casey remained in his position there for another four years as the file was misplaced when it went to the English diocese.

When: 1967
Alleged victim: His niece Patricia Donovan, then aged five. She claims the abuse continued for over a decade.

Reported: In 2005 to UK police and to the gardai. Of the three complaints filed in Limerick, only Patricia went directly to gardai.

His position: He was then working in London, helping the emigrant Irish community and driving housing initiatives, while also regularly travelling back to Limerick. This abuse also allegedly occurred during his reign as Bishop of Kerry.

What happened: No prosecution was directed by the DPP. Patricia spent years trying to ensure that restrictions on his ministry were enforced, saying she did not want other children to be at risk. No award or compensation was ever paid; however, the Galway Diocese did pay for some counselling sessions for her.

What did the Church do: The Diocese of Arundel & Brighton suspended him from active ministry in 2005 and reported it to the police. He came back to Galway to retire in 2006. The Diocese of Limerick reported it to the gardai and Papal Nuncio.

When: 1960s, year unknown
Alleged victim: A minor in the diocese of Kerry
Reported: 2005
His position: Bishop of Kerry



Accusations: Eamonn Casey

Who came forward and when?

The allegations of child sexual abuse against Eamonn Casey

What did the Church do: The diocese met with the person and the concern was reported to the gardai and HSE, as well as to the Galway Diocese. Counselling support was also offered but was not availed of at the time.

When: 1960s, year unknown
Alleged victim: A Limerick woman who wishes to remain anonymous.

Reported: In 2014
His position: Dr Casey had been working in London but frequently travelled back to Limerick, where his family was based.

What happened: She took a High Court case against Bishop Casey. She was awarded over €100,000 with a confidentiality agreement in place. The Limerick Diocese has said it did not impose that clause of secrecy, nor is it its policy to do so.

What did the Church do: The Diocese of Limerick reported it to the gardai and Papal Nuncio. They also provided counselling. Bishop Brendan Leahy also met with the female victim.

When: 1980s, year unknown
Reported: 2014
His position: Casey was Bishop of Galway at that time.

What did the Church do: Galway Diocese says it has offered counselling to all victims who came forward but that the matter of compensation did not arise. All complaints in Galway were forwarded to the Congregation of Bishops in Rome, which had a role in restricting his ministry alongside the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith.

And in further revelations, Annie Murphy wasn't his first relationship with an adult woman. These are the adult allegations:

When: 1960s
Who: Two women informed the Galway and Limerick dioceses that 'whilst they were adults, Bishop Casey had abused their trust and that such abuse involved sexual acts'.

Reported: 2011
What happened: The Diocese of Limerick paid a pastoral donation to one woman. The Galway Diocese offered financial help for counselling for both women. These complaints were also notified to the gardai and HSE.

When: 1960s
Who: A third party reported an unwanted sexual advance made by Bishop Casey to a woman in Limerick, which was rejected.

Reported: 2016
What happened: Limerick Diocese notified the Papal Nuncio.

When: 1973
Who: Annie Murphy, his distant American cousin, 22 years his junior. She was 24 and he was 46. She had travelled to Ireland at the insistence of her father to recover from a turbulent chapter in her life.
What happened: Annie gave birth to their son Peter in Dublin in 1974. This was only revealed in 1992, prompting Casey to tender his resignation as Bishop of Galway to the Pope.

He denied his son for many years and only met him for the first time when Peter was aged 15. He also used diocesan funds to pay for his son's education – IRLE70,000 was later repaid.

imposed by the Holy See. And so, it would have been... inappropriate for the Papal Nuncio to be present at that funeral.'

Fr McGrath added that Galway Diocese must have been left with a difficult decision when it came to the burial of Casey.

He said: 'They'd never had to deal with a bishop who'd been accused like that before in Ireland,

and I would suspect that people didn't know exactly what to do. It has to be a difficult thing to do, to make a decision about burying someone whom you did have great regard for...

'But the fact that some of the protocol was observed shows that there was a certain awareness.'

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