**Haiku for Healing**

*A series of 33 poems written by Laura Murphy in honour of the mothers and children who suffered through Church and State in Ireland.*

Beautiful babies  
Thrown into the septic tank

Your hands, still dirty.

Holy Trinity  
Father, Son and Holy Ghost

Where is the Mother?

It never leaves you

The torment, guilt, longing, shame.

Catholic Ireland.

Sealing the records  
To hide your own shame

A closed case, sealed fate.

Suspension of truth

Trying to hide evil crimes.

Pain, frozen in time.

They called you a whore.

You are the Source of all Life

And suppressed no more.

Unfettered secrecy.

Government clings to old ways.

Hindering healing.

Illegitimate

Are those who called you this.

Defiling your rights.

Their babies were used

To test vaccinations.

Cold revelation.

The babies who died  
Before the priest intervened

Didn’t get to Heaven?

You took her baby,

Separating purest love.

Shame is yours not hers.

You made her labour  
With no pain relief.  
Who's the fallen woman now?

Together no more.

*"All I want is Mama’s arms"*

Open, primal wound.

Did you turn your cheek

As you stole their innocence?

Original sin.

You tore them apart.

Their Meeting of Families

Would never happen.

Did you pray for us

As you riddled us with guilt?

Projecting your shame.

No place for women

On the altar most holy

‘Thou shalt not be seen.’

Our healing can come

When the suffering is felt

Through the heart of man.

He died to save us.

But who would save us from you?

Turning in His grave.

Let us celebrate

The Meeting of Families!

Forget all the pain.

He died in our name

To exorcise our evil

Who’s the sinner now?

So many good men

Not allowed to procreate.

We call them Father?

You were not evil.

That was their own reflection.

You are beautiful.

The will to power

Is weakness when disguised

As the will to love.

Did we have a choice

To separate church and state?

It was not our fault.

A blast from the past.

A re-traumatisation.

Please be gentle with our hearts.

Going with the flow

Into our dark history

To heal the future.

We all stood for truth.

Patriarchy turned around.

This is history.

Now, you are sorry.

Take responsibility.

Love, understand, act.

State apology.

You thought you were the only one.

‘You did nothing wrong’

They have said sorry.

Nothing takes away your pain.

But your voice is heard.

Your humanity

Validated by the state.

Healing can begin.

Hope springs eternal

Beneath where the roses grow.

Darkness brings new life.

* Laura Murphy