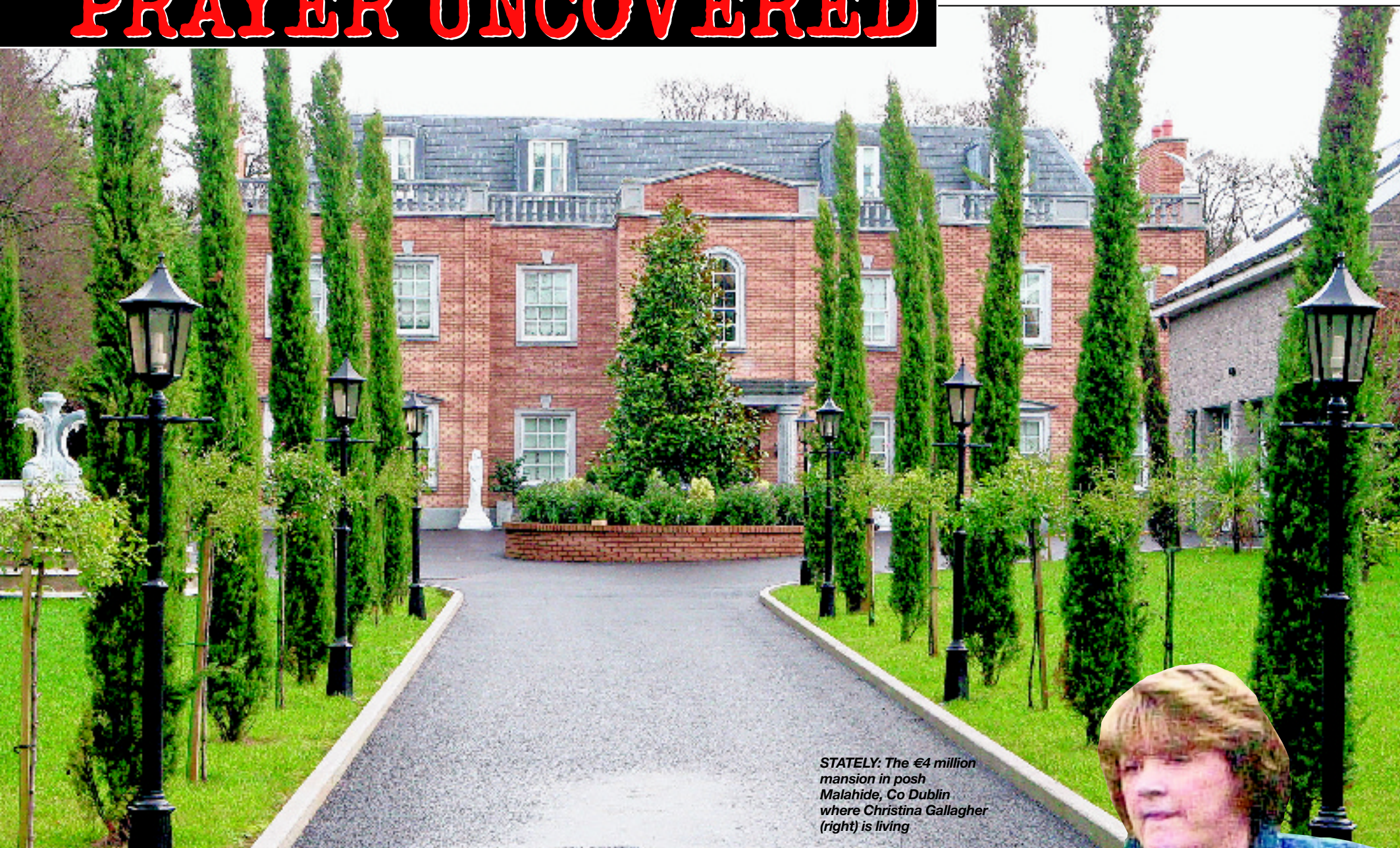


PRAYER UNCOVERED



STATELY: The €4 million mansion in posh Malahide, Co Dublin where Christina Gallagher (right) is living



SCAM EXPOSED: How the Sunday World revealed the extent of Christina Gallagher's wealth in recent weeks

express their disgust to this newspaper, others went on Joe Duffy's Liveline radio show to express concern for relatives "brainwashed" by Gallagher and her House of Prayer.

One man rang us to say his elderly father, who is a regular visitor to the Achill house, had been sucked into the scam and was handing over money.

"Our mother died from cancer two years ago and a few months after her death Gallagher called him in and said she had had an apparition the night before and saw my mum sitting in heaven.

"For my dad that news was better than winning the lottery. Gallagher just reeled him in and he swallowed it hook line and sinker.

"She blatantly targeted him when he was vulnerable. She is a fraud and someone has to stop her. "He is 72 and I am sure he is out thousands of euro, but won't tell us how much he has given her. I just hate to see him taken for a ride.

"My dad is down there every Saturday and will not listen to us. She is making a fool of him. She has amassed so much wealth."

A woman called Anna told Joe Duffy a similar story, saying she was concerned for her mum who

had given Gallagher €15,000.

Another shocking case reported to us was an elderly couple in Dublin who had planned to give thousands of euros to the Third World, but were then persuaded to give it to the House of Prayer instead.

"When we told Christina Gallagher she said immediately that there were plenty of people to give to the Third World, but very few to give to the House of Prayer," said the pensioner.

Revenue

"I really hold that against her, because we wanted to do some good with the money. It is so sad.

"What really surprised us was that Fr McGinnity asked us to write the cheque to himself rather than the House of Prayer because they had a small problem with the Revenue Commissioners which they were trying to iron out."

The pensioner said she stopped going to the House of Prayer two years ago when she and her husband decided it was a complete scam.

"We felt that what Fr McGinnity was saying was just not true. There was no dwelling on the spiritual at all. He just talked about Christina and how much she was suffering.

"They wanted more money for this Blue Ivory Trust which was buying her house from her. We could not see the sense in that and pulled out.

"They are a cult... I can see that now standing back.

"We know we have been made fools of. Your story last week is still a complete bombshell and you are doing a brilliant job.

"So many people were hoodwinked. She was preying on people's religious beliefs."

Martin Moloney, from Galway but now living in Birmingham, told us he had brought groups of relatives to the House of Prayer four times but had never even seen Gallagher.

"All we kept hearing was what a great woman she was and what great work she was doing and that donations were needed. We at least expected to see her," he said.

"She should give back money to those poor people she took it off."

A Cork bus tour operator called Tom told us he stopped bringing groups to the House of Prayer two years ago in "pure anger at the way money was extorted" from people.

He said: "I met people who were asked to sell their homes and give the money to them, people who

were asked to give their salaries or take out loans.

"I saw elderly people and relatives of my own giving money when they did not have much. And it was always cash they wanted.

"People are told if they donate to the House of Prayer they will have eternal salvation. But those who abandon or betray Christina Gallagher will suffer eternal damnation.

"They extracted money from the most vulnerable."

He said his uncle gave €8,000 to the Blue Ivory Trust, while an 85-year-old cousin gave €2,000.

Refused

He said one couple were encouraged to sell their pub and restaurant and come and live in the house. They refused but did cough up €15,000.

He said the House of Prayer rang tour operators this week to say there would be a meeting soon to work out ways of getting people to Achill after all the bad publicity.

Former followers also told us how:

- Secrecy-obsessed Gallagher banned photographs at the House, so outsiders did not know what she looked like.

- Staff threatened to ban coach operators who took wealthy Americans to "rival" Knock.

- Some donors who asked where their money was going were told it was for "Our Lady" and they could not be more specific because "the bishop will shut us down."

Local Mayo newspapers were sent warnings this week not to follow up the Sunday World story.

The same letter was sent to Joe Duffy, but he chose to highlight it on his programme.

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THE AGENT OF THE DEVIL – SEE P10&11