

New memoir ‘Buried Truth’ uncovers a priest’s secret, a family’s silence, and one man’s 25-year fight for answers

Jim Graham’s decades-long inquiry exposes a secret long buried and exposes the human cost of institutional silence

SENECA, S.C. – What happens when a man discovers at age 48 that nothing he believed about his childhood is true? In “Buried Truth: A Poignant Story of a Man’s Search for His Father, Exposing Powerful Forces Bent on Hiding the Truth” ([published by Archway Publishing](#)), author Jim Graham recounts the startling moment he learned he was not biologically related to the family who raised him—nor had he ever been legally adopted. That revelation propelled him into a 25-year investigation to uncover his origins, leading to the discovery that his biological father was a Catholic priest whose identity had been shielded by both family members and Church authorities.

Graham’s journey began with a revelation that upended his life and pushed him into the role of investigator. Driven by a need for answers, he methodically assembled evidence, sought access to sealed records, confronted a resistant religious order, and ultimately drew media attention — including investigative reporting that led to coverage in the Boston Globe Spotlight team and multiple televised reports. His search eventually pointed to one man: Father Thomas Sullivan, a priest of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

According to documents and testimony Graham later uncovered, Father Sullivan had a clandestine relationship with Graham’s mother, attempted to leave the priesthood, and spent years under internal restrictions because he refused to renounce his love for her. The Church worked to protect itself from scandal — burying the truth from Graham, his mother, and the public for decades. The memoir culminates in a remarkable and emotionally charged scene: the exhumation of Father Sullivan’s grave for DNA testing, leading to definitive proof of their biological relationship. “That moment, standing at the edge of my father’s grave, was both an end and a beginning,” the author writes. “It was the final act in a search for truth—one that demanded courage, persistence, and an unwavering commitment to justice.”

“Buried Truth” centers on the broader theme of institutional control, documenting how the Catholic Church shaped and restricted the lives of those involved. The book will resonate deeply in today’s climate of rising calls for transparency and accountability within religious institutions. By sharing his story, Graham exposes a wider, overlooked reality: the often-ignored children of priests. These individuals, born into secrecy and raised in silence, have seldom seen their experiences acknowledged publicly. He hopes that by continuing to speak, personal pain can transform into collective progress — ensuring to break the cycle of secrecy and denial.

“Buried Truth: A Poignant Story of a Man’s Search for His Father, Exposing Powerful Forces Bent on Hiding the Truth”

By Jim Graham

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About the Author

Upon graduating from high school, Jim Graham accepted a position as a mail clerk with a major U.S. airline. Over the course of more than 10 years, he advanced through the organization to become a project manager in sales and marketing at the general office in New York City. His tenure was temporarily interrupted by his service in the U.S. Army, including one year deployed in Vietnam. Following his time with the airline, Graham acted as a consultant for various companies and subsequently managed his own golf marketing firm. He and his wife are now retired and reside in South Carolina.

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