

Margaret Grant RIP
Funeral Mass
Errill Church
Friday 29th July 2022

Margaret Grant (nee Maguire), of Ballagh, Errill, Co. Laois, who passed away peacefully on Sunday 24th July surrounded by her loving family. Predeceased by her cherished husband Jim, siblings Mary (Dooley), Paddy, Jack and baby Thomas. Margaret will be forever loved and sadly missed by her children Sheila (Price), Catherine (Caygill), Mairead and James. Her son-in-law Dave and late Ian, and daughter-in-law Elizabeth. Her grandchildren Tom, Sarah, Tanya and Emma. Her sister Teasy (Robinson), brothers Peter and Joe, her sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, nephews, nieces and extended family. Margaret was a loving wife, mother, granny, sister, aunt and sister-in-law. She will be forever remembered and greatly missed by all her family.

I don't know how many of you are familiar with the name the name Sebastian Vettel. Well, he is one of the most successful Formula One Racing drivers of all time. However, he has a number of things in common with Margaret Grant whom we honour with Christian burial today. They both loved their cars, he a Ferrari F40 and she her 1990 Toyota. They both loved to drive and most significantly this week.... they both finished their driving careers for good. There are also a few differences between Sebastian and Margaret though. At the tender age of 35 Vettel is choosing to give up driving, but Margaret at almost 92 did not choose to give driving and from my conversation with her in the hospital last week she left me in no doubt but that she hoped to continue driving. One other significant difference between Sebastian Vettel and Margaret Grant was that he made his name for driving fast.....Margaret is probably best remembered in this community for not traveling so fast.....I probably need to make a confession here. Margaret and Mairead would regularly be here at Mass in Errill on a Saturday night. Sometimes I may have had something on back in Rathdowney after Mass which I needed to get back for as quickly as possible. Leaving the church here I might have on occasion said a little prayer that I would get out on the road before Margaret did. Sometimes the prayer was

answered and sometimes it was not. Margaret really took the words of that motorist's prayer very seriously.....

Grant me O Lord a steady hand and watchful eye.
That no one shall be hurt as I pass by.
Thou gavest life, I pray no act of mine
May take away or mar that gift of Thine.

Shelter those, dear Lord, who bear me company,
From the evils of fire and all calamity.
Teach me to use my car for others need;

*Nor miss through love of undue speed
The beauty of the world;* that thus I may
With joy and courtesy go on my way.
St. Christopher, holy patron of travellers,
Protect me and lead me safely to my destiny.

Margaret Maguire was born in Ballagh on the 27th of April 1930. She was baptised in Grogan Church three days later at that font over there. Grogan has always had a special place in Margaret's life. Like many of their neighbours the Maguires walked every Sunday to Mass in Grogan following the route of the Mass path. In more recent years Margaret liked to come here to Errill, not just for mass but for quiet visits too. As she sat here, she would look up at that window dedicated to St. Colmcille and recall memories of masses and visits to Grogan church in her younger days where that window originally was. Then she might touch the Baptismal font where she had been baptised and give thanks for the gift of faith passed down to her from her parents Thomas and Julia and all those who had gone before her. That faith that was nurtured in Margaret's life in Ballach, in Grogan, in Errill, was a very important part of Margaret's life and I know it sustained her in good times but more importantly in times of challenge and distress.

To my best knowledge Margaret has spent all of her 92 years living in Ballagh. One of a family of eight she grew up in a busy farming

household where there were always jobs to be done. Whether it was milking cows, churning butter or making black puddings, Margaret did it all. In her 20's Margaret was to meet the love of her life, Tipperary man, Jim Grant. Jim and Margaret were married on the 10th of November 1954. They settled in Ballagh where they raised their son and three daughters. I think it is fair to say that Margaret's life centred around her home and her family and being a mother and homemaker was her greatest vocation in life. She brought to that vocation many of the qualities mentioned in that first reading from the Book of proverbs today; a valiant woman, a woman of strength who invited good not evil every day of her life, a woman who worked diligently with her hands, spoke with wisdom and taught in a kindly way. All those fine qualities, and many more, found a very strong echo in Margaret Grant's long and faithful life.

Today we gather here in Errill to say farewell to Margaret and to commend her soul to the love and mercy of God. Reluctantly she has given up the keys to her beloved Toyota and while her earthly journeys have come to an end her heavenly one has just begun. Margaret can certainly borrow those words of St. Paul in the second reading....
the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness.

And one final little thought. When Margaret gets to heaven in these days, I think there will be a little note waiting for her, probably left by St. Christopher or whoever is in charge of transport up there. The words on the note are similar to ones I saw on a poster in a garage some years ago. The note reads:

Dear Margaret,

We thought of you this morning, and again this afternoon. We wondered how your journey has been and if we'd see you soon.

Because we share a love for cars and wont waver one iota. We'd love it if you'd stop by and we'll service your Toyota

Margaret, May your gentle soul rest in Peace Amen