

Kitty Kennedy nee Brophy RIP

Funeral Mass

Friday 16th December 2022

*Kitty (Catherine) Kennedy (nee Brophy), Sacred Heart Nursing Home, Crosspatrick and formerly Rathlogan, Johnstown, Co. Kilkenny and Harristown, Rathdowney, Co. Laois. December 11th 2022. Unexpectedly at St. Luke's Hospital, Kilkenny. Predeceased by her husband Martin. Sadly mourned by her brother **Harry**, sisters Imelda, Helen, Teresa and Bernadette, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.*

Symbols: Bell, Candle and Cross from Crosspatrick, Family Cards, and kindness , Sacred Heart Picture,

Readers: Kenneth and Paul

Prayers Margurite and a Quinn family member

Since I heard of Kitty's death on Monday last I have been thinking back on my various meetings and conversations with her over the last ten years while visiting the Nursing Home in Crosspatrick. There are a few things that stand out for me as I think about Kitty, First and foremost I think of Kitty as a woman of very strong faith. And when I think about Kitty's faith I think of three very important figures who were central to her faith life. Incidentally all three of those figures are depicted in this church. Behind me in those two niches are Mary the mother of Jesus and Jesus himself under the title of The Sacred Heart. The last time I visited the Nursing Home in Crosspatrick I went looking for Kitty. I found her in her usual spot, in that area next to the main sitting room in what is probably the original part of the building. Typically, Kitty was praying the rosary. On previous visits I would have found her there in the company of others praying the rosary but on this occasion, she was alone with her beads. Kitty had great devotion to Our Lady and so perhaps it was no surprise that she should die on a feast of Mary under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Kitty was born on Sunday the 11th of November 1934 in Harristown. November 11th is the feast of St. Martin of Tours but it is the other saint of the same name, Martin de Porres whose feast is also in November that Kitty had great devotion to and belief in when she needed some influence with the man above. Martin De Porres is also depicted on one of our windows here in the church. Now I have a suspicion that devotion to Martin De Porres was something of a tradition in the Brophy family faith story. I seem to recall that he was also the *go to* Saint for Kitty's sister Phyllis and I believe Kitty regularly posted the St. Martin magazine to you Imelda in London. So being born on one Martin's feast day and having such devotion to another Martin perhaps it was no surprise that when it came to meeting a husband, he too would be called Martin. Kitty was introduced to Martin Kennedy of Rathlogan and they were married on the 29th of July 1959 in our Lady of the Rosary Church in Harolds Cross in Dublin close to where Kitty had been working. They spent the first two years of their married life in England but later returned to live at Martin's family home in Rathlogan.

The third significant focus for Kitty's faith life was of course the Sacred Heart. Kitty comes from a generation of people of Faith for whom devotion to the Sacred Heart was very important. That devotion was underscored by a belief in the love and mercy and compassion of Jesus. Kitty prayed to the Sacred Heart every single day. But there is another reason why of course the Sacred Heart was precious to Kitty. When her husband Martin died in 1989 Kitty continued to live alone in Rathlogan for a further ten years. Eventually she found that an isolating experience and initially she moved into live in Urlingford. But very quickly Kitty made a decision to move to the recently opened nursing Home in nearby Crosspatrick. The Quinn family had named their Nursing Home for The Sacred Heart and placed the residents and staff under the care of The Sacred Heart. I have no doubt that played a part in attracting Kitty to live there. Kitty was to be the longest living resident in Crosspatrick. At twenty Three years she may very well be one of the longest resident in any nursing Home. From my first ever visit there ten years ago it was

obvious to me that Kitty was truly at home in The Sacred Heart nursing Home. She was at the centre of life in the home. In fact, I used to wonder if Kitty saw herself more as a member of staff than a resident. I don't think I have ever met any resident of any nursing home who felt more at home and more part of the fabric of a place as Kitty did in Sacred Heart. Key to her happiness there was the ability to be able to have regular Mass and of course the daily rosary. She loved the rhythm of life in Crosspatrick and I'm sure the staff there will miss her presence very much. Kitty took an interest in their lives and they in hers. I know that when Mrs. Quinn(Theresa) died suddenly in February last, Kitty felt that loss very personally. I know that Margurite will do so later but can I also say a huge thank you to the Quinn family and all the staff at Sacred Heart Nursing home for the wonderful care you gave to Kitty and of course her brother Joe.

My final memory of my conversations with Kitty over the years was her abiding interest in her extended family. She was always talking about them and enquiring about them. To all of you and especially her surviving siblings, Harry, Imelda, Helen, Teresa and Bernadette I extend to you our deepest sympathy.

I understand that last week when Kitty heard that for reasons beyond everybody's control there could not be the special Mass and party to celebrate Christmas in the Nursing Home, she was very disappointed, and I gather she might even have expressed that with her characteristic directness! Well Kitty, you kind of got your way. Here we are celebrating this Mass for you and you are at the centre of it. The venue for the Christmas party is changed from Sacred Heart Crosspatrick to Sacred Heart Headquarters in Heaven. I know that you are more than happy to be going there and you were certainly prepared. I have no doubt that joining your brothers and sisters, your parents, your husband Martin the welcoming party will include the other two St Martins in your life, Mary the mother and Jesus the Sacred Heart himself.

As a final thought I think of those beautiful words again from the poet Tagore words that could so easily have been Kitty's this week as says goodbye to you her family of birth but also her family in Crosspatrick:

It was beautiful as long as it lasted, the journey of my life, I have no regrets whatsoever, save the pain I'll leave behind.

Those dear hearts who love and care, and the heavy with sleep ever moist eyes, the smile in spite of a lump in the throat and the strings pulling at the heart and soul,

The strong arms that held me up when my own strength let me down, each morsel that I was fed with was full of love.

At every turning of my life I came across good friends, friends and family who stood by me, even when the time raced me by.

Farewell, farewell my friends, I smile and bid you goodbye.

No, shed no tears, for I need them not, all I need is your smile, If you feel sad, do think of me, for that's what I'll like, when you live in the hearts of those you love, remember then..... you never die

when you live in the hearts of those you love, remember then..... you never die. Kitty May you rest in peace