

Eileen Hyde RIP
Funeral Mass
Rathdowney Church
Monday 27th March 2023

*Eileen Hyde (nee Morrissey), Gougane, Glosa, Johnstown Road, Rathdowney, Co. Laois. March 24th 2023. Peacefully at home surrounded by her family. Predeceased by her husband Noel, grand-daughter Sarah, sister Sheila and brothers little Jimmy, John and Alec. Sadly missed by her loving family **Joe, Brian, Fiona**, daughter-in-law **Anna**, son-in-law **Dougie**, grandchildren **Michelle, Laura, Raymond, Ellen, Peter and Amy**, great-grandchildren **Cillian, Kyah, Cayden**, sisters **Kathleen and Rosie**, cousins, nieces, nephews, extended family, neighbours and friends.*

When the final farewells must be spoken
I'll join the Legion, that's what I'll do
And in some far distant region
Where human hearts are staunch and true
I shall start my life anew

Any of you who visited Eileen's home could not have failed to notice one thing. Everywhere there are pictures. Some of those pictures are in frames and many are not. Most of those in frames record treasured memories of family occasions, weddings, christenings, First Communion, Confirmations. Those not in frames are mostly Joe's magnificent paintings. Those pictures both framed and unframed have given me a little inspiration as we gather today to reflect on, and indeed celebrate Eileen's life. More specifically I would like to use the word FRAMES as an acronym for Eileen Hyde's very full and unique life. The word FRAMES itself is not that important but each of the letters within that word represent the most important things in Eileen's life.

The letter 'F' represents three very important aspects of Eileen's life and in a way, they are all interconnected. Family, Faith and Finbarr. We all

know that even though Eileen and Noel left Cork and moved here to Rathdowney with their family almost fifty years ago, Cork never left them and it certainly never left Eileen. She was a proud Corkonian. St. Finbarr's first hermitage was on that beautiful little island, Gougane Barra, hence the name on the Hyde family home. Finbarr later moved to found a monastery on the banks of the river Lee and the city of Cork grew out of that monastery. It was the place where Eileen Morrissey was born on the 29th of November 1934, it was in Cork she went to school had her first job and of course where she married the love of her life, Noel Hyde on St. Stephen's Day 1953.

F also stands for family and family was hugely precious for the woman we honour with Christian burial today, both the family that she was born into, the Morrisseys and the family she and Noel went on to create together, three children and then seven grandchildren and more recently three great grandchildren. Kathleen and Rosie the three of you wearing that same pendant of Our Lady said something very powerful about your close relationship and then I got to see that little video of three of you singing your song together; 'SISTERS' Some of the words of that song tell it as it was

*All kinds of weather we stick together
The same in the rain or sun
Three different faces but in tight places
We think and we act as one... uh huh
Those who've seen us
Know that not a thing could come between us*

Eileen's vocation to be a mother to you, Joe, Brian and Fiona was what she would have considered the most important role in her life. It has brought her the greatest joy but with great love also can come great sadness. I added the letter S at the end of frame for two particular reasons. First of all, S stands for SUNBEAM. What an upbeat name for a place to work and that was the name of the Textile factory in Cork where Eileen worked but of course SUNBEAM was also where Eileen met and fell in love with her future husband Noel Hyde. But that S also

remembers the saddest time in Eileen's life when as a mother and grandmother she was heartbroken at the death of Brian and Anna's three-year-old daughter **Sarah**.

It was particularly at times like that when Eileen relied heavily on that other 'F' in her life; FAITH. As I said earlier, the three F's, **Finbarr, Family and Faith** were all closely linked. Whatever items that were packed into that removal van which travelled up the old N8 in August 1974 from Cork city to Rathdowney, one of the most precious possessions Eileen brought with her was that gift of Faith which had been nurtured in the Morrissey and Hyde family homes on the banks of the River Lee. Here in Rathdowney that Faith continued to be strengthened not just by her regular attendance in this church but also by her participation in the Prayer Group which flourished here in this parish at that time and also with her group of lady friends and neighbours who prayed the rosary every day during the month of May at the cross that intersects Johnstown Road and Harp Road. *Charm is superficial and beauty fades but the woman who honours the Lord is to be praised.* We give thanks today for a depth of Faith which imbued every part of Eileen Hyde's life.

The **R** in Frames stands for this town and this parish which has been Eileen's home for the last forty-nine years. That transition from Ireland's second biggest city to live in a somewhat obscure little town in the Irish midlands cannot have been an easy one for Eileen and Noel and their young family. In uncertain economic times people have to make difficult choices for the good of their families. Nevertheless, at a human level there is a lot of pain in leaving behind the familiarity and support structure of family, friends and neighbours and everything you have known since childhood. Eileen experienced all of that heartache but at some point she made a conscious decision to make this town her new home in every sense. Yes, she sought out other Corkonians which helped to keep her accent but she also knew that if this new town was to become her home then she would have to reach out and connect and make new friends. And that she certainly did. I already mentioned the

Prayer groups but there was also ICA and in more recent times the various active retirement groups. Eileen immersed herself in these groups and they embraced her in return. But perhaps the lasting contribution Eileen and indeed Noel too, have made to this community was in the area of the arts and music and of course Panto. That brings me to the **A** and the **M** in FRAMES. Eileen was Artistic in so many different understandings of that word, in her own personal sense of style but also in her love of music and singing, her involvement in The Tops of the Town and of course the Annual Pantomime. It was highly appropriate that Eileen would pass away on the weekend of Panto in Rathdowney but this year she gets to be reunited with her favourite duetting partner in heaven or as someone commented on RIP, the *Couple of Swells* are together again.

No doubt Eileen and Noel and you their family opted to get involved in the musical and artistic life of Rathdowney in part at least to help you settle into a new community, to meet new friends and to make this town your home. But in doing so Eileen and all of you have made a unique contribution to the life and character of this community and if I may, I say thank you for all that today. And further, if I may be so bold, the greatest tribute to both Eileen and Noel is that you their children and grandchildren would continue to share your unique gifts with this community.

The **M** is certainly for Music, it is also for **Morrissey** the family Eileen was born into and the one she remained so close to the end. When I asked Eileen's two grandsons Raymond and Peter to give me a word to describe their grandmother, they both used **M** words, Mad and Messer. But **M** is also for Mother. And Joe, Brian and Fiona you have all said to me in different ways this past week what a wonderful mother she was for you.

The last letter in the word FRAMES is that **E** and today is all about the **E** because of course it represents Eileen herself.

As well as being Panto weekend Eileen also died on the weekend we celebrated the Feast of the Annunciation on Saturday the 25th of March. The Annunciation marks the moment when Mary discovered she was

going to become a mother. It was a moment filled with a mixture of fear and excitement. I wondered what it was like for Eileen the day she discovered she was to become a mother for the first time. I imagine it was also perhaps a mixture of fear and excitement. Thinking about all that led me to pick that gospel passage from St. John for Eileen's funeral. I also chose that gospel for another reason. Those of you who attended Eileen's wake over the weekend may or may not have noticed the large painting that hung on the wall over Eileen's coffin. It is one of your work's Joe and it is a very stark close up of Jesus hanging on the cross. If my memory serves me correctly Jesus' head is bowed and tilted and looking towards the woman in the coffin. For me it was almost a recreation of that gospel scene of Mary beneath the cross of her son. But that scene was also an intense moment of pain and intimacy between a mother and her son. Jesus was concerned for his mother. He wanted to be sure that she was cared for. Today Jesus shows that same intimacy and care for Eileen as he takes her to himself. If Eileen is looking for words to say to Jesus she might well use those words from St. Paul in today's 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.* And Jesus will probably say, Eileen I know you have, come in here and get this party going. And then the fun will begin.

Eileen, may your gentle soul rest in Peace.

nderneath the lantern
By the barrack gate

Darling i remember
The way you used to wait
'Twas there that you whispered tenderly
That you loved me
You'd always be
My lili of the lamplight
My own lili marlene
Time would come for roll call
Time for us to part
Darling i'd caress you
And press you to my heart
And there neath that far off lantern light
I'd hold you tight
We'd kiss good night
My lili of the lamplight
My own lili marlene
Orders came for sailing
Somewhere over there
All confined to barracks
'Twas more than i could bear
I knew you were waiting in the street
I heard your feet
But could not meet
My lili of the lamplight
My own lili marlene
Resting in our billet
Just behind the line
Even though we're parted
Your lips are close to mine
You wait where that lantern softly gleamed
Your sweet face seems
To haunt my dreams
My lili of the lamplight
My own lili marlene
My lili of the lamplight
My own lili marlene.

My heart is broken but what care I?
Such pride inside me has woken
I'll try my best not to cry
By and by

When the final farewells must be spoken
I'll join the Legion, that's what I'll do
And in some far distant region
Where human hearts are staunch and true
I shall start my life anew

Good-bye, it's time
I sought a foreign clime
Where I may find

There are hearts more kind
Than I leave behind and so, I go
To fight a savage foe

Although I know that
I'll be sometimes missed by the girls I've kissed
In some Abyssinian French Dominion
I shall do my bit and fall for the flag if I must
Where the desert sand is nice and handy
I'll be full of grit

You won't see my heels for the dust
I'll do or die
You'll know the reason why
When told of bold Leopold's last stand
For the Fatherland

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Good-bye, good-bye
I wish you all a last good-bye
Good-bye, good-bye
I wish you all a last good-bye