

Judy Brophy RIP
Funeral Mass
Cullohill Church
Thursday 11th January 2024

*Peacefully at her residence, surrounded by her loving family.
Pre deceased by her husband Stephen, daughter Mary,
brothers Joe, Tom, Stephen, Ned and Brian, sisters Kitty,
Nancy and Molly.*

*Deeply regretted by her loving children Shay, Kay, Ber and
Steve, daughter in law Theresa sons in law Barney and
Vinnie, grandchildren Molly, Aoife, Jim, Una, Lucy and Orla,
sister in law Nell, nieces, nephews, neighbours, relatives and
friends.*

Symbols: Rosary Beads, Photo Album and Scrap book,
Mug (Hospitality) Plant (love of garden), Dublin Jersey
(love of sport)

Barney to do commentary.

Readers: Molly and Aoife

**Prayers of Faithful: Teresa, Orla, Una, Bernie
(Brennan) Paula?**

Bread and wine: Steve and Kay

I would like to begin this reflection by sharing a little poem which you might be familiar with. It is simply called The Dash

The Dash

by Linda Ellis

I read of a man who stood to speak
at the funeral of a friend.
He referred to two different dates
from the beginning...to the end.

He noted that first came the date of birth
and spoke of the following date with tears,
but he said what mattered most of all
was the dash between those years.

For that dash represents all the time
that they spent alive on earth.
And now only those who loved them
know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own,
the cars...the house...the cash.
What matters is how we live and love
and how we spend our dash.

So, think about this long and hard.
Are there things you'd like to change?
For you never know how much time is left
that can still be rearranged.

If we could just slow down enough
to consider what's true and real
and always try to understand

the way other people feel.

And be less quick to anger
and show appreciation more
and love the people in our lives
like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect
and more often wear a smile,
remembering that this special dash
might only last a little while.

So, when your eulogy is being read,
with your life's actions to rehash...
would you be proud of the things they say
about how you spent YOUR dash?

The two dates that may in time appear on Judy's tombstone are the same. The 8th of January because ironically, she died on her birthday. The little dash between those dates represents her 86 years of life.

*"What matters is how we live and love
and how we spend our dash."*

Well how did Judy Brophy spend her dash? Many of you who have known her a lot longer and a lot better than me, could answer that question very well. But, having visited her a number of times over the last year, having listened to you her family and others here in the community, if I was to make a stab at answering the question, *How did Judy spend her dash?* I would think of Judy, the loving sister, wife and mother, devoted grandmother, loyal friend, someone with a gift for hospitality and welcome, a helpful and caring neighbour, hard worker. A woman in tune with nature who loved to be in her garden and working with flowers and plants, a woman with a great sense of humour and fun and who never lost that unique Dublin wit. A woman who loved the company of her grandchildren. A woman who had lived down here in this community for over 55 years but always remained

loyal and proud of her Dublin roots. Most of all I will remember her as a gentle woman of deep faith who had a great devotion to Our Lady and who loved to receive the Eucharist.

*“What matters is how we live and love
and how we spend our dash.”*

Judy Dunphy was born on Saturday the 8th of January 1938. She was the youngest of nine children born to Joseph and Mary Dunphy of 1 Sitric Road, Stoneybatter in Dublin. Having completed her Primary and secondary education, Judy went to work at a very famous Dublin institution, The Pen Corner located close to Trinity College. This much-loved Dublin shop only closed in 2022 after more than a 100 years in business. The Pen Corner specialised in selling the best quality of pens, pencils and other types of stationery. Judy loved her job there and rose to become manager of the shop which attracted all kinds of famous customers including Grace Kelly, James Cagney and Cary Grant, and Irish writers like Seamus Heaney, Brian Friel and John Banville.

From an early age Judy would have spent a lot of her holiday time down here in Cullohill where both her parents were from. During one of those visits she would meet and fall in love with Stephen Brophy of Aghamacart. They were married on the 17th of September 1967 in Holy Family Church, Aghrim Street in Dublin. Even though Judy was very familiar with this community and had many relatives here, none the less it must have been a huge change for her to leave behind her wonderful job, her life in the city and re locate to the heart of the country. And not only did she move here but she was also becoming one of three Mrs. Brophy's living in the same house. Stephen's grandmother Catherine and his stepmother Elizabeth were the other Mrs Brophy's. Judy cared for both of these women and Stephen's uncle Ned until they passed away. This little detail alone gives us some insight into the extraordinary caring and gentle nature of the woman we honour with Christian burial today.

Having been both a runner and a camogie player herself Sport and particularly GAA has been a lifelong interest and passion for Judy. In terms of both Cullohill and Laois, Judy was born into, and later married

into Sporting Royalty. Her dad Joe Dunphy was the only Cullohill man on the only Laois team to win an All Ireland senior hurling final in 1915. Judy's brother Ned won a Leinster title with Dublin and her brother Joe was part of the famous Cullohill team which won the Laois Junior title in 1953, the Intermediate title in 1954 and The Senior title in 1955. Judy's future husband Stephen was also part of that famous team from the 1950's

Judy and Stephen were to be blessed with five children, Mary, Shay, Kay, Ber and Steve but sadly Mary died shortly after her birth. Just twenty years after they married, Stephen was diagnosed with cancer. He was just 52 and he lived with the illness for a further eight years. Again, Judy cared for Stephen and was broken hearted when he died on 11th of March in 1995.

Through all the Joyful, Glorious and Sorrowful Mysteries her life, Judy was sustained by a strength of character, a wonderful sense of humour and a very honest approach to life. Underpinning those strong human qualities was also a very simple but also a very deep Catholic Christian Faith. As I mentioned earlier, Judy's faith was grounded in a great devotion to Our Lady and also a deep love for Jesus in the Eucharist. Last January when Fr. McGree retired, Judy asked me could she continue to receive Communion on a Sunday in addition to my monthly visits. I know that she was deeply appreciative to Therese Drennan, one of our eucharistic ministers who brought her communion every Sunday and also on the days before she died. This spiritual food which had sustained and nourished her faith all her life was now food for her final journey.

After a life of faithful living, loving and caring for others we gather here in Cullohill today to say farewell to Judy. With St. Paul in that second reading to Timothy today Judy can certainly say: *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.*

Shay, Kay, Ber and Steve., Judy's grandchildren; **Molly, Aoife, Jim, Una, Lucy and Orla,** and all the other extended family members. These first days of 2024 have been very painful for you in so many ways. Just a few weeks ago you celebrated Christmas with your mam/ your granny

without any sense of what was to come. On my own behalf and on behalf of this parish community, I offer you our sincere sympathy and support. I know you are well aware of this already but as the pain of these days begins to recede a little, I hope you can look back with enormous gratitude for the wonderful inheritance of love, faith, compassion and care that this Valiant woman has left to each of you. In that spirit can I finish with some familiar words which I hope will bring you some comfort today:

*We can shed tears that she is gone
Or we can smile because she has lived.
We can close our eyes and pray that she will come back
Or we open our eyes and see all she has left behind.
Our hearts can be empty because we can't see her
Or we can be full of the love we shared
We can turn our backs on tomorrow and live yesterday.
Or we can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.
We can remember her and only that she's gone
Or we can cherish her memory and let it live on.
We can try and close our minds, be empty and turn our
back
Or we can do what she'd want: smile, open our eyes
Love and go on*

Judy Brophy may your gentle soul rest in peace.