

Reflection from Fr. Colm on the Friday of the 5th week of Eastertide

Audio posted to the Parish Website on Friday 15th May 2020

Morning and let me tell you about Maureen, she was what's known as a local character. I've met Maureen a few times. I've popped into the club on occasion in the past. Maureen would always be there. She loved to smoke, she loved to drink. She was confined to a wheelchair and perhaps that's what endeared Maureen to the local community - that vulnerability. But it was more, it was the love I think that radiated from Maureen herself in her silence in her quietness. I know people who cared for her, they've spoken to me. But Maureen and her love of both neighbours, friends was perhaps highlighted last Christmas when she was confined to hospital knowing that the club's - The Working Man's Club - annual Christmas party was on she signed herself out to be at it and she was unapologetic about why she was leaving hospital.

And so yesterday I stood outside the gate, with a line of people both sides of the street as we waited for Maureen's coffin to pass. COVID had got her and she passed, the coffin slowly passed by the church I had an opportunity just to pray the prayer for dead and especially for the soul of Maureen quietly. She was heading down towards the Crem, she probably will have had just had a 20-minute service.

But what was important for her and for the community was what happened on the street yesterday. It was more important for those who were on the street. The applause went up, the silence, the gentle applause, all that could be heard on the street. It was wonderful.

And then the coffin stopped outside Maureen's house. Her carer John went in, brought out roses, handed them to people to place on the coffin. Silence descended. I knew many were praying quietly in their hearts for Maureen and giving thanks for her life. And they will miss her. And I will miss her being so important to them even though I didn't know her so well.

So, we pray for Maureen this morning because the Gospel today, Jesus is reminding us about the importance of loving our neighbour as ourselves. We do that in so many different ways very inadequately at times, but we strive to do it. And certainly, I saw a great expression of that yesterday. So, God bless you Maureen.