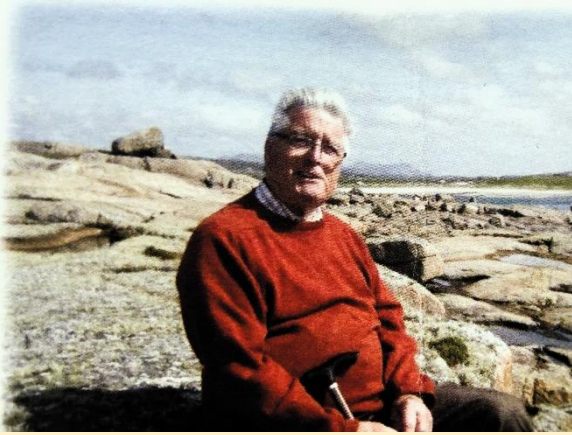


## Owen Murphy – an appreciation



A parish is built on its people as they gather to worship together as a community of faith.

In the last twelve months, Mount Merrion had lost two of its most loyal servants in Liam Daly and PJ Clarkson; two ambassadors for all those other dedicated parishioners who have gone to their reward and who gave significant commitments to the building up of the faith in this area.

This week we lost two more great community leaders and Parish servants in Des Smyth (our thoughts are with Alice and the family) and Owen Murphy.

Owen's contribution to Mount Merrion Parish was immeasurable and exceptional. His leadership involvement in the Parish began as far back as 1973 in the last years of Fr Stephen Clune's time as Parish Priest. His last assignment - given to him by Fr Tony Coote - was the organising of a mass on the Feast of Thérèse to honour lay participation in the Parish. That was in autumn 2018; Owen spent 45 years+ directly leading Parish activities, week-by-week, year-round.

Kathleen Larkin once noted that every Parish in Dublin was like a Government department. Each Parish Priest would be understood to be the then Minister, and in our case Owen was the permanent Secretary-General. His commitment, while he was still working, and raising a family of four, to the efforts of Mount Merrion Parish was remarkable. Other than sitting on the Finance Committee/organising banking matters, Owen shepherded, supervised, and participated in every other Ministry of the Parish imaginable; leading Communications, Liturgy, Projects & Maintenance, Fundraising, Parish Council, Community Centre, Social Activities, Money-Counting, the school Boards of Management, and especially the critical group of lay people working as Sacristans that was at the heart of Monsignor Ardlie MacMahon, and then Fr Pat McManus's vibrant Parish structure.

Some of his finest hours included large-scale project management: Community weeks; two large-scale Parish Exhibitions in the late 1980's- and mid 1990's, the visit of the Relic of St. Thérèse in 2001, and the opening of new Community Centre in 2003. However, his careful mentoring of others left its mark even more on the lay faithful were around him. He was especially proud of the music group The Theresian Singers - and while it was initiated by Fr Paddy Sheehan - he very happily referred to himself as their 'agent', and marvelled at musical development.

More importantly, Owen never left a stone unturned to consider ways to bring people together to celebrate their faith and to spread the good news of what the fabric of an engaged Parish could do for others and their faith. In today's church, co-responsibility has become a new, desired feature of religious leadership. Owen was giving a masterclass in 'co-responsibility' over 35 years ago, never seeking the limelight for himself but always so dependable, available to advise, and astute in his actions.

Outside of our Priests, there are very few people, if any, who have given as much to Mount Merrion Parish as Owen Murphy did - ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

Our prayers are with Owen, Paula, Colm, Michele and their families, in memory of Owen, and his much beloved Kathleen.

