

BRIAN

In the spirit of Brian's sermons and his creative greetings cards we will aim to keep this brief.

But how do you do justice to the memory of someone who has had such a powerful and positive impact on so many people from so many different walks of life. The simple truth is that you can't. Each one of you here will have different memories of Brian and the best way to celebrate his life is to share these memories and experiences, perhaps over a glass or two after this service.

What we will do is give you a few memories to get the ball rolling.

He was born in Mountmellick, County Laiche, Ireland in 1942 followed by Sean and Imelda. The McEvoy's emigrated to England in 1948 and in 1960 he went to the English College in Rome to train as a priest. This taste of Rome was stay with him for the rest of his life.

After Brian was ordained he came back to England and began his professional life as a Parish Priest, Journalist, Chaplain, Confidant, Tourist Guide, Canon. These roles took him to Bristol, Gloucester, Bath and London, working in Parishes, prisons, hospitals and army bases.

Which brings us on to Brian's occasional interest in guns. As a boy at St Brendan's College, he thought it would be interesting to shoot another boy with an air pistol to see if it would hurt. It did hurt and Brian was beaten for his mis-demeanour.

Later in his life, as a chaplain for the British army based in Colerne near Bath, he was invited to the officers' mess for an evening of merriment. As the evening progressed they all thought it would be a good idea to use the bar as a shooting range, popping off the optics with the barman running back and forth as a distraction. Damage was done but no-one was hurt. Brian wasn't beaten this time although he was reprimanded by the Captain the next day.

As a hospital chaplain for the RUH in Bath Brian provided great support for the sick and dying and nothing would stand in the way of him making it to hospital when called. On one occasion, celebrating the Epiphany, having dinner with friends, he was called

to go to the RUH to administer last rights. His face had been painted with glitter and stars and on return to the celebrations the glitter and stars were intact.

Rome. Well, what can we say. In his later life Brian lived for the next visit to Rome to see his friends and sit in the Campo de Fiori, reading his paper and drinking a glass of wine or perhaps partaking of a now infamous Negroni cocktail! Over the past 5 years, every trip to Rome was going to be his last but he kept making it back. He always said that if he died in Rome not to bring him back.

When Brian first broke his neck, which went un-diagnosed, he went to Rome and marched the whole city exhausting his guests. The guests wanted to see the Sistine Chapel and Brian obliged to take them even though he had seen it 100 times before. For those of you that know, the Vatican Museum is like IKEA. Once you're in you can't get out, you have to walk through the whole store. Brian suffered this and the only redeeming feature for him was the beautiful floor. He went back to Rome the week before he died.

Brian was delighted with the choice of the new pope Francis because of his integrity, modesty and humility, traits which seem very familiar to those who knew Brian.

A bit of breaking market news:

Easyjet shares have plummeted. Bosses have tried to alay market fears by announcing cuts to their Rome schedule in response to falling passenger numbers.

And finally the makers of Gordon's Gin have issued a profit warning for the second half of the year due to an anticipated slump in sales.

Which brings us to No 4 Harley Street. This house has been a feature of Brian's life since the late 1950s, first as his parents home and then his home from 1985 when he served as parish priest here in St Mary's. Many of you will have experienced the hospitality of No 4 at first hand. The intoxicating mixture of serious debate, uncontrollable laughter and warm welcome. For some time

the front door lock was very inadequate to the point that a gust of wind could blow it open. When this was pointed out, Brian's reply was "SO". To him the door was always open to anyone, including a rat that moved in while he was on holiday.

Once you were through that front door, he brought everyone together, loved them all and enjoyed himself.

His generosity extended into opening up No 5 Harley Street to an incredibly diverse range of students, migrants, refugees, and those who just needed a helping hand. While an accountant might pull his hair out at the relaxed attitude towards contributions to running costs, this summed up Brian and his reasons for choosing the priesthood, borne out of a genuine desire to help those in need. So many of those who passed through No 5 used it as a stepping stone to a better life in Bath or elsewhere having experienced the enriching a life affirming effect of spending time in Brian's company.

There are many chapters to Brian's life but a common thread of kindness, empathy and an ability never to judge.

Brians Words. I'm sorry I'm not with you to say goodbye so I would like to say a few words in lieu of me not being here. Um, there was a young Roman poet called **Catullus** who travelled all the way to Patheneia to say goodbye to his Brother and he used the famous words **ave atque vale** which has become part of history to music and poetry. What he was trying to say was, to his brother, I salute you . Well I salute you because you have given me so much help and confidence over the years and **the vale** is um goodbye. I would like to add a little, tiny postscript to that from the opening of the paraolympics when Professor Stephen Hawkins said look to the stars and be curious.

LOOK TO THE STARS AND BE CURIOUS.

CIAO BRIAN