

Eulogy for Sr M Dymphna Dineen DMJ--Funeral Mass Friday March 13th 2026 12 Noon at St. Patrick's Church, Kilbrittain (Read by Rita Ruttle)

I would like to welcome you all here to Kilbrittain today, both in person and those tuning in on the live stream; especially to the Sisters who have travelled from DMJ in Dublin and England; Sr Paula, Sr Joan, Sr Cathleen, Sr Helen and Sue. A warm Ceád Míle Fáilte to all. And thank you Fr Pontianus, and Fr Liam Crowley for officiating this farewell Mass. I'm Rita, Sr Mary Dymphna's niece and I am speaking on behalf of all her family today.

Sr. Mary Dymphna, or Auntie Mary as we affectionately knew her, was born on April 23rd 1931 and lived in Ballymore, Kilbrittain throughout her school going years with siblings Margaret, Joan and Kay and her parents Katherine (nee Murphy) and Bartholomew Dineen. She attended Ratharoon National School and in the 1930's it was school through the fields, just like her classmates. After secondary school she made her decision to enter religious life, following a visit from a nun to the school. She joined the order of Daughters of Mary & Joseph in England at the age of 17 and made her Profession in 1956. As was the general rule back in the 1950's nuns were not allowed home, however she did attend her mother's funeral in April 1961 but stayed in the convent in Timoleague during her visit. She had just returned to England when her father passed away just three weeks later, but she did not come home again for his funeral. This must have been so difficult for her.

During her long life, she was a teacher in various parts of the UK, including Croyden and Scarborough. In 1991 she returned to Dublin to do a course in pastoral ministry so we all got to spend some lovely quality time with her that year. Then she returned to Middlesbrough as parish sister which she relished, as being involved in the community and helping people came naturally to her.

In 2017 she went to live in West Wickham, near Kent, which is where she lived out her final years until February 20th 2026 when she went to her well earned Eternal reward.

We, her family would like to thank her "family in religion" who were her best friends. Special thanks to Fr. Eddie Gubbins, a Limerick man and her life long friend, who at her own request, celebrated her beautiful Requiem Mass in Kent last Tuesday. We are very grateful to Sr. Paula, Sr. Annette, Sue and everyone who took such good care of Mary when she needed it most. Also to Maureen and Margaret who were with her in her final weeks.

We have lovely memories of Auntie Mary's holidays during the summers; including her much loved pilgrimage to Knock every year with the local community, trips to the beach, visits to nephews, nieces and cousins to catch up on all the news. Her golden jubilee was celebrated in style in Ballymore with Kay & Len bringing home all the party gear, for our big get-together.

2026 was a very special year in Auntie Mary's life as she was celebrating her Diamond Jubilee, which is 75 years in religious life. And St. Patrick's Church here in Kilbrittain is very fitting for Mary's funeral Mass, as she was baptized here, made her First Holy Communion and Confirmation here and attended Mass here each time she was home. She was always very proud of her Dineen roots, her identity and now sadly, we say goodbye to the last of the Dineen clan today. On behalf of all your family Mary, I want to say thank you for all the lovely memories you have given us. Go raibh mílemaith agat agus slán tamail.