

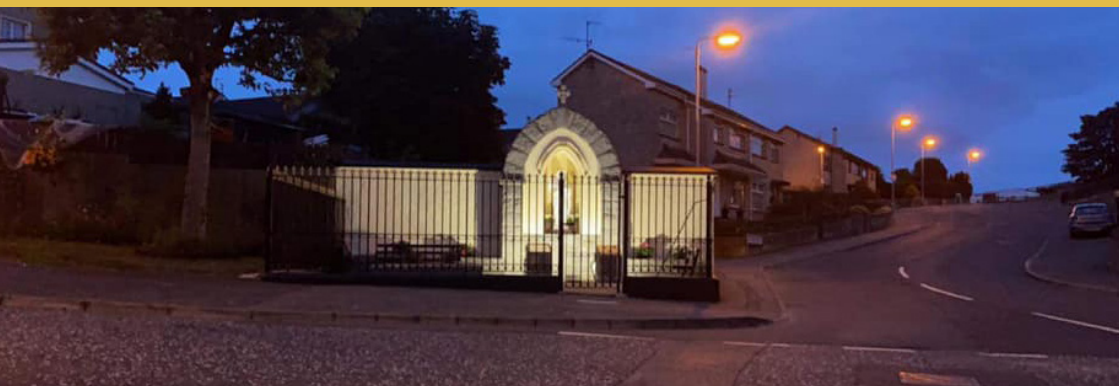


# **Service of Rededication of the Grotto of “Christ The King”**

**On Sunday 22nd August @ 7.00 pm.**

**Celebrant**

**Fr Des Loughran.**





## **The Refurbishment Project.**

Having been approached by local people concerned about the dilapidated appearance of the Grotto, Councillor Gavin Malone organised a team of community activists to coordinate a rejuvenation of this iconic shrine.

Local lady, Betty Woods, who has cared for the Grotto for very many years was particularly pleased to hear of the ambitious plans. Community activists from the area, Nathan Mc Cann and Gary Mc Donald pledged their support and the project went live. We are very pleased to have Fr. Des Loughran, a local man, conducting our service tonight and adding to the communal aspect of the event.

The origins of the Grotto can be traced back to the 31st International Eucharistic Conference which was held in Dublin in June 1932. Special trains were laid on from Newry to bring people who wished to be part of the million + congregation at High Mass in Phoenix Park.

After the Mass, the Papal Legate Cardinal Lauri visited Newry en route to Armagh. Local communities set up makeshift altars and grottos in honour of the occasion. The Grotto at Pound Corner in Church Street was one such example with small statues and vases of flowers.

After the great occasion was over the people of the area decided to erect a permanent structure to commemorate the event. A committee led by, Robert White, James O Hare, Peter Mc Sherry, Robert Stack, David Mc Veigh and Pat Keenan collected donations and raised enough money to enable work to commence on the building of the Grotto.

The granite came from Ballinacraig and local stonemasons, George Lundy, Mick Mc Ateer and Dan Mc Ateer led a willing workforce completing the task in 1934. A procession to the Grotto was for many years an annual event but now long in abeyance. The centrepiece of the Grotto is a life-sized statue of "Christ The King" standing in a recess that is illuminated at night.

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# **Eucharistic Congress**

## **SPECIAL B.O.C. COACHES**

Will Leave Newry on

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday  
22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th June.

— AT —

10 a.m. for Dublin, leaving Dublin at 8 p.m.

**On Sunday, 26th inst.**

Special Coaches will leave Newry at 8 a.m.  
for Dublin.

### **RETURN FARE 8/-.**

Seats must be booked before 7 p.m. on the evening  
previous at our DEPOT MARCUSSQ., NEWRY

# Councillor Eugene Markey (RIP)

The last major facelift to the grotto was completed over 20 years ago and 2 local Independent Councillors worked in unison to deliver the project.

The late Councillor Eugene Markey was a key player in the delivery of the scheme. A wily and effective politician, Eugene was a poll topper who was Chairman of Newry and Mourne District Council on 3 occasions. His interpersonal skills and charisma earned him the title of “The Peoples Champion”.

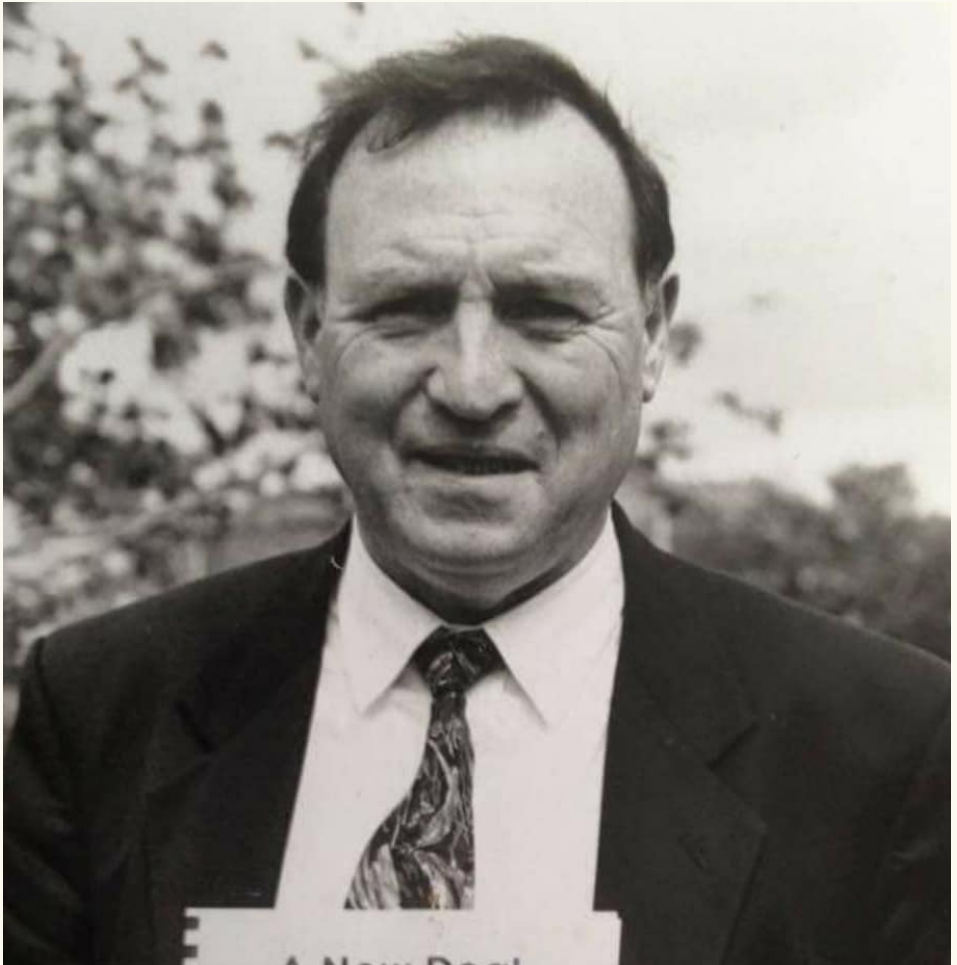
Eugene was born at number 56 Church Street, but although his family moved to Ballybot when he was a toddler he retained his roots and connections with Church Street at a very early age.

Eugene was fiercely proud of his working-class roots and was a highly accomplished public representative.

# Councillor Jack Patterson.

Jack Patterson worked closely with Eugene Markey on the refurbishment of the Grotto and like Eugene, was an Independent Councillor. He had a career in the public sector spanning over 50 years, half of which was spent as a Council official and the latter half as a Councillor. The highlight of his career as a Councillor came when he was elected Mayor of Newry and Mourne in 2003/4.

Jack too, was an excellent communicator, always approachable and available for constituents. He retired from public life when Newry and Mourne Council was amalgamated with Down Council in 2015.



Jack Patterson who reflected upon the interesting subject of carters.

# Groundworks.

Comprehensive preparatory work was a key element in the process and Damian Mallon (DM Powerwashing) did a first-class job removing excess paint and grime from the site.

The following morning, a road sweeper from the Council Refuse section in Greenbank arrived to clear the residue from the footpath and roadway.



# Cosmetics.

The repainting of the site was entrusted to a local man, Sean Mc Caul, a skilled painter and decorator and whose family are synonymous with the trade. Sean has done a marvellous job and has restored the Grotto to pristine condition.

New lighting was an essential requirement and LED lights were installed by Thomas Braham, Director Braham Electrical.

Decorative stones for the flower beds were supplied by Mallon's Hardware.

Cecilia Heaney (Central Florists) supplied beautiful shrubs which were planted by Oliver Keenan, another long time supporter of the Grotto.



**Sincere thanks to everyone who supported this  
community driven project.**

**We couldn't have executed the plan  
without you.**

Jim Finnegan, Pocket Box, The Free Car App

Kieran Dineen, Dineen Office Supplies

Maurice McCauitt

Michael McCaul Signs

Mallons Hardware

Damian Gill

Braham Electrical

DM Powerwashing

Cecilla Heaney, Central Florists

TR O'Gorman

New Brook Cleaning

Mickey Keenan, Modern Fireplace Company

Windmill Bar

Cavern Bar

Todays Local, Lindsay Hill,

The Crispy Cod

Church St, FC

Toners Toys and Clothing

Paddy Power, Bookmakers

**And a big thank you to our residents who have  
donated through Church St, Community Group.**

**In Memory of the Hanna family, 33 High Street  
and Hugh and Esther O'Gorman, Cowan Street.**