

Feature

Following the announcement of the death of Bishop Séamus Freeman on Saturday August 20th, the people of Kilkenny, Ossory and further afield were stunned, not only at the loss of a bishop, but at the passing of a kind and caring person. If ever the phrase 'one of nature's gentlemen' was apt, then surely this was the case.

Preparations for Seamus's funeral got underway and his body was received at St Mary's Cathedral in Kilkenny on Wednesday night. The Rite of Reception was led by Bishop Denis Nulty (Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Ossory), who welcomed Bishop Freeman's family: sisters Esther and Mary, brothers Tommy, John and Pat and their extended families. Bishop Nulty welcomed Archbishop Eamon Martin (Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland) who joined priests and religious from Ossory, members of the Pallottine Society and parishioners from various parishes of the diocese. He spoke of the three families of Bishop Freeman: The Freeman Family, The Pallottine Family and The Ossory family. Sacred music was provided by the Cathedral Choir under the direction of Mr John O'Neill. Housekeepers at Bishop Freeman's house Mary Ryan and Bernadette Hunt and Painter and Decorator of the Cathedral Vincent O'Brien placed the bishop's mitre, the bible and cross upon the coffin. Fr Donal McCarthy, SAC, a long time friend and co-worker with Bishop Freeman gave the reflection. The Prayer of Intercession was led by Rita Neary, Parish Secretary in St Mary's Parish. At the end of the ceremony Fr Richard Scriven, Administrator of St Mary's Cathedral, invited all to a cup of tea in the Chapter Room and to Night Prayer in the Cathedral at 9.30pm.

PRAYERFUL VIGIL

On Thursday parishioners from the four city parishes kept prayerful vigil in the cathedral where Bishop Freeman's remains lay before the altar. During the day there was a steady stream of mourners who came to pray for their late bishop.

The prayers of Thursday concluded with Compline - Night Prayer of the Church - which was led by Fr Derry Murphy and Fr Eamon Monson, both members of the Pallottine Society. Fr Derry in welcoming all gave a special céad míle failte to the Superior General of the Pallottine Society, Fr Jacob Nampudakam, who had travelled from Rome.

FUNERAL MASS

On Friday at midday Bishop Nulty was the chief celebrant of the Requiem mass. He was joined by

Archbishop Dermot Farrell (Archbishop of Dublin and Primate of Ireland), Archbishop Diarmuid Martin (Archbishop Emeritus of Dublin), Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly (Archbishop of Cashel and Emly), Bishop Eamonn Walsh (Archdiocese of Dublin), Bishop Alphonsus Cullinane (Bishop of Waterford and Lismore), Bishop Paul Dempsey (Bishop of Achonry), Bishop William Crean (Bishop of Cloyne), Bishop Denis Brennan (Bishop Emeritus of Ferns) and priests and religious of the diocese of Ossory. The Superior General of the Pallottine Society, Fr Jacob Nampudakam, was joined by members of the Pallottine society from Ireland. A large congregation joined Bishop Freeman's family for the requiem mass, many from various parishes and committees of the diocese and members of the various religious orders in the diocese. Sacred music was again given by the Cathedral Choir under the direction of Mr John O'Neill.

The requiem mass began with a procession of symbols representing the seven sacraments carried by Michael Freeman, Frances Lennon, Sheila Walshe, Eddie Tallent, James and Roseanne Freeman, Fr Brian Griffin and Jimmy Cooke. Bishop Freeman's brother Tommy read the readings and the psalm was sung by Ms Martina Burke. The Prayer of Intercession were read by friends and family members and the offertory gifts were brought to the altar by Ms Gemma Mulligan (Pastoral Coordinator for the Diocese of Ossory), Evana Freeman and Suzanne Freeman.

PALLOTTINES EXTEND THANKS

After communion and before the final prayers and commendation Fr Jacob Nampudakam spoke on behalf of the Pallottine Society speaking of how the Pallottine family remain eternally grateful to Mons. Freeman, one of the best known Pallottines in their history acknowledging that the Union of Catholic Apostolate owes

so much to Mons. Séamus Freeman, for all his works in getting approval and as the first president. Bishop Freeman's brother Pat, his sister Mary and niece Sinead spoke on behalf the family. Pat recalled their family life in Coolaghmore. Sinead spoke of the affection of the next generation for their uncle who always remem-

bered them with cards and gifts. Bishop Freeman's sister, Sr Mary Freeman RSM, read a special poem which gave an overview of Bishop Freeman's life and ministry.

Bishop Freeman was laid to rest in the shadow of the Cathedral beside his predecessors Bishop Laurence Forristal (1981-2007),

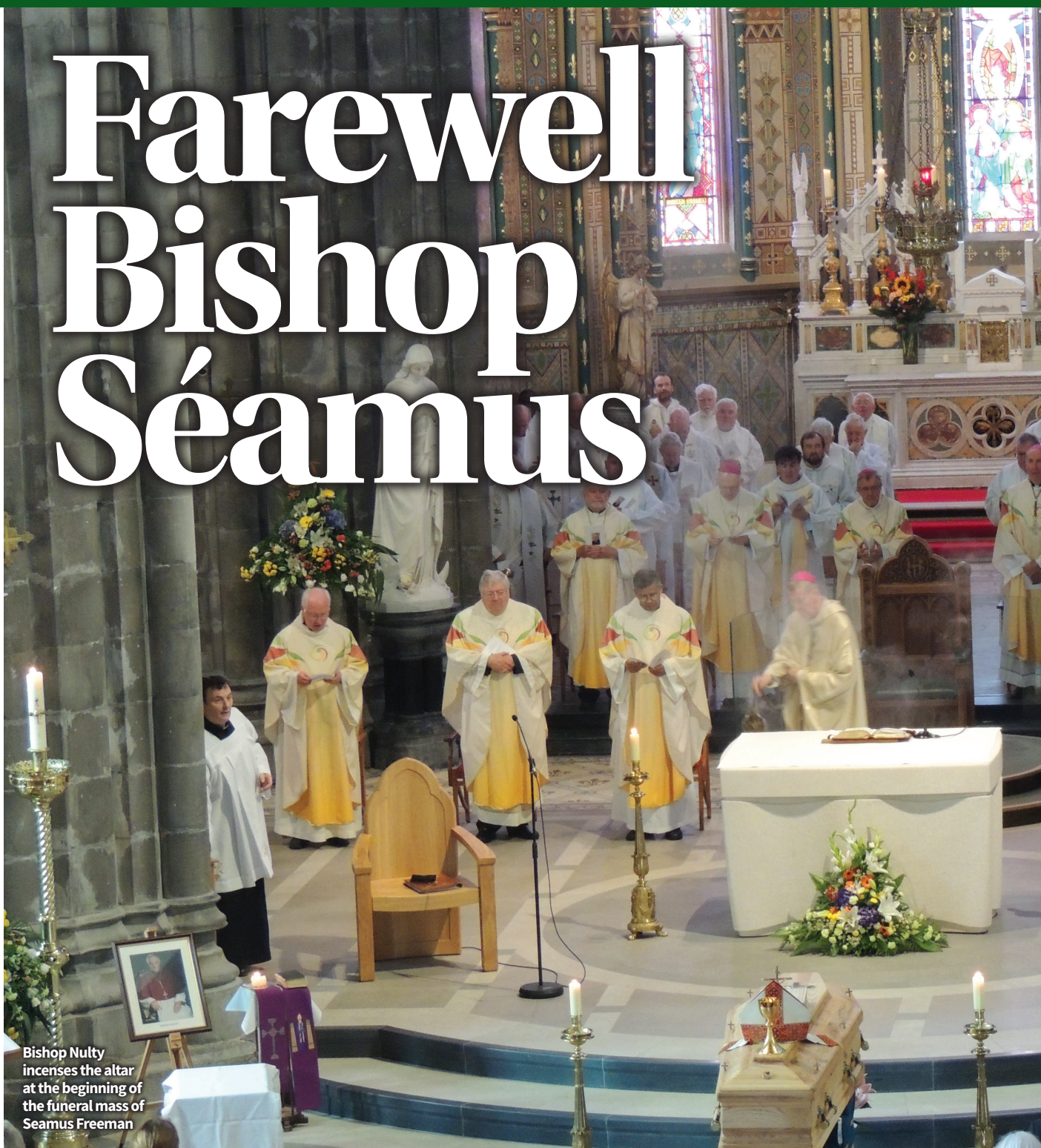
Bishop Peter Birch (1964-1981), Bishop Patrick Collier (1928-1964). Also buried in the cathedral grounds is Archbishop Thomas White a native of Durrow, a priest of the diocese of Ossory and former Papal Nuncio.

Bishop Séamus Freeman, SAC, the eldest of the eight children of James and Bridget Freeman, was

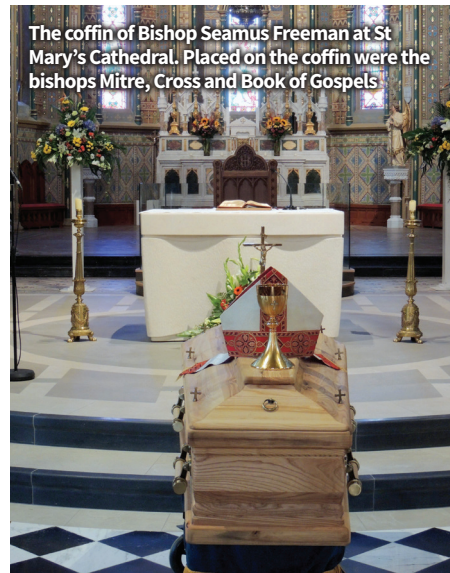
born on 23 February 1944 in Clonlady, parish of Mullinahone, Co. Tipperary, in the Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly. At the age of eight months his family moved to Coolaghmore, parish of Callan, Co. Kilkenny, in the Diocese of Ossory. He attended Coolagh National School and Callan CBS. He completed Secondary

Farewell Bishop Séamus

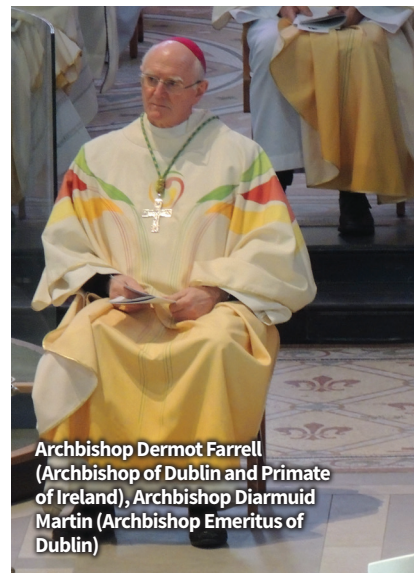
Bishop Nulty incenses the altar at the beginning of the funeral mass of Séamus Freeman



Archbishop Dermot Farrell (Archbishop of Dublin and Primate of Ireland), prays the Eucharistic Prayer at the funeral mass of Bishop Freeman



The coffin of Bishop Séamus Freeman at St Mary's Cathedral. Placed on the coffin were the bishops Mitre, Cross and Book of Gospels



Archbishop Dermot Farrell (Archbishop of Dublin and Primate of Ireland), Archbishop Diarmuid Martin (Archbishop Emeritus of Dublin)