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Friends, family, Father, thank you for being here today as we lay to rest my brother, Patrick O'Connell—our Paddy.

We come with heavy hearts, but also with full ones.

Full of stories, of small kindnesses, of that big laugh that carried down the road in Ballyfermot and told you he had arrived before you even saw him.

Paddy was born on 14 March 1982, and he left us on 3 April this year, forty-four years old.

Too soon for us, but not without leaving a clear mark on the world.

He was the beloved partner of Siobhán, the devoted dad of Liam and Orla, the proud son of Eileen and Michael, brother to Niamh and to me.

My older brother, my protector and my best mate growing up in Dublin.

He was steady from the start.

At school, he captained the GAA team not because he shouted the loudest, but because people trusted him.

He kept his word.

He did the simple things right—show up on time, help without fuss, leave a place tidier than you found it.

It sounds small, but when you stacked enough of those small things together, you got Paddy's life.

He trained as an electrician and he took fierce pride in doing a job properly.

You could tell it from his hands and from the way he'd test a circuit—twice—and then give a quiet nod that meant you were safe.

He didn't chase flash.

He started his own small business because he wanted to do honest work and do it well.

He mentored apprentices with the same patience he used with us as

kids—showing rather than telling, and never making a big show of what he knew.

If a neighbour's lights went, if a socket sparked at the community centre, if someone's house felt cold and dark, he was the first to turn up, tools in a battered bag, saying his favourite line: "Leave it with me."

And the thing is—when he said it, you did leave it, because the worry went out of the room.

Outside of work, he lived by the same steady compass.

He loved Gaelic football and poured himself into coaching the local under-14s.

He brought a fairness to it—everyone got a run, everyone learned something, and everyone left the pitch feeling ten feet tall.

He fished off the pier at Howth in weather that'd skin your ears, came home with stories as often as he came home with mackerel, and was just as happy either way.

He kept old radios on the kitchen table, guts out and screws in a jam jar, coaxing songs from them long after most people would have given up.

And on a good night in the local, he'd settle into a trad session, foot tapping, eyes bright, holding a room not by talking, but by listening.

My favourite memory is a weekend on Achill.

The wind was coming in sideways and every sensible person turned back.

Paddy just grinned, said we were already wet, and pushed on with that determined stride of his.

We laughed until our faces hurt, the two of us specks on a cliff path, convinced that if we kept going together, we'd find the way through.

That was Paddy's gift: he made hard things feel manageable, and he made the ordinary feel like an adventure worth having.

He loved quietly and thoroughly.

Family first—always.

Siobhán, he adored you.

Not in speeches, but in school-run breakfasts, in late-night fixes, in small notes on the counter that said he'd be back before training.

Liam and Orla, your dad beamed when he spoke about you.

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He took real joy in the people you are becoming, and I know you carry the best of him—his loyalty, his humour, his sense that problems can be solved with patience and a plan.

Mam and Dad, he honoured you in the way he lived—honest work, respect for people, shoulders squared to whatever came.

Niamh, you know better than anyone how he could tease with a twinkle and then defend you like a lion when it was needed.

He cared about fairness, not as a slogan, but as a habit.

He supported St. Vincent de Paul because he believed that dignity begins with practical help.

He volunteered his skills in community centres, wiring safely so kids could play music and parents could share a cup of tea without worry.

He was, to the bone, a neighbour.

We are deeply grateful to the team at St. James's Hospital for their care in these last days.

You met us with gentleness and skill, and we won't forget it.

And in keeping with the way he gave in life, Paddy was an organ donor.

Even now, somewhere, another family is getting the kind of phone call that brings light back into a dark room.

That is a final, generous act, and it is profoundly him.

What will we miss?

His big laugh, certainly.

That reassuring "leave it with me."

The way he'd stand in a doorway, consider a tangle—wires or worries—and set about sorting it without making a fuss.

We'll miss the certainty that if Paddy said he'd be there, he'd be there.

Today is a Funeral Mass, and it is right that we commend him to God with our prayers.

But it is also right that we carry forward what he started.

If you want to honour Paddy, do a small thing well.  
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Show up when someone needs a hand.

Keep your word.

Give the apprentice time.

Share the credit.

And when the rain is sideways and the path looks long, take another step, and bring someone with you.

Brother, you led from beside us.

You taught me that strength can be quiet, and that courage often sounds like a calm voice saying, "We'll sort it."

You were my first teammate, my best mate, and the one who turned fear into forward motion.

Go gently, Paddy.

We will mind Siobhán, and we will mind Liam and Orla.

We will look after Mam and Dad, and we will mind each other.

We will keep your tools in good order and your tunes in the house, and we will try—each in our own way—to be the kind of neighbour you were.

Thank you for the years we had, for the laughter that shook the table, for the steady hand on a shoulder that needed steadying.

Thank you for keeping your word, again and again, until it became a promise we all could live by.

Rest now, brother.

Leave the rest with us.

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