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***Martin Peytons Farewell Address to Fr. Dan O'Mahony Killasser Community Centre 30th August 2009***

"Ladies and Gentlemen, there's no need for panic, I'm not taking over from Fr.Dan. His shoes are too big to fill anyway. It's just that on this occasion, on behalf of all of us with your kind permission, I would like to extend to Fr. Dan, our heartfelt thanks for all he has done for us over what has been a huge part of his life and ministry. Nineteen years in all he has been with us between his two " tours of duty". He was with us on our good days, the days we brought our babies to him to be baptised, and then the years going by all too quickly the same babies, now children back to Fr. Dan for Holy Communion, then Confirmation, and even for some, Marriage. He was with us on the hard days, the days when we were bereaved, or finding the going tough in some other way, and because he has in abundance, what the French call savoir faire, the ability to know, to do, and say the right thing, he made the good days better and the hard days a little easier to bear. And it wasn't just in spiritual matters he led us, but he was a tireless worker for the community. All we have to do is look at how the church here in Killasser has been kept in such fine order, and Callow which is a real gem. The building of this Community Centre, handball and squash court, and so many other activities, far too numerous to catalogue here with Fr. Dan right in the thick of things showing leadership, and always a helping hand. I remember on one fund raising venture a considerable sum of money was raised when we were invited to guess Fr. Dan's weight. Not to many of us got it right. Amidst all of this hard work he has been friendly, approachable and always a great sense of humour. I remember on one occasion confessing to him that I thought that I was guilty of

the sin of pride. How is that, Dan asked. Well I said, I keep thinking that I'm very good looking. That's not a Sin said Dan, that's a Mistake.

He has pioneered the parish newsletter, a time consuming and onerous task, which is of great benefit to all of us, and I don't know how he managed it, but I don't believe that I ever saw a spelling mistake, or a misprint in it ever, unlike a newsletter that I saw in a Dublin church once, with an intended message that there would be a meeting for prayer and meditation in the Parish church on friday evening at 7-30. The message read that there would be a meeting for prayer and medication in the Parish church on friday evening at 7-30.

And so the years have gone by, and along with all the good times, there have been hard times. But to quote someone else, life is not about how hard You can hit, but about how hard You can be hit, and still keep moving forward. And Fr. Dan is moving forward to a new challenge, and a new chapter in his life and ministry, and just down the road from him in his new parish of Cloonacool, in Coolaney, is a man who was born and raised just a stones throw from here, my own cousin Fr. Patrick Halloran. And I know that he will have a true friend and a good neighbour in Fr. Pat.

They say the best speeches are the short ones ,so I'll end here just by saying once again, thank you Fr. Dan from all of us, and for you Fr.Dan,

May the road rise with you,  
May the wind be always at your back,  
May the sun shine warm upon your face,  
May the rain fall soft upon your fields,  
And until we meet again,  
May the good lord hold you in the palm of his hand.

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