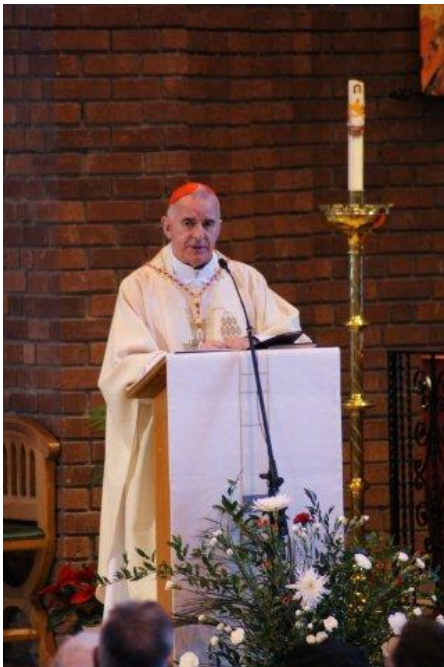


## **Keith Patrick Cardinal O'Brien** **Archbishop of the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh**



His Eminence, Keith Patrick Cardinal O'Brien B.Sc. Dip.Ed. KGC was born in Ballycastle, County Antrim, on the 17th March (St Patrick's Day!) 1938.



He came to Scotland as a boy with his family in 1949 where he received his primary education at St Paul's Whiteinch and St Stephen's Dalmuir, before going on to St Patrick's High School in Dumbarton. He completed his secondary education at Holy Cross Academy, Edinburgh and graduated a Bachelor of Science from Edinburgh University (1959). Cardinal O'Brien also holds a Diploma in Education (1966).

He entered St. Andrew's College, Drygrange in Roxburghshire to study for the priesthood and was ordained on 3rd April 1965 in St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh by the then Archbishop Gordon Joseph Gray.

Cardinal O'Brien has held appointments as a priest at Holy Cross Edinburgh, Our Lady's and St Bride's Cowdenbeath (where he was also Chaplain to St Columba's Secondary School) 1966 – 1971 before coming here to St Patrick's Kilsyth. He served here as assistant priest to Fr Denis O'Connell PP (1972 - 1975). He was then appointed to St Mary's Bathgate

where he served that parish from 1975 – 1978.

He was then appointed as the Spiritual Director of St Andrew's College Drygrange, which was the principal senior seminary college for the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh from 1978 – 1980. After this appointment he was asked to become Rector of St Mary's College Blairs in Aberdeen, which was a junior seminary college for boys and young men training for the priesthood, during the period 1980 – 1985.

He was nominated Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh on the 30<sup>th</sup> May 1985. The announcement of his appointment to the See of St Andrews and Edinburgh was made on Monday

3rd June 1985. He was to be the 7th Archbishop of this ancient See since the '*Restoration of the Hierarchy*' in 1878. His episcopal ordination was by Gordon Joseph Cardinal Gray and Archbishop Emeritus of St Andrews and Edinburgh with co-consecrators, His Excellency Archbishop Bruno Heim, Apostolic Pro Nuncio to Great Britain and Ireland and the then Most Reverend Archbishop Thomas J. Winning of Glasgow, later Cardinal Winning, in St Mary's Metropolitan Cathedral Edinburgh on 5th August 1985.

He was given the following honorary titles during his term as Archbishop; Knight of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta: Bailiff Grand Cross of Honour and Devotion in 2005. Knight of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem: Grand Prior of the Scottish Lieutenancy of the Order in 2001 and Knight Grand Cross in 2003.

During his term as Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh he was also Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Argyle and the Isles during the period 1996 – 1999.

Pope St John Paul II created him Cardinal on the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2003 with the title Cardinal Priest of Ss Gioachino e Anna ad Tusculanum in 2003.

In 2004 he received 3 Honorary Degrees – Doctor of Laws from St Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada; Doctor of Divinity from the University of St Andrews and Doctor of Divinity from the University of Edinburgh. He was also appointed Papal Legate, Long Tower Church Celebration, Derry, Ireland in 2009.

After his creation as Cardinal, Keith Patrick O'Brien was appointed a member of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications and also a member of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People.

He was the President of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland and fulfilled various engagements out with his own Archdiocese at the request of other members of the Bishops' Conference.

As well as ministering in his own Archdiocese and elsewhere in Scotland, the Cardinal had always shown an intense interest in the missions, having visited initially the territory previously adopted by his own Archdiocese – Bauchi in Northern Nigeria on two occasions. He had also been with his priests on loan in Central America, having visited El Salvador on three occasions and Chiapas in Mexico on two occasions, as well as visiting one of his priests in Guatemala.

As a Director of the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF), the Cardinal visited projects funded from Scotland in successive years – visiting Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2004, Ethiopia in 2005, and Darfur in the Sudan in 2006. He has also visited India early in 2007 and China in the latter part of 2007. In 2006 he visited various projects supported by Holy Rood High School and St John's Parish, Portobello in the Diocese of Moshi in Tanzania.

Cardinal O'Brien gave up the pastoral governance of the Archdiocese of St Andrews & Edinburgh, tendering his resignation which was accepted nunc pro tunc by Pope Benedict XVI on 13th November 2012 and which was definitively accepted on 25th February 2013.

Cardinal O'Brien resigned amidst allegations of inappropriate behaviour towards 3 priests and a former priest. Cardinal O'Brien himself admitted '*..I wish to take this opportunity to admit that there have been times that my sexual conduct has fallen below the standards expected of me as a*

*priest, archbishop and cardinal....To those I have offended I apologise and ask forgiveness. To the Catholic church and people of Scotland, I also apologise. I will now spend the rest of my life in retirement. I will play no further part in the public life of the Catholic church in Scotland."*

After a fall at his home in Ellington near Morpeth in Northumbria in February 2018, he was admitted to hospital in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

At 1am on 19th March 2018, the feast of St Joseph, patron of a happy death, His Eminence Keith Patrick Cardinal O'Brien, Archbishop Emeritus of St Andrews & Edinburgh, died at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Newcastle-upon-Tyne surrounded by family and friends. He was fortified by the rites of the Holy Church after having received anointing of the sick the previous day from Archbishop Leo Cushley of St Andrews and Edinburgh in the presence of Bishop Seamus Cunningham of the Diocese of Hexam and Newcastle.

On Thursday the 5<sup>th</sup> April his requiem Mass took place at the Church of St Michael in Newcastle close to the Little Sisters of the Poor care home where he had lived for a short while before his admission to hospital. The principal concelebrant was the Archbishop of Westminster Vincent Cardinal Nichols assisted by Cardinal Sean Brady, Archbishop Emeritus of Armagh; Archbishop Edward Adams, Papal Nuncio to Great Britain; Archbishop Leo Cushley successor of Cardinal O'Brien as Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh; and Bishop Stephen Robson of Dunkeld. There was approximately 300 mourners present including around 50 priests from England, Ireland and Scotland with Cardinal Nichols the main celebrant and homilist.

His Eminence Archbishop Vincent Cardinal Nichols of Westminster used his homily during the Requiem Mass for the Cardinal Keith Patrick O'Brien RIP (1938-2018) to urge those present to pray for the repose of his soul and also for those he offended during his life.

*"In recent days, the life of Cardinal Keith has been laid bare," said Cardinal Nichols, "We all know its lights and its darkness; we need not spend time talking about them even more for he has given us the key words. In his last will and testament, he wrote: 'I ask forgiveness of all I have offended in this life. I thank God for the many graces and blessings he has given me especially the Sacrament of Holy Orders.' Today, as we pray for the repose of his soul, we also pray for all those he offended and ask God to strengthen them at this time."*

Cardinal Nichol's homily is reproduced in full below:

*'There is a truth, deep in our Catholic tradition, often forgotten in our days, yet very relevant to this moment. It is this: that every funeral Mass is above all else a prayer for God's mercy for the one who has died. So often services after a death are seen to be a time for celebrating a life, for recognising the great achievements of a life now ended and for treasuring happy memories. Yet the emphasis of our tradition is somewhat different. Always, we gather to ask God's mercy for the one who has died, today for Cardinal Keith O'Brien. We do so with trust and love, knowing that God's promise of mercy is enduring and that our prayers, entering into the presence of the Father through, with and in Jesus, the beloved Son, will be heard.*

*In recent days, the life of Cardinal Keith has been laid bare. We all know its lights and its darkness; we need not spend time talking about them even more for he has given us the key words. In his last will and testament, he wrote: 'I ask forgiveness of all I have offended in this life. I thank God for the many graces and blessings he has given me especially the Sacrament of Holy Orders.' Today,*

as we pray for the repose of his soul, we also pray for all those he offended and ask God to strengthen them at this time.

In seeking the mercy of God, Cardinal Keith follows in the footsteps laid out for us in our faith. St Patrick, whose name Keith Patrick O'Brien was proud to bear, wrote in his Confessions these words:

**'It is with fear and trembling that I should be awaiting the verdict that's coming to me on that (judgement) day, when none of us can go absent or run for cover; and when every last one of us will have to answer for even our smallest sins at the court of Christ the Lord.'** (8)\* This is, indeed, the pathway we all have to trace.

Pondering on the mercy of God is what we should do today. You will recall the Year of Mercy. During it, Pope Francis encouraged us to **'rediscover the infinite mercy of the Father who welcomes everyone and goes out personally to encounter each of them.'** The Pope also explained to us that **'Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy'**, adding, **'Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions, and his entire person reveals the mercy of God.'**

Now this is what we have heard in this morning's Gospel passage taken from St Luke. The two disciples are making their sad journey away from Jerusalem, a name that it used to represent the Church, the presence of God among His people. The two disciples, then, are walking away from the Church, disappointed in all their hopes, disillusioned by what they have seen and heard. But, see what the Risen Jesus does: he goes to walk with them, continuing their journey in the direction that they are going, away from Jerusalem. He does simply tell them to turn back. No, he walks with them. He accompanies them. He listens fully to their dismay and their sense of being let down. Only gradually does he invite them to see beyond that dismay and begin to speak to their hearts. Even when he sits at table, he does not tell them to return to Jerusalem. He simply shows himself to them. The decision to return is one that they make, moved by the compassion they have found in him.

In this account, we see the mercy of God at work, in the person of Jesus, coming to us in our dismay, in the prison of sin which we construct around ourselves, and opening for us the door through which we can retrace our steps back to him.

In the life of Cardinal O'Brien, as well as his failings, there was goodness, courage and many acts of simple kindness. Not least was his determination to serve the poor of the world. But when we come to stand before God we do so best when we come empty-handed. No matter how great or slight our achievements might be, we cannot depend on them. No, we come before God empty-handed so that we can receive the one thing necessary: a full measure of God's mercy.

Only in this way can we hope to enter into the promise that was proclaimed in the first Reading of the Mass. **'On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all people a feast of rich food! A feast of well-aged wines, strained clear.'** This is an image we can all understand and one for which we long, notwithstanding our unworthiness.

But then we are consoled with the next words: **'Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces and the disgrace of his people.'** This too is the promise of the Lord. The healing of the wounds we have inflicted and the wounds we ourselves bear, is his work. It is a work that cannot be accomplished without Him. Yet as His work, it is a task in which we are to be his active servants

*and never simply sit on our hands. The promise of the heavenly banquet is for all; the task of healing and finding forgiveness is also for all.*

*I started with words from the Confession of St Patrick. So, let me end with some more. Here is St Patrick's faith, loud and clear. Let us make it ours today. He wrote:*

***'I haven't a doubt in the world that, on the day appointed, we shall rise up again in the brightness of the sun; that is to say in the glory of Jesus Christ Our Redeemer...since it is from him and through him and in him that we are going to reign. But the sun he bids to rise, morning by morning, for our benefit, will never reign, nor will its glory last. Christ is the true sun whose glory shall not fade. We who believe in him and worship him - in fact anyone who does his will - shall live forever, because Christ lives forever, reigning with God the Father Almighty and with the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.'*** (59-60)\*

*This is our prayer today, especially for Cardinal Keith Patrick O'Brien. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen*

### **✠ Vincent Nichols**

\* From the Confessions of St Patrick

The following day, Friday 6<sup>th</sup> April his interment took place at Mount Vernon Cemetery Edinburgh, where he was laid to rest in the same plot as his parents. The service of interment was led by His Grace Archbishop Leo Cushely.

May he rest in peace. He was 80 years old and in the 52<sup>nd</sup> year of his priesthood.



**Mount Vernon Cemetery Edinburgh as mourners gather for Cardinal O'Brien's burial  
Friday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2018.**



## Fr O'Brien's time in St Patrick's Kilsyth

Upon the retirement of Thomas Canon McGarvey, Fr Denis O'Connell was appointed as Parish Priest of St Patrick's Kilsyth and started in Kilsyth on the same day as his new assistant Priest, Fr Keith Patrick O'Brien on Wednesday 9th February 1972 (*see Kilsyth Chronicle article below*).

Fr. O'Brien quickly set to work in this large and busy Parish most notably being involved in the establishment of a new Convent in Kilsyth for the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in May 1972. Throughout his tenure in Kilsyth, Fr O'Brien was involved not only in his pastoral work as a Parish Priest but also in his associations with the many clubs and societies which used St Patrick's Halls which helped him to become known in the wider community of Kilsyth. At this time in St Patrick's pastoral life was noted for the upsurge in House Masses where virtually every Catholic family in the town had Mass said in their own home. At the same time there was great devotion to the 'Living Rosary' and also support for the cause for the Beatification of at that time the Blessed (now Venerable) Margaret Sinclair.

### ***St Patrick's Newsletter 20th Oct 1974***

#### **Diocesan Changes - Father O'Brien's Transfer to Bathgate.**

Fr O'Connell writes: *"It is with sadness and a deep sense of personal loss, which I know will be shared by all our people, that I have to announce this morning the transfer of Fr O'Brien to Bathgate and to an assignment in St Mary's Bathgate, one of the largest Secondary Schools in the Diocese – an assignment for which of course, Fr Keith is singularly suited with his teaching qualifications and with his considerable experience as a full time School Chaplain in Fife.*

*Need I say that he leaves with the prayerful good wishes of countless friends in Kilsyth as well as our most grateful appreciation of his outstanding priestly work in our Parish over the past 3 years.*

*As some degree of compensation and indeed a measure of Fr Keith's worth, he is being replaced at St Patrick's by two priests, now that the staffing situation has been eased slightly after the recent ordinations. We welcome Fr Robert McGarrigle from St Kentigern's Edinburgh and Fr Brian Byrne from St Margaret's Dunfermline."*



### ***St Patrick's Newsletter 20th Oct 1974***

#### **Fr O'Brien Writes**

*"Dear Fr Denis,*

*As I try to gather my thoughts before leaving Kilsyth, my mind flashes back over the many projects in which we were involved. I think over the years we were together we did try to cater for all our people and try to bring them closer to God. Would you please pass on my thanks to all the Parishioners of Kilsyth for all their many kindnesses to me. From the first moment of my arrival to the day of my departure, I have felt that I was a member of a very happy family and I have been very grateful for the way in which I have been welcomed by all the people.*

*I take this opportunity of thanking all those who have given me gifts before leaving and I know that*

*you will also give me the greatest gift – that of remembrance in your prayers and in your Masses and Holy Communion."*

Fr. O'Brien left St Patrick's Kilsyth on 25th October 1974 to take up a posting at St Mary's Bathgate and as a teacher and Chaplin at the local high school.

## CHANGES AT ST PATRICK'S

Two new priests have been welcomed by Kilsyth St. Patrick's congregation, following the retiral of Canon Thomas McGarvey and the transfer of Father Michael Bell to Blanefield. Father Denis O'Connell is the new parish priest and Father Keith O'Brien his assistant.

Father O'Connell's appointment revives an old link between his family and Kilsyth. His cousin, Father Dan Murphy, was assistant priest to the late Canon McNamara from 1915 to 1923.

A former member of the staff at St. Mary's College, Blair, Father O'Connell is known for his broadcasts on radio and TV and served for some years as assistant to Father Agnellus Andrew, O.F.M., Deputy Head of Religious Broadcasting, BBC, London.

More recently he was parish priest at St. Matthew's, Rosewell, where he became known throughout Scotland and overseas for his work in

promoting the claims of Edinburgh working girl, Margaret Sinclair, to be declared a saint of the R.C. Church.

Father O'Brien studied for the priesthood at St. Andrew's College, Drygrange, after graduating at Edinburgh University.

After further studies at Edinburgh University and on completion of his teacher training course at Moray House College of Education, Father O'Brien served as chaplain to St. Columba's School, Dunfermline, and assistant priest at St. Bride's Church, Cowdenbeath. He is a native of Ballycastle, Co. Antrim.

helping out at the church regularly to enable the two priests to have time off.

Canon McGarvey (75), now lives at 8 Manse Court. A native of Broxburn, he has been in the priesthood for 45 years, serving in Edinburgh, Polmont, Lochore (Fife) and Bonnybridge before coming to Kilsyth.

The canon says he has enjoyed his work in Kilsyth immensely, and has seen many changes for the better, particularly the new housing schemes. The highlight of his 16 years was without doubt the opening of the new church in 1965.

Canon McGarvey has taken advantage of the Pope's new ruling that the clergy can retire at 75. "I feel it is for the good of the parish," he said. "I am stepping down to enable two younger, more active men to take over."

### WONDERFUL CHURCH

Speaking at all Masses last Sunday, Father O'Connell congratulated the parishioners on their wonderful new church. "The fact that it is almost clear of debt," he said, "is a memorial to the outstanding achievements of Canon McGarvey as parish priest; an eloquent tribute also to the loyalty and exceptional generosity of the good parishioners of St. Patrick's, down through the years. Father O'Brien and myself are delighted that Canon McGarvey is staying with us at Kilsyth to keep a kindly, fatherly eye over the parish and people he so obviously loves."

### STAYING IN KILSYTH

Canon McGarvey's retiral took place 16 years to the day after his arrival in Kilsyth in 1956. He has decided to remain in the town, however, so his well-kent figure will still be much in evidence. He will be



FATHER DENIS  
O'CONNELL



FATHER KEITH  
O'BRIEN

Kilsyth Chronicle Wed 16<sup>th</sup> Feb 1972

## Some Memories of Cardinal O'Brien in St Patrick's Kilsyth



Cardinal Gray at Rosewell with the then Fr. O'Brien in 1973.



Canon O'Connell introduces the new Apostolic Pro Nuncio to Great Britain and Ireland to Sister Angela. On her left-hand side is the Rev. Alistair McLachlan of the Burns and Old Parish Church. Awaiting next in line is Mr. Harkins.

Archbishop O'Brien follows behind Archbishop Barbarito.





Archbishop O'Brien with  
Mrs Agnes Conway and  
Mrs Mary Griffin at the Scots  
College in Rome.



Archbishop O'Brien's  
52nd birthday with Mary  
Patterson, Agnes Hackett



Cardinal O'Brien at  
St. Patrick's  
Date unknown



Archbishop O'Brien's 52nd birthday in  
St Patrick's Church hall.



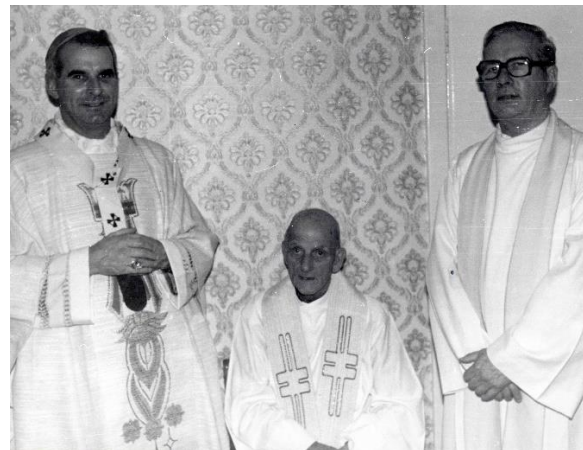
The then Fr O'Brien with left John Scullion  
and right Betina Weldon.



Archbishop O'Brien and Archbishop Barbarito, Apostolic Pro Nuncio to Great Britain and Ireland on a visit to St Patrick's. Fr Denis O'Connell is following in the background.



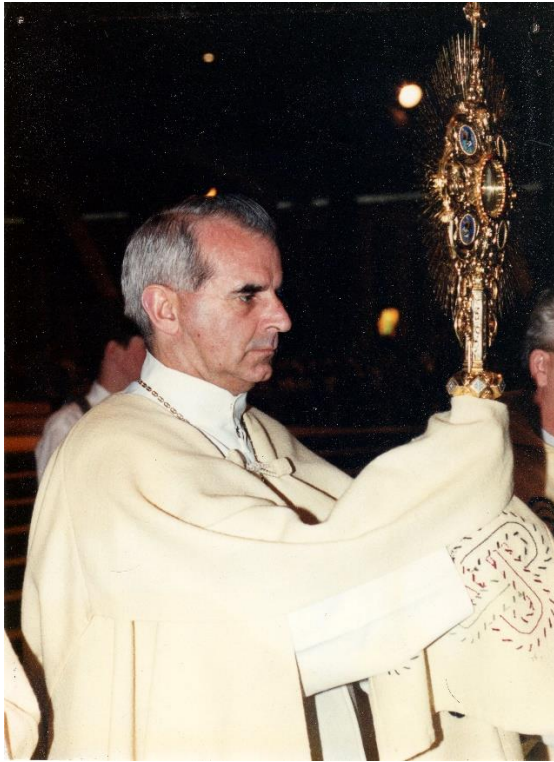
Cardinal O'Brien visits St Patrick's Kilsyth in June 2002 and meet some parishioners



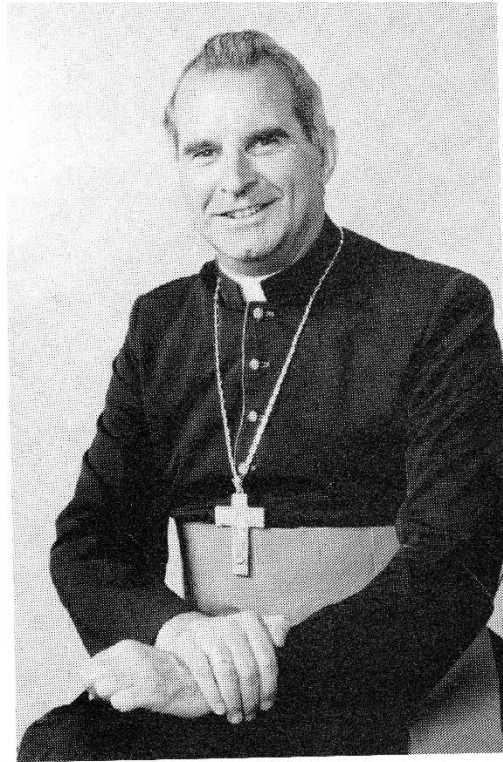
Cardinal O'Brien with Fr Bernard Doonan and Reverend Ministers of other churches in Kilsyth.

Cardinal O'Brien and Fr Denis O'Connell visits Canon Thomas McGarvey just before his death.





Archbishop O'Brien at exposition of the blessed sacrament.



An official photo of Archbishop O'Brien for his episcopal ordination in 1985.



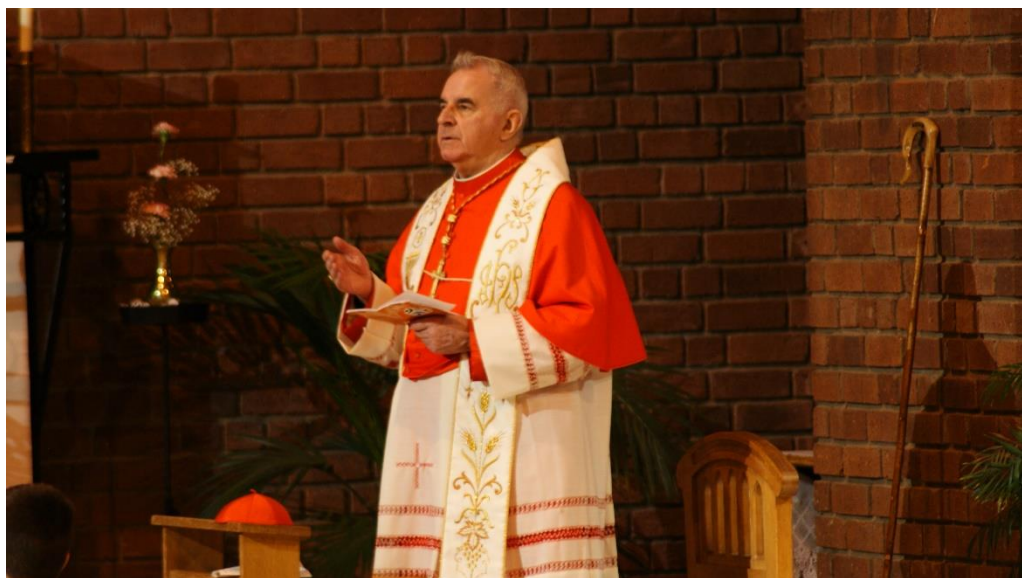
*ABOVE - Archbishop Keith O'Brien greets his young visitors as they pile into the Archbishop's residence at St Bennet's in Edinburgh.*

St Patrick's School visit the Archbishop at his official residence in Edinburgh in 1994.





Cardinal O'Brien visits Kilsyth in December 2009 after the church building had been desecrated by a vandal. The parish priest at that time was Fr James Tracey.



This photograph shows the final visit of Cardinal O'Brien to St Patrick's Kilsyth on the 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2013 just a few days before his resignation.





This photograph shows the final visit of Cardinal O'Brien to St Patrick's Kilsyth on the 1st Feb 2013 just a few days before his resignation. After Mass was over Cardinal O'Brien said a few words of reflection – this was to be the last time he was to visit St Patrick's Kilsyth and probably his last words anywhere as a public figure and Cardinal Archbishop.



The final resting place of His Eminence  
Keith Patrick Cardinal O'Brien in Mount  
Vernon Cemetery Edinburgh, together  
with that of his parents.

***Requiescat in Pace***