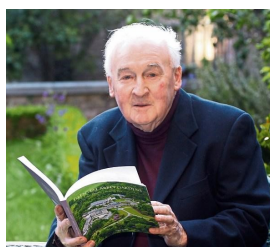




BRIAN P. MURPHY OSB

MONK OF GLENSTAL

died, Monday 16th May 2022
aged 86



John Patrick Murphy - known in his family as Paddy - was born in England to Irish parents, on 28 September 1935. Following his secondary education, he entered Douai Abbey, near Reading in Berkshire. He was professed in October 1955, taking the name Brian, in honour of the seventh-century Bishop of Dorchester, Saint Birinus. He was ordained priest in October 1963.

In 1974, Fr Brian discerned that he should leave Douai. He spent an extended period in Glenstal shortly after that, but eventually decided to return to lay life. He qualified as a teacher in Trinity College Dublin, and taught for several years at St Gerard's School in Bray, Co. Wicklow, eventually becoming Head of the Junior School. His book, *St Gerard's School: An Educational Initiative*, was published in 1999.

Brian arrived in Glenstal once again in September 1984, this time for good. Initially a guest, he spent his time on historical research and teaching. He was awarded a PhD in History from UCD in 1987. Sensing a call to return to monastic life, he was permitted to begin a period of probation that same year, and his definitive incorporation into the Glenstal community became effective on 1 August 1990. Throughout the decades that followed, Fr Brian had two primary occupations - scholarly historical work and the restoration and care of Glenstal's historic gardens. He was passionately committed to both, and brought them together most elegantly in 2014, with the publication of *Glenstal Abbey Gardens*.

His 1990 book, *Patrick Pearse and the Lost Republican Ideal*, offered a notable and somewhat controversial challenge to prevailing 'revisionist' interpretations of the history of the revolutionary and civil war period in Ireland, and he continued writing and lecturing on related topics to the end. Less controversial was his 2018 book on the traumatic experiences during this time of the family who built Glenstal castle, *The Life and Tragic Death of Winnie Barrington*.

Devoted to daily work in the terraced garden and the Lady Garden, Fr Brian was a familiar and welcoming face for countless visitors over the years. He had a loyal band of assistants throughout this time, including many 'men of the roads', who had come to stay in our hostel.

Fr Brian became ill on the afternoon of Sunday 15th May and was transferred to University Hospital Limerick on Monday 16th May, where he died later that day. He is survived by his brother Peter, daughters Miranda and Frances, and grandchildren, Amelia and Paul. The funeral arrangements will be announced later.



Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him