

Jim Dobbin, K.S.G., K.M.C.O., M.P.

Jim was born on May 26th 1941 in Kincardine, Fife – the son of a coalminer who had moved from Northern Ireland in search of work. He began his education at the Holy Name Primary School in Oakley near to Dunfermline and went on to study bacteriology and virology at Napier College, Edinburgh.

In 1964 he married Pat, who he had first met in primary school. Their marriage was blessed with four children – Patrick, Barry, Kerry and Mary and eventually several grandchildren who were extremely important to Jim. The children and grandchildren were fully involved in the Requiem Masses.

Jim worked as a micro-biologist within the National Health Service mainly at the Royal Oldham Hospital. In 1983 he was elected as a councillor in the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale becoming labour group leader in 1994 and leader of the Council in 1996 for a short time. He stepped down from both the National Health Service and the Local Council on his election to the House of Commons in 1997 with a majority of over 17,000. He was a member of the European Scrutiny Select Committee from 1998 until his death. He also chaired the all-party Pro Life Group in which his service was particularly robust and persevering in matters concerning of every human life for which he was awarded and invested as a Knight of the Pontifical Order of St. Gregory the Great from Pope Benedict and honoured by the Sacred Military Constantinian Order of St. George.

Jim died whilst on a Parliamentary trip to Slupsk, Poland where he had presented an award on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. An evening Requiem Mass took place in his parish church of St. Vincent de Paul, Norden, Rochdale celebrated by his parish priest, Canon Paul Brindle, assisted by six local priests in the presence of a packed congregation of friends, family and parishioners. On the following day the Requiem Mass took place at St. John's Cathedral, Salford celebrated by the Bishop, the Right Reverend Terence Brain, and assisted by numerous diocesan clergy and again a large congregation included many parliamentary and political colleagues.

In the words of the various eulogies and the many tributes "Gentleman Jim" will be greatly missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Pat, their four children and grandchildren.

May he rest in peace