

Luke Fionnán Nolan was born in Galway on September 11th, 1992 along with his twin brother Marcus to our most loving family. Parents Liz and Joe, older brothers Michael and Oliver and little sister Jessica. Luke was and is so many things-bold, wild, beautiful, funny, mischievous, energetic, excitable, confident, practical, affable, sociable, a leader of his many crews. But also, soft, gentle, calm, thoughtful, romantic, sensitive, supportive, and genuine. He always treated everyone in his environment equally - he never changed who he was or adapted his character to please the next person. Luke sought out as fulfilling a time as possible, whatever the occasion. He didn't overthink the consequences of his decisions and actions (at least until the repercussions hit!), but that's what made his life more interesting and eventful than most. Most important was having a jive, relishing the moment, following his beloved Leeds United and seeking out gas times with great friends and family. With that, innumerable stories and tales have come to delight and fill our lives, and those stories will forever endure. For his entire life, he remained authentically and unapologetically himself. He lived it large.

Luke was enjoying a new adventure living abroad in Melbourne, Australia, until he suddenly lost his life on May 11th, 2020 at just 27 years old. He suffered a cardiac arrest while sleeping next to his beautiful girlfriend Becky and despite the best efforts of CPR and the intensive care team, Luke could not be resuscitated. We would later learn that Luke had a genetic condition called Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy or HCM. With HCM, following puberty, the heart septum & left ventricle start to enlarge. It is the most common form of genetic heart disease, affecting 1 in 500 people and is the leading cause of sudden cardiac death under age 30. As with Luke, 50-70% of cases do not show any prior symptoms until a cardiac arrest occurs. While we are thankful that Luke lived a truly happy, care-free and healthy life, the sudden nature of his passing has made his loss so difficult to comprehend for our family, his numerous friends and the Galway community he so touched.

With the difficulties Covid-19 posed in getting Luke home, friends set up a gofundme page to help. The page took off like wildfire. Within the 2.5 weeks it took to bring Luke back, over 3,500 people donated. We gave €80,000 of this to the Kevin Bell Repatriation Trust who brought Luke home with incredible tenderness and kindness. We have now donated the remaining portion to 2 incredible organisations very dear to us:

1. Family heart screening clinic at the Mater hospital, who facilitated our family's cardiac investigations for HCM and who continue to assess and help families in these awful circumstances.
2. Cardiac Risk in the Young Ireland (CRY) who screen families for inherited cardiac conditions, raise awareness of these conditions through information meetings and media campaigns and provide counselling to families affected by sudden cardiac death.

Simple, non-invasive tests like ECG and Echocardiogram can detect this deadly condition and prevent more families going through this heartache and losing someone as incredible as Luke. We would implore all young people to be screened.

Our family misses Luke so desperately, and we can still barely believe in this new reality without him. We do plan, however, to live for Luke, and to live like Luke. To honour him and carry him in our hearts and minds, to celebrate him with fundraising events for these amazing charities, to draw strength and inspiration from him, and to devote all our efforts and achievements to him. He will remain foremost in our every endeavour, every celebration, every milestone, and every challenge that life throws at us.