

Remarks by Sister Mary Ann LoGiudice
At the funeral of Sister Maureen Joyce
May 24, 2010

It is my distinct privilege to stand before you to honor Sister Maureen Joyce.

A few months ago, when I told Sister Maureen that I wanted to speak at her funeral, she was deeply touched, and since then she has told me some things she would like me to say.

First and foremost she wanted me to convey her deep gratitude to the people who supported her on her journey. This gratitude extends to the Sisters of Mercy who assisted in providing and supporting Maureen's unwavering vision and ministry; to her family who demonstrated unconditional love throughout her life; to her "Kindergarten friends" who supported her with wonderful friendships over many decades; and to the CC directors; the Central Office staff, the CC board of trustees and the staff at CMS, who without question helped fulfill her philosophy and vision. Maureen felt enormously blessed by the presence of you in her life.

Maureen loved people, and in her eyes, everyone, from pauper to prince was equal. Thus she treated each person with compassion, non-judgmental acceptance and limitless love. She also had a tremendous love for animals, and if she was your "mother", you were one lucky dog, or cat as the case might be. Maureen cared for many pets throughout her lifetime, and even during her illness, one of her chief concerns was her beloved dog, Tyrone whose well-being remained a top priority.

Catherine McAuley, founder of the Sisters of Mercy once said, "There are things which the poor deem more

precious than gold, though they cost the donor nothing; among these are the kind word, the gentle compassionate touch, the patient listening to their sorrows". Maureen graciously and invariably bestowed these precious gifts upon others. She had a remarkable knack for making each individual feel special and unique. Despite being so ill, Maureen always had the time and energy to listen to everyone who walked through her door. She took an interest in people's lives, regardless of what the doctor had to say that day, and in spite of unbearable pain. Even in confronting her own mortality, her focus was always on other people and in letting them know how deeply she cared about them. Even during the end stages of her illness, Maureen welcomed phone calls and visits from people who loved her. Her desire was that others would be peaceful when the inevitable occurred.

Catherine McCauley urged her sisters to celebrate, enjoy life and cultivate a spirit of joy and play. Despite the enormous responsibility that Maureen had in her position as CEO of Catholic Charities, she managed to celebrate life and find joy in many things big and small. The birds visiting her feeder on her deck, the gardens surrounding her humble home, a planter of pansies in her kitchen window, all gave her immense pleasure. She rejoiced at the successes of each young mother and every child who had turned to Catholic Charities and CMS for help in overcoming the special struggles and challenges they faced. Among the things that gave Maureen particular joy were her summer vacations at the Cape, and witnessing countless Siena Saints victories at the TU Center. Throughout her illness, and up to the end, she continued to enjoy her times with family and friends enriching these visits with her sense of humor and gentle spirit.

Henri Nouwen once wrote "To the compassionate person, Nothing is alien, No joy, No sorrow, No way of living,

No way of dying." Even in pain and illness, Sister Maureen's light grew stronger.

It has been an honor to walk with Maureen during her life, but most especially during the last several months. She accepted every moment with strength, dignity and grace, which is evidence of her deep faith. Maureen taught me a great deal about living and about letting go. I am proud and honored to have been her friend.