



“We rejoice in the continued invitation to seek justice, to be compassionate and to reflect mercy in the world.” C. McAuley



The Spirit Of Mercy

A tribute to Sister Maureen Joyce

Today we gather to honor Maureen: Sisters, family, colleagues, friends and former clients, drawn together in this sacred space by love – Love of God, who called her to this chapel in her youth to profess her unwavering commitment to service. Love of family, which lives on in the memories of each new generation. Love for the Mercy Community, sharing Catherine McAuley’s passion for the poor and the voiceless as a fearless advocate for justice and a compassionate presence wherever she saw a need unmet.

Our loss is great, our grief profound as we bid Maureen farewell. Yet, through tears of mourning, in the Resurrection song we find comfort and peace, knowing that her pain has ceased. For her a new creation has begun. Her spirit remains with us. Her inner light lingers, shining through the smiles of wide-eyed infants and young parents blessed with energy and hope for their future, in those living with HIV and those who have found freedom beyond the bonds of drugs or alcohol because she believed in them.

Maureen brought the vision of Baggot Street to fruition in her time and place. She would not allow the voiceless to be ignored or cast aside. She brought the plight of the poor to our attention and would not let us look away. Maureen walked the walk. Like Catherine, she was persistent in her pursuit of justice. Like the intrepid women who brought mercy to the people on the streets of Dublin, she stood firm, advocating with grace and tenacity for those on the fringes of society. Publicly she challenged politicians, the powerful, the privileged, and the people of Pine Hills to open our hearts and our wallets, to seek justice, to bring the Word we profess alive. She planted seeds of mercy at CMS, Farano House, Heery House and elsewhere, bringing compassion and hope to outcasts, the abandoned and those afraid of change. Small programs have grown and flourished, expanding throughout the diocese and beyond, bringing hope and confidence to souls once weary and lost.

Perhaps her greatest gift was her capacity to bring the talents of others to life.
A busy CEO, Maureen never lost sight of her mission to serve others.
She encouraged us to look beyond perceived limitations,
to search within, to embrace possibilities, to believe that change is possible.
At ease with politicians and prisoners; with the wealthy and the homeless,
Maureen modeled for us the gifts of patience and presence.
Though her accomplishments were many,
she lived simply, in the midst of those she served,
the gospel message given substance in her every interaction.

Even as her illness weakened her body, it could not stifle her smile.
Maureen gave to us the gift of strength through her courage,
choosing quality time over length of days.
Like Catherine, her faith fueled her passion for life
as she nurtured the gifts of all who shared her journey.
With dignity and grace, she showed us how to find joy in each moment
and to cherish the gift of each new day.
It is fitting that we celebrate the great gift Maureen was to us.
Her laughter will echo in our hearts; her smile
will brighten even the darkest of days, as long as memories endure.

Her legacy of love will live on in those
who continue to address contemporary needs
with vigor and passion, trusting in Providence,
seeking to discern and follow the breath of the Spirit within.
On this feast of Pentecost, thankful for the time we shared,
we celebrate her life with stories and songs, with prayers of gratitude and praise,
as we offer back to God his gentle servant Maureen,
called to follow the path of mercy before time began.
Her service to the Lord now complete,
may she rest peacefully in the presence of the triune God
for time and eternity.

Kathy Schongar
Pentecost Sunday
May 23, 2010