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OBITUARIES

Obituaries Sept. 20, 2014

September 19, 2014

One of the founders of Mercy Center Ministries, **Sister Mary Waters, R.S.M.**, 74, a Sister of Mercy for 56 years, died July 26 at her home in Bayport, L.I.



Sister Mary

Born in Waterbury, Conn., she attended St. Gerard Majella School, Hollis, and Mercy Juniorate H.S., Fort Greene.

She entered the Sisters of Mercy Novitiate in Syosset, L.I., in 1958, and professed her final vows on Sept. 5, 1963. She later earned her master's degree in social work from Adelphi University, Garden City, L.I.

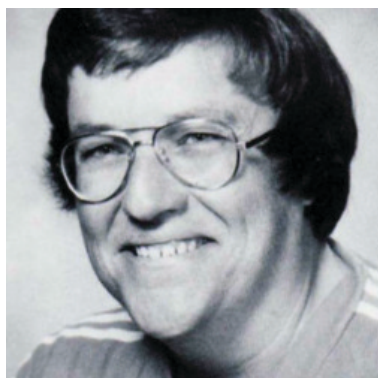
She taught in St. Patrick's School, Bay Shore, L.I., 1960-62; Holy Rosary, Bedford-Stuyvesant, 1962-63; and served as both teacher and principal at St. Gregory/Unity Catholic, Crown Heights, 1965-76.

She served as pastoral minister and member of the outreach team at Our Lady of the Snows, Blue Point, L.I., 1976-87.

In 1983, Sister Mary was one of the founders and administrators of Mercy Center Ministries, Patchogue, L.I., providing shelter and training for young mothers and their babies.

In 2001, she was elected president of the Brooklyn Regional Community and served until 2007 when the Brooklyn Community merged with four other Mercy Sister communities to become the Mid-Atlantic Community. She was elected to serve on that Leadership Team until her retirement in 2011.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at Our Lady of Mercy Academy, Syosset. Burial was in St. Charles Cemetery, Farmingdale, L.I.



Modry

Jane Modry, a longtime teacher, coach and athletic director at St. Francis Prep, Fresh Meadows, died Sept. 8 at a rehabilitation facility in Lake Ariel, Pa. She was 70.

Born in Jackson Heights, Modry attended P.S. 32, Murray Hill, Bayside H.S. and the State University at New Paltz, N.Y. She received her physical education teaching certification from Hunter College, Manhattan, in 1967, and later her master's degree in sports management from Adelphi University, Garden City, L.I.

In March, 1967, she began teaching physical education at Bishop Reilly H.S., Fresh Meadows. The following year, she began a coaching career that spanned 24 years. St. Francis Prep moved into that location in 1974, and Modry remained on staff where she coached the following women's sports: varsity basketball, 1968-92; varsity volleyball, 1968-80; varsity softball,

1968-80; and varsity women's track, 1968-70.

Her varsity basketball teams amassed more than 300 victories, and she was named Coach of the Year for women's basketball in 1980 and 1989. Her 1980 team won both the GCHSAA downstate and city championships, while the 1989 team was the Class "B" GCHSAA champion and the New York State runner-up. Her 1979 women's softball team was diocesan champion.

Dubbed the "Queen of Physical Education," Modry has often been described as a pioneer in the world of women's athletics as a coach, administrator and women's athletic director from 1984 to 1999. She was recognized as Administrator of the Year by the N.Y.S. CHSAA Athletic Administrators Association. She also one of the founding members of the GCHSAA and also served a term as president of the league.

In 1999, she assumed the role of director of student activities and served in that capacity until her retirement from the Prep in 2005, also serving as Student Council director from 2000 to 2005. She continued to serve as the Diocese of Brooklyn's representative to the N.Y.S. Federation of Secondary Schools Athletic Association.



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In 1991, Modry was inducted into the Diocese of Brooklyn's Hall of Fame; in 2000 became an Honorary St. Francis Prep Alumna; and in 2003 received the Franciscan Spirit Award.

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"She (Modry) was one of the women that was there from the beginning," said Denise Hillig, the current Brooklyn/Queens GCHSAA president. "She was passionate about athletics both at St. Francis Prep and the league. She with other founding members is why the Girls Catholic High School Athletic Association is in existence. She's why we are what we are today.

"She never stopped until the time she retired. She fought at every level to make sure girls had the same access to sports as boys did."

Hillig said that Modry served as a mentor to her as she moved up to various leadership positions in the diocesan league and as a member of the N.Y.S. committee.

"Jane showed me the ropes and really made sure I was aware of the history of the way things went," Hillig said. "She would live to sit and tell me stories of how it was. I am really going to miss her."

Hillig played basketball in the GCHSAA for St. Agnes A.H.S., College Point, while Modry coached at St. Francis Prep. She said she looked up to Modry as a female coach – something Hillig wanted to do some day and has accomplished as head junior varsity girls' basketball coach at St. John's Prep, Astoria.

"I never dreamed then I would be holding the positions I hold today," Hillig said. "If it weren't for people like Jane back then laying the groundwork, then I would never be able to have the privilege of doing what I do today. I owe Jane and the other founding members a great deal."

Modry is survived by her brother Bill. A funeral Mass was celebrated Sept. 12 at St. Thomas More Church, Lake Ariel. She was buried in Mount St. Mary's Cemetery, Flushing.

St. Francis Prep will host a memorial Mass for Modry on Wednesday, Sept. 24 at 7 p.m. in the school auditorium. Following the Mass, there will be a reception in the school cafeteria.

Paul Speckenbach, a former two-sport star athlete at St. Francis Prep, Williamsburg, died Sept. 15 at St. Francis Hospital, Roslyn, L.I. He was 70.

Born in Brooklyn, he excelled at both baseball and basketball while at the Prep and was named New York City and CHSAA M.V.P. in numerous publications. In his four years on the varsity team, the dominant right-handed pitcher was named First Team All-City twice, Second Team All-City once and a Third Team All-American. His teams won the city championship in his freshman and senior seasons.

Speckenbach received over 100 college scholarship offers for both baseball and basketball, but it was pro ball that won. The then-17-year-old signed with the Los Angeles Dodgers immediately after his high school graduation in 1962 for \$100,000 – a substantial contract for a high schooler.

The Dodgers, who outbid the other 19 professional baseball clubs at the time, touted Speckenbach as the No. 1 prospect in the country and dubbed him the "new Bob Feller."

"He (Speckenbach) reminds you a lot of Feller," Dodgers' scout Rudy Rufer told the Palm Beach Post in an article dated June 23, 1962. "He has a tremendous fast ball. He has a big kick with that front leg, like Feller, and blazes the ball across. He has a curve good enough for the majors right now."

Known as a "bonus baby" for signing a lucrative contract, Speckenbach was assigned to the Dodgers' Single-A affiliate, the Santa Barbara Rancheros of the California League. He finished 5-4 in 18 starts his first season in 1963 but began experiencing rotator cuff troubles.

The following season, he was picked up by the St. Louis Cardinals on waivers and pitched in limited duty for the Rock Hill Cardinals, St. Louis' Single-A affiliate in the Western Carolinas League.

After his playing career, Speckenbach entered St. John's University, Jamaica, and earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration. In 1969, he began a career in advertising. He later received an honorable discharge from the Air National Guard in 1973.

He returned to St. Francis Prep in the fall of 1974 to teach business management, economics, finance and driver's education. He coached junior varsity and varsity baseball as well as freshman basketball at the Prep.

He later coached freshman baseball at Chaminade H.S., Mineola, L.I.; junior varsity baseball at Msgr. McClancy M.H.S., East Elmhurst; and collegiate baseball at both St. John's and C.W. Post, Brookville, L.I. He was inducted into St. Francis Prep's Hall of Fame in 2005 and named to the school's inaugural Ring of Honor class in March of this year.

"He (Speckenbach) was a great story teller," said a lifelong friend Chris Schneider of Floral Park, L.I., who met Speckenbach at the St. John's University business school in 1965. "He was a great athlete. I met a lot of people that faced him as a pitcher, and they feared getting in the box against him."

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He is survived by his daughters, Lee and Ann, and three grandchildren.

A Mass of Christian burial was celebrated at St. Anastasia, Douglaston, on Sept. 20.



Father Scarangelo

Father John Scarangelo, O.F.M., died suddenly Aug. 30 while on vacation in Onset, Mass. The former pastor of Our Lady of Peace parish in Brooklyn was 59.

A native of the Bronx, he was received into the Order on Aug. 15, 1976 and was ordained to the priesthood on Nov. 14, 1981.

Much of his ministry was centered in education. Most recently, he was on faculty at Cathedral Girls' H.S., Manhattan, 2000-07.

He also served as parochial vicar at St. Anthony of Padua, Greenwich Village, 1999-2000; and as pastor of Our Lady of Peace, 2007-10.

Since 2010, he served in his Order's administration.

A Mass of Christian burial was celebrated Sept. 6 at the Shrine Church of St. Anthony of Padua. Burial was at Calvary Cemetery, Woodside.

Deacon Florencio Cruz, who served at St. Matthew's Church, Crown Heights, died Sept. 6 at his place of residence on Park Place in Crown Heights. He was 81.



Deacon Cruz

Auxiliary Bishop Paul Sanchez celebrated a Mass of Christian Burial Sept. 11 at St. Matthew's, with the pastor, Father Frank Black, serving as a special concelebrant. Deacon Jorge Gonzalez, diocesan director of the Diaconate Formation Office, preached the homily and said he'd always remember Deacon Cruz for his generosity and kindness.

"Florencio was always very kind with people," said Deacon Gonzalez, who had known him for 16 years. "He always had a smile. He did what he needed to do quietly, yet he was an extraordinary man who lived an extraordinary life every day."

Deacon Cruz was ordained on Dec. 1, 1979 and immediately began serving in his home parish. He remained at St. Matthew's until his retirement in 2010.

"He saw the changes in the parish and was always available for the people," Deacon Gonzalez said. "He was never looking for recognition."

Deacon Cruz is survived by Manuela, his wife of 63 years, and son Rene Cruz of the Bronx. Burial was at Cypress Hills Cemetery.



Brother Francis

Brother Francis Chinery, S.C., a Brother of the Sacred Heart for 67 years, died Sept. 4 at New York Hospital of Queens, Flushing. He had just turned 86.

A native of Bayonne, N.J., he entered the Brothers of the Sacred Heart in Metuchen, N.J., in September, 1942, and pronounced his final vows on Aug. 15, 1953.

His ministry in education spanned 51 years, during which he served in Coindre Hall, Huntington, L.I.; St. Stanislaus College, Bay St. Louis, Miss.; McGill Institute, Mobile, Ala.; Vandebilt H.S., Houma, La.; Catholic H.S., Baton Rouge, La.; St. Joseph H.S., Metuchen; Msgr. McClancy M.H.S., East Elmhurst; and Phillipsburg Catholic H.S., Phillipsburg, N.J.

His final years were spent in residence at Msgr. McClancy M.H.S.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Sept. 6 at Our Lady of Fatima Church, East Elmhurst. Burial was in the Brothers' Cemetery in Metuchen.

Sister Anita Boegel, R.S.M., a Sister of Mercy for 69 years, died July 28 at Mercy Center in Dallas, Pa. She was 87.

Born Claire Boegel in Richmond Hill, she attended Holy Child Jesus School and Bishop McDonnell H.S., Crown Heights. She entered the Sisters of Mercy Novitiate in Syosset, L.I., on Feb. 2, 1945 and professed her final vows on Sept. 6, 1950.

She taught in St. Jerome School, East Flatbush, 1949-51; St. Brigid School, Bushwick, 1947-49; St. Patrick, Kent Avenue, Williamsburg, 1951-61; St. Edward the Confessor, Syosset, L.I., 1961-63; Mater Christi D.H.S., Astoria, 1963-69; Holy Trinity D.H.S., Hicksville, L.I., 1969-75; and Mercy H.S., Riverhead, L.I., 1975-82.

Sister Anita was executive secretary and treasurer at Mercy H.S., Riverhead, 1982-89; served as



Sister Anita

secretary/treasurer for ENCOAR in Douglaston, 1990-95; and worked in the finance office of the Sisters of St. Dominic Motherhouse, Amityville, L.I., 1995-2000.

She is survived by her sister, Sister Eleanor Boegel, O.P.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at the Sisters of Mercy Convent, Whitestone. Burial was in St. Charles Cemetery, Farmingdale, L.I.

Sister Anne Regis Miller, C.S.J., a Sisters of St. Joseph, Brentwood, L.I., for 75 years, died Aug. 26, in St. Joseph Convent, Brentwood.



Sister Anne

Born Regina Miller, she entered the congregation in February, 1940 from Holy Child Jesus parish in Richmond Hill.

She attended Manhattan College and received a master's degree in Latin from St. John's University, Jamaica, and certification in Spanish from Queens College.

She taught at Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Williamsburg, 1941-42; St. Martin of Tours, Bushwick, 1942-43; St. Anne, Brentwood, 1943-45; St. Augustine, Park Slope, 1945-49; and Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Astoria, 1949-52.

She taught Latin at The Mary Louis Academy, Jamaica Estates, 1956-61 and 1969-91; and at St. Angela Hall Academy, Clinton Hill, 1961-66.

She served as superior and principal of Queen of Peace School, Kew Gardens, 1966-69.

Using her language skills, she did volunteer work in Tamarinda, Ponce, Puerto Rico.

In 1991, she retired to St. Joseph Convent, Brentwood, where she continued her teaching ministry by tutoring local students.

A Mass of Christian Burial took place in Sacred Heart Chapel, Brentwood, on Aug. 29. Burial followed in Calvary Cemetery, Brentwood.

Sister Clare Patrice Farrell, O.P., a Sister of St. Dominic, Amityville, L.I., for 63 years, died Aug. 27. She was 83.



Sister Clare

Born Elizabeth in St. Joseph parish, Astoria, she attended the parish school and was active in the parish brigade. She also attended St. Agnes A.H.S., College Point.

On Sept. 8, 1950, she entered the Dominican Sisters congregation in Amityville. She pronounced her vows on Aug. 4, 1952.

Her field of study was science. She began her ministry in education at Most Holy Trinity School, Williamsburg.

She moved on to secondary education at Bishop McDonnell H.S., Crown Heights, 1958-70, where she taught in the science department and served as department chairperson, and later taught at her alma mater, St. Agnes A.H.S.

She also served as a teacher and an assistant principal at St. Agnes Cathedral H.S., Rockville Centre, L.I.

She returned to the classroom at St. Francis Prep, Fresh Meadows, and eventually moved into public relations and student programming, 1997-2008.

For many years during her summer vacations, she volunteered at Our Lady of Consolation Home and Rehabilitation Center, now located in West Islip, L.I.

She was appointed as the congregation's archivist in 2008 and moved to Amityville, where she continued her archival ministry despite illness.

She is survived by four brothers: Donald, Robert, Matthew and Marist Brother Francis (William).

A Mass of Christian Burial was held in St. Albert's Chapel, Amityville, on Aug. 29.

Interment followed in the Sisters' cemetery.

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