

Sister Faine Moira McMullen, RSCJ

I volunteered to collect information and remembrances of the lovely RSCJ Sister Faine McMullen as I was a Political Science major at Newton College class of 1966 who respected her very much.

She was brilliant, and determined to excite us with history, government and current events, and what lay before us after graduation. I thought I'd be heading for the FBI once I left Newton. But long before that—as it turned out--- unlikely event, I met the man I would marry during my junior year, and the FBI looked less likely as a career.

And I regret to say that after graduating, I didn't keep up with Faine as others did. I married months after graduating and soon moved to San Diego with my Naval officer husband. I was trying to complete a Master's in Library Science while working as a law librarian at the University of San Diego. On our return to live in NYC three years later I had the first of our four children. When my youngest was 8, I began working full time as the CCNY Architecture Library Director for 24 years....actually retiring the year that Faine died I found out subsequently.

Being busy is no excuse though. Everyone is. It's a great regret that I didn't stay in touch. She was such an inspiring woman.

A native New Yorker from Queens, NYC, born in 1914, Faine was the third of six children. Her father was a lawyer and her mother, a homemaker. Faine earned her BA, majoring in history, at the College of Mount Saint Vincent. She entered Fordham Law School, graduating in 1937. She was admitted to the bar in NY State at the youthful age of 23. Faine practiced law with her father and then with the US Army before entering the RSCJ in 1944, the year I was born. She joined her sister Grail in the Society. Three of their brothers became priests.

In 1954, after her final vows and having earned an MA in history from Manhattanville College, Faine spent the next thirteen years teaching at Newton College.

In 1967 a year after our graduation, Faine asked for and received an exclaustation to spend time in Boston working among the poor, the first of the many US cities she would spend time in throughout her life of devotion in serving those among us who had the least.

When I learned recently what she said early on in Boston: "I studied the poor who surrounded me; I grew to love them and ever since their problems have been mine," I was in tears. How could I have lost touch with this woman who was living a life of amazing service to, and love of, the poor.

Others among our Newton graduates who knew Faine from the late 1950s through the late 1960s did stay in touch and several are sharing their memories with those organizing this Newton College reunion for the class of 1966.

Their submissions are so touching and will be available in the Newton College Archives at Boston College and also at the RSCJ Archives in St. Louis, Missouri.

I'll end by saying that Sister Faine Moira McMullen was a woman of amazing grace who helped SO many who had so little, as she lived her life in response to the call of Vatican II to go out into the world and be among the people.