

Birth: July 12, 1920

Profession: July 30, 1950

Death: June 15, 2011

Elizabeth Stuyvesant White, Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ), died peacefully at Teresian House in Albany, New York on Wednesday, June 15, 2011. Sister White, a humanities professor and accomplished choral musician, was actively teaching as recently as 2007. A Memorial Mass will be held at Teresian House Chapel on Saturday, June 18, 2011 at 2 p.m.

Hilda Carey, RSCJ, said of Sister White, "When I took her Old English course (at Newton College in Boston), I spent hours with a jiggly, illegal flashlight (lights were out at 10:00 in those days) trying to translate OE poetry into modern English without sacrificing mood, rhythm, kennings or caesuras. How many professors inspire such extracurricular activities?" Sister White did.

Sister White was born July 12, 1920, in New York City, to Lawrence Grant White and Laura Chanler White. She entered the Society of the Sacred Heart at Kenwood, in Albany, New York, on September 8, 1942, and made her final vows on July 30, 1950 at Via Nomentana in Rome. She earned a bachelor of arts in Classics at Manhattanville College in 1941, a master of arts in English at Radcliffe College in 1941, and a Ph.D. in English at Catholic University in 1962.

Sister White arrived at Newton College in 1953 as dean of students and English lecturer. She would teach Medieval and Renaissance English there for much of the next 50 years, beyond the time of its merger with Boston College. Over a 60-year ministry in education, she also taught at Sacred Heart schools in Albany, NY; Princeton, NJ; Greenwich, CT; Boston, MA; Washington, DC and Tokyo, Japan, as well as at Boston College. She spent the summers of 1977 and 1979 in the Society of the Sacred Heart Archives in Rome.

Sister White's passion for her subject matter and care for her students earned her both public acclaim and affectionate regard. In 2006, Boston College awarded her an honorary degree. The citation read, in part, "Sister Elizabeth White's lifelong commitment to teaching as a member of the Society of the Sacred heart has awakened intellects, shaped values and changed lives for countless young women and men throughout the second half of the 20th century."

Sister White was fluent in French and German and accomplished in music, particularly choral music. She was active in the Catholic Art Association, the Catholic Renaissance

Society, the English Institute, the Modern Language Association and the National Council of Teachers of English.

Sister White continued to teach well into her 80s. She served as a writing coach for students in the honors program at Boston College and as a group leader at the Institute for Learning in Retirement until 2007, when she entered prayer ministry at Kenwood Convent in Albany. She moved to Teresian House the following year.

In addition to her parents, Sister White was predeceased by her brothers: John Chanler White, F. L. Peter White and Robert W. White. She is survived by four sisters: Alida Lessard of St. James, NY; Cynthia Jay of Huntington, NY; Sarah White of Bronx, NY and Ann Buttrick of New York City, and many loving nieces and nephews. Her paternal grandfather was the architect Stanford White.