

Maureen O'Halloran, RSCJ

July 18, 1952-September 14, 2020

Maureen was one of seven children of William Edward O'Halloran, Esq. and Alice Dunbar O'Halloran of Newton, Massachusetts. She attended Newton Country Day School, graduating in 1970, then Newton College for a B.A. in Political Science and Economics in 1974. Her freshman roommate remembered her as "shy, private, reserved, quirky, zany, introspective, self-deprecating, and one of the most deeply caring persons I had ever met." Her introduction to Maureen's Boston accent was the question, "Are you going to the potty tonight?" The commencement speaker at their graduation was Dorothy Day, who made a lasting impression on the whole class, especially on Maureen. She was a field coordinator for a gubernatorial campaign, and upon graduation, a caseworker for the Consumer Protection Division of the office of the state attorney general.

She continued her studies and her Boston residency for a Masters of Public Administration from Suffolk University in 1977. Two years later, she entered the Society, on August 27, 1979, and spent her candidate year in Princeton. She returned to Newton to become a novice in September 1980, the first year at 860 Beacon Street and the second at 934 Beacon, under the direction of Mickey McKay and Betty Boyter. She moved across the country for her novitiate ministry experience from February to May 1982 at Menlo Park, where she taught high school history classes. She returned to her native Newton to make her first vows on November 6, 1982, in the Newton Country Day School chapel.

The next year, she returned to Stuart in Princeton, where she taught middle and high school classes and participated in campus ministry activities until 1986. That year she did her international experience before profession in Kalungu, Uganda. Probation took place at the Villa Lante in Rome from February to June 1987, with the probation team of Virginia Rodee, Kin Tanabe, and Margarita Hurtado. Maureen made her final profession there on June 28, 1987. Law school awaited her, and she completed the J.D. degree at Boston College Law School in 1990, back on the same campus where she had attended college. She was admitted to the bar of New Jersey and Massachusetts, and of the U.S. District Courts for the same states. Maureen clerked for the justices of the Superior Court of Massachusetts from 1991 to 1992 and was a housing attorney for South Middlesex Legal Services. Throughout these years, she served on the province representative assembly (1985-1986) and vocation committee (1986-1989), and the Inter-Community Legal Conference. She was a member of the Massachusetts and Boston Bar Associations, trustee of Newton Country Day School and the Kenwood Infirmary, and director for two years of the Boston College Alumni Association (1991-1992).

Maureen was doing legal work in Boston when, in 1999, she was asked by provincial Kathleen Hughes to take on a new and unexpected role, as provincial treasurer. To this new role, Maureen brought a well-trained legal mind. It was she who insisted on having an actuarial study in the wake of the province's changing demographics, before going ahead with health care planning. The result was a wake-up call: the realization of the need to make huge changes, the restructuring of province finances, and the creation of the office of Mission Advancement. She was convinced of the need for expertise, for consultants, and for collaboration with the laity,

which our schools had long since developed. With her came the benefit of her many deep friendships from high school and college, professional friends or spouses of friends who then formed the nucleus of the financial advisors who became a finance committee and helped the province rethink its investment strategies. Maureen used her prodigious skills of research to follow the market, real estate, and health care issues.

In 2007, Kathy Conan's letter to the province announcing the end of Maureen's seven-year mandate as provincial treasurer noted "her willingness to identify and face challenging issues, her commitment to working through serious matters when the solution has not always been clear, her sense of direction and of the values which should guide our proceedings."

Maureen brought her New England Yankee reserve to the provincial center in Saint Louis, but was a thoughtful and honest member in community conversations. She loved gardening, and chronic back pain did not deter her from leaving her beautifying mark on the gardens where she lived. She loved beauty, especially good music, and had deep family attachments. She loved nature, especially from the deck of a vacation house. In turn, she was loved for her contemplative soul, her sensitivity and humor (usually irreverent but hysterical), and a heart formed by her pre-probation experience in Africa. Maureen loved good food and she was a fabulous cook. She may be the only RSCJ who has moved across country to a new community with a very large barbecue grill in tow.

After she left Saint Louis in August 2008, Maureen spent several months in Rome helping put together a handbook for provincial treasurers throughout the Society. When she returned, she did free-lance legal consulting and work, some for her family, much of it for the province: the TIAA-CREF settlement, legal and financial aspects of the United States-Canada merger, aspects of the sale of Kenwood, and various other projects for the province. At the time of her death, she was serving on the boards of two Network schools, Stuart Country Day School since 2007, and the Rosary since 2014, where she was a member of the corporation and of the finance committee.

Most of all Maureen joined to her well-trained legal mind a well-tuned and loving heart. She gave herself completely to a ministry that she probably never dreamt she would be asked to do. Maureen gave of herself unstintingly in very challenging years for the province. She died in Newton on September 14, surrounded by loving family and community.

One freezing night in Newton a few years ago, Maureen realized that someone was in her car late at night. She found an elderly woman with dementia who was in a nightgown and had lost her way. While waiting for an ambulance to arrive, she took the woman in and made her a cup of tea. Because Maureen had left the car unlocked in the driveway, the woman was able to find shelter, but would probably have frozen to death during the night if Maureen had not looked out and noticed. She emailed the story to her community and friends, labeled: "Tonight I saved a woman's life!" Though perhaps not so directly, Maureen saved many other lives as well.

Mass of Christian Burial

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July 18, 1952 – September 14, 2020



September 22, 2020

St. Ignatius Church
Chestnut Hill, Mass.