



KIRBY

Sister Joan Kirby, R.S.C.J.

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Sister Joan Kirby, R.S.C.J., former director of the Temple of Understanding (TOU), an interfaith organization affiliated with the United Nations, died Sept. 9 at her residence in Manhattan. She was 89.

She became director of TOU in 1994 and continued with the organization, first as director and then as its representative to the United Nations, until 2014.

In 2010, she received TOU's Interfaith Visionary Lifetime Achievement Award "for promoting interreligious values at the United Nations," her lifelong commitment to addressing "human rights and ecological issues," and her work to develop "young leaders."

In her earlier ministry she was involved in housing concerns in New York City. From 1981 to 1984, she was a housing counselor and director of home ownership for Housing Conservation Coordinators, a community-based, nonprofit organization in Manhattan's Hell's Kitchen. She was executive director and president of Homes for the Homeless in New York, 1986-1988.

She served as headmistress of the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Manhattan, 1969-1981. She earlier taught and served as headmistress at schools in Washington, D.C.; Princeton, N.J.; and Newton, Mass.

Born in New York City, she entered the Society of the Sacred Heart in 1947 and made final vows in 1956. She held a bachelor's degree and two master's degrees from Manhattanville College, and a licentiate in philosophy from the University of Louvain, Belgium.

A sister, Cecilia "Billie" Mullen, and numerous nieces and nephews survive her. A Funeral Mass was offered Sept. 17 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Manhattan. Burial was to be Friday, Oct. 23, at the Society of the Sacred Heart Cemetery in Kenwood.

Keywords

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