

Regina Anne Griffin, RSCJ
July 7, 1949-January 31, 2000

Regina Griffin was one of seven children (one died soon after birth) born in Brighton, Massachusetts to Frederick John Griffin and Helen Frances Grogan. Her father's Air Force career necessitated living in many places, including East Anglia, England. The family also traveled extensively in Europe. One of Regina's memories is of an audience with Pius XII. Then the family moved in 1958 to London, where she continued her education in various schools, with opportunity to appreciate the English educational system and to make many friends among the English girls with whom she studied. She completed secondary school at Notre Dame Academy in Washington, DC in 1967. She earned a B.A. in Political Science and Religion at the College of New Rochelle in 1971, followed by the M.Div. at Weston Jesuit School of Theology in 1975.

When Regina was applying to enter the Society, one of her recommenders wrote: "The quality that attracted me to Regina first was probably her personal warmth, a capacity to share another's problems and joys in the midst of her own needs in a busy life. Her enjoyment of life and steady good humor were a blessing.... Though we began to share a special deepening friendship, her heart was always open to all, and ready to give of herself when everyone was feeling the tension of exams and other responsibilities."

She entered the Society as a postulant in community, at Stuart Country Day School in Princeton on August 27, 1976. She spent her noviceship at Beacon St. and made her first vows in Newton, Massachusetts on September 2, 1979. During the years before profession she was a Religion teacher and had other duties at Stuart 1976-1977. During the noviceship, she volunteered at Casa Myrna Vasquez Home for battered women, then was a team member for a parish renewal program in Brighton, MA. For the rest of the time before probation, she was Director of Religious Education at parishes in New Jersey and Washington. She made her probation at the Villa Lante in Rome, where she was professed on June 16, 1985. After her return from Rome, she was Director of the Office of Lay Ministry for Dade County, Florida for the Archdiocese of Miami. In 1987, she began to be interested in ministry to Haitian communities in the U.S. She learned Creole and founded the Haitian Center in Trenton, New Jersey.

She received the M.S.W. degree from the Hunter College School of Social Work in New York in 1993, and from then on pursued social work in New York and elsewhere. In October, 1994, she was diagnosed with stage three breast cancer at the age of forty-five. After a mastectomy and a brutal round of chemotherapy, she recovered and was in remission for four and a half years. She wrote eloquently of the experience in the *RSCJ Newsletter* 19:3 (March, 1997), of the questions, the fear, the support of friends, family, and community, and of her faith in God. Then in 1999, metastasized cancer returned, showing up in three places in her spine. There was more surgery and more chemotherapy. Again, she wrote eloquently of the experience, of her encounters with others undergoing treatment, and of her reliance on others. She died in New York at the end of January of the following year. The day before she died, she sent a message to her sisters in New York: "I am putting myself in the loving hands of God, St. Madeleine Sophie, and my RSCJ sisters." She died peacefully, surrounded by her 80th St. community, at the age of fifty.