

## Sister Maeve McDermott

Entered eternal life on February 3, 2026



When I sat down to write this message I had a lot of trouble. How do I give a legend like my Aunt Maime, Sister Maeve, to most of you, justice. How can I sum up the life of such a gentle soul and servant of God? Then, likely with some inspiration from Aunt Maime, I thought of her favorite movie, *The Sound of Music*, and knew we should start at the very beginning, a very good place to start.

Aunt Maime was the second child to Jack and Delia and was born in Dublin before they moved their family to the United States. She was the only daughter to my grandparents growing up with her three brothers, Jack, Ed, & Joe, in Newark, New Jersey. From a very young age, Aunt Maime was a natural protector and nurturer. I still remember a story about how she helped protect my father from his bullies as a child and how she was later rewarded with ice cream by my grandmother. She took naturally to protect all those that needed aid and made it her life's mission

to help others. It was no surprise that she entered the Sisters of Charity at the age of 18 where she grew and answered God's calling to live her faith and serve her community.

Aunt Maeve lived an amazing life of service as a fierce advocate for the underserved and a formidable agent of God. She had an amazing and unique ability to befriend all regardless of economic or social status and was able to use those connections to help bridge gaps and provide direct aid to the most vulnerable members of our community. Aunt Maeve did this all while shattering glass ceilings and staying true to her calling from God. Whether it was taking people for a tour of the Supreme Court, getting a car ride home with Sister Marylou from Martin Luther King, Jr., or traveling the world to recruit teachers, Aunt Maime was always looking to push boundaries to better this world. During a recent visit, Aunt Maime recently told Noreen the secret to good living was to live happily by responding to the needs of the people around you to the best of your ability. She expanded on the lessons she learned from her parents, passing on these lessons to generations of children in Jersey City, a city she loved dearly.

Despite all the time, energy, and effort she put into improving her community and this world, Aunt Maime was also a matriarch in our family. Growing up, my cousins and siblings can attest that there was never any event that she missed. Indeed, she was always early and came with an entourage. Sister Peggy, Sister Julie, Sister Marylou, Sister Mary Ann Tierney, Sister Jackie, Sister Noreen, Sister Agatha, Sister Prudencia, MaryAnn and John, and many others all became honorary McDermott's throughout the years. Aunt Maime did not draw any lines between her devotion to God, her service to the community and her family. She had a beautiful way of blending all the important aspects of her life into a functional and cohesive unit where we could all learn from her and each other.

Aunt Maime was a very proud Irishwoman, having been honored by the Ancient Order of Hibernians in New York and having been named Grand Marshall of the Jersey City St. Patrick's Day Parade. Her heritage and family history was important for her to learn from and live the beliefs and values taught by those that came before her. She also sought to pass on those same values and her Irish pride to each of us.

I don't know anyone that has been blessed by knowing Aunt Maime that didn't have something wonderful to say about her. She truly had a gift to connect to people, understand them, make them feel special and like they mattered. I know I would not be the person I am today without her. Because of Aunt Maime, me and many others can say that our dreams are bigger, our achievements are greater, and our lives are better.

I suppose death is what makes life beautiful, knowing that our time here is finite, to make the most of it and remember what is important. Aunt Maime reminded us of that. Aunt Maime was not afraid of death having such strong faith in God and knowing she would be reunited with us one day. Indeed, one of the last things she mentioned was that she was going to see her own mother. While my heart and the hearts of our family and those who she graced throughout her life are now broken by our loss, I find peace and strength in our shared faith, knowing that she is finally in God's kingdom likely dancing up a storm with those that have gone before her. Rest easy Aunt Maime.

~ John W McDermott,  
nephew of Sister Maeve