



Maris Anne Mattingly

September 10, 1952 - September 9, 2021

Maris Anne Mattingly died peacefully at Prince William Hospital in the presence of friends on September 9, the day before her 69th birthday. Her health challenges had been mounting for years, featuring multiple hospitalizations and admission to a rehabilitation center and then to a nursing home in 2018, culminating in transfer to a CCU unit and then (briefly) hospice care. Nonetheless, she would tell you that she lived a rich and rewarding life, full of many graces and wonderful friends.

Maris's life was centered by her Catholic faith and an urgent need to share it. Her first and longest-lasting teachers were her parents, supplemented by the Sisters of Mercy at St Pius X elementary in her home parish and at Our Lady of Mercy Academy on suburban Long Island. A year with the Jesuits at Marquette University didn't hurt.

A born teacher, Maris was tasked with youth formation while still in high school, as CYO softball coach and CCD instructor. ("Good morning Miss Mattingly" started 50+ years ago.) By the time she settled in Virginia she was an accomplished volunteer, and worked at St Michael's and then All Saints, 30 hours a week as a volunteer (!) before joining the staff full time at All Saints in 1999. As much as she contributed to her All Saints beloved community (a lot!), she received as much grace in return.

Maris described herself in a resume as "youth-loving, faith-filled, joyful, creative, articulate, hard-working, detail oriented, punctual, organized". One could truthfully add lifelong learner, voracious reader, engaging conversationalist, and traveler before getting at her superpower: Maris sought to engage with every person as an opportunity to learn more about humanity. (A quietly radical notion: anyone made in the image and likeness of the divine is worth exploring.)

Maris's formal portfolio on staff featured faith formation and sacramental preparation for small children (First Communion, for example), adolescents (Confirmation), teens, and adults (RCIA), plus ministries for the homebound and imprisoned. Reflecting on her own upbringing, Maris insisted to every family with a member she assisted that it was the

family that provided the most important lessons, while her contributions paled in comparison. Many families, in turn, were inspired to deepen their faith and observance in order to be better companions to their children or spouses.

Maris did not view success as the secular world or popular culture do. She never had a lot of money, but she had enough. Enough to entertain her friends, enough to buy gifts for countless people, enough to travel a bit. For Maris, success was one child making a good confession and receiving the Eucharist in a state of grace, one young person fully engaged in a confirmation project, one teen enthusiastic about the Youth Rally and then more fully engaged, one adult beaming at the font during Easter Vigil, one homebound person receiving communion ... and then another. And another. And another. When they stay in touch year after year ... grace unbounded.

Maris retired (very reluctantly!) on disability in 2015, when she finally acknowledged her compounding physical challenges. Even before her retirement, the many saints of All Saints supported her to an extraordinary level: some members of "Team Maris" drove her to cardiologist appointments, others to the optometrist, others to mass; some members of Team Maris shopped for her, others prepped meal portions left in designated areas of her refrigerator; some members of Team Maris picked up laundry and then dropped off; some members of Team Maris managed her finances; some members of Team Maris came by to read out loud her mail and the church bulletin. Many members of Team Maris made sure she maintained human contact, and was rarely alone.

This was not Maris's best time. Team Maris was stretched beyond any reasonable limits, and Maris needed more care than they could provide, or she would admit. Admission to Manassas Health & Rehabilitation Center in 2018 permitted an equilibrium, with Team Maris having a manageable portfolio (diet soda deliveries continued, but still) and Maris getting the medical care she needed.

Maris's vision was severely limited and she never left her room, but she had sufficient stability to engage with every staff member she encountered (every human is in the image and likeness, right?) and to try to impose order on her very limited physical environment. She remained as hopeful and as optimistic as any person could be under the circumstances. And ... cheerful, loving, compassionate, and interested in every human with whom she came in contact.

The telephone brought her friends and family to her ear, the television brought mass and devotional services as well as news of the world, and each person who came into her room might know something she didn't or might have something interesting to say. At this

time she discovered a staff member from Milwaukee with whom Maris could practice that flat Midwestern “A”, and staff from Nigeria who could teach Maris greetings in their native language. “Jeopardy!” was on at 7:00, of course, followed by a telephone recap with her high school BFF.

And then ... COVID-19 and restrictions on visitation and deliveries. Not to mention, Maris getting the virus just after her first vaccine. (As if the organism needed more stress!) Her good days were when she had positive interactions with other humans and when her condition didn't get worse. Eventually there were too many other days, and she was transferred to CCU at Prince William as September began. She received wonderful care and had opportunities to speak with family and friends, including a goddaughter about to be married. Even in hospice care she had some moments to communicate.

Then she faded, and was gone. Peacefully, with close friends at her side. “I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith.” (2 Timothy 4:7)

When Maris was admitted to the CCU, every other bed was taken by a Covid patient. In other words, if just one more Manassas resident needed critical care to survive the virus, there would have been no room there for Maris. Please take care of each other by wearing a mask, maintaining appropriate distance, and getting the vaccine when eligible. There are too many funerals.

Maris is survived by her siblings Sandy (& Louise), Joe, Jim (& Amy), and Sharon; by nieces and nephews Tara (& Rich), Sarah, Zane, Samantha, Jerri (& Daniel), Charlotte, Jacob, and Alyssa (& Buck); and by their children Frank, Sadie and Miles, Harper and Willow, and Hayden and Junior. Maris is also survived by at least two godchildren (Katie and Paulie), by hundreds of former children brought closer to faith through sacramental preparation, by hundreds of adults brought into full communion with the church, and by the families of all these folks.

Mass of the resurrection will be at 10AM on October 5 at All Saints Catholic Church, Manassas VA (there will be a live-stream), with a reception to follow at the PAC. Cards may be sent to Sandy Mattingly, 28 Fort Greene Place, Brooklyn NY 11217 or Sandy@ManhattanLoftGuy.com.

No flowers, please. People inclined to make a financial contribution in Maris's memory should donate close to their heart (alternatively, Maris would suggest Jesuit Refugee Services jrsusa.com or her alma mater Our Lady of Mercy Academy olma.org). Everyone should do something for the humans in their midst. In addition to traditional Random Acts

of Kindness, please consider reaching out to a person from whom you are alienated, or a person who needs forgiveness, or a person who seems to be alone. You can tell them (or just think to yourself) “Miss Mattingly sent me.”

Comments



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Steve Venckus - September 28 at 05:20 PM



“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



Steve Venckus - September 28 at 05:19 PM



“ So many beautiful Maris memories. We will always remember the parables of Maris that she shared from her own life to make a point in RCIA class. She was so special; we will miss her so much!
Steve and Fran Venckus

Steve Venckus - September 28 at 04:53 PM



“ 17 files added to the tribute wall



Steve Venckus - September 28 at 04:48 PM



“ "The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I receive glory through Pharaoh and his chariots and charioteers." Every time Maris and I met, no matter where, the chariots and the charioteers from my son's reading for the Easter vigil was pretty much our greeting. Maris always looked at the world through her Catholic eyes and it was a joy to be with her.

Jeanette Perrington - September 27 at 02:09 PM



“ Jeanette Perrington purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Maris Anne Mattingly.



Jeanette Perrington - September 27 at 01:31 PM



“ I first met Maris the first time I was an RCIA Sponsor during the 1991-92 year & 92-3 years. I frequently enjoyed the commentaries she would make when we led the discussion questions after the lesson Father Hilary Hayden taught us. Maris was always prepared for each session and she was very good at getting all in her discussion group to actively participate. Maris also had a great sense of humor when we met in social affairs that other parishioners invited us to.

Maris was a devout Catholic who didn't just talk about her faith but truly lived a life where she always showed by example to others as to how we could bring ourselves to freely serve the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I know that in the first couple of years, that I was a Volunteer in RCIA, Maris taught me not to be afraid of sharing my faith with others. Now that I am retired, I continue to share a lot about the lessons she shared with me back 30 yrs and will continue to be shared with this years Catechumens. and Candidates. They will see from others who volunteered for RCIA many of the same lessons Maris shared with other RCIA Sponsors.

John Bland - September 26 at 09:58 PM