

Two Kennedy family members stand out among notables who died in 2009

WASHINGTON - The deaths of two members of the Kennedy family two weeks apart in August stand out in a series of notable obituaries of Catholics who frequently made news headlines during their lives.

Sen. Edward M. "Ted" Kennedy, 77, a Democrat who served 47 years as a U.S. senator from Massachusetts, died Aug. 25 at his home on Cape Cod after a yearlong battle with a malignant brain tumor.

He had stepped into the spotlight as a member of one of the United States' most famous families, Catholic or otherwise, after the assassinations of his two older brothers, President John F. Kennedy and Sen. Robert Kennedy.

Kennedy's sister, Special Olympics founder Eunice Kennedy Shriver, died Aug. 11 at age 88, also on Cape Cod. She had been in failing health after suffering a couple of strokes in recent years and had been hospitalized several days before her death.

Sen. Kennedy stood with the church on a wide range of issues from immigration reform to the minimum wage during his lengthy Senate tenure, but his legislative support of legal abortion prompted some critics to say that giving him a Catholic funeral was a scandal to the church. But canon lawyers and others said a Catholic funeral for Kennedy was appropriate under church law.

Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley of Boston presided at the funeral, and Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, the retired archbishop of Washington, officiated at the family-only burial service in Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

In a letter to Shriver's family, Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States, said she was "a woman of ardent faith and generous public service" in her work with the developmentally and physically disabled. He added Pope Benedict XVI "unites himself spiritually with each of you at this difficult time,

holding close to his heart Eunice as she is called home to eternal life and trusting in the words of sacred Scripture: ‘What will separate us from the love of Christ?’”

Other notable Catholics who died in 2009 included:

- Father Richard John Neuhaus, 72, a former Lutheran minister who became a Catholic priest and was a staunch defender of church teaching on abortion and other life issues and founder and editor in chief of the journal *First Things*, of complications from cancer, Jan. 8.
- Italian Cardinal Pio Laghi, 86, a former apostolic delegate to the United States 1980-84, then nuncio to the U.S. 1984-90, who tried to convince President George W. Bush not to invade Iraq in 2003, of a blood disorder, Jan. 10.
- Irish actor Patrick McGoochan, 80, best known to television audiences for his title roles in the 1960s’ CBS drama series “Secret Agent” and “The Prisoner,” in Los Angeles, Jan. 13.
- Mexican-born actor Ricardo Montalban, 88, best known for his role as Mr. Roarke on TV’s “Fantasy Island” and as a pitchman for the Chrysler Cordoba, at his Los Angeles home after suffering from congestive heart failure, Jan. 14.
- Retired Belgian Archbishop Jean Jadot, 99, former apostolic delegate in the United States 1973-80 and later pro-president of what is now the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, at his home in Brussels, Jan. 21.
- Retired Bishop Thomas A. Tschoepe of Dallas, 93, after a lengthy illness, in Dallas, Jan. 24.
- Father Rollins Lambert, 86, the first African-American to be ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Chicago, in Palos Park, Ill., Jan. 25.
- Cardinal Stephen Kim Sou-hwan, 86, Korea’s first cardinal, the longest-serving cardinal at the time of his death, an outspoken defender of human rights and one of a shrinking number of cardinals elevated to the College of Cardinals by Pope Paul VI - whose number includes Pope Benedict XVI - in Seoul, South Korea, Feb. 16.

- Retired Bishop Thomas J. Welsh, 87, who headed the Diocese of Allentown, Pa., for 15 years and was founding bishop of the Diocese of Arlington, Va., in Allentown after a short illness, Feb. 19.
- Sulpician Father Joseph C. Martin, 84, a noted authority and lecturer on alcoholism who co-founded Father Martin's Ashley addiction treatment center in Havre de Grace, Md., from complications of heart disease, in Havre de Grace, March 9.
- Cardinal Umberto Betti, 87, a Franciscan who served as a theological expert at the Second Vatican Council and later as a consultant to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in Fiesole, Italy, April 1.
- Franciscan Sister Jose Hobday, 80, a Seneca tribal elder and a popular author, storyteller and lecturer on prayer and spirituality, at the Casa de la Luz Hospice in Tucson, Ariz., April 5.
- Benedictine Father Theodore Heck, 108, who had been the world's oldest Benedictine monk, in Indiana, April 29.
- Dom DeLuise, 75, the comic actor who starred in several Mel Brooks movies plus the "Cannonball Run" and "Smokey and the Bandit" film franchises, mastered the double-take look of surprise on film, in Santa Monica, Calif., after a long illness, May 4.
- Norbertine Father Robert J. Cornell, 89, one of only three priests ever to serve in the U.S. Congress - he served two terms, was defeated in his bid for a third term and forbidden by his bishop to seek his seat once more - in De Pere, Wis., May 10.
- Oblate Father Lawrence Rosebaugh, 74, a U.S. priest with a long history of taking risks to aid the poor and marginalized, killed in a highway robbery in Guatemala, May 18.
- Redemptorist Father Norman Muckerman, 92, a former editor of Liguorian magazine and a former president of the Catholic Press Association, at St. Clement's Health Care Center in Liguori, Mo., after a long illness. May 19.
- Haitian Father Gerard Jean-Juste, 62, a passionate advocate for the poor and

impoverished in Haiti and a longtime supporter of former priest and exiled Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, of complications from a stroke and a lung problem, in a Miami hospital, May 27.

- Passionist Father Thomas Berry, 94, internationally regarded as the dean of those working to relate ecology to spirituality, in Greensboro, N.C., June 1.

- Father Timothy Vakoc, 49, who was seriously injured - including brain damage and the loss of an eye - in a 2004 bomb blast in Iraq after celebrating Mass for U.S. soldiers, in New Hope, Minn., June 20.

- Ethel M. Gintoft, 83, the first woman to head the Catholic Press Association and the 20-year associate publisher and executive editor of the Catholic Herald, newspaper of the Milwaukee Archdiocese, in Milwaukee, June 24.

- Farrah Fawcett, 62, best known for her TV roles on the series "Charlie's Angels" and the made-for-TV movie "The Burning Bed," after a three-year battle with cancer, in Los Angeles, June 25.

- Cardinal Jean Margeot, 93, retired bishop of Port Louis, Mauritius, July 17.

- Father Raymond H. Reis, 104, a longtime professor at St. Louis University and the world's oldest Jesuit, in St. Louis, July 19.

- Robert Novak, 78, a longtime syndicated columnist and political commentator who joined the Catholic Church in 1998, after battling brain cancer for more than a year, in Washington, Aug. 18.

- Robert Schindler Sr., 71, father of the late Terri Schiavo and who was at the center of a lengthy legal battle that resulted in a Florida court ordering her feeding tube removed, from heart failure, in St. Petersburg, Fla., Aug. 29.

- Monsignor Lawrence J. Corcoran, 92, who served from 1965 to 1982 as executive secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Charities, forerunner to today's Catholic Charities USA, in Columbus, Ohio, Aug. 31.

- Bishop Bartholomew Yu Chengti of Hanzhong, China, 90, a Vatican-approved

bishop who had ministered in the clandestine Catholic community since he was secretly ordained a bishop in 1981, of stomach cancer, in Hanzhong, Sept. 14.

- Henry Gibson, 73, a fixture on the TV smash "Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In" with his offbeat poems and deadpan delivery, in Malibu, Calif., of cancer, Sept. 14.

- Retired Bishop Michael A. Saltarelli of Wilmington, Del., 77, who led the diocese through 12 years of significant growth and unprecedented challenges, in Newark, Del., Oct. 8.

- Bishop G. Patrick Ziemann, 68, who resigned as head of the Diocese of Santa Rosa, Calif., in 1999 after admitting a homosexual relationship with one of his priests, of complications from pancreatic cancer, at a Benedictine monastery in St. David, Ariz., Oct. 22.

- Jesuit Father Thomas P. O'Malley, 79, who served as president of John Carroll University in Cleveland, 1980-88, and of Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, 1991-99, of an apparent heart attack, in Chestnut Hill, Mass., Nov. 4.

- William A. Wilson, 95, the first U.S. ambassador to the Vatican (1984-86) after Congress restored full diplomatic relations with the Holy See, and for three years prior was President Ronald Reagan's personal envoy to the Vatican, of cancer, in Carmel, Calif., Dec. 5.