

Princess 'Personified Graciousness,' Cardinal Says

Princess Grace of Monaco, who died Sept. 14 after an automobile accident, "personified graciousness in her own life," said Cardinal John Krol of Philadelphia.

"She simply had class," Cardinal Krol said in an interview on NBC's "Today Show" the day after Princess Grace died of a cerebral hemorrhage in Monte Carlo. She was 52.

Princess Grace, who abandoned a Hollywood career to marry Prince Rainier III of Monaco, "was a talented, brilliant, intelligent actress," the cardinal said, "but I viewed her more for the beauty of her soul and of her character."

Cardinal Krol celebrated a memorial Mass for Princess Grace on Sept. 17 at noon in the Cathedral Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul in Philadelphia.

In a statement expressing his shock and grief at the news of her death, Cardinal Krol said, "She was indeed a gracious and gentle lady, a devoted and loving wife and mother, and a princess beloved by the people of Monaco. She was renowned as a talented actress, but her natural beauty was far exceeded by the spiritual beauty of her soul, and of her living faith."

The cardinal recalled that she had attended Mass in his home and that he had celebrated the solemn Mass of thanksgiving in Monaco's cathedral on the 25th anniversary of Prince Rainier's reign.

In a statement from Washington, President Ronald Reagan praised Princess Grace's "character and intelligence." He said she was remembered as "a compassionate and gentle lady who had a deep and abiding affection for her adopted country and people."

In a telegram to Prince Rainier, Pope John Paul II said he was "profoundly grieved at the death of Princess Grace, who always carried out her mission as a sovereign and as a mother of a family with a great spirit of faith and in a manner which gained her the respect and sympathy of all."

Frank Sinatra, who starred with her in the film, "High Society" in 1956, said she was "a gracious, wonderful woman who was a princess from the moment she was born."

The daughter of a millionaire Philadelphia contractor, Grace Kelly achieved stardom in a Hollywood career that included only 11 films. Twice nominated for an Academy Award, she won it as best actress for her performance in 1954 in "Country Girl."

In that film she portrayed a frumpy harridan, embittered by her marriage to a drunken, has-been actor played by Bing Crosby.

The role contrasted with that of the sophisticated, cool beauty she played in three films directed by Alfred Hitchcock, "Dial M for Murder" (1954), "Rear



Princess Grace with Cardinal Krol.

Window" (1954) and "To Catch a Thief" (1955).

Her first major role was that of Gary Cooper's Quaker wife in the 1952 Western, "High Noon," and one of her last films was "The Swan" in 1956, in which she portrayed a beautiful young woman who marries a crown prince.

On April 18, 1956, she translated that role into reality when she married Prince Rainier, a member of the Grimaldis, Europe's oldest royal family, in an elaborate three-hour ceremony in the Cathedral of St. Nicholas in Monaco. Archbishop, later Cardinal, Paolo Marella, then papal nuncio to France, gave the couple a blessing from Pope Pius XII.

The following January the pope sent a message of "paternal congratulations" to the couple's newborn daughter, Princess Caroline, and her parents.

In April of that year Pope Pius received Prince Rainier and Princess Grace in a state visit and expressed the hope that "one may always admire in you the splendor of the Christian faith."

The couple was also received in audience by Pope John XXIII in 1959 and Pope Paul VI in 1974.

After her marriage Princess Grace devoted herself to her family, her duties as the wife of Monaco's ruler and to various works of charity.

She was the narrator in three films produced by a division of the Family Rosary Crusade headed by Holy Cross Father Patrick Peyton, known as "the rosary priest."

In an interview last June Father Peyton said Princess Grace has "always had a yearning to do something for the rosary."

"At first," he said, "she had the idea of building a rose garden in honor of the rosary on the grounds of the royal palace in Monaco."

The priest said he had told her as they were filming, "This is really your rose garden."

In an article in January 1958 in America magazine,

the weekly published by U.S. Jesuits, Princess Grace urged that individuals work toward the solution of the international refugee problem.

That problem is not "complicated beyond solution," she said.

The response to the plight of Hungarian refugees uprooted by the aborted revolution in Hungary in 1956 and their successful resettlement proved that "when we really make up our minds to provide a solution to the tragic problem of homelessness, a

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solution can be found," Princess Grace said.

Noting that a refugee problem existed long before the Hungarian crisis, she said, "As individuals, we feel powerless to help these unfortunate people. But this is a mistake, as tragic for our own souls as for the lives of our fellow men. The actions of governments and private organizations must find their origin in the hearts and minds of each of us."

In 1958 Princess Grace succeeded her husband as president of the Red Cross of Monaco and took an active part in its administration.

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She also helped found a day nursery for the children of working mothers and participated in the administration of a home for girls.

In 1965 she established and became president of the Princess Grace Foundation, devoted primarily to the encouragement of local artists and craftsmen.

In 1977 the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization awarded her its Ceres Medal in recognition of her work on behalf of young people and the Red Cross.

In August 1976, at the 41st international Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia, Princess Grace and Prince Rainier spoke at a family life conference.

"The role of the wife and mother in the family structure is probably more difficult today than ever before," Princess Grace told 5,000 people in Philadelphia's Civic Center. "With more and more women working out of necessity or desire... her role is more complex — though essentially the same as it always had been — namely, to keep the family together, husband and children as a harmonious unit and to provide a link between generations."

Grace Patricia Kelly was born on Nov. 12, 1929, in Philadelphia, the third of four children of John Brendan Kelly, the son of an immigrant, and Margaret

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Majer Kelly, who worked as a photographer's model before her marriage.

John Kelly, a bricklayer who went on to make a fortune as a building contractor, first gained fame as an Olympic oarsman. He once ran for mayor of Philadelphia.

Growing up in the Philadelphia suburb of Germantown, Grace was a somewhat withdrawn but imaginative child, often sick with colds or asthma. Her mother once said that she played in bed with her dolls "for hours on end... making up little plays. Grace could change her voice for each doll, giving it a different character."

In an interview in 1974 she said she and Prince Rainier "were taking a terrible gamble" when they married. "We didn't know each other... But we were both at a point in our lives when each was ready for marriage."

She credited their Catholic faith with helping to resolve the difference in culture and backgrounds.

Asked in another interview if she was "truly happy," she said, "I don't believe that any of us is ever truly happy."

Besides Princess Caroline, whose marriage to a French businessman ended in divorce, Princess Grace and Prince Rainier had two other children, Prince Albert, born in 1958, and Princess Stephanie, born in 1965, who survived the auto accident that caused Princess Grace's death.

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