

Fisher president left mark on school

Rob Cullivan/Catholic Courier

More than 500 people attended a funeral Mass for Dr. Katherine E. Keough, president of St. John Fisher College, on Sept. 29 at St. Louis Church in Pittsford.

Bishop Matthew H. Clark presided at the Mass, and released a statement praising the late president, who died Sept. 25 from complications due to bone cancer. Noting that she had served on the Diocese of Rochester's stewardship council in the 1990s, he called her "warm, caring and generous" and "a tremendous asset to the diocese whenever we called upon her for her wisdom and her help."

"(Her) energy and commitment certainly shows in the many remarkable initiatives she was able to



launch during her tenure," the bishop said. "Yet she also was generous with her time and talent with the larger community."

Dr. Keough, who was 61, became Fisher's fifth president in 1996, and its first woman president.

She was instrumental in Fisher's financial turnaround and in persuading the Buffalo Bills to relocate their summer training camp there. She oversaw campus improvements such as the building of a new dormitory and also added 20 new academic programs. During her tenure, the school's undergraduate enrollment grew by 56 percent and its graduate

Obituary

enrollment increased by 125 percent. She also oversaw the development of scholarship programs, including a Catholic-high-school student scholarship fund.

"I found her personally a delight to work with," said Basilian Father John Cavanaugh, special assistant to the president at Fisher. "She knew what she wanted and set out to achieve it. The one thing she didn't want to hear is, 'I can't do it.'"

Dr. Keough was also former director and chairman of the Buffalo branch of the Federal Reserve Board of New York.

Born in New York City, Dr. Keough

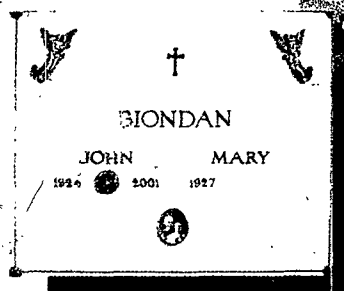
held various teaching and administrative positions in public schools before accepting a position with William Paterson College in New Jersey. From there, she accepted a position as the assistant superintendent for personnel at the Tehran American School in Iran. In 1979, Dr. Keough's husband, William F. Keough — now deceased — was among the 52 Americans taken hostage in the American embassy in Tehran. During this ordeal, Dr. Keough was a key figure in maintaining unity among the families of the hostages and the U.S. government.

Dr. Keough is survived by a son, two daughters, a brother and numerous grandchildren. Interment will take place in Waltham, Mass.

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