



## HOLY ANGELS

*Unconditional Love. Unlimited Possibilities.*

### **MARIA TERESA MORROW**

December 20, 1955-August 24, 2010

Holy Angels' first resident, Maria Teresa Morrow, 54 passed away due to complications during surgery on Tuesday, August 24, at Gaston Memorial Hospital.

Maria was born December 20, 1955, with complex medical needs, multiple disabilities and a dim prognosis. When Maria was three weeks old, her mother, Dorothy Powell, brought Maria to a day care center operated by the Sisters of Mercy. With the Sisters' loving care and medical attention, Maria not only lived but thrived and the day care became a home for children and adults with mental retardation and physical disabilities where loving and caring became synonymous.

Throughout her life, Maria became somewhat of a local celebrity – primarily due to the writings of Charlotte Observer columnist, the late Kays Gary and nationally syndicated columnist, Jim Bishop. Maria lived at Holy Angels her entire life – in the Gary community group home (named in memory of Kays Gary). She began her employment at Holy Angels in 1975. Maria served as the morning receptionist at the “Morrow Center” – Holy Angels main facility – and she greeted each guest and visitor with her warm welcome and bright smile. In the afternoons she could be found at Cherubs Candy Bouquet in Downtown Belmont, making bouquets.

In her early years, Maria attended Sacred Heart Elementary School, operated by the Sisters of Mercy in Belmont, NC. She was a member of the Girl Scouts.

She was a founding member of Holy Angels' Great Adventures Club, an outreach program providing recreational opportunities (established in 1980). On September 18, 2005, Maria became a member of the Mercy Associates, the lay volunteer organization committed to the works of mercy.

The Maria T. Morrow Spirit Award was established in 2005-in recognition of Maria's “spirit” - her can-do attitude, commitment to making a difference, determination, sparkle, and seeing endless possibilities and unconditional LOVE for all. Each year the Maria T. Morrow Spirit Award is presented to a Holy Angels staff member who exemplifies Maria's indomitable SPIRIT.

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*3 Year Accreditation – Meeting International Standards of Quality*



Maria will forever be known for her generosity, her sense of humor and her great love of Holy Angels. She was truly an inspiration to all who knew and loved her – she touched the lives of so many Holy Angels residents and their families, staff, volunteers and anyone with whom she came in contact. Throughout her life she did not let any aspect of her disability stop her from experiencing all life had to offer – from enjoying a lazy day of summer at the pool with her many friends or traveling throughout Ireland.

The spirit of God worked through her in establishing Holy Angels nearly 55 years ago.

Maria is survived by the South Central Community of the Sisters of Mercy and her Holy Angels family and very special friends; Sr. Mary Gerard Donovan, RSM; Sr. Ann Marie Wilson, RSM; Sr. Jill Weber, RSM; Regina Moody, Bill Gary and her long time caregiver Beverly Bowens, the residents of Holy Angels Community Group Homes, and her sister Teresa and brother in law Barry Walton of Maiden, her Aunt Helen Cooper, Belmont, and uncle Olen and wife Betty Easler, Lancaster, SC. Maria has many, many friends that have followed her story and life and will forever be remembered. She is preceded in death by her mother, Dorothy Easler Morrow Powell, and Sr. Marie Patrice Manley and Mother Mary Benignus Hoban – Sisters of Mercy and co-founders of Holy Angels and the many angels who lived at Holy Angels during their earthly life.

The visitation will be held on Thursday, August 26, 6:00-8:30 p.m. at the Sisters of Mercy Cardinal Gibbons Chapel, 100 Mercy Drive, Belmont. A private Prayer of Remembrance service will be held at 7:30 p.m.

The Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated by the Most Rev. Abbot Placid Solari, OSB on Friday, August 27, 11:00 a.m., the Sisters of Mercy Cardinal Gibbons Chapel, 100 Mercy Drive, Belmont. A luncheon at Curtin Hall will immediately follow to continue the celebration of Maria's life.

A private inurnment will be held at a later date at Holy Angels-Morrow Center, Mother Mary Benignus Hoban Garden of Angels.

Pall bearers include: David Moody, Kevin Moody, Douglas Moody, Gary Babcock, Joseph Pastula, John Gibbons, Thomas Long, and William K. Gary, Jr. The residents of Holy Angels Community Group Homes will serve as the Honorary Pallbearers

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Holy Angels, PO Box 710, 6600 Wilkinson Blvd., Belmont, NC 28012 or donations can be made on-line at [www.holyangelsnc.org](http://www.holyangelsnc.org) and condolences to McLean Funeral Home.