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Former Chicago vicar for religious - and a big brother - dies

by Robert McClory

NCR Today

Eugene McClory died May 3 in Cincinnati and was buried May 9 following a funeral Mass in Michigan City, Ind. Back in the late 1960s, he was a priest of the Chicago archdiocese serving as vicar for religious under Cardinal John Cody. This was a time of great turmoil, when religious orders were being restructured and many sisters were leaving. Gene was constantly in action, visiting convents and motherhouses not only in Chicago, but around the country. He was a great listener and wise counselor.

He was also my big brother. And to this day, when I give a talk to a Call To Action group or attend a conference anywhere, an elderly woman, sometimes several, will come up afterward and say, "Were you the Father McClory who saved my life in the 1960s?" They always give their religious name and ask where he is and what he's doing. I suspect some are still readers of *NCR*.

Gene went to Rome with Cardinal Cody several times to discuss matters with the heads of the Congregation for Religious. Among the photos put up at the wake was one of Gene and Cody and some Curia members at the Vatican, with Pope Paul VI in the middle. And there were very strong rumors in the early 1970s that Gene was about to be named a bishop. But he stopped the rumors instantly when he resigned as a priest in 1971 and got married.

He had quite a career afterward -- president of the Alfred Adler Institute for Professional Psychology in Chicago; assistant director at the Center for Social Concerns at the University of Notre Dame; coordinator for the Caregiver Assistance Network of Catholic Social Services of southwest Ohio; ombudsman for nursing homes in northern Kentucky. He is survived by his daughter, Catherine (Michael) Diedrich; two grandchildren; his wife, Mary Coleman; and me. Gene was 84. You can read my full eulogy below.

Eulogy for Eugene McClory by National Catholic Reporter

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