

Lady. "If there had been tapes," she crowed, "I would have been on them!"

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT F. DRINAN,
SJ

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on February 1, I went to the funeral mass for Robert F. Drinan, SJ. Rarely have I been so moved at such a solemn occasion. This was a joyous celebration of a wonderful man's life.

I knew Bob Drinan before he was a Member of Congress and was referred to as the "conscience of the Congress." I was a young college student when he recruited me to go to Boston College Law School. To make it better, he even offered a scholarship, and as a student with absolutely no money, this was most appealing. I finally called Father Drinan and told him I was going to Georgetown Law School because I especially wanted to be in Washington. He chuckled and said he was giving me absolute, insofar as it was a Jesuit institution.

Throughout the more than 40 years since then, he and I talked often and had some of the most wonderful visits. His interests in life, the United States, the Jesuit mission, and his friends never faded. The last time we saw each other was when I gave a speech in December at the Georgetown Law School, and he came by to hug and greet both Marcelle and me.

I will not try to repeat all of the wonderful things said about him, but I do ask unanimous consent that a tribute to him by Colman McCarthy be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

FATHER DRINAN, MODEL OF MORAL TENACITY
(By Colman McCarthy)

If you've ever wondered whether God laughs, think back to 1980, when the Rev. Robert Drinan was ordered by Pope John Paul II to get out of politics and leave Congress. The Jesuit priest, who died on Sunday, was finishing his fifth term representing a suburban Boston district that included Cambridge and Brookline. The pope had been hearing from rankled conservative American Catholics—the Pat Buchanan, William F. Buckley Jr., William Bennett wing of the church—that Father Drinan, a purebred Democrat, was a dangerous liberal. His voting record on abortion was seen as too pro-choice.

Father Drinan's presence in the House of Representatives had been sanctioned by the previous pope, Paul VI, as well as by the U.S. episcopate, the cardinal of Boston, his own Jesuit superiors and emphatically by the voters in his district.

No matter.

John Paul, knowing that Jesuits take a vow of loyalty to popes, had his way. And who replaced the dangerously liberal Father Drinan? The more dangerously liberal Barney Frank—as ardent an advocate for abortion rights and as he was for gay rights. If there is a God, the Frank-for-Drinan trade surely had Him laughing at the Vatican's expense.

From Congress, Bob Drinan went a few blocks to Georgetown University Law Center.

It was a natural transition, from practicing the politics of peace and justice to teaching it. His classes on human rights law, constitutional law and legal ethics were routinely oversubscribed. Though I had met him before his days in Congress, when he served as dean of Boston College Law School, it was at Georgetown Law that our friendship grew. My classes there for the past 20 years have attracted the same kind of students that his did—future public-interest lawyers, poverty lawyers, human-rights lawyers, and, in good years, a future Jack Olender or William Kunstler.

After my Tuesday afternoon class, I would often go by Bob Drinan's fourth-floor office to get energized. I saw him as a towering moral giant, a man of faith whose practice of Christianity put him in the company of all my Jesuit heroes—Daniel Berrigan, Horace McKenna, Teilhard de Chardin, John Dear, Francis Xavier, the martyred Jesuits of El Salvador and the priests who taught me in college. In his office, ferociously unkempt and as tight as a monk's cell, our conversation ranged from politics to law to the morning's front pages. He was as knowledgeable about the Torture Victim Protection Act of 1991 as he was about the many allegations of international lawbreaking by the current Bush administration. Bob Drinan had mastered the art of being professionally angry but personally gentle.

As a priest, he was a pastor-at-large. He was at the altar at journalist Mary McGrory's funeral Mass. He celebrated the Nuptial Mass at the marriage of Rep. Jim McGovern (D-Mass.) and his wife, Lisa. And always, there were plenty of baptisms. As a writer, he produced a steady flow of books on human rights, poverty and social justice. He saved his most fiery writing for the National Catholic Reporter, the progressive weekly to which he contributed a regular column. His final one appeared on Dec. 15, a piece about the 26th anniversary of the martyrdom in El Salvador of Maryknoll Sister Ita Ford.

The column began: "In the 1980s I gave a lecture at Jesuit Regis High School in New York City, where the students are all on scholarship. I spoke about the war being waged by the Reagan administration against the alleged communists of El Salvador.

"In the discussion period, three students took issue with my remarks, making it clear that they and their families agreed with the U.S. policy of assisting the Salvadoran government. The atmosphere was almost hostile until one student stood and related that his aunt, Maryknoll Sister Ita Ford, had been murdered by agents of the government of El Salvador. I have seldom if ever witnessed such an abrupt change in the atmosphere of a meeting."

One of my students at Georgetown Law last semester was also one of Father Drinan's: Chris Neumeyer, a former high school teacher from California. His father, Norris Neumeyer, was in town earlier this month and wanted to meet his hero, Father Drinan. The two lucked out and found the priest in his office. Yesterday, Norris Neumeyer, after learning of the priest's death, e-mailed his son and recalled asking if Father Drinan knew his often-jailed fellow Jesuit Daniel Berrigan and his brother Philip. He did. The difference between himself and the Berrigans, Father Drinan believed, was that they took action outside the system while he took action inside.

Papal meddling aside, it was enduring action.

TRIBUTE TO CLAUDIA BECKER

• Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Vermont is constantly made a better place by

some of the extraordinary people who come there and add to the talents of our State.

One such person is Claudia Becker. She has restored the Big Picture Theater in Waitsfield along with her husband Eugene Jarecki. The theater has become a center for the people of the Mad River Valley, and Claudia has shown a sense of conscience in films she has shown at Big Picture.

Marcelle and I have been privileged to know Claudia for years and her husband Eugene for years before that. Marcelle, as an acting justice of the peace, even performed their marriage. We have enjoyed watching their home grow in Vermont, as well as the addition of two of the most beautiful children anyone could wish for.

Recently, Seven Days in Vermont wrote an article about Claudia and what she has done with her film festival. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

"BIG" DEAL—FILM FEST FOUNDER CLAUDIA
BECKER GETS THE PICTURE
(By Candice White)

On a recent sunny afternoon, several cars, many with ski racks, pulled into a large dirt parking lot at the corner of Route 100 and Carroll Road in Waitsfield. Children pulled off brightly colored ski hats and unzipped puffy jackets as they led their parents through sturdy wood doors. Above, bold red and black letters inscribed on a round, Art Deco-style clock identified the building as the Big Picture Theater.

Inside, the petite proprietor, Claudia Becker, was hustling from one task to another. She swept the wooden floor of the large, windowed cafe-lounge, dusted the player piano, crossed to the carpeted hallway to help an employee count a cash drawer, and answered both the theater phone and the personal cell phone hooked to her corduroys.

A young man and his blonde girlfriend—friends visiting from Becker's native Germany—appeared and greeted her. After a quick exchange of words in German, the man walked behind the bar to the kitchen area and began polishing silver, while his girlfriend took over the broom. Becker darted back to the concessions area and, with a warm smile, greeted the line of customers arriving for a 4 p.m. matinee of Charlotte's Web.

The past year has been a whirlwind for Becker, 39, in her new role as owner of the Big Picture Theater. When she bought and renovated the former Eclipse Theater last spring, she already had a full plate: two children under the age of 6, a marriage to filmmaker Eugene Jarecki (The Trials of Henry Kissinger, Why We Fight), and an acclaimed film fest. Lately, Becker's velocity has increased as she gears up for the fourth annual Mountaintop Film Festival. The human-rights-based marathon runs at the theater starting this Wednesday, January 10, through Sunday, January 14.

The fest presents 10 documentary films and three dramas, all addressing issues of national and international concern, from the toll of the Iraq war to Bombay's child sex trade to civil disobedience during the Vietnam War. It showcases personalities, too. The opening night gala features a reception with filmmaker Henrietta Mantel before the showing of her film on Ralph Nader, An Unreasonable Man. A Q&A with Nader himself