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FACULTY MEMORIAL FOR DR. HAROLD F. McNIECE

Dr. Harold F. McNiece, our colleague as Professor of Law and our former Dean, died on Wednesday, December 27, 1972 at the age of 49.

From 1946 when he first joined the faculty of St. John's University School of Law to the time of his death, Professor McNiece infused a spirit of high professionalism into the stream of students progressing annually towards their roles as lawyers.

Those whom he taught were captivated by the brilliance of his mind, his perceptions and insights and his ability to organize, synthesize and communicate legal thought and skills.

Those who loved him were captured by his wit, his charm and his firm quiet Christian charity.

Dr. McNiece's distinguished career is marked by many dates, events, publications and honors. But what truly set him apart from other men is not the cold, historic record of his achievements, but rather the respect and affection permanently preserved in the hearts and minds of a multitude of lawyers and friends who remember him and his ideals and who pitch their professional lives to his high standards.

Harold F. McNiece was a superior student, lawyer, teacher, administrator and man. His academic honors included a cum laude B.S. degree and a summa cum laude LL.B. degree from St. John's University. He served as Editor-in-Chief of the St. John's Law Review for which he always held a special interest and esteem. New York University awarded him his J.S.D. in 1949.

He was admitted to practice before the New York and Federal Courts and served many of those courts in special and difficult assignments as referee and special master.

In 1946 he began teaching at St. John's University Law School and became preeminent in the fields of Torts and Family Law. He authored books on Torts, Security Transactions and Heart Disease and the Law. His numerous articles in learned law reviews and journals earned him a national reputation for scholarship. Three special awards bespeak his achievements as a teacher and scholar:

1. The President's Medal of St. John's University in 1962, the highest honor conferred on a Faculty member;
2. The Law School Alumni Association award in 1970 for a distinguished record of service to Legal Education and the Profession; and

3. The Freedom Foundation Award in 1955 for his "Freedom and the Law" contribution to the book, *Concept of Freedom*.

Harold McNiece served St. John's Law School simultaneously as a teacher and administrator. He became Assistant to the Dean in 1951 and achieved the Deanship in 1960. After ten productive years which saw this law school grow in stature and prominence, he resigned the Deanship in 1970 and devoted his full time to teaching. Father Joseph T. Tinnelly, C.M., his predecessor as Dean and his colleague for many years, commented recently that it was hard to imagine St. John's Law School without him because for more than twenty-five years he has been the principal architect of its continuously growing reputation for excellence in legal education.

During the 1960s the Brooklyn Bar Association and the New York State Division of Human Rights honored Dr. McNiece for his many distinguished public service achievements. His life shines as an example of the true meaning of the profession of which he was a member and about which he taught. Day-by-day, he rendered service to the public as a hearing examiner for the Department of Justice, as a special referee in attorney disciplinary proceedings, as executive director of the Judiciary Committee of the New York State Constitutional Convention, as president of the Brooklyn Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and as a member of numerous legislative, eleemosynary, financial and Church boards and committees.

He was a man of deep faith in God who suffered long and intensely through many illnesses, but always with a joy and with an indomitable spirit that could not be broken because his love of God and his fellow human beings gave meaning to that suffering.

Many of us who visited him during some of his frequent hospitalizations often came away with a feeling of having received more than given—such was his perpetual good cheer and optimism.

This Faculty, collectively and individually, mourns his tragic and early passing. The St. John's Law School community has lost a great leader and moving spirit. We extend our deep condolences to his sister, Mrs. Stephen Messina, and to his brothers, John and George.

Yet, this Faculty Memorial cannot close on a note of sadness because we speak of a man of happiness. We rejoice in the message of his life which is changed, not ended, and in what his life gave to us—a joy that will always remain alive.

May he rest in God's peace.

THE FACULTY,
St. John's University
School of Law.