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Professor Emeritus Robert M. Byrn: A Remembrance

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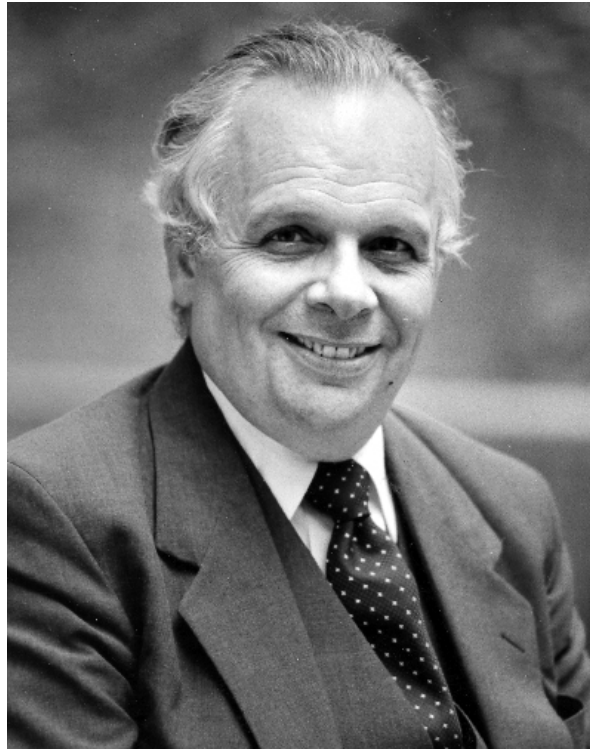
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**PROFESSOR EMERITUS ROBERT M. BYRN
(1931–2017)**



A REMEMBRANCE

*Joseph C. Sweeney**

Robert M. Byrn, the Leonard F. Manning Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Fordham University School of Law, lost his long and painful battle with cancer on February 3, 2017, in his eighty-fifth year. His connections to Fordham encompassed the major part of his life. He received a B.S. from Fordham University College of Business Administration in 1953 and received a J.D. from Fordham University School of Law in 1959 after service with the U.S. Army in Korea in 1954–1955. As a law student, he served as an associate editor of the *Fordham Law Review* with the late Dean

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and Judge Joseph M. McLaughlin. After bar admission, he practiced law with the firm of Hughes, Hubbard & Reed in New York from 1959 to 1963. He returned to Fordham Law as an assistant professor in 1963 and was promoted to associate professor in 1966, professor of law in 1968, and Manning distinguished professor in 1988.

Professor Byrn taught Substantive Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure, concerning which he prepared a casebook, many articles, and comments. He also taught Torts, the "Queen of the first-year curriculum." To replace the former courses Equity Jurisdiction and Pleading, he developed the upper-class course Remedies, for which he also prepared a casebook. In addition to service as associate dean from 1986 to 1988, he served on many committees dealing with strategic planning and curriculum revision and was a careful mentor to new faculty members, including the author. His devoted service to Fordham Law lasted thirty-one years until ill health forced him to retire in 1994.

Outside of the university, he was greatly concerned with the right to life of the unborn, and he accepted appointment as guardian ad litem for the unborn from the New York courts; he also testified before Congress on these issues (before the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*). He was also involved in combatting the problems of juvenile delinquency and gang warfare for the city and state and was an adviser to the New York State Law Revision Commission. After retirement, he volunteered at St. Clare's and St. Vincent's Hospitals, Covenant House, Cabrini Medical Center, the Cardinal Cook Nursing Home, and Goldwater Hospital. Always a valiant soldier, he strove to make the law better and to improve the lives of fellow citizens. He was a friend to the lonely and abandoned.

Professor Byrn is survived by the children of his late brother Frank, a senior partner in the firm of Haight, Gardner, Poor & Havens.

Professor Byrn's life illustrated the wisdom and purpose of the Christian life:

*O Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let me sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon,
Where there is despair, hope,
Where there is doubt, faith,
Where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, grant me
not to be consoled, but to console
not to be understood, but to understand
not to be loved, but to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned
it is in dying that we are born
to eternal life.*

—St. Francis of Assisi