

EWTN Founder Mother Angelica Dies at 92

Mother Angelica, a soft-spoken nun who dispensed homespun religious and life advice for years on television after founding a cable network, died on Sunday aged 92, officials and religious leaders said.

"Mother Mary Angelica of the Annunciation, foundress of the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), passed away on March 27 after a lengthy struggle with the aftereffects of a stroke," the Catholic News Agency said in a statement.

"Mother has always and will always personify EWTN, the network that God asked her to found," said EWTN Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Michael Warsaw.

The nun, born Rita Rizzo in Canton, Ohio, founded the network, among the world's largest religious broadcasters, from a studio set up in an Alabama monastery garage in 1981 after she objected to a movie being shown by a station which was owned by the studio she used for producing programs for a Christian network.

Mother Angelica, once hailed by Time magazine as arguably the nation's most influential Roman Catholic woman, suffered a debilitating stroke in 2001 which mostly left her without the ability to speak in her final years, but her ministry lived on through reruns of her television program.

In a statement, Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley said: "She devoted her life to ministry, converting untold numbers of people to the church. She left an indelible mark on Alabama, the Catholic Church and the world as a whole."

EWTN said four days of memorial events at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Hanceville, Alabama, would culminate

in a Christian burial mass on Friday. {eo}

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