

# the Mary and Brother Russell gallery

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John was born the son of Joseph and Genevieve Russell in the Bronx on 29 February 1920. Since his parents could save on birthday candles, cakes and gifts, they decided to have two other children, Genevieve in 1923, and Mary four years later. The family lived on Ryer Avenue in the Bronx in 1930.

John entered the United States Army at the beginning of World War II, and saw service in the European theater, mostly in North Africa, where his unit checked the weather and reported to the Air Force using codes from a manual. The soldiers off duty had lots of time on their hands, and they engaged in a continuous bridge game. As a result, John became a crackerjack bridge player, a pastime he pursued his entire life. There was always controversy whether Jimmy Dixon or John Russell was the better bridge player; it was the Brothers' version of who's greater, Mickey Mantle or Willie Mays. A secondary pastime was guessing the weather, and John was skilled at reading future weather from knowledge of the winds and cloud formations.

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◀◀== Brother James Kearney listens to one of Mary's great stories.



◀◀== The twenty-one year old in a pensive mood.

Brother Russell with two long-time friends: Brother Joseph J.R. Bélanger and Brother Donald Kelly. All three taught or are teaching at Marist College ==▶▶



◀◀== Mary Russell is the angel who organized this party.



◀◀== Two of the younger guests at the party.



Mary speaking to Brother James Kearney, with Brother Russell hidden between them. Brothers Adams and Sacino at end of table. ==▶▶



The Russells in a pleasant moment. ==▶▶



◀◀== The crowd singing happy birthday before the cake is cut.



◀◀== Brother Russell blowing out the candles. he managed to extinguish twenty, but needed a second breath for the twenty-first.





The guest of honor greets visitors from his position at the head table ==>>



Brothers James Adams, Joseph Sacino and Donald Kelly sat at the other end of the "head" table ==>>



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