

FERRÉ AGUAYO, SOR ISOLINA (1914–2000)

Known as the Angel of the Playa de Ponce, Sor Isolina was born into a well-to-do Puerto Rican family in 1914. Her religious calling to forsake her comfortable life and work with the poor came to her at the age of fifteen, but she did not reveal her decision to the family until her twenty-first birthday. She joined the Missionary Servants of the Most Blessed Trinity and in 1937 she professed as Sister Thomas Marie.

An accomplished religious leader, Sor Isolina, a name she recovered following Vatican II, joined the faculty of Blessed Trinity College in Philadelphia, and earned a master's degree in criminology from Fordham University. An avowed community organizer, Sor Isolina created multi-service groups, worked with numerous grass-roots and government sponsored organizations in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, and helped the poor, at risk youth, and families to reach their potentials. Honored by numerous organizations for her humanitarian deeds, Sor Isolina received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President William J. Clinton, and seventeen doctorates honoris causa throughout her lifetime.