

SISTER M. ROSE ANGELA, O.S.F.

January 10, 1964

"I'll be going soon too," had been her comment when on January 3d Sister Pauline died. Sister Rose Angela made the statement almost casually. She had been in the infirmary since Christmas Eve. She had hoped to spend her last Christmas "on her feet," but the abdominal pain which had sent her on a special visit to the doctor on December 20th, intensified to the point where she could hold out no longer. "I'd better go to the infirmary now," had been her decision, and except for two Masses in Chapel on Christmas Day, she never left it again.

Actually, until then no one had guessed just how sick Sister Rose Angela really was. She still set the tables in the dining room three times a day -- murmuring an ejaculation with every dish. She had "resigned" in September from the Offset Department, but with the understanding that she was available if she were needed, or if the work piled up. Sister wasn't well -- that was clear -- but not until late December did anyone suspect that she was eking out her days on borrowed time.

Sister herself refused at first to admit that fact. She had been anointed on Christmas Eve -- but people DID get well even after Extreme Unction. Then on the 26th she faced the issue squarely. Sister Peter had told her gently that the hard mass could not be softened by any applications.

Sister Rose Angela thought a long moment. "Then I won't ever get better." It was a statement, rather than a question, but once she had voiced that truth, her anxieties left her. "You'll have to help me get resigned," she had previously said. Now, however, there was no question of working for resignation. She had achieved it; now there was only peace.

But it was not peace without pain. From Christmas Day on, she grew progressively worse, though on Thursday morning, the 9th, she conversed briefly with Father Louis and Sister Casimir, and was able to reach back in memory for a name that they had forgotten.

She asked Sister Eucheria, her teacher of long ago, to pray with her, but even as she spoke in the whisper that became usual with her at the end, Sister Rose Angela was slipping farther and farther away from the pain-filled world that pressed heavily upon her. Late that evening she finally fell asleep. Early Friday morning as her fever mounted steadily, it became apparent that she would not wake to another day.

And so it was that quietly, peacefully, with hard-won courage and no hint of apprehension, Sister Rose Angela in the early hours of January 10th, went home to the embrace of God.

GOD GRANT HER REST ETERNAL!

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