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*For those who have been faithful, O Lord,
life is not ended, but merely changed.*

December 16, 1977

Dear Sisters,

Though the whole Church is only now entering the most solemn days of Advent, the long anticipation of the Lord's Coming was realized for Sister M. Cecilia Downey yesterday, December 15. Sister died peacefully at 2:55 in the afternoon in the infirmary of Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home where she had lingered more than three months after suffering a stroke. She was in the 79th year of life and the 57th year of religious life.

Sister Cecilia was born in Joliet on May 19, 1899, of Menard F. and Mary Ann Cole Downey. At Baptism in Sacred Heart Church, she was given the name Edna Catherine. At the age of 21, she entered our Congregation as a postulant. The Feast of St. Clare, August 12, 1923, was the date of her first profession; she pronounced her final vows on that feast in 1926. Sister celebrated her Golden Jubilee on June 22, 1973.

St. Cecilia fittingly became her patroness when Sister Cecilia received her religious name in 1921, for she had been interested in music since early childhood. Her career formally began with the study of voice at the age of 12, and good music was her great love until her death.

Because her expressed life's ambition was "to raise the standard of singing in schools and choral organizations," Sister Cecilia devoted the 54 years of her active career to music education. Eighteen of these years were spent in teaching private pupils and high school students at St. Francis Academy in Joliet, and St. Procopius, St. Francis de Sales, and St. Clement High Schools in Chicago. Sister Cecilia also held the position of alumnae moderator of St. Francis Academy for 18 years. Twenty-six years were spent in the music department of the College of St. Francis. There she was noted as chairperson of the department and as director of the College Chorale. Hundreds of women in her native Joliet will remember her long and dedicated service to them.

Sister Cecilia is survived by a sister, Mrs. Fred Dvorak, and one brother, Eugene, both of Joliet. To them, as well as to her several nieces and nephews, we offer our sincere and prayerful sympathy.

The Wake will be held from 2 until 9 p.m. today, December 16, at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home. Mass of the Resurrection will be celebrated on Saturday morning, December 17, at 10 o'clock. Burial will be at Resurrection Cemetery in Lockport.

"Come, O Wisdom, and show your people the way to salvation!" May Sister Cecilia now experience the fullness of this salvation for which she has long and faithfully waited.

Devotedly yours,

THE GOVERNING BOARD

