

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

November 20, 1980

Dear Sisters,

Just a year and a half ago Sister Angeline Essner moved to Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home. She knew, she said, that it was time for her to go. This intuitive sense, no doubt, also helped her prepare during these last two months of illness for her final journey. She ended her long earthly pilgrimage at 4:15 AM on Wednesday, Nov. 19, 1980, in the 90th year of her life and the 70th year of her religious commitment as a Franciscan.

Sister Angeline was born to Andrew and Josephine Essner on Feb. 23, 1891, in Benton, MO. She was named Emma at her Baptism in St. Lawrence Church, New Hamburg. Just a few days short of her twentieth birthday she entered the postulancy on Jan. 31, 1911. Later that year on August 12 she entered the novitiate and made her profession of vows in 1913. During all her years in religious life she served the needs of the young. She taught every grade on the elementary level as well as serving as principal for several years at St. Marys, Rock Island. Sister Angeline taught a total of 49 years in Illinois at: Sacred Heart, Englewood; Sacred Heart, Hubbard Woods; St. John's, Joliet; St. Marys, Rock Island; Guardian Angel Home; St. Joseph, Elgin; St. Francis de Sales, Sts. Peter and Paul, and St. Clements, Chicago; St. Marys, Des Plaines. She spent 5 years in Ohio at St. Marys, Columbus and St. Peters, Mansfield, and 3 years at St. Denis, Benton, MO - her home parish. Sister celebrated her Diamond Jubilee in June, 1973.

When actual classroom teaching became too great a burden ten years ago, she retired to the Motherhouse to assume her ministry of tutoring. "Tutoring pupils gives me perfect joy" were the words she wrote on a ministry form a few years ago. She was involved not just with tutoring though but with religious education at St. Bernards as well as craft work classes for the children, particularly knitting. She was happy to live at the Motherhouse during her last years, especially appreciative of the privilege of praying before the Blessed Sacrament. As her energy continued to decline she made the decision to move to Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home arriving there on May 15, 1979. Just a couple of months ago she moved to the infirmary floor, accepting in her patient manner the suffering of her last illness.

Sister Angeline's philosophy of life can be summarized in the statements that became familiar to her Sisters at the Motherhouse. "Why should we complain. We have so much to be grateful for" were her words in the face of life's problems and frustrations. Her own Gospel story reflected that of St. Pauls for she often said: "No one can ever take away the joy that's in my heart". If that was her word of truth in this life, it is an absolute certitude now that she views her life from eternity.

Sister Angeline's wake will take place at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home on Friday, Nov. 21, from 2-7 PM. At 3:30 PM that day there will be a Prayer Service with the Liturgy of Christian Burial at 7:00 PM. Burial will be Saturday, Nov. 22, at 9:30 AM from OLA to Resurrection Cemetery. We offer our sympathy to her brother, Clemens, and her many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. We are especially mindful of her relatives in the Congregation: Sister Angelica and Rosabel LeGrand, Sister Zita Diebold and Sister Loretta Vetter. She was preceded in death by her sister, Sister Lourdine, in 1959.

May the Father who gave her a cherubic look in this life receive her into His company of angels and saints in Heaven for all eternity.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
The Governing Board

