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Sister M. Sophia Frangenburg

After a seven years' illness due to a spinal disease, Sister Sophia won her release the morning of October 16, dying in the infirmary of the Motherhouse at 11:40 o'clock.

Sister, seriously hampered in her work, had been admitted to the infirmary in 1947. As time went on she grew increasingly paralyzed and helpless. In April of 1952, gravely ill with a urinary obstruction, she was treated at St. Joseph's Hospital and then transferred to Mercy Hospital, Chicago, where Dr. Harold Voris, neurologist, performed spinal surgery in an effort to relieve her paralysis. No relief ensued, and her condition being pronounced hopeless, she returned to Joliet June 3rd. It was definite she would never walk nor sit up again. Though she knew the verdict and returned to a bed of helplessness, she could bravely smile and say, "I am so glad to be home."

Three weeks before her death, due to hemorrhage from the kidneys, she was once more hospitalized at St. Joseph's. Again there was nothing that could be done, and she was brought back to the infirmary. The last week broncho-pneumonia set in--the final complication directly causing her death. She received Holy Communion for the last time on October 11, and the next day lapsed into coma, Father Leonard Pueche, OFM, from the Alberta Province, Canada, continued at her bedside the last three hours, praying for her and blessing her.

The Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated in the Convent Chapel on Tuesday, October 19. Rev. Gervase Brinkman, OFM, assisted by Rev. Benedict Pfeifer, OFM, and Rev. Benedict McCarthy, OFM, was the celebrant. Father Gervase led the prayers at the grave, interment being made at Mount Olivet Cemetery.

Sister Sophia's record of appointments goes back to 1925, when she started her five years' service at the Academy as baker. Following that, she did domestic work at St. Joseph's, Elgin; at Sacred Heart, Hubbard Woods, at St. Pascal's, St. Boniface, and Sacred Heart, Chicago; at St. Raymond's and Guardian Angel Home, Joliet. Her last mission appointment was Holy Family, Bayfield.

At all these convents Sister gave quiet and willing service, preparing good meals with seemingly no effort and always with a margin of spare time. She kept needlework at hand, and did beautiful embroidery and crocheting. Even after she entered the infirmary she continued to ply her needle, and only when paralysis forced her to inactivity, did she give it up.

During her long and difficult illness, Sister Sophia was in the truest sense of the words a silent sufferer, a model of patient and loving resignation. Not only did she never complain; she never even requested a service. She simply accepted with gratitude what was done for her and demanded nothing. She never asked why, but met every phase of her protracted illness with the same calm as she met death. This was, however, not the calm of insensibility. She was easily moved. Any small compliment, any little kindness would bring tears to her eyes.

She offered her suffering and her prayers, but always felt she was doing nothing. She would not let her rosary out of her hand and said ejaculations over and over on it. The Sisters who knew her best had great confidence in her prayers and asked her help for special intentions. Now that her long martyrdom is over, and she "walks before the Lord in the land of the living," may she continue in Eternity what she did so well in time; may she pray for us, as we do for her. Requiescat!