

SISTER M. PAULINE, O.S.F.

January 3, 1964

Death slipped quietly through the corridors of Our Lady of Angels while 1964 was still very new indeed, and paused at the bedside of Sister Pauline, who for weeks, it would seem, had been expecting him.

Looking back, one can remember the symptoms of premonition. There was the visit home to Leonore at Thanksgiving time, which she just "had to make!" And there was her determination to get all her Christmas "thank you" notes written. But the premonition carried with it no fear. As she confided to Sister Olga, her favorite Scrabble partner, "I'm more resigned now than I was. This can't last too long." And she continued, "I've had a long life; I've had a full life. I can't complain!"

That last remark was typical. She was obviously failing -- but she had had eighty-four years of living, and "I can't complain." Christmas had been a joy to her. With Sister Olga as her "chauffeur," she made a complete tour of Our Lady of Angels, enjoying the holiday atmosphere and exclaiming, "This is the nicest Christmas I ever had!" There were so many cards, so many gifts -- and so many people to say "Thank You!" to.

Then as the year drew to a close, Sister Pauline became worse. She was "no good," she told Sister Olga, who looked in to wish her a happy new year. Later in the day she came slowly into the kitchenette for a glass of juice, "just juice, that's all." She returned to her room and almost immediately rang for Sister Peter. "I have such a pain," she moaned, "such pain!" It was obvious that she had reached a crisis, and as the call went out, the Sisters hurried to her side.

"Pray louder!" she told Mother Immaculate, and then gradually Sister Pauline slipped into sedated sleep. When Mother Borromeo and Sister Mary of the Angels arrived, she had begun to rally, though as the medication wore off, the pain once more became unbearable. Then with the morning came her urgent questioning, "Isn't Father coming?" -- and she remained alert in spite of the hypodermic. Later in the day medication was to be effective, but at 7:20, with pain searing her, Sister Pauline consciously welcomed the Lord Who came as Viaticum. It was January 2nd.

The day wore on, and for Sister Pauline the pattern of pain was unchanged. It persisted into the evening and into the hours of night. At 1:30 Friday morning Sister received what was to be the last medication. Sometime in the early hours of Friday morning, Sister Charitas, keeping her first death watch, noticed the subtle change: Sister Pauline was breathing more slowly -- there was an indefinable difference -- and instinctively Sister summoned the others.

It was approximately 5:15 when Sister Pauline slipped away to finish her "nicest Christmas" in Eternity.

**GOD GRANT HER REST ETERNAL!**